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# ETHICAL TREATISE

ON THE

# PASSIONS,

FOUNDED ON THE PRINCIPLES INVESTIGATED IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL TREATISE.

BY T. COGAN, M. D.

"The variety of the Passions is great, and worthy in every branch of that variety of an attentive investigation. The more accurately we search into the human mind, the stronger traces we every where find of His wisdom who made it."

Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful.

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# PART I.

## *On Well-Being or Happiness;*

IN THREE DISQUISITIONS.

1. On the Beneficial and Pernicious Agency of the Passions.
2. On the Intellectual Powers, as Guides and Directors in the Pursuit of Well-Being.
3. On the Nature and Sources of Well-Being.

# ADVERTISEMENT.

*It is five years since a second edition of the Philosophical Treatise on the Passions was submitted to public inspection: which is a space of time far beyond the intentions or expectations of the author. The great extent and intricacies of so important a subject, united with his various avocations, have rendered an earlier publication of the present work impracticable. The influence of the same causes have also prevented the completion of the author's plan. But as the subject admits of a pause, he has availed himself of the circumstance, that the interval between the publication of the present and the former work, may not extend farther beyond the bounds of propriety; and as the design of the author, is to attract the closest attention to a pursuit confessedly the most interesting, and not to gratify impatient curiosity, this suspension may not be unacceptable to the class of readers to whom the work is principally adapted. The* second part *is in great forwardness; and should no impediments arise, it will be published in the course of the ensuing year. An appropriate Title Page will be delivered with the last volume, which will denote the relation of the different parts to each other.*

# CONTENTS.


Page.

Introduction - - - - - - - - - - - - 1

DISQUISITION I.

ON VIRTUOUS CONDUCT AS PRODUCTIVE OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING - - - - 29

CHAP. I.

*On the Virtue of Prudence.* - - 33

Contentment - - - - - - - - - - - 39
Fortitude - - - - - - - - - - - - 43
Patience - - - - - - - - - - - - 46
Modesty - - - - - - - - - - - - 49

Humility - - - - - - - - - - - - 51
Industry - - - - - - - - - - - - 54
Frugality - - - - - - - - - - - - 56
Temperance - - - - - - - - - - - 58
Chastity - - - - - - - - - - - - 59
Moderation - - - - - - - - - - - 60

## CHAP. II.

*On the Social Virtues.* - - - 68

Justice - - - - - - - - - - - - 69
Benevolence - - - - - - - - - - - 79

## DISQUISITION. II.

ON THE NATURE OF MORALITY; ITS LAWS, MOTIVES, &c. - - - - - - - - - - - 93

## CHAP. I.

*Origin of opinions respecting Virtue Morals &c.*

Sect. I. On the import of the terms Virtue and Vice - - - - - - - - - 97
II. On approbation and disapprobation 108
III. On merit, and demerit - - - - 120

## CHAP. II.

*On the Laws of Moral Obligation.*

Sect. I. Difference between virtue and morality - - - - - - - - - - 127
Sect. II. On Moral Sanctions; or the inducements to practise virtue - - 141
1. Self interest - - - - - - 145
2. Rational conduct - - - 147
3. The social principle - - - 149
4. The benevolent principle - 154
5. The beauty of virtue - - 159
6. Positive injunctions - - - 164
Sect. III. Comparative view of the motives enumerated, respecting their degrees of influence - - 177—198
Sect. IV. On the religious principles most conducive to virtue - - - 204

## CHAP. III.

*On the origin and progress of virtuous and religious affections.* - - - - - - - - 231

Fear - - - - - - - - - - - - 233

Hope - - - - - - - - - - - 235
Love - - - - - - - - - - - 238
Sorrow - - - - - - - - - - 254

# *INTRODUCTION.*

IN the preceding disquisitions our attention has been directed to human nature, as engaged in the pursuit of Good; and we contemplated the uses of the passions and affections, as connected with this grand object: We stated the pernicious aberrations to which they are exposed, with the causes of these aberrations: We analysed those various intellectual powers, whose office it is to instruct and guide us in the important inquiry after Well-being: We investigated also the nature and extent of that Good, which human Beings are capable of enjoying, and of which some portion or other is the object of incessant desire.

The terms *Good*, for the *object* of our desire, and *Well-being*, to express the desirable state, have been adopted in preference to any others, because they appear to be the most appropriate. The first denotes the apparent character of the

object pursued, and the last comprehends ease, pleasure, felicity. When Epicurus maintained that the whole of man consists in the enjoyment of pleasure, it was originally understood, that he intended to express the enjoyment of all Good; but the prominent idea presented to the mind being that of *sensual* pleasure, disreputable associations have been connected with the term, and the greatest Sensualists are now placed in the foremost rank of his genuine disciples. As we possess, or occasionally enjoy, much good which is not entitled to the character of *happiness* or of *felicity*, neither of these terms can be deemed generic; for they do not apply to all our pleasurable sensations or states, which are in themselves desirable; that great blessing *Contentment*, would, for example be excluded. *Well-being* comprehends the whole. It is not improper when applied to the innocent gratifications of Sense; it admits of occasional pleasures, derived from amusements and incidental exhilarations of the animal spirits; it is peculiarly adapted to that composed and habitual state, in which we acknowledge existence to be a valuable blessing; it embraces the pleasures and satisfactions derived from the love of knowledge; and it reaches to those more exalted sensations which constitute the highest state of well-being, *Felicity*.

Hitherto we have chiefly considered man, as an *interested* being, perpetually eager in his search after some apparent Good; and our attention has been directed to his desires, and his capacities relative to this object. According to the plan proposed we are now to make the *Conduct* and *Dispositions* of rational agents, and whatever may respect these, the chief subjects of our inquiry. We shall attempt to trace the line of conduct which it is necessary to pursue, the dispositions it is necessary to cultivate, and the particular inducements by which moral agents ought invariably to be influenced, in their search after those portions of Good, which from the constitution of their nature, and the situation in which they are placed, they are rendered capable of attaining.

But before we enter fully into the subject, we shall make some preliminary observations, as introductory to our plan. These will principally be deduced from the investigations which have already been made, and they will constitute the basis of our subsequent disquisitions.

I. By *Conduct* we understand an effort to possess some particular object, or to apply certain means in order to obtain certain ends; and by *right* Conduct, we express such exertions as have the

approbation of our reason respecting the object, the motive, and the means. The object must be important or interesting; the motives pure and respectable; the means lawful and properly adapted to the purpose. Whatever is contrary to reason cannot lead to permanent Good; if the motive be dishonest or dishonorable, the agent acts upon a principle by which he stands self-condemned; and ignorance of the proper means cannot ensure a salutary issue. It was to prevent wrong action and its train of pernicious consequences, that human nature is endowed with those intellectual powers which have the acquisition of truth for their object; and with those cautionary powers of doubt, hesitation, and deliberation, which detain the mind from acting, until clearer evidence shall indicate the right path.

It is observable that the word *Conduct,* is most pertinently, if not exclusively, applied to the actions of beings who are endowed with reason and understanding. It is not usual to speak of the conduct of Animals governed entirely by instinct: Of these we say that "they acted in a particular manner," not that they *conducted* themselves in that manner. This distinction seems to be founded upon the discretionary power with which rational Beings are entrusted, in union with the immense diversity of objects upon which this

power is exercised. Altho' the Instincts of Animals be as diversified as their various species, yet in most of their pursuits they act *instinctively*; that is, by invariable propensities, or by an uncontrouled impulse of the senses, and of the passions immediately excited by them. Notwithstanding the diversities correspondent to the specific nature of Animals, they are all influenced by three objects alone, in their search after Good to themselves; the procuring of sustenance; the escaping from danger; and the propagation of their species. As different animals are destined to such different kinds of Good, and to escape from various kinds of danger, there is a correspondent diversity both in their conformation and instincts; but these diversities still relate to the above objects. In these respects the Whale does not differ from the Oyster, the Reptile from the Elephant, nor the Tyger from the Lamb. In the human species, these desires, are by common consent, placed in the lowest class. It is expected that the superior faculties of men, be employed about objects, that are deemed more exalted and refined:—There is a much larger range for human conduct:—Our pursuits are still more diversified:—Our conduct is more the result of a preference, and this preference is expected to be the result of some mental

exertion. Hence we are not only endowed with the simple powers of perception, but of reflection, deliberation, discrimination, to a great extent; and of finally determining according to the dictates of sound reason.

In all sensitive Beings, the grand desire is one and the same, to possess something Good. But in Animals of an inferior nature, this desire directs to a very few objects as the means of good; these are productive of few gratifications, and the passions excited by these desires or the incidents attending them, are also comparatively few. Animals are alone affected by things administering to their sensual wants. The desire of immediate gratification, anger at impediments, fear at some impending danger, instinctive fondness for their offspring during the early months of their existence, a silent attachment to their own species, appear to be, with some few exceptions, the total of their propensities. The sources of Good to the human species being more copious and diversified, Man being endowed with the more extensive powers of observation, comprehension, and reflection, he is subject to numerous correspondent passions and affections. He not only feels the emotions which present objects are capable of exciting, but upon reflection he can rejoice or grieve at the past; by his foresight he can hope or

fear for the future. He has a quick sense of honour or of disgrace from moral causes. He can suffer remorse where he has acted morally wrong, or be rewarded with complacency from the consciousness of his having acted right. As the superior sociability of his nature opens to him extensive sources of good or of evil, so is he exposed to all the contingent passions and affections, which the peculiarities of his connections are calculated to excite. As the passions of men are not under the irresistible impulse of Instinct, nor always under the guidance of reason, they are frequently productive of consequences to which the inferior creation are strangers.

II. If we attend to the various sources of Good to be enjoyed by man, we shall discover four distinctions and gradations. The indulgence of the animal appetites; pleasures and amusements, or slighter mental gratifications, including the enjoyment derived from the conveniences and accommodations of life; intellectual pursuits; and the cultivation of social, relative and pious affections. The gratifications of animal appetites proceed from a natural impulse, and demand neither observation, experience, nor reason to prompt to an indulgence. This is the only propensity possessed by man, in common with the brute creation;

and, in the human species, it is observed to be the most ungovernable in the most ignorant and uncultivated minds; which being strangers to every superior enjoyment, cannot be affected by any comparisons. In the pursuit of amusements, conveniences and accommodations, the mind becomes more operative; the imagination is peculiarly active, inventing or modifying things pleasant and useful, and creating fantastic scenes which may either amuse or deceive. In the pursuits of knowledge, the exercise of memory, ratiocination and judgement are the most conspicuous. By the first, facts are collected and retained; by the second inferences are drawn; by the last a decision is made. Thus we perceive that our minds are not only enriched by interesting facts, but also by the deduction of other important truths from them. In the pleasure derived from the sociability of our nature, and from our connections with other beings, the *affections of the Heart* are immediately concerned. It is here that the passions and affections generally manifest themselves in the strongest manner, and they are deemed the constituents of the most refined felicity.

III. It has been noticed that every voluntary action of a rational Agent, proceeds from the final determination of his own mind; that this mind

has been influenced by certain inducements, having some apparent good for their immediate exciting cause; and that unless the inclinations or desires thus generated be restrained by more powerful inducements, those first excited will become the efficient moving cause, of the determination of the Will; and thus will they acquire the character of *Motives*. It has also been remarked that inducements have a stronger influence when they are conformable to the principle, which has taken habitual possession of the mind, whatever be its character and tendency. It was further observed, and it can scarcely be observed too often, that the final execution of every determination of the Will, produces an immutable change respecting the grand pursuit of Well-being. The deed performed brings us forwards in a greater or less degree, towards the enjoyment of this Well-being, or places us at a more remote distance from it; and we are compelled to submit to all the consequences.

These interesting facts prove that the principles of human action, may be distinguished into two Classes, *primary* and *subordinate*. The primary, grand, universal principle, ever operative in all sensitive and conscious beings, is the love and desire of some species of Good. The subordinate principles relate to the apparent means of obtaining this Good; and they direct to particular

actions, according to the idea entertained at the instant, of the efficacy of the means to produce the particular species of good desired. These subordinate principles are frequently very different in different persons. Some, for example, are actuated by a principle of benevolence, of justice, of integrity; others, by a principle of honour; others by a principle of ambition, of revenge, of sensuality, &c. Nor is the same principle uniformly active in the same person, at all times. He frequently sees the same object in different points of view. He is himself subjected by adventitious circumstances, to a versatility of mind, which may, for a period, occasion such a contrariety in his dispositions, that his predilections and aversions shall entirely change their objects; and the actions of one moment shall be opposite to the plans of the preceding. However, notwithstanding these contrarieties, he is still in the pursuit of Good; and it still remains a truth, that the prevalent influence of certain principles, constitutes the habitual character of each individual.

IV. The history which was given, upon a former occasion, of the sources of our good and evil, of the happiness we are rendered capable of enjoying, and the misery to which we are exposed, manifests that the state of well-being, in the hu-

man species, depends principally upon the *feelings of the Mind*. Corporeal indulgences are not only transient, but they are comparatively few. The most numerous, as well as the most exalted and durable pleasures are *mental*. The delicate enjoyments derived from the cultivation of the arts, distinguished by the appellation of Taste, though they acknowledge the organs of sense to partake of the gratification, as they are the introductory media, yet they are deservedly considered as the pleasures of the *Mind*. The slighter amusements which recreate the frame; the pursuit of knowledge; the calm pleasures of contentment, satisfaction, complacency; the invigorations of hope and joy; the delightful affection of love, in all its ramifications; all the social and relative affections, whether conjugal, parental, filial, or friendly; as also esteem, veneration, gratitude, admiration; and the expansive pleasures of benevolence, are all of them *mental*. Most of our *painful* sensations have also a similar character. The pangs of hatred, with all its modifications; the irritations of anger, envy, and peevish discontent; the corrosions of malice; the oppressions of sorrow, grief, and melancholy; the horrors of fear, despair, and remorse; and the various ramifications of displacency, are passions and affections of the *Mind*.

These obvious facts show the high importance of regulating the passions and affections of the mind, and possessing that habitual frame of disposition, which is favourable to all those pleasing impressions of which it is susceptible, and which place it at the most remote distance from mental misery. The pleasures of sense, when most innocent, are still of a very transient nature. They are only to be enjoyed periodically; and if we possess no other resources, the mind sinks into a dull vacuity, into a listless inactive stupor, during the intermediate space. Nor can we conceive it to be engaged in any other occupation, than in seeking fresh occasions to stimulate new desires, that the transient pleasure of gratification may again be enjoyed. If these gratifications be illegitimate, such as reason condemns, such as expose to mischievous consequences, this intermediate space is filled up with fearful apprehensions, with contrition, remorse, and self condemnation, as often as the mind is compelled to reflect; and it is only aroused from a state of stupor, by a sense of the keenest misery.

Hence the necessity of that mental Discipline, which Moralists in every age have judged to be so essential to human happiness; and by which alone every disorderly, tormenting and injurious passion and affection may be subdued, and those

affections be cherished, which implant peace, contentment, satisfaction within, and diffuse their beneficial effects all around.

V. Mental discipline, implies, that we possess an accurate discernment of that which is most productive of permanent Well-being, to ourselves and others; habitual dispositions to act in a correspondent manner; and firmness of mind to resist every seductive inducement of a contrary tendency. By the former we escape the evils, from which minds, the best disposed, could not otherways be secure; by the others we resist the dangerous impressions made upon us by sensible objects, and subdue that inordinate self-love, which is inconsistent with personal happiness, and so fatal to the happiness of others. It is the regulation of our propensities, and the cultivation of right dispositions, that can alone ensure a permanency in right conduct, or render the practice of that which our reason most approves, a source of permanent pleasure to the agent. Abstract ideas of what is right and proper, are not sufficient to secure happiness. A theoretical conviction of the beneficial tendency of some actions, and the pernicious consequences of others, will not be an effectual counterpoise to the strong impulse of desire, and the impetuosity of those disorderly

passions, which may be excited by improper objects; nor will they reclaim the Base and Sordid from the disgraceful influence of inordinate Self-love. The proper office of examination, inquiry, and ratiocination, is, strictly speaking, confined to the production of a just discernment, and an accurate discrimination. But when these are obtained, we may still view the most important truths in the light of abstract facts, or of propositions in which we take no pleasure, nor seem to possess any interest. It is by *feeling* their importance, that a predilection is formed. When proper Desires are excited, rational inducements operate as they ought; and these will rise into Motives, if they be not effectually opposed by other inducements and desires of a contrary tendency. The gratification of every desire is, at the instant, pleasing, though the issue should prove fatal. It is therefore of the first importance that our desires should uniformly lead to that which is productive of Good, without any admixture of evil. It is alone by the permanent influence of *right affections,* that an uniformity can be expected; because these alone will be permanently operative. In cases of high importance, the first impulse of conviction will sometimes excite a strong desire for correspondent action. But the *Passions* are always transient. Their immediate stimulus may

have a sufficient force to impel the mind from its usual track, for a short period, but it will not induce a constant and steady pace in the new path. When the passion subsides, the strong efforts will also subside. Unless it be succeeded by its correspondent *affections*, former habits will regain the ascendency. The permanency of right affections is necessary, to introduce right habits, and right habits are synonymous with confirmation in goodness. Were any one to do that which is in itself right with reluctance and permanent self-denial, he might benefit others, and he might avert some great and impending evil from himself, but he could not be in a state of self-enjoyment. The discharge of his duty would be felt as an irksome task. *Compulsive* acts of justice belong to slaves, and not to free men; and compulsive generosity, compassion, and benevolence, are contradictions in terms.

VI. In order to ensure right conduct, those considerations or inducements must be prevalent, which are deservedly considered as a proper counterpoise, to the propensities of a contrary character. For the strongest inducement will become the Motive of every particular action; and where there are various inducements of a contrary tendency, each of them possessing a certain degree

of power, there must be a peculiar energy in the prevalent inducement to enable it to gain this ascendency. Such inducements must therefore appear peculiarly important, in order to produce the desired effect. They must promise a superior good to some one, or be considered as a desirable compensation for what may be deemed a present disadvantage, or may threaten a future loss.

Another requisite, is a persuasion of the *Truth* of counteracting principles; that they are not altogether conjectural, or merely possible. As whatever immediately and strongly affects the mind through the medium of the senses, conveys at that instant, the idea of a *certainty*; so whatever is expected to counteract, must be founded upon such a degree of evidence as to entitle it to our firm belief. It is true that, in some cases, the mere possibility of very important issues, may invigorate to right conduct, or terrify from that which is wrong; but, generally speaking, without a conviction of the *reality* of some future good or evil, the influence of present and sensible objects will prevail.

In our inquiry into the irregularities of the passions and affections; their nature and causes, * we endeavoured to prove, that those errors in conduct which are not the effects of absolute ignorance,

* See Part 1. Disq: 1. Ch. 11.

proceed either from the influence of present objects, by which certain desires are immediately excited; or from a predominant *Self-love*, which makes personal gratification, and personal accommodation, the centre of every desire, and the source of every motive. These effects are produced without any studied operation of the mind. The mind appears at the first instant, to be more passive than active. An impulse is received to which it submits, without reserve or restraint. We are always impressed by the prominent qualities of objects, which are supposed to respect our Well-being. It is these which strike, excite desires, and incline to act. Unless other qualities of a different nature, or from other objects, be in readiness to oppose them, the first will inevitably prevail. But as these qualities, or these different objects, are not present to our view, they must be brought forward by an immediate effort of the mind. Some other inducement possessing the requisite powers, must be made to operate. A just sense of that which is right and proper to be done, a due attention to the beneficial, or injurious consequences, which may follow the compliance with, or a resistance to the seducing incitement, must be made to gain the ascendency over the illicit propensity. The first

supposes that the mind has been so well disciplined to the love of what is right, that it had rather forego the proffered advantage, than sacrifice its integrity; and the other supposes that we have, either from experience or observation, acquired such an extensive knowledge of consequences, attendant upon certain actions, as to be able to represent to ourselves these consequences, under the character of important realities; until their intrinsic importance, although they are not directly operative, shall subdue the alluring influence of present objects. It is to answer these desirable purposes, that we are endowed with the powers of observation, investigation, reflection, contemplation, meditation, &c. By observation, reflection, and investigation, we acquire a knowledge respecting the nature of human actions, and their various issues. By contemplation, we become more deeply impressed with the excellence and importance of the objects which ought to be most influential; and by meditation, we devise the most powerful means of accomplishing the desirable end. Thus the mind may become habituated to a class of operative principles, calculated to resist the impulse of passion, or of inordinate desires, and ensure a victory.

In this contest the Imagination may also become a potent ally. It is by the Imagination that we

are so frequently deceived. It is by its delusion, that we are so often induced to expect happiness from conduct which reason condemns. But when this faculty paints in strong and lively colours, the whole train of good or bad consequences, inevitably resulting from particular modes of conduct; when it particularizes the Good that will arrive, and in which we shall certainly rejoice; or describes, in all their horrors, the Evils from which the season of escape is irrecoverably past, by a commission of the deed, the imagination annihilates the distance of time, and sets our future selves as it were immediately before us. It brings forward, and places before the eye of the mind, what we shall hereafter be in character, station, and feeling, in consequence of a compliance, or of a resistance, to the inducements of the moment.

VII. The contest of opposite inducements is at length terminated by the *Resolution* which the mind forms, previously to the irrecoverable act; and the *Inducement* is now rendered triumphant, by being converted into a *Motive*. When a conviction is implanted of the importance, or propriety of any particular line of conduct, Resolution may be considered as the medium, between this conviction, and the good to be derived from the

act itself. It may be formed with great reluctance, arising from the apprehensions of pain, from being obliged to counteract a strong propensity, or to militate against long and favorite habits. But it is the commencement of a combat, which insures a victory. The first instance of success is a triumph inspiring joy, which invigorates and strengthens subsequent resolutions. The mind now becomes better acquainted with the nature and value of those considerations, which it had called to its assistance. It examines every quality in all its relations, and to the extent of its influence. It approves and admires as it contemplates. Disinclinations and disgusts are gradually subdued; dispositions are formed novel and pleasing. The new inclination grows stronger by indulgence; a new train of correspondent ideas excite to actions congenial with their nature; and the heart gradually acquires a love for that virtue, which reason has always recommended. A delightful harmony now subsists between two powers which were before at variance, to the perplexity of the mind; and by their union, they subdue every impediment to a speedy progress towards permanent felicity.

VIII. As the human species alone is rendered capable of extensive knowledge, and progressive

improvement, to an unlimited degree, it is a truth demanding our closest attention, that both the *necessity* and the *difficulty* of mental discipline, increase with the progressive enlargement of our ideas, and the extent of our acquaintance with the multitudinous objects surrounding us. Every object exciting desires, seems to possess beneficial qualities. These are noticed with a degree of eagerness, and we wish to appropriate them. The more numerous the objects are, and the greater the diversity observed in their qualities, the more numerous may be the passions and desires excited, and the difficulty of making a wise and prudent choice, may proportionably increase. Some of these objects relate to immediate, others to more distant advantages; some strongly attract by the allurements of immediate gratifications, others promise a greater, but a more remote good. Hence are contrarieties in our desires augmented, by the amplitude and diversity of striking qualities which progressive knowledge places before us. The minds that are the best disciplined will make the wisest choice; those most destitute of mental culture, will be in danger of the most pernicious mistakes. They whose principles and propensities are not in proper unison, will be exposed to self deception, by having recourse to

every sophistry, in order to reconcile things which are incompatible. Thus it is, that an extensive acquaintance with surrounding objects, may expose us to the pangs of disappointment, by perpetually deceiving our expectations; or may become the occasion of extreme wretchedness, by stirring up disorderly passions. Without just discrimination, without some rational principles, together with dispositions and resolutions to make them the rule of conduct, our enlarged acquaintance with various subjects may become the occasion of misery; it may dispose us to bewail those intellectual improvements, which have inspired a keen sensation of our wants, by augmenting our acquaintance with the things to be enjoyed.

IX. We have remarked, upon a former occasion, that, although some actions and propensities may be deemed perfectly indifferent, or optional, by mankind in general; yet others are considered in a very different point of view. Some are denominated *Virtues*, and others are regarded as *Vices*; and these terms are marks of approbation or of reproach. The distinctions have universally existed, although a difference in opinion has frequently arisen, under which of the classes, particular actions should be ranged. The general rule has been to place those actions and dispositions which

have a known, or supposed tendency to produce some specific good upon the agent, or upon his associates, or others with whom he is connected in the bonds of amity, in the class of *Virtues*; and the intentional production of evil, in the class of *Vices*; and to ascribe different degrees of merit or of demerit, to such actions and dispositions, according to contingent circumstances. To these are annexed ideas of obligation to perform, or to abstain; and these ideas are founded upon certain *Laws of Conduct,* which ought to be invariably observed. Right conduct therefore implies a perfect conformity in the agent to these rules, and wrong conduct implies a violation of them.

The above epitome of the leading principles relative to human conduct, and which are peculiar to rational and intelligent agents, opens to us a large field for investigation, respecting the nature and influence of human actions, as they relate to Well-being, or the production of happiness or of misery; the principles which ought to be the rules of action; and the motives by which it is expected that intelligent and social beings should be uniformly governed. These subjects shall occupy our attention in the following disquisitions.

In the first of which, enquiry shall be made

into the nature of that conduct which is most conducive to personal and social happiness, or the reverse; and the manner in which their opposite effects are produced.

In the second, We will endeavour to trace the origin of our ideas of Virtue and Morality; examine upon what moral obligation is founded, and the comparative influence of its laws upon the human mind, in the practice of virtue.

In some subsequent disquisitions, we shall particularly consider the authority by which those religious principles are enforced, which are best calculated to promote the uniform practice of virtue.

Although no Science can be of a more practical nature than the Science of Morals, yet the extreme copiousness of the subject, compels the author to confine his plan to the investigation of the principles on which all practice is founded. The attentive reader will draw many practical inferences as he proceeds, in addition to those which have naturally presented themselves in the course of our inquiries. But as Virtue and Morality extend to every state and every action of moral agents, both as individuals, and in their relative and social characters, to collect and arrange the moral pre-

cepts deducible from the principles advanced into a regular system, would be an undertaking too extensive for the limits he has prescribed to himself. His grand object is to point out the harmonious connections that subsist, between the well directed passions and affections of the mind, moral conduct, rational religion, and human happiness; to ascertain in what Virtue specifically consists; to examine the nature of moral Obligation, and appreciate the various Inducements which Moralists, and Divines propose, in all their attempts to awaken mankind to a sense of their duty, and their interests; and to them he must leave the amplification or more immediate application, in the various duties and offices of life.

# DISQUISITION

## THE FIRST.

*On the Nature of that Conduct which is most conducive*

TO

## PERSONAL AND SOCIAL HAPPINESS,

OR

*The Reverse.*

# DISQUISITION I.

## *On Conduct as it Influences personal and social Well-being.*

IT was observed in our introductory Treatise,* when we were considering the causes which create a diversity in our affections, that a great latitude of choice, both with respect to the object and the means, is permitted within the limits of strict propriety. In our progress from the ignorance of infancy to manhood, and from rude uncivilized nature, to the refinements of polished life, infinitely various are the objects soliciting our attention, at every stage; and various are the incidental causes, which influence our choice. Many of these are within the precincts of the strictest propriety. It is also very evident that a diversity in

* See Phil: T. P. ii. C. ii. For the enumeration of particulars.

our opinions and predilections to a certain degree, is, in many cases, a source of much good. As the various classes of animals are made capable of enjoying a great diversity of good, in consequence of their being endowed with particular instincts, correspondent to the species of food destined for their sustenance, thus in the human race, in whom are combined diversities of powers which separately characterize the inferior animals, do we observe a beneficial diversity of tastes and dispositions, arising from peculiarity of temperament, modes of education, habits, national customs, &c. by which the attachments of Individuals to particular objects, become an immediate source of pleasure to themselves, and of utility to others. By this happy constitution of things, each one is able to enjoy his own particular object, with fewer encroachments upon the tastes and preferences of his neighbour. Pursuits and experiments are thus diversified to a great extent, and by means of these we become more intimately acquainted with the nature, qualities, and influences of an infinite variety of objects, to the great augmentation of the general Good.

But there are some actions, dispositions and propensities, concerning which, no one enjoys a discretionary power; some, which are in their very

nature pernicious, and ought at all times to be suppressed; some, which are uniformly beneficial, and ought at all times to be respected and practised. These are immutable in their nature and effects; over which neither difference of sex, periods of life, peculiarities of temperament, custom, fashion, or any other incidental circumstances, are considered as an excuse for a different line of conduct. They are, by universal consent, distinguished by the appellations of VIRTUE and VICE. To these our attention is now to be directed.

The passions and affections of the mind have been classed by us, under two general heads. They were distinguished into those which are of a *selfish*, and those which are of a *social* nature.* The conduct, over which the passions and affections have so great an influence, and which is so powerfully productive of well-being, or the reverse, is in like manner to be contemplated under these distinct heads. Such conduct may relate to the *selfish*, or to the *social* principle. It may primarily, or solely, belong to what is of the greatest benefit or injury to *ourselves*, in our individual capacity; or it may respect our *social* intercourse, and relate to the beneficial offices we are able to perform, in the various relations of life; or to the

* See Phil: Treat.

evils induced upon those with whom we are immediately connected, or diffused over the community at large, by the irregularities and impropriety of our behaviour. We shall consider each in its order.

## CHAP. I.

## ON THE VIRTUE OF PERSONAL PRUDENCE, AND ITS OPPOSITE.

IT was observed in the introduction to the first part of this Ethical treatise,* that in consequence of the extent, variety, and complication of our social connections, a great majority of those actions, dispositions, and propensities, which we agree to approve or to censure, and to denominate Virtues or Vices, are of a *relative* nature. The approved actions and propensities that are merely personal, in which we conceive of the moral agent individually, and as detached from his social character, free from every species of responsibility to others, and solely attentive to the dictates of self interest, are very few. These may with propriety be resolved into the virtue of *Prudence*; for abstractedly considered, they are confined to personal interest, and personal safety;

* See No. IX.

which, if a man *will*, to neglect or violate, he may be guilty of extreme *folly*, but as he is entirely his own master, and is responsible to no one, the ideas of *duty* and *obligation*, appear to be inadmissible. He that is bound to no one is certainly free. The term obligation implies that others have some kind of claim upon us; and obligation may rise to an indispensible duty, where the claims of others are founded upon just and high pretensions. For this circumstance inscribes a new character upon the action; may render it more than prudent or imprudent; it may become an act of *justice*, and the neglect become highly *criminal*. It has now acquired a *social* or *relative* character. We shall at present consider prudence in the abstracted and insulated Sense.

Personal prudence expresses such a propriety of disposition and conduct, in every circumstance and situation, as shall be the surest protection from any apparent evil; and most productive of the greatest advantage, upon the whole, to the agent. Prudence is the offspring of just discernment; and hence it has acquired the name of practical wisdom. It can only exist, when there has been a due exercise of those important faculties of the soul, attention, inquiry, consideration, and reflection, relative to the things which immediately concern us, as these are preparatory to accurate

conceptions, right discrimination, legitimate inference, and the final decisions of the judgement, by which the prudential conduct is ultimately directed. Prudence is therefore founded upon a knowledge of the nature, tendency, and consequences of facts derived from the observations and experience of others, or of ourselves; and a determination to act in the most beneficial manner.

Personal prudence manifests itself in being upon our guard against every thing that may prove injurious. Where this is impracticable, it submits to a less evil, in order to escape a greater. It gives the preference to the best objects which present themselves to our choice, that we may not rest in an inferior good, where the superior is within our reach. It implies an attention to the proper means of accomplishing the desired end, due exertions in the application of the means, and a firm resolution to persevere in the right path, in the midst of many difficulties, and in opposition to every seduction. It carefully avoids that rashness and precipitancy of conduct, which might augment present troubles, or induce evils at a future period; but it acts with spirit and promptitude, when deliberation and indecision, might be injurious or fatal. Prudence has learned

to appreciate the means of good in our possession, according to their respective degrees of worth, and the consciousness of our own merit in the attainment; and thus it indulges a spirit of contentment, satisfaction, and complacency; those sources of immediate enjoyment. It is cautious not to relinquish present advantages, without the assurance of something preferable. It avoids every risk, where a failure would induce more of misery, than success could confer of benefit. It implants patience in painful and distressing situations, while it encourages hope; and it excites to such exertions, as are rational and promising, in situations the most distressing and perilous. It effectually suppresses every turbulent, unruly, and self-tormenting passion, which at the moment of indulgence often inflicts much greater misery, than the evils resented. It employs every faculty of mind and body, in a manner correspondent with the laws of their destination, without abuse or excess.

Imprudence, on the contrary, is the child of culpable ignorance, or of thoughtless inattention, or of those strong and passionate propensities to immediate gratification, which create an indifference to future consequences. Imprudence is mostly governed by the present feelings, and is hurried into action by the impulse of the moment. It is

occasioned by a quick and vivid perception of some quality in an object, that is of a delusive influence, without the exercise of any of those faculties of mind, by which alone the final issue of every action can be fully discovered. Although Imprudence cannot be accused of a malevolent design, for no one can wish evil to himself, yet it is continually productive of mischief; for it is either blind to dangers and difficulties, or it wantonly and impotently braves them. It is continually prone to neglect and despise a superior good, which it may already possess, and to indulge in a craving after phantoms, which a deluded imagination has represented as more important realities. Under actual sufferings, the impatience, discontent, and envyings, which it inspires, increase the anguish; and it attempts to obtain a release by transports the most tormenting, or by methods which plunge the deeper into misery.

Having thus taken a general view of the nature of prudence and imprudence, we shall descend into some particulars, which will manifest both the extent and importance of their influence.

Prudence, and Imprudence have three distinct characters, according to the different manners in

which they operate. In some cases they primarily respect a conformity, or opposition to the dictates of reason; at other times, they are manifested in the prevalent affections of the mind, when it is placed in peculiar and trying circumstances; and sometimes they are characterized by a veneration for certain principles in our nature, which are acknowledged, by common suffrage, to be highly respectable; or, by a culpable and abandoned violation of them.

The first species of prudence and imprudence relates to forming, or neglecting certain plans, or modes of conduct, in which some temporal advantages, or conveniences are the immediate objects in view. He is considered as a prudent man, who improves those secular advantages which may present themselves, in consequence of the peculiarities of his situation, or the favourable circumstances surrounding him; who embraces every opportunity which justice permits, and reason sanctions, of promoting his own well-being, and that of his dependents. This kind of prudence consists in making the best selection, when a variety of promising projects are before him; in adopting the most efficacious means, and in pursuing his design with care and assiduity. He is deemed imprudent, and an enemy to himself, who neglects such opportunities; who makes an

inferior choice; who acts in an incautious and careless manner; and who, through inattention, or from ignorant self-sufficiency, contrary to the admonitions of his more intelligent counsellors, pursues plans and projects but ill calculated to obtain the desired purpose. In such cases, prudence is generally considered as a branch of wisdom. He is a *wise* man who pursues his best interest by the most probable means, while negligence, or gross and absurd mistakes, have the denomination of *folly;* with various epithets annexed, according to the degrees of deviation from the dictates of a sound understanding.

To the prevalent state of mind in contracted, trying, and afflictive circumstances, which are not to be escaped, or do not admit of a remedy, belong the virtues of Contentment, Fortitude, Patience, Resignation, Humility, and Modesty.——These merit our particular attention.

## *Contentment.*

Upon a former occasion, *Contentment* was considered as an acquiescence of mind in a moderate portion of good possessed*. It implies a percep-

* See Vol. I. Ch. ii. p. 65.

tion that our lot might have been much better; that it is inferior to what many others enjoy, or that it does not fully answer our own expectations; but it is still valued as a desirable good; and this estimation inspires a placid state of mind, which often attracts the envy of those who are reputed to be much more fortunate. Contentment may be inferior to *satisfaction* with respect to instantaneous enjoyment; this being a lively pleasure, excited by the immediate accomplishment of some specific desire, which may be of a transient nature; whereas Contentment respects the permanent influence of the good in possession: consequently, though the pleasing impression may be more moderate, it is much more durable. *Satisfaction* implying the accomplishment of a wish, or the gratification of a desire, does not acquire a character deserving of approbation; nor is it considered as a virtue. Contentment is justly placed among the virtues, as it is the result of proper consideration and meritorious efforts. The mind has weighed every circumstance in its situation in a just balance; has suppressed every wish that is unreasonable or extravagant; appreciates the good, and wisely mitigates the evil; compares its blessings with its deserts, and readily acknowledges that the former greatly preponderate. The Dis-

contented are, on the other hand, much disposed to place too high a value upon their own deserts, or to consider what they possess to be far beneath their claims. The thoughts of a contented mind are more strongly fixed upon the *good* obtained than upon the *evil* that is intermixed; those of the discontented are so occupied by the intermixture of evil, however small, that the good communicates no pleasure. The man possessing this prudential virtue, forms a comparison between his own state and circumstances, and those of persons beneath him; and he perceives that they might have been much more humiliating. The conviction that his lot is superior to that enjoyed by others, has a tendency not only to inspire placid contentment, but the pleasing affections of joy and gratitude. The Discontented form their comparisons from higher blessings allotted to those around them, and these excite the tormenting passions of envy and jealousy.

Virtuous contentment is distinguished from the Indifference of gnorance, by its knowing that there are states and enjoyments superior to its own; and it is distinguished from the Indifference of the slothful, by approving of every proper attempt to advancement in the scale of well-being. This species of prudence will exert itself, where good is to be obtained, without violating the claims of an-

other, and without exposure to those risks which so frequently prove fatal to the Inconsiderate and Imprudent. Virtuous contentment may be connected with the perception, that there are qualities in other objects, and advantages in other situations, highly desirable in themselves; and it will not feel an obligation to remain in its confined and circumscribed sphere, when an enlargement may be lawfully and honourably obtained.

If there be any virtue which is immediately its own reward, it is the virtue of Contentment. It has the wisdom to contemplate *good*, which is always a pleasant contemplation. Discontent has the folly to ruminate upon *evil*, which is always unpleasant. Contentment stands at a distance from the irritations of envy and repining. It enjoys all the sweets of its blessings, and knows their value, while in possession of them. The Peevish and Dissatisfied enjoy nothing of that which is present, and yet murmur at its departure. While impatient discontent acquires the art of extracting misery from *every thing*, and good from *nothing*, prudent contentment *enjoys a something* in every state. It discovers a precious metal in the very ore, which discontent rejects with ignorant disdain, or analyzes only that it may detect some pernicious alloy. In a word, without this prudential virtue of Contentment, no situation, no possessions,

however ample, no accomplishment of the most ardent desire, can be productive of well-being; but the possession of a contented spirit renders the humblest lot a source of true enjoyment, without being an impediment to those plans and pursuits, which are destined to augment the happiness of man.

## *Fortitude. Courage. Intrepidity. Magnanimity.*

We have considered Fortitude, Courage, and Intrepidity, as virtuous affections excited to repel some threatening evil*. Fortitude is a collected state of mind, which opposes itself to dangers and difficulties, with firmness and resolution. Courage has been described as active fortitude, or as expressive of some particular exertion to repel a particular injury. Intrepidity may be deemed the summit of courage, as denoting a superiority to every sensation of fear, in situations most calculated to inspire it.

Where the cause is just, and where all the caution of prudence cannot discover a probable and lawful, or an honourable method of escape, or of securing some grand and important object, without exposure to danger, these affections are view-

* See Vol. I. p. 106.

ed in the light of distinguished virtues. The exercise of these virtues supposes a just discernment of the nature and extent of the danger, and a determination to meet it; founded upon the clear perception, that boldly to face the evil is a method of escaping its effects, much more secure than any method that could be devised by the supple evasiveness of dread. By this token it is distinguished from the presumptuous courage which degenerates into rashness; and which, mostly, augments the evil apprehended, or plunges into others. The absence of virtuous courage is Cowardice and pusillanimity; which either expose to greater dangers, or purchase the appearance of safety by a shameful compromise.

The Ancients had so an exalted opinion of personal courage, that the epithet of *Virtue* was almost exclusively applied to it. Virtue and courage were by many deemed entirely synonymous. In nations at war with each other, and in the heat of contest, it is still considered as a substitute for every other virtue; and atrocities are frequently committed without repugnance or remorse, which would shock the feelings of humanity in calmer moments. The influence of warlike valour upon both body and mind, is singularly great. It seems at once to change the whole character; and it excites to exertions and atchievements, which, at any other season, could not possibly be performed.

It augments muscular strength, and it renders the corporeal frame insensible to pains or fatigues. The eager attention of the mind to the grand object, and its extraordinary agitation, render it superior to surrounding horrors, or even to the apprehension of immediate death. The animating tumult, social sympathy, hopes of triumph, intermixed with wrath against the foe, annihilate all those sensations which every Individual would probably feel, at any other period, from an exposure to scenes much less terrific.

Where danger is urgent, and other methods of escape impracticable, a courageous disposition forms an exalted character, and it is obviously its own reward as it is its own security.

*Magnanimity* expresses, in addition to the intrepidity of courage, a display of some peculiar greatness of mind; of some generous conduct; in the midst of those conflicts, which inspire inveterate hatred in minds less noble. It greatly exceeds simple intrepidity, by manifesting that the benevolent principle is operative, in the midst of scenes which are most calculated to extinguish its feelings, and which is completely suspended in minds of inferior mould.

## *Patience. Submission. Resignation.*

The virtue of *Patience* refers to something which is to be endured; and expresses the commendable and advantageous manner in which it is endured. It sometimes is manifested by perseverance in a painful and arduous undertaking; sometimes it relates to the exemplary manner in which bodily pains are borne; and at other times, it is exemplified by circumstances which are calculated to depress the mind. In the first case, it approaches to the nature of active courage, and expects to be rewarded by a successful issue. In the other cases, it is a species of passive courage; the whole effort of the mind being exerted to bear the affliction with firmness and resolution; without the indulgence of a repining disposition, or betraying an irritated mind by indecorous emotions, or uttering clamorous and unprofitable complaints.

When the endurance of sufferings does not indicate an abject spirit; where the evil to be sustained is irremediable, or cannot be escaped by justifiable means, Patience is a most eminent virtue. It often manifests a more exalted character than what is displayed in the exertions of

active courage. In the latter, the mind is roused by a potent stimulus, which inspires it with unusual vigour, and imparts unusual strength to the muscular system. It has the hope of a successful issue for an auxiliary, and in the ardor of contest a sense of danger is considerably diminished. In the exercise of this passive virtue, danger has yielded to realities, and nothing remains but the endurance of sufferings, which it is the object of active courage to escape. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, Patience greatly diminishes a sense of evil. It directs the attention to whatever can be soothing to the spirits. It moderates the feelings, either of bodily pain or mental affections, by the firmness of tone which it communicates to the frame. Fretful impatience, on the contrary, is in itself a painful sensation; and, by the activity of a perverse imagination, it renders sufferings of an inferior magnitude intolerable, by dwelling upon every circumstance of aggravation.

*Submission* is that species of prudent patience, which consists in yielding to the superior power of calamitous events, or their inflictive cause, in cases where they cannot, or ought not, to be resisted. It is in such instances, the Prudence of Necessity, without the exercise of volition from any other motive. Where resistance is impracticable, or would be without avail, it is no vice to yield; but

as the influence upon the mind is entirely compulsive, it scarcely deserves the character of a virtue.

*Resignation* gives itself entirely over to the afflictive cause. But its influence upon the mind will vary, according to the conceptions formed of the nature and character of the cause. If the evil appear great, and without a remedy, if the agent be relentless and inexorable, it adds to submission the torpor of absolute despair: a paralysis is induced, upon all the powers and propensities to re-action. If the agent possess a moral character, the sufferer will be disposed to hope that complete resignation will operate as a plea for compassion; and where the character of the agent is eminent for clemency, resignation will be treated by the agent himself as a virtue, which entitles to indulgence and commiseration.

Thus are the advantages of Patience, in all its ramifications, obviously great. An impatient man superadds the disorders of his own mind to the afflictions of his body, or the miseries of his state. Circumstances are not only unpleasant and painful, they are also irritating. The impulse of his sufferings upon his mind, and its turbulent re-action, raise a dreadful storm within; while patience, operating like oil upon the troubled waves, diminishes both the turbulence and the

danger. Patient submission feels some of the advantages of calmness; if it be not the result of meanness or pusillanimity, it is free from self-reproach, and is entitled to the reward of self-complacency. When resignation is accompanied with a strong confidence in the agent, it administers no small degree of consolation. It cherishes hope in the midst of sufferings; and it expects not only a future exemption, but a beneficial result, either from the nature of the suffering itself, or from the temper with which it is sustained.

## *Modesty.*

*Modesty* is another ramification of prudence. In the English language it is a generic term. It is often used as expressive of delicacy in a sexual sense; but it characterises also an amiable reserve and diffidence, where *self* is immediately concerned; and in this sense we shall here consider it.

This species of modesty avoids every thing forward and presumptuous, in the social intercourse. It is not eager to display a superiority of talents, wealth, or station, in order to triumph over others, by which unpleasant feelings, from a perception of inferiority, are excited. True modesty proceeds



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from a just discernment of propriety, and is frequently connected with exalted ideas of genuine merit. He that is diffident of his own deserts and powers, possesses an enlarged view of what is excellent; sees the difficulty of attaining it, and laments the slowness of his own progress. Vain persons are, generally speaking, contracted in their knowledge. They are induced, by the shallowness of their own conceptions of the nature of perfection, in any branch of science, or in any accomplishment, to think that they have made a more extensive progress, than a genuine knowledge of themselves will admit. They dream that they excel others, through an ignorance of their own defects; entertain unworthy opinions of the acquirements of those who may be greatly their superiors; and they are total strangers to the extent of those excellencies, in which they vainly suppose that they have made a proficiency.

While the virtue of modesty is an evidence of discretion, respecting the feelings of others, it is an evidence of genuine prudence respecting ourselves. The world is disposed to be liberal where pretensions are moderate; and where there are no appearances of rivalship, or of unmerited claims to superiority; but where there are, men are very tenacious of *their own*; and will acknowledge merit in others with much reluctance. While imper-

tinence and imprudence disgust every one; while pride and self-sufficiency, are eager in their demands of that approbation, which they will not obtain, it is happily secured to the modest and unassuming. There is, it is true, a degree of pleasure in the indulgence of vanity; but it frequently exposes to censure and disgrace: there is a degree of pain in modest diffidence; but it is amply recompensed by the glow of satisfaction, derived from the favourable opinion of others; and by the encouragement thus inspired, that the deficiency is not so great as was apprehended, or too great to be surmounted.

The man of high pretensions and of lofty pride, affects a superiority which is truly inimical. The disdain which he is disposed to manifest, is destructive of the cordial affections of friendship, and is repaid with displacency and hatred; whereas the modest and diffident attract friendship and inspire love.

## *Humility.*

In Humility, moral diffidence is still greater than in modesty. The latter respects the particular state of mind, when in the presence of some spectator. Humility is a more private and a deeper

conviction of defects. The appearance of modesty in the presence of others, may sometimes be ascribed to a temper naturally reserved and timid; to a contracted education; or being unaccustomed to the world; and thus, through a total ignorance of men and manners, it may attribute to others a superiority to which they are not entitled; and which a more intimate acquaintance with their real character would disallow. Humility measures itself by a higher standard. It compares its own deficiencies with the degree of perfection to which it aspires, and is grieved at the disproportion discovered; and this discovery effectually checks every emotion of vanity and pride, which would be so detrimental to its future progress. The deep sense of demerit so peculiar to its nature, suggests motives of contentment, though placed in an inferior station; of gratitude for the blessings enjoyed, though communicated with a more sparing hand; and of patient submission under circumstances, which would prove irritating to the proud and assuming.

Although the reflection upon our own imperfections, be not in itself a source of pleasure, yet its salutary effects more than compensate for the pain induced. Humility is always accompanied with a sincere desire of improvement; which, at the instant, affords some consolation, and promises

more in the sequel. By inspiring patience, contentment, and gratitude, it is conversant with very pleasing sensations. It enjoys the approbation of the worthy and discerning ; and this is of higher value than the shouts and tumultuous applause, which the vain may artfully obtain from the indiscriminating multitude : and it is effectually secured from the disappointments and mortifications, to which the ambitious are so frequently exposed. We may here apply, with peculiar propriety, the observation made under the preceding article; it is an universal law, that whoever attempts to intrude his own supposed superiority upon another, raises a spirit of opposition in the minds of all around him ; and should they be compelled to praise, it is with inward reluctance. Whoever manifestly undervalues his own accomplishments, without affectation, is secure of the tribute of approbation, even from his rivals. Thus, as humility is in its nature pacific, unassuming, and unprovoking, it lives in peace with all men, and enjoys the habitual comfort of their good-will, without relaxing in its endeavours to make further progress in the excellencies which it loves.

The third characteristic of prudence and imprudence, we have stated to consist in a veneration

for certain principles in our nature, which are universally considered as highly respectable; or, in a culpable violation of them. To this class belong *Industry* and *Indolence*; *Frugality* and *Extravagance*; *Temperance* and *Intemperance*; *Chastity*, *Immodesty*, *Lasciviousness*, &c. &c.

## *Industry.*

Industry is a rational and habitual exercise of our various talents, in order to acquire the means of Good, adapted to our situation in life We all experience that well-being, is not an inheritance. We are destined to pursue it perpetually. This pursuit of well-being or happiness, consists in searching after, and properly employing, the means calculated to produce the desirable end. The means of happiness, and the power of obtaining them, are our constitutional riches; and it is by the exertion of our powers, that we acquire the means. The means multiply, and our powers increase, as we advance in exertions; and these exertions are necessary, in order to surmount that love of ease and of indolence, to which human beings are naturally prone; to which those are peculiarly exposed, whose ideas are few, and whose experience and observations are confined

within narrow limits. Industry, to be productive of happiness, must be a rational exertion, founded upon knowledge and foresight respecting the issue. It is an habitual exertion, built upon a just sense of danger from neglect, and a perception of the advantages to be derived from perseverance. The Indolent consume the stock of good, of which they may be possessed, without making a due provision to supply the waste; and thus they may become destitute and indigent. But as human improvements, considered in the aggregate, are progressive; as new and ample resources of various kinds are open to the industrious, thus in an advanced and cultivated state of society, admitting that an individual may remain stationary in his possessions, he may still become retrograde in well-being. The advancement of others in various species of good, in consequence of their exercising a virtuous industry, ultimately leaves the Slothful and Inactive at a remote distance behind them; and although their *absolute* state may be the same, their *relative* situation is changed; which is a positive deduction from well being. The flattering ideas of superiority, or the consoling ones of an equality, are lost in the perception, that our inferiors or equals are rising above us; which eventually leaves us beneath them, as certainly as if we had absolutely descended from our

station. The irritations of envy, discontent, and self-reproach, from a conviction of this degrading inferiority, become painful substitutes for those advantages, which might have remunerated laudable exertions.

## *Frugality.*

To prudent industry is the virtue of *Frugality* nearly allied. The man who is industrious, upon rational principles, will not be disposed to squander, wantonly what he has been assiduous to collect; much less will he render it the occasion of evil, by an abusive extravagance. As he has been labouring for good, he will always employ the means in such a manner, as to accomplish the good. He has had a wise end in view, and he will be careful to apply the means his assiduity has obtained, to the fulfilment of his purpose. He will not refuse those present enjoyments which are moderate, lawful, exhilarating and encouraging. The man who never enjoys the present, draws a bill upon futurity that may not be honoured; and thus he may become as destitute, as if he had accumulated no resources. But a wise man, will certainly reserve a considerable portion for a futurity, that may arrive, without bringing with it

the means, or the capacities of obtaining further acquisitions. He remarks, that the prodigal is a wretched accomptant, who acts as if he could not be the poorer by spending all that he possesses; and who does not appear to know, that the profusion which rapidly exhausts his stock, must speedily make him a bankrupt in enjoyment, and precipitate him into misery. On the other hand, true frugality will not be avaricious: for the miser, renders all his labours fruitless. Means never to be used, are means without an end or an object. Nothing remains in recompence for incessant toils, but the erroneous idea that he shall be above want. The idea is erroneous, for he is in perpetual want; notwithstanding his stores, he is still craving for more; while he continues destitute of all those comforts and accommodations, which are in his power, but which he has not the spirit to procure, with ample means in his hands. What he deems inexhaustible reservoirs of good, thus degenerate into stagnant pools; formed by his selfishly impeding the currency of those means of enjoyment, which in their course would have refreshed numbers as well as himself.

## *Temperance.*

The term Temperance is chiefly applied to moderation in eating and drinking. A virtuous temperance in these articles, does not permit either the appetite or the palate, to trespass upon the salutary boundaries of nature. It sets a watch over the luxuries of the table; and permits not its viands to load and depress the animal economy, which they were destined to refresh and invigorate. Temperance resists the seductions of the circulating glass, and watches over the exhilarations it has a tendency to produce, lest they should offend against reason and self-command. Temperance is careful to prevent the seeds of diseases from being transmitted into the system, through the medium of the enticing cup; and it disdains that ebriety which suspends and confounds the exalted faculties of the soul, and thus rejects the grand prerogative of man. Temperance is alarmed at the danger of exciting pernicious passions, or of adding a new stimulus to propensities, too apt of themselves to become unruly.

The evils which temperance escapes, fall to the lot of the Intemperate. For the gratifications of the moment, they barter away the permanent good of health, calm unruffled spirits, fortune,

conscious self-command, habitual preparation for the duties, employments, and contingencies of life. They become the slaves of incidental excitements to mischief; and too frequently, through the indiscretion of an unguarded hour, rendered unguarded by intoxication, make a sacrifice of all that is valuable in life, and plunge themselves into irremediable distress, for the remainder of their days.

## *Chastity.*

Chastity implies such a command over the sexual propensities, that the passions implanted for the important purpose of supporting the existence of the species, by perpetual successions, may not be irregularly indulged, to the injury of the public or the individual. The gratifications of the chaste are sanctioned by reason; are consistent with the order of society, and the peace and happiness of families; yet they are placed, by the man of virtue, in the subordinate class of enjoyments; nor do they occupy the choicest of his thoughts, plans, and projects, as is often the case with a professed Libertine. The truly Chaste will check the rovings of an impure imagination, in their retired moments; nor will they defile the delicate and refined

enjoyments of social intercourse, by the wantonness of indelicate allusions; or by exciting a blush of embarrassment in the cheek of modesty. Chastity is a happy stranger to that debility of frame incidental to excess; and to diseases induced by promiscuous intercourse with the vilest and most degraded of human beings. It is secure from the shame of detection in illicit amours, and it abhors the idea of plunging the partner of criminal pleasures, into the gulph of infamy and wretchedness*.

## *Moderation.*

The proper exercise of all these personal virtues is, in common language, frequently expressed by the term *Moderation*. This term is therefore of universal import. It respects every pursuit, every indulgence, and extends to every lawful propensity. It holds the reins over things perfectly innocent, or in themselves laudable. It cherishes contentment, without destroying activity. It marks the bounds between œconomy and avarice; liberality and profusion; caution and cowardice; courage and rashness; repose and indolence. In every state, in every possession, in every pursuit, there is a medium where good takes its most dura-

* See Vol. II. Abuse of Passions, p. 108.

ble residence, and is enjoyed with the least possible alloy. Whatever does not arise to this medium, is a deficiency, and some good is lost. Whatever exceeds, is a pernicious extravagance, inducing something evil. Moderation aims at obtaining this medium. It may be obliged to suppress many gratifications to which inclination prompts; but it insures the more valuable blessings of contentment, tranquility, and complacency. It enjoys securely and permanently, whatever it possesses; without inducing horrors from excess, whether they consist in disgrace, disease, penury, regret, or remorse. Through the want of moderation, the ambitious lose the advantages of their present pre-eminence; and flushed with their good fortune, like desperate gamesters, persevere in their plans of further advancement, until they are checked in their career, and sink beneath the persons on whom they trampled. Through the want of moderation, accumulated riches are unproductive of the blessings for which they were coveted; the Glutton carries home disease from the festive board; and the Debauchee prematurely brings upon himself all the infirmities of advanced years; the Drunkard reels from the tavern, his passions inflamed, his reason extinguished, a prey to the first temptation, and in danger of falling a sacri-

fice to the sudden emotions, which the most trifling incidents may have excited *.

From the above survey of those personal virtues, which we have included under the general title of *Prudence*, we not only discover three distinct characters, but also the causes why these characters should be ascribed to them.

The slighter omissions to pursue our own interests, to the full extent of our power, may appear imprudent, without being vicious or morally wrong. We may therefore smile at a folly, without feeling resentment against a vice. The objects of human pursuit are many and various; the dispositions and propensities of men greatly differ; the possession of the amplest means does not secure enjoyment, and has at times become the source of vexation and disappointment: these, and similar considerations, afford a latitude to human actions, within the limits of innocence. If any one be disposed to remain satisfied, with what the world in general may deem to be unworthy of his notice, without his neglecting the duty which he owes to his social connections, he is under no obligation to make the opinion of the world the

* See Vol. II. p. 101.

rule of his conduct; and though he may perhaps act unwisely, in thus foregoing what he might have enjoyed, he is still master of his own actions, without responsibility to others. If any one, in his eagerness to obtain an imaginary good, should greatly over value it in the purchase; if he should take infinite pains for a mere trifle; or yield up desirable possessions for what is of little value, we should censure his extreme folly; but when the disadvantages of his folly are confined to himself, we shall not charge him with criminality. On the other hand, the man who steadily pursues his own good, without undue infringement upon others, or the use of improper means; whether this good consist in the augmentation of property, or in the innocent and moderate enjoyment of what he possesses, we shall commend his prudence, but we shall not honour him with the character of being virtuous.

Respecting the second class, which relates to the state of the mind in disadvantageous, distressing, or dangerous situations, we are disposed highly to applaud the virtues of contentment, patience, resignation, fortitude, and modesty; and unless the deficiency in these virtues be very great, we are inclined to soften it down into an human frailty. The extreme difficulty of remaining within the bounds of moderation, in every case, and in all moods; the caution and resolution required ne-

ver to be off our guard; and in the ardour of our pursuit of that which is allowed to be good, always to observe the precise medium, without being either too remiss or too impetuous, demands so nice a balance, both in the judgement and in the affections, that we observe an unfavourable turn of the scale without surprize, or the severity of censure. Right conduct is ONE; deviations admit of various degrees; and the completion of a particular act, may frequently depend upon the nicest circumstances. Caution, for example, may indicate a commendable prudence, in one instance, and in another, nearly similar in appearance, it may become timidity and cowardice. The same observation is applicable to frugality and avarice; and several other virtues and vices that are contiguous to each other, and where the difference consists in defect or excess; the irksome and irritating nature of pain and various mental feelings; the great propensity of self-love in every case to overrate our merits, and exaggerate our sufferings; and many considerations of this nature, incline us to make many allowances for defects which our reason cannot approve. By an inverted ratio, wherever we discover considerable progress to be made in the above virtues, they are sure to be crowned with our warmest applause and admiration. We contemplate with delight the wise and tranquil spirit of that man, who makes

the little he possesses a valuable and enviable treasure, by the contentment with which it is enjoyed; or who has the skill and resolution to mitigate his various sufferings, by patience and resignation. We form the most favourable opinions of those who shew themselves to be humble and diffident. Humility and modesty are peculiarly pleasing, as they manifest an amiable subjugation of that overweening conceitedness, which is so apt to insult others. We infer, that humble minds entertain a much more enlarged sense of excellency, and the difficulty of attaining it, than the insolent and assuming can possibly boast.

The vices of Indolence, Intemperance, and Debauchery, on the other hand, are censured much more than their opposite virtues are applauded. They are reproved as disgraceful violations of those laws of conduct which interest, propriety, and decency, teach every rational being to approve and admire. They are always of a pernicious tendency; and therefore cannot be optional in their nature. A propensity to their indulgence, is not placed upon the footing of natural infirmities, excepting among associates in vice; but it is ascribed to a corrupt and depraved disposition. This propensity clearly indicates, that the love of pleasure is the predominant rule of action; and that sensual gratifications have gained an ascend-

ency, over the nobler pleasures of an intellectual nature, and the choicest affections of the heart; and consequently they are pronounced to be degrading to man.

But the pernicious consequences of these vices are not confined to the persons who commit them. They are highly injurious to others; and may diffuse their baneful effects over society at large. The indolent man is not only guilty of a shameful dereliction of all the active and useful powers of mind and body, but he is an useless or a pernicious member of society. He is a drone in the hive, which consumes the honey of the laborious; and he retains all who are unfortunately dependent upon him, in a state of poverty and want, from which his exertions might have extricated them. The dissipated, extravagant, and intemperate, while they injure themselves, are also highly detrimental in their social connexions. They are at all times unworthy associates, are neglectful of their relative duties; they frequently induce wants upon themselves, which they expect that the humanity of others will relieve; and they reduce to indigence, those who were entitled to look up to them for assistance and protection. Repeated intoxications are, in fact, voluntary fits of insanity, and they frequently induce all the evils of insanity, not only upon them-

selves, but upon those around them. Indiscrete resolutions and decisions, quarrels, bloodshed, and the destructive indulgence of inflamed passions, are the natural result of drowning reason in the poisoned bowl.

The devotees to lustful pleasures, must either associate with the vilest of characters, or seduce the innocent and lovely. By the former, every delicate sentiment is lost, and their moral sense is blunted, until they are scarcely qualified for the society of the virtuous and chaste; though they should not sacrifice all the joys of conjugal and parental affection, for the embraces of an harlot. If they gratify their passions through the means of seduction, they imprint disgrace on the characters of their innocent offspring; perpetuate the shame of the deluded; and diffuse misery over their worthy and respectable relatives, for gratifications which place them upon a level with the brute creation.

These vices, therefore, being disgraceful in their first principle, and so injurious to the peace and welfare of society, it is not surprising that they should be condemned. Self-interest, uniting with the dictates of reason, induces the virtuous to censure them with peculiar asperity.

## CHAP. II.

### SOCIAL VIRTUES.

NUMBERLESS are the instances which have presented themselves, in the course of our investigations, evincing the absolute dependence of man upon man, for the supply of many natural, and of every artificial want; which manifest, that our best affections and dispositions are of a relative and social nature; that mutual offices of kindness, and reciprocal benefits, can only be cherished by the constant exercise of those qualities, which are the proper objects of attachment. We observe also, that from the diversity of humours, and oppositions of interest, many of the worst passions and affections of the human brest, are occasionally excited, in consequence of our relative characters; such passions and dispositions as have a tendency to alienate the minds of men from each other, and become fatal to all the advantages and joys, that may be derived from the social intercourse. It is therefore obvious,

that to enjoy every benefit from this intercourse, and escape the evils to which it is exposed, the strictest attention must be paid to certain dispositions and modes of conduct; individual rights are to be respected; the more disinterested affections are to be assiduously cultivated; concessions of our just claims must be occasionally made; essential assistance is to be rendered upon particular emergencies, although attended by the loss of some personal conveniencies. Thus only it is that the greatest possible good can be extensively diffused; and all those horrors be prevented, which arise from the indulgence of the selfish, turbulent, and malignant passions.

The social virtues productive of these ends, may be comprised under *Justice* and *Benevolence*; and the vices injurious to them, are injustice, and malevolence, or cruelty.

## *Justice. Injustice.*

These denote the disposition and conduct which refer to the undoubted rights of another. Every man has a something which he is entitled to call *his own*; and however unimportant it may appear

to those around him, he is disposed to place a great value upon it, *because it is his own*. The idea of exclusive property is a pleasing idea, and adds a something to the well-being of the individual. Rights are of various kinds; life, liberty, personal security from attacks and insults, the means of good lawfully obtained, whether it be by inheritance, gift, purchase, or the result of personal exertions, are considered as exclusive rights. These are the means of good; and whoever unjustly deprives another of them, necessarily deprives him of all that good, they might have bestowed. There are also many other claims of right, by virtue of the various relations and connections of life, in which the kind affections are immediately concerned; as the assiduous care of parents, the obedience of children, conjugal fidelity, the obligations of friendship, &c. These are claims upon others which they neither have a right to refuse or evade; and the loss of which becomes the immediate loss of actual enjoyment.

Injustice is a trespass upon all such rights. It is guilty of neglects, encroachments, violations, by which the claimant is deprived of a something which nature, or some species of compact, had constituted his own; and it assumes the character of fraud, deceit, usurpation, oppression, or cruelty, according to the manner adopted, or the means

employed, and the pernicious effects produced.

Justice therefore pays the strictest attention to whatever is equal and right, from the most important, to the minutest claims. It is attention to those principles of equity, by which the nice balance of good, belonging to each individual, is preserved; and of which he cannot be deprived, without encroachments upon his well-being.

According to this representation of the nature of justice, it manifestly consists of the following particulars;

Justice deprives no one of the good to which he is entitled:—This constitutes robbery and plunder.

Justice cannot enjoin upon another, the performance of more than the claimant has a right to demand:—This is oppression; it renders power the only rule of action.

Justice cannot exact from others more than their talents, situations, and powers, enable them to accomplish:—This is to demand an impossibility; it is both cruel and irrational. The utmost of its demand in this case, is a strenuous exertion in the use of all the means, that can possibly be obtained.

Justice cannot inflict punishments which have not been deserved; for the very nature of punishment is to chastise a delinquent. Where there

has been no delinquency, every attempt to punish, is an act of cruelty. It is also obvious that where the punishment exceeds the offence, the surplus becomes itself an offence; it is an act of injustice.

From the first article, arise different characteristics, respecting individual acts, in our social intercourse, such as *Honesty*, *Fidelity*, *Veracity*.

Honesty, according to its derivation, may be said to express whatever is just, respectable, and honorable; but in its familiar use, it is mostly confined to upright dealings in our commerce with the world, and the sincerity of our conduct towards each other. It defrauds no one of that to which he has a claim, by nature or by compact; even in the minutest article. It is actuated by the love of justice; and scorns to take advantage of the ignorance, or inattention of another; or to screen itself behind the imperfection of human laws.

*Fidelity* chiefly respects services of a civil or social nature. It executes the offices enjoined, with an eager attention to the requisitions and interests of the principal, in opposition to the strongest inducements to betray the trust, that may arise from a sense of danger, or the seductions of self interest. It is peculiarly applicable to friendship.

It expresses the sincere and unreserved manner

in which salutary advice is given, to any one who may rely upon our judgments; and also the freedom of our admonitions and reproofs, whenever a sense of obligation renders reproof necessary.

*Veracity* consists in a determined fidelity, respecting the report that is made of what we know, in opposition to intentional deception; or in the love of truth, and hatred of falshood and lies.

This is a most important branch of justice. Every man has a right to true information, concerning the things which properly belong to him; and the want of veracity deprives him of this species of good. It is a privation of a most injurious tendency. The indispensible importance of truth, to protect us from the fatal effects of error, must be self-evident. The observations and experience of an individual, however extensive they may seem, are extremely limited, when compared with the stores of knowledge we are able to collect, from the observations and experience of numbers. But it is only by the powers of communication, that such knowledge can be enjoyed by others; and as accurate knowledge is necessary, that we may escape numberless errors of conduct, mutual veracity becomes a mutual guarantee against the fatal effects of ignorance. He that makes a false report, may induce an injury beyond the power of calculation; and if he deceive inten-

tionally, he is, in the eye of reason, responsible for the evil consequences which may result. Mutual veracity is the basis of society. It enables us to march together through life with a bold and firm step. Falshood is a traitor under the mask of friendship. It does worse than detain us in that state of ignorance, from which we aim at being exempt; it exposes us to new dangers, from the confidence inspired, that we are no longer ignorant. While conscious of our want of information, we should perhaps have continued inactive; upon a presumption of knowledge we may act to our destruction. False information is a deceitful beacon, which inspires hopes of safety, while it allures towards a tremendous rock, or devouring quicksands. But there is no species of veracity more important than the performance of a promise. A promise is an assurance given, that some act shall be performed to the benefit of another. It is a species of transfer, by anticipation, and is always considered as yielding up a right to the thing promised. It naturally inspires hopes; it gives a new range to the ideas; new projects are formed; and the mind already enjoys to a certain degree, the pleasure to be derived from the promised good. A breach of promise is most sensibly felt, not only as a disappointment, but as an unjnst privation, of that which

the promiser had rendered our own; and to the vexations of disappointment, are added the irritations of anger and resentment.

The perfection of a just character is denoted by the expressive terms, *Integrity* and *Uprightness*. The first relates to an entire uniformity of conduct, in every minute particular. The man of integrity practises every part of social justice, without reserve or omission. He is conscientiously accurate in all his dealings; faithful to every trust; tenacious of every promise; and disdains to dissemble or prevaricate. Uprightness expresses the same character in a state of dignified elevation. It deems every act of injustice as a meanness to which it scorns to stoop.

Clear conceptions of justice manifest the nature of Injustice. It withholds that which is due; it invades the most precious rights of the claimant, and deprives him of that happiness, which he has a title uninterruptedly to enjoy. Injustice obviously consists of various degrees, both of criminality and of injury; assuming the character of *fraud, deceit, usurpation, tyranny, oppression,* and *cruelty*; according to the manner adopted, or the means employed, and the injuries committed.

The injustice of fraud and deceit, consists in the use of some particular artifice, to gain the confidence of the person on whom the act is commit-

ted. It obtains or withholds his property under false pretences; or deprives him of a portion of what is due, by a partial and imperfect performance of the stipulated agreement. The practical difference between fraud and deceit, principally consists in the extent of the intended injury, and the mode of conducting it. A privation of the whole, or of a large portion of that which is due to others, is deemed a fraudulent act. Swindlers, Sharpers, false Coiners, &c. sufficiently illustrate the meaning of the term. Deceit, in its usage, is most correspondent with slighter tricks; such as disposing of goods of inferior value, as if they were of prime quality; vending adulterated articles as pure and genuine; making false declarations respecting their original price, the country whence they were bought, &c. &c. This vice chiefly respects that part of the mercantile world, who term themselves *fair traders.*

To *usurp,* properly signifies to seize, or unlawfully use, that which is the property of another. It is now chiefly applied to the unjust possession of power; to seizing the reigns of government by force or treachery; bringing those who were freemen under the yoke of despotism; or forcibly compelling subjects to change their rulers.

*Tyranny,* is injustice committed by one in the possession of power, who openly violates the

rights and claims of others, by the arbitrary exertion of an authority which they have not the means of opposing.

*Oppression,* takes advantages of power lawfully or unlawfully obtained; exacts from others more than is justly due, or inflicts burdens grievous to be borne. It frequently acts under the sanction of human laws, to which it gives its own interpretation; but which tyranny openly defies.

*Cruelty,* is an act of injustice, which chiefly respects the *misery* inflicted upon its object. The term does not pay a primary attention to the advantages gained by the agent. This vice manifests a wanton obduracy of heart, more than either of the preceding. Every other act of injustice may originate from an inordinate desire of gain, or the lust of power; which may have tempted the aggressor to suppress, in particular instances, without totally destroying, the natural feelings of humanity. In acts of cruelty, these feelings appear to be totally eradicated, and to be supplanted by a spirit of revenge or malignity.

The above remarks chiefly relate to those obvious and overt acts of injustice, from which respectable characters are exempt. But there are many instances of injustice, which are no less real, though they may be less apparent; and which by

their continually operating, are extremely injurious to social happiness. If it be a characteristic of justice, that it deprives no one of the good to which he is entitled, we may discover many instances of injustice, and even of cruelty, which are committed by persons, who are not conscious of the evil. We may frequently observe that those who are most scrupulous, respecting those means of good, that relate to any kind of property, are yet guilty of unjust privations, respecting the grand article *Good itself.* The man who will be minutely accurate, in the payment of the stipulated wages of his servant, and would blush at the idea of defrauding him of a shilling, will render his existence comfortless, by the unjust impetuosities of his temper, and by perpetual dissatisfactions, at the most strenuous endeavours to please; and thus rob a dependent of more real enjoyment, than the whole of his wages could have purchased. The parent who is solicitous to enrich his children, and employs many an anxious hour to promote their happy establishment in the world, may render them completely miserable by the unjust severity of his temper, or habitual moroseness of his conduct. Or he may defraud a dutiful child of his kindest affections, and bestow them upon a less deserving favorite. These, and many other instances which might be adduced, are

acts of injustice more severely felt than various privations, which are stigmatized by the name of fraud and deceit. If privations of certain means of good which are due, be considered so disgraceful, and injurious, surely that privation of immediate good and permanent comfort, which our dependents and relative shave a right to claim, and which constitute the habitual enjoyment of life, are more pernicious in their effects, although they may not be so criminal in the motives.

## *Benevolence.*

The love of justice simply expresses a right disposition towards that which is equitable, whereby no one shall be deprived of the portion of good to which he is entitled; nor is it accompanied with that ardent desire to diffuse happiness, over beings capable of enjoying it, which characterises *Benevolence*. It is considered as an indispensible principle of action, rather than as constituting an affection of the heart. It could not therefore have a place in our inquiries into the nature of the human passions and affections. Benevolence, or the sentiments and feelings of goodwill towards others, being not only an affection, but a pre-eminent affection, was minutely consi-

dered in our introductory volume *; which supersedes the necessity of enlargement in this place. We shall confine ourselves to a concise statement of the principles that have been advanced, and apply them to the subject immediately before us.

It has been observed, that benevolence respects both good desires and dispositions towards others; and also favourable opinions concerning them. Its opposites, *malevolence* and *displacency*, imply ill-will and ill-designs towards another, and also unfavourable opinions. Benevolence may be considered as a principle, constituting a predisposition or readiness of temper, to impart good to susceptible beings, or to participate in their welfare. It is primarily exercised toward those who have a common interest with ourselves, in the conjugal, parental, filial, fraternal relations, particular friendship, &c.; and it extends to those who are more remote from us; assuming the title of general benevolence, and ramifying into the affections of compassion, mercy, pity, liberality, and sympathetic joy, at the good fortune of others; and thus acquiring various denominations and degrees of excellency, according to the peculiarities of its application to their state, exigencies, or character. It was also observed that the complacential regards

* See page 125.

and favourable opinions entertained, relative to the characters and conduct of our associates, was accompanied with a *love* towards them ; was productive of the warmer affections of gratitude and admiration, respecting particular acts or dispositions of the object; or the calmer ones of esteem, respect, veneration, &c. according to the ideas formed of their permanent characters. Malevolence and displacency operate in a contrary direction. Malevolence, or ill-will, is manifested by malignity, envy, resentment, transports of anger, cruelty, &c. Displacency is marked by the emotions of horror, indignation, contempt, irrision; or the milder indications of censure and disapprobation.

This concise recapitulation of the principles which have already passed under examination, will be sufficient to evince, how much the affections of benevolence contribute to the peace and felicity of the human mind; and in what respects, and to what degree, those of malevolence have a tendency to destroy it. The affections which have good for their object, are always pleasing; the opposites are always sources of painful perturbation. In the warm affections of gratitude and admiration, the humiliating ideas of inferiority, are absorbed by the pleasures enjoyed by the

benefit conferred, and in love to the donor. The superiority acknowledged in every expression of admiration, instead of exciting envy, infuses transports. The kind affections of social life, constitute the whole of its sweets; diminishing every trouble and augmenting every enjoyment. When most inactive, benevolence imparts a placid serenity to the mind. Nor can it be exerted in particular offices, without conscious sensations of good in the breast of the agent himself. Malevolence, when least active, is a secret corrosion; and its exertions implant the strongest sensations of misery.

The extensive power of benevolence to alleviate the ills, and promote the happiness of mankind; and that of malevolenee to diffuse wretchedness, are too conspicuous to demand amplification. This evil principle is the bane of all social intercourse; diffusing horror as far as its influence extends. The minute ramifications of good will are admirably adapted to meet the peculiar exigencies of its objects; alleviating distresses; removing anxious apprehensions; consoling the afflicted; increasing a scanty store of enjoyment; and even augmenting the felicity of the fortunate, by a generous participation. Strict justice does not augment happiness, it simply prevents a diminution. It imparts no other good than that

derived from avoiding an injury. It does not commit a robbery, and is contented. Benevolence is a volunteer in the service of Good: it is the champion of well-being: it delights to augment the prosperity of the happiest; and it searches into the abodes of Misery, with a desire to extirpate the enemy.

There is a species of benevolence, which, although it be less splendid in appearance, and more circumscribed in its exertions, is of high importance to the peace and harmony of social intercourse; which is the virtue of *Discretion*. This virtue is frequently considered as a branch of prudence, although it primarily respects others and not ourselves*. It avoids those inadvertencies in speech and conduct, which might incidentally prove injurious, or unnecessarily give offence. Indiscretion either not perceiving, or not regarding, those attentions which, in civil society, one man expects from another, frequently excites severe displeasure, without designing to displease. Discretion is a singular compound of prudence, benevolence, and justice. It is a preservative against incidental resentments and ill-will; it is cautious not to injure the feelings of those who

* See Note A.

are deserving of our notice; and it is pained by such inadvertencies as might, in any respect, prove injurious. It is a practical discrimination suggested by a benevolent temper, respecting propriety of behaviour in circumstances peculiar and delicate; and it contributes essentially to the pleasures of social intercourse, as its operations are perpetual.

The above remarks discover to us several other characteristic distinctions between the operations of simple justice, and those of the benevolent principle.

The natural rights of man being circumscribed, they are, generally speaking, clearly indicated and defined: so that there is little room for embarrassment, and none for hesitation. But the acts of benevolence, are destined to operate far beyond the confines of the strictest justice; and to diffuse a larger portion of good than could be enjoyed, by the full possession of our natural rights. Yet the acts of benevolence are to be considered as occasional acts, solicited by peculiar circumstances, rather than being obligatory in every instance, like those acts which characterize justice. What is due to another, ought at all times to be conceded to him; the act cannot be withheld. Benevolence claims a discretionary power, and

has something optional in every act, respecting its object and extent. Although our intellectual faculties fully ascertain that benevolence of temper is an excellence, and the practice of it a duty, yet they clearly perceive that its operations cannot, like those of justice, be reduced to weight and measure. The indigent and afflicted have claims upon our humanity, but not in every particular instance of distress. They can make no demand of right in any one instance. Generosity is an excellent virtue, and ought to be practised; but *when* it ought to be exercised, and in *what manner*, and to what *extent*, will depend upon many contingencies. Liberality will bestow gifts; but without some limits to liberal conduct, the amplest funds would be exhausted; and without discernment, they might be exhausted upon the unworthy, to the detriment of the deserving. Compassion naturally prompts to assist and comfort the afflicted; mercy will be inclined to remit punishments; but as the one cannot alleviate every distress, nor ought the other always to remit punishments, so the exercise of a just discernment is requisite to select proper objects, and circumscribe the boundaries. Compassionate aid must be regulated by the state, the character of the object, the resources of the benevolent man, and the

surrounding claims of others. Mercy itself, injudiciously exercised, might defeat its own purpose.

But notwithstanding these necessary restrictions, it is still the grand object of benevolence to diffuse happiness, far beyond the power of justice. This prevents encroachments; benevolence confers blessings. It diminishes miseries which justice could not assuage, but might perhaps inflict; it augments enjoyment beyond the claims of equity. It is not only respectable, it is *amiable*. It is not simply just, it is *good*. The strictest exercise of justice may be performed by one who has no attractions; in whom a selfishness of temper is still conspicuous. Benevolence makes voluntary sacrifices; places *self* at the remotest distance; stifles the resentments which injuries are calculated to excite; and remits the demands of which justice may be tenacious, in order to promote the welfare even of an offender.

The above character of Benevolence, will sufficiently distinguish it from every spurious act which imposes upon the unwary and inexperienced. There is a thoughtless good nature, which is pleasing in itself, and may confer incidental benefit; but not being directed by principle, is very frequently erroneous; and the good it produces is very circumscribed. The dissipated youth who

spends his patrimony among the worthless, may applaud his own liberality, but he will be condemned by the wise, and probably be despised by the participators of his bounty; for they may be fully convinced of his want of discernment. The ambitious man, who courts popularity by splendid acts, is not beneficent, but selfish and designing; and although the diffusion of his wealth, may prove very acceptable to the objects of his apparent bounty, yet he is merely purchasing a commodity, which he values more than he does the purchase money; and instead of being deserving of public applause, he may be censured by the discerning, for having made an unprofitable bargain. Nor can we consider those actions as marks of genuine munificence, which are performed through means that have been obtained by injustice. The riches amassed by fraudulent practices, or by tyranny and oppression, may be liberally bestowed on public charities; may be devoted to the endowment of churches and hospitals; the donor may have monuments erected to his memory, or he may be canonised as a saint; but he has attempted to purchase reputation with the property of others; to dazzle the eyes of the world, that his crimes may not be discerned; or to compound with heaven for his nefarious practices,

by the consecration of what is not his own, at the hour when it can be retained no longer. These, instead of being acts of munificence and charity, are no other than *splendida peccata*; the delusive decorations of the ambitious and depraved.

The general survey we have taken of the conduct and dispositions, universally acknowledged to be virtuous or vicious, so fully manifests their influence upon personal and social well-being, that they require not further investigation. The cultivation of prudence, justice, benevolence, in all their branches, is not merely of *some importance*, it is *absolutely necessary*, to the possession and diffusion of that extensive good, after which we so ardently pant; to attain which our nature is rendered capable; and of which vice is the venom and the canker. It is a fact which no one can deny, that the regular and steady practice of every virtue, would raise human felicity to the most exalted state of perfection. Were every man *prudent*, extensively and uniformly, he would extract the greatest possible good from every posssible situation. He would arrive and repose at the true point of enjoyment, perfectly secure from the numberless vexations, disappointments, and hor-

rors, in which the imprudent are so frequently involved. Were every man *just* and *upright*, each individual would march with a firm step in paths of perfect peace:—all the irritated, irritating, and malignant passions would subside:—man would no longer be a terror to man:—the voice of lamentation would seldom be heard, and the voice of reproach would be for ever silent. Were every man *benevolent*, he would alleviate the numerous wants, and mitigate the distresses which justice itself was impotent to relieve; and confer greater enjoyments, than it is in the power of justice to protect. Benevolence is the virtue of a feeling heart, and it renders the feeling heart of the befriended object peculiarly happy, by the inspiration of those delightful affections, Love, Friendship, Gratitude, and Complacency. By universal *Discretion*, minuter injuries and displeasures would be unknown; mutual confidence would be diffused over every part of our social intercourse; we should travel smoothly through every stage of our existence, strangers to the rude shocks of impertinence and indiscretion; assiduously and successfully studying our mutual accommodations on the road. It is this virtue of discretion, which forms the basis of what is termed *politeness*, in genteel circles; which is so attractive and engaging,

that it is frequently presented and *accepted,* as a substitute for more substantial virtues. The semblance of good-will displayed by an urbanity of manners, is found to be more captivating, than greater benefits conferred with a roughness in the mode, which approaches to an indiscretion.

# DISQUISITION

THE SECOND.

## ON MORAL CONDUCT.

OR

*The Nature of Morality; its Laws, Motives, &c.*

# DISQUISITION II.

## *On Moral Conduct.*

THE disposition of every one to pursue his own interests, supersedes the necessity of recommending the practice of all the *personal* virtues as a *duty*, where a conviction is implanted that such a conduct is the only road to happiness: nor would the term be applicable; as duty and obligation, are, strictly speaking, *relative* ideas. The eagerness with which we seize all the means of Good, when we know of what they consist, and where they are to be found, annihilates the idea of an *obligation*, in a moral sense of the word. But the case is very different respecting the practice of the *social* virtues. As self-interest is not here the professed object in view, but the interests of others, it is necessary to introduce some efficient principle or principles, with which the ideas of *duty* and *obligation* are intimately connected; and without

which, every man would think himself at liberty to act as he pleases. An opposition of interests frequently presents itself in the universal pursuit after the means of Good; and excepting some other law of conduct were operative, than that of personal welfare, universal anarchy would take place, to the subversion of social intercourse, with all its blessings. To prevent these horrors, human nature is endowed with certain principles, which meet with the approbation of all; and to which it has been invariably expected, that intelligent creatures should conform. To these we shall now direct our notice.

This subject has deeply engaged the attention of moralists:—*The foundation of Virtue,—what are the proper motives for the practice of Virtue;—the nature of moral obligation,* or the principle which constitutes any particular act an indispensible *duty*, or stamps *criminality* upon its opposite; are questions which have given rise to much controversy in the philosophical world; and this sufficiently manifests that the subject is surrounded with difficulties. Since the work before the reader, is solely intended for practical uses, the author is studious to avoid whatever has the appearance of being theoretical and speculative. A simple statement of facts is more congruous to the mo-

ral history of the human mind, which he is attempting to give; and he leaves it to others to draw whatever inferences they may deem legitimate. Yet he is not without hopes, that these moral researches, which assume a direction rather unusual, will spread many important truths before the philosophical reader, to which the partial and contracted nature of controversy, may have rendered him too inattentive; and that some difficulties will of themselves be resolved, by a more comprehensive statement of facts, than controversy is disposed to admit.

In the following Disquisition, we shall endeavour to trace the origin of the opinions maintained, by mankind in general, on the subject of virtue and morality: such as relate to the specific nature of virtue and vice;—the pleasant or unpleasant impressions which the perception of virtuous and vicious conduct, uniformly make upon the human mind;—the conceptions formed of merit and demerit,—and of moral obligation. We shall also search after those principles which are uniformly permitted to influence human conduct; and the relation they may have to the practice of virtue. We shall next examine which of these

principles is, in its own nature, best calculated to promote the steady and uniform practice of every virtue; and finally attempt to trace the origin and progress of the social virtues, and religious affections in the human mind.

# CHAP. I.

## ON THE ORIGIN OF THE OPINIONS MAINTAINED RESPECTING VIRTUE, MORALS, &c.

### SECT. I.

#### ON THE APPLICATION OF THE TERMS VIRTUE AND VICE, TO CONDUCT AND DISPOSITIONS: AND THEIR TRUE IMPORT INVESTIGATED.

THE ample view that has been taken of the nature of Virtue and Vice, and their immediate influence upon personal and social well-being, will enable us to ascertain the reason, why these terms have been invariably chosen by moralists, to express right and wrong conduct; describing, by, as it were, a telegraphic brevity, the opposite characters of good and bad men. We shall consider each distinctly.

## *Virtue.*

This word has, at different periods, and in various connexions, been variously applied; and yet it will appear upon minute examination, that in every connexion it expresses a *salutary force* and *energy*. It is used to denote an inherent power of a *beneficial* nature, and a vigorous exertion of that power. Thus we say that particular effects have been produced, by *virtue* of certain means employed. It is frequently said of medical drugs, that they retain, or have lost their *virtues*; that is, their power of producing the salutary effects, which they usually produce. Many expressions in common phraseology evince, with great accuracy and precision, that the power expressed by the word Virtue refers to something *beneficial*. Whatever is decidedly *injurious* to ourselves, we may ascribe it to a *Virus* or a *Venom*, but never to a *Virtue*. Yet we shall adopt the term, whenever the power of doing injury to others, is beneficial to ourselves. Gunpowder will be said by the warrior to possess *Virtue*, according to its strength, or the power of extending destruction among his foes; and the Indians, who are accustomed to poison their arrows, will complain, that the poi-

son has lost its *Virtue*, with its powers of destruction. That quality inherent in bodies, by which an injury may be produced, unconnected with beneficial effects of any kind, is called its *Virus*; and this term will be deemed to be uniformly applicable, as long as we remain ignorant of its power of effecting good. But when this power is discovered, and applied to salutary purposes, it is immediately dignified with the title of *Virtue*. Physicians speak of the *Virus* of the natural small-pox, but when they apply this *Virus* to the beneficial purposes of inoculation, it changes its nature, in their opinion, and possesses a positive *Virtue*. Opium and arsenic, were once considered as unqualified poisons ; but since the beneficial effects of both in various diseases, have been discovered, they are allowed to possess great *medical Virtues*.

Hence it is clear, that the primitive and genuine idea annexed to the word Virtue, is that of a *beneficial* power; and whatever is able to produce some species of good, by its energies and operations, is acknowledged to possess some species of Virtue. Accordingly, in the ruder state of society, before the mental powers were sufficiently awakened, or instructed, to form deep-laid schemes of attack or defence ; before men were

conversant with those arts of war, which could alone be the result of observation and experience; when corporeal strength, was the only means that could be employed to assail a foe, or repel an insult; there was much *Virtue* in the arm of a champion; and the man who exerted it successfully in defence of his party, became a man of high renown. The transition from muscular force to personal courage, which held danger in contempt, and to that energy of mind, which prompted to the execution of the most dangerous enterprises was natural; and *Virtue* became the proper term to denote *Valour* and *Prowess*. But when the ruder state of society gave way to more regular establishments; when the interests of communities, became more extensive and complex, as the means of good were multiplied and appreciated; the ideas of property, and the claims of individuals, became more numerous and diversified; and in proportion as those inequalities in the states and conditions of men, which proceeded from an universal struggle after happiness, with unequal powers, became obvious and striking, the necessity of what we now term *Prudence*, *Discretion*, *Integrity*, and *Benevolence*, in their various branches, became evident; and the word *Virtue* was applied, as it were by common consent, to those acts and dispositions, upon which the existence, harmony,

and happiness of society, immediately depend. It is not surprising therefore, that in the more advanced stages of social intercourse, we should more frequently hear of the *relative, conjugal,* and *social Virtues,* than of those which distinguish the *Warrior* and *Champion,* which are not so perpetually in exercise.

Thus, in all the gradations through which the word Virtue has passed, it has always retained the character of a beneficial influence. When applied to human beings, we infer a voluntary agency. To a perception of what is proper, because it is beneficial, is united a firm disposition to perform it. This necessarily includes an exertion of power against some opponent. Such is the object in the exertion of every mechanical and chemical power, and of corporeal strength; and it is also the object of all mental energy. Since knowledge is not an inheritance, it is only to be acquired by the exertions which subdue our natural indolence, and conquer the difficulties of attainment. Wisdom is the result of much mental exertion, to discover, and judiciously to employ, the most proper means to accomplish some useful purpose; and although neither knowledge nor wisdom are, in the present day, placed among the virtues, yet the *pursuit* of them is. The improvement of the mind is a virtuous diligence, directed towards the most import-

ant of all objects; while obstinate, and wilful ignorance, proceeds from the contemptible vice of indolence. Every ramification of prudence indicates a self-command, which strenuously opposes the strongest solicitations of some seducing and ensnaring object. Justice and integrity, determine to do whatever is right, in the midst of all the temptations arising from flattering prospects of ambition or of opulence, and the fair promises of secrecy. Benevolence possesses the distinguished power, of making a voluntary sacrifice of those personal rights, which the selfish man so highly values. It liberally bestows what the avaricious carefully hoard. It voluntarily endures the pangs of sensibility, which may soothe and relieve those who suffer still greater pains. It relaxes the rigid claims of right, and suppresses the desire of revenge, as often as propriety admits; and resolves to forgive, in many cases where it has the unrestrained power to punish. Thus does the virtuous man conquer himself. He is the courageous and triumphant hero, who subdues the formidable enemy within: he exerts the best powers of his mind, to gain the ascendency over every thing that is unworthy and pernicious *.

* See note B.

## *Vice.*

Qualities, powers, and propensities, of a *noxious* tendency, are not expressed by a simple term. Accurate language, in order to describe existent diversities, has adopted the words virus, venom, poison, and *vice*; and these denote the various kinds of pernicious influence, exerted over animated and rational beings. All these expressions convey ideas perfectly distinct from destructive powers occasionally and incidentally exerted, by natural or physical agency. There is neither virus, venom, poison, nor vice, ascribed to the storms which overwhelm the ship floating on the ocean; nor to the flames which consume our dwellings. The terms are confined to qualities radically and unequivocally injurious; they *uniformly* suggest the idea of *mischief*. But although they agree in this general effect, there is a diversity in their application.

*Virus*, denotes a pernicious quality in vegetable or animal substances, arising from some accidental degeneracy of their fluids. Thus we speak of the virus of the small pox, of pestilential diseases, putrid miasmata, and the virus communicated by the bite of a mad animal. *Venom* is applied to those destructive fluids, which are constitutionally formed in organized bodies, essential to their re-

spective natures, and are communicated to other living bodies, by the instinctive agency of some animated beings; as the sting of a bee, the bite of a scorpion, &c. *Poison* is a general term, more applicable to pernicious effects than to specific causes. It expresses the power of producing injury, seated in bodies promiscuously; without paying immediate attention to the manner in which the power was acquired. Thus both virus and venom, may be considered of a poisonous nature, from the effects produced by them. We speak also of vegetable and mineral poisons; that is, of substances, which by their great activity, in very small quantities, may disorder or destroy the animal frame. These detrimental qualities are called poisons; although as we have remarked above, when these same powers are skilfully applied, so as to be productive of *good*, we immediately denominate them *virtues*.

*Vice*, strongly marks the injurious nature and effects of some human propensities. Etymologists tell us, that the word is derived from the latin *vito*, refering to an evil which all should be solicitous to escape, or avoid. It is always placed in opposition to virtue, being most opposite in its nature, influence and character. As virtue is a quality in the mind that exalts the subject, in proportion to the degrees of its excellency, thus vice

is an opposite quality, which has its degradations, sinking the character proportionably below the level of innoxious beings. It is considered as a pernicious quality, generated by whatever has a tendency to corrupt the human mind, and render it depraved. Hence it admits of various degrees, correspondent with the virus which occasionally corrupts our fluids. Were it naturally inherent, it would resemble the *venom* of animals; which is in its nature constitutional; nor does it admit of similar gradations in the same individual. It is upon its being more accidental, and not essentially permanent in the same species, that we sometimes apply the term to animals that are restive or unruly; or that are not easily trained to useful and peaceful habits. Thus we ascribe vices to a horse, that will not obey the whip or the spur; or to an ox, that attempts to gore the attendants, instead of yielding his neck to the yoke. In every sense it is a term of reproach, used to express a pernicious deviation from a more harmless and useful tenor of conduct.

The extensive views that we have taken of the miseries introduced into human life, by the vices of ignorance, indolence, intemperance, injustice, envy, cruelty, &c. sufficiently manifest the close analogy that subsists between vice and the noxious qualities noted above. Vice is the *virus* of

the mind; and as far as it extends its baneful influence, it poisons all the sources of happiness.

Hence it is that some of the evil passions of men, are so frequently and forcibly expressed by metaphors, taken from these various noxious qualities: and it is remarkable, that those particular distinctions are also noted, by the different manners in which the metaphors are used. *Virulence*, which is obviously derived from *virus*, best expresses a rapid, and pernicious violence in the occasional sallies of temper. It refers to the angry passions that are excessive; and which are not exempt from a great degree of malignity at the time. Thus we say "he was vehement against him to a degree of *virulence*: His language was very *virulent*: He was too *virulent* in his reproaches, notwithstanding they were founded in justice." But the word *venom*, best expresses malignity itself. It supposes that the subject possesses an envenomed bosom, and a kind of organization, as it were, destined to the secretion of malignity. This word describes, not merely a person in a fit of wrath, but one who harbours malice, who malignantly stings, and does intentional mischief. In ruder phraseology, it is said that "he spits his venom:" which immediately raises in the mind the idea of a noxious animal determined to injure. Strokes of satire, in which the malignity may be

more obvious than the wit, are poetically termed *envenomed shafts.*

*Poison,* as a metaphorical expression, does not so immediately refer either to the culpable irritations of the moment, or to the deeper malignity of the heart. It is often applied to a pernicious, or destructive influence, unconnected with the moral character or designs of the agent. Thus we say of particular sentiments, that "they have a tendency to poison the mind;" although he that advances them may possibly design to improve it. Books of a certain description, are represented as dangerous, from "having a tendency to poison the morals:" and all the happiness of a family is said to be *poisoned,* by the ill conduct or misfortunes of some individual belonging to it.

Such is the respectable connexion in which whatever is deemed vicious, in the tendency or design, is placed; nor is the arrangement inaccurate or unjust.

## SECT. II.

### ON THE APPROBATION AND DISAPPROBATION OF HUMAN ACTIONS; AND THEIR ORIGIN.

THE terms *Virtue* and *Vice*, not only express a *beneficial*, and *pernicious* energy, but they contain also a latent *approbation* or *censure* of the agent. The idea excited by an act we pronounce to be *virtuous*, is not only that it is something good in itself, or productive of good, but that it manifests something *worthy* and *respectable* in the performer. We conceive that both the object and motive are as they should be. The idea attatched to *Vice*, is that of an act pernicious in its tendency, performed by one who is under *base* and *unworthy*, or *unlawful* motives. These ideas are intimately connected with those of virtue and vice; even in such cases where we may mistake the character of the act; and thus apply the word in the most improper manner. When our conceptions of the character of an act, or of the motives are erroneous, we shall blame, when we ought to approve, and praise, when we ought to censure; yet whatever we censure partakes of the nature of vice, in our opinion at the instant, and the agent is criminated; whatever we praise, we deem to be a virtue,

and the agent is applauded. From a contrariety of opinions, concerning the nature and tendency of particular actions, it may happen that exalted honours shall be conferred by some, on persons whose conduct others may execrate, as deserving disgrace. Private interests, contracted views, a party spirit, or national contests, excite the most opposite sensations, and call forth the loudest exclamations, either of encomium or inventive, according to the influence which particular modes of conduct, may have upon the principles and interests of the individual, his party, or his country. These facts are too frequently illustrated, by the ferments excited between different nations, or among the same people, in their contests about religion or politicks, or in the election of magistrates, &c. But still, in every instance of this kind, the abstract ideas of good and evil, of virtue and vice, concerning their intrinsic natures, are precisely the same. Whatever we censure, we consider it as an evil, which ought not to have been committed; whatever we approve and commend, it is under the idea of a good, intentionally performed, that is, as a virtue. *

Hence it proceeds, that the same act shall appear in different points of view, not only to inter-

* Note C.

ested or prejudiced persons, but to the eye of reason itself, according to its consequences, and the intention with which it was performed. To deprive an individual of his life, to annihilate at once his present existence, with all its connextions, and relations, and influences, will always be repugnant to the feelings of the humane; but the act will sometimes be considered as innocent, sometimes approved as necessary and laudable; at others, condemned as the effect of a culpable carelessness; and at others, it is abhorred as a murder.

The distinctions made between *physical* good and evil, in which there is no imputation of virtue or vice, and those actions and dispositions of intelligent beings, which are deemed *moral* or *immoral*; and also the difference which we make in the nature of the same simple act, according to the object and motives of the agent, are manifestly founded in the power and exercise of *Volition*. As every intelligent agent is a *voluntary* agent, according to the statement we have given of the nature of volition; as he possesses the physical power to act as he *wills*, and to walk in the paths of virtue or of vice, according to the determinations of his own mind, we naturally form an *opinion* of his dispositions and character, according to the general tenor of his conduct, and the influ-

ence of worthy or unworthy motives; and we mark the gradations of his good and bad qualities, by the degrees of his disposition and efforts to promote good or diffuse evil. †

That we are so formed as to be disposed to *love*, whatever administers to our happiness, and to have an *aversion* to its contrary, in cases where the power of volition is not exerted, is a truth, which every one admits; and which has frequently presented itself in the course of our investigations. The diamond does not voluntarily glitter in order to charm us, nor gold render itself costly in consideration of our benefit; yet we admire the beauties of the one, and are eager to possess the other. There is no criminal disposition in nauseous medicines, to render themselves disagreeable to the taste, and yet they are loathed. The qualities which appear calculated to promote our pleasure, convenience, or happiness, attract our regards; we are disposed to love and cherish them: Whatever appears to be displeasing or pernicious, easily excites our displacency or abhorrence. But when we contemplate the qualities and dispositions of those who have the *powers of Self-command*; whose physical constitution is not crea-

† See many particulars illustrative of these remarks in Phil. Treatise Part ii. Ch. iii. § 3. Influence of Passions and Affections on Character.

ted with immutable qualities, of a beneficial or injurious tendency; when that which we deem to be good or bad in them, appears to be *self-created,* we superadd to our attractions or repugnancies, certain *Opinions* respecting the agent himself. With that love or hatred we are naturally disposed to indulge, towards qualities obviously good or bad, are connected ideas of *honour* or *disgrace;* and sentiments of *approbation* or *censure, applause* or *condemnation,* as often as such qualities are discovered to exist, in rational and voluntary agents. The exercise of our reasoning powers concerning them, is always accompanied with some *sensation.* An *affection* is excited; a mental *feeling,* of a pleasant or disagreeable nature, accompanies the decisions of the understanding. The actions and dispositions which we pronounce to be good, excite the pleasing sensations of respect, esteem, veneration, gratitude, admiration, according to the various degrees of excellency. We begin to entertain a *love* for the agent. In our *hearts,* as well as in our *judgment,* we give him the preference to every one who has not signalized himself in a similar manner. Actions which reason pronounces to be improper, absurd, atrocious, excite the disapprobation of our minds. Some peculiar sensations either of irrision, anger, contempt, in-

dignation, according to the apparent prevalence of folly or of moral turpitude*.

Applause and censure are open expressions of these peculiar sensations. They are designed indications of these mental feelings; and they are calculated to produce correspondent effects upon the feelings of the agent. The social nature of man, will not permit him to be indifferent, concerning the sentiments of those around him. We are pleased with the esteem which any particular mode of conduct may attract; and we consider contempt as a most painful and humiliating punishment. These principles operate so powerfully in the human breast, that nnmbers have encountered the most arduous enterprises, exposed themselves to imminent dangers; endured innumerable hardships; solely for the reward of popular applause. Many have sought even death itself, in order to be entitled to a posthumous fame, of which they expect not to be conscious; and others have violated their best principles, have opposed their judgments, and their natural dispositions, rather than suffer the pangs of disgrace.

The determinations of the mind, proceeding from the prevalent thoughts and suggestions of the mind itself, are sure indications of what pass-

* See Phil. Tr. p. 170. passim.

es *within*. They always discover the particular disposition of the moment. When motives of a similar nature repeatedly produce similar acts, in situations that are similar, we learn to form an accurate judgment, concerning habitual character, We know as decidedly, that it is not in the nature of a bad man, uniformly to act virtuously, or of a virtuous man, habitually to commit vicious actions, as that the quality of a stream must correspond with that of its source; and of the fruit to the nature and quality of the tree. Incidental circumstances may, in each case, produce incidental effects, in contrariety with the usual train of things; but it is according to the usual train that we form our judgments.

We have remarked, that these impressions are more or less vivid and lasting, according to the various degrees, and even shades of difference in the nature of particular actions, and the dispositions of the agent. We approve or applaud, in proportion to our perception, that the act was beneficial, and the motive dignified and liberal. We blame, or severely condemn, in proportion as we discover that the vice was productive of mischief, and the motive was unworthy and base. Thus for example, although ignorance be always dangerous, and may be the source of innumerable evils, yet the ignorance that was inevitable, is

deemed void of culpability. But the ignorance which proceeds from indolence, inattention, or wilful neglect, is a just subject of reproach. The love of knowledge is always commended, because it is aiming at a qualification to be useful. The right use of knowledge, which constitutes *wisdom*, is still more commendable, as its object is to produce those effects, which alone can give importance to knowledge. The improper use of knowledge is folly; because it is wasting a valuable treasure to injurious or trifling purposes. Personal prudence naturally meets with our approbation; we commend those who act according to the dictates of wisdom in their own concerns, and seek to promote their own welfare; yet, as the benefit or injury is confined to the agent, we rather pity the folly of those, who are enemies to their own interests, than feel very painful resentments; unless the intimacy of our connexions should excite these sensations. Justice is so essential to the welfare, and even to the existence of society, that we expect it from all men. It is an indication that the morals of a community are deeply depraved, when simple acts of justice meet with high applause; and we are lavish of every opprobrious epithet, whenever we perceive atrocious violations of the principles of justice.

Nothing can evidence the universal estimation in which this virtue is held, more, than the attempts which are incessantly made by wicked men, to avoid the disgrace of detection. The most depraved are necessitated to have recourse to every subterfuge, in order to support a character for honesty and integrity. Even those, who possess the power of acting, to the full extent of their purpose, shudder at the idea of meeting the public eye, under the avowed character of unjust, tyrannical, oppressive and cruel. Princes and potentates, before they invade the territories of their innocent and peaceful neighbours, think it prudent to publish manifestoes replete with arguments to justify their conduct.

The principles of justice are revered by those associations that subsist by violating its laws. Banditti and Robbers of every denomination, are compelled to obey the dictates of justice, in the division of their spoils, or their nefarious compact would dissolve itself. We cannot listen to the quarrels and altercations, of the most rude and uncultivated minds, without being struck with the encomiums they pay to the virtues of justice, veracity, honesty, and chastity; when they mutually upbraid each other with violating their dictates. Each erects himself into a censor of the conduct of his opponent; manifests an inward

respect for virtue, by the severity of his reproaches at the gross deviations of his antagonist; and where there is too strong an evidence of criminality, to permit an absolute denial, both parties eagerly collect and exaggerate the faults of their accusers; that upon a comparison, they may appear the least culpable, either in the quantity or quality of guilt.

But although each individual act of injustice be reprobated, more than its opposite virtue is applauded, yet so numerous are the opportunities of transgressing the boundaries of strict equity, with apparent security; so great may those advantages appear, which will be derived from some species of fraud, arising from our superior knowledge; so multiplied, in a commercial state, are the temptations to enrich ourselves, at the expense of another; so prone are we to mistake the permissions of our imperfect laws, for the dictates of equity; that strict honesty acquires a great respectability of character: and high integrity manifested in every transaction, receives the most exalted commendations. The acts in which oppression, malice, cruelty, are connected with injustice, are held in the greatest abhorrence, and excite the warmest indignation against the perpetrator.

What has been advanced concerning *Benevo-*

*lence*, shows its superiority to every other virtue. A disposition to augment the stock of well-being, among those around us, far exceeds the resolution not to sap or plunder it. The philanthropist that makes exertions for the good of others, without ostentation, or the expectation of being remunerated, manifests a disposition approaching to divine. The self denial that is voluntarily practised in order to be beneficent, compassionate, or merciful; the dangers to which humane persons instinctively, as it were, expose themselves in order to rescue others from destruction; are such distinguished marks of an exalted virtue, as to excite universal admiration. Contracted or timid minds will not be able to imitate, but they will join their voices to the exclamations of those, who have been protected or blessed by such acts of distinguished beneficence.

The same accuracy of discrimination, is observable in the slighter instances of benevolence which characterize *Discretion*. This, manifesting a delicate attention to the state and welfare of another, more than the dictates of justice absolutely demand, is deemed a virtue highly commendable. A discreet person always attracts esteem and confidence. Slight indiscretions, which are the result of inexperience, or the volatile thoughtlessness of youth, and free from the impu-

tation of design, are readily pardoned; but such indiscretions will not be frequently repeated, without relinquishing a claim to indulgence, and incurring severe reprehension. A person remarkable for his indiscretions, is avoided as a dangerous member of society; for although he may not intend mischief, he becomes the culpable cause of it.

Thus do the opinions and feelings of mankind, upon the subject of virtue and vice, manifestly consist of four gradations, with shades of difference in each. They condemn as a weakness or a folly, the improper conduct which is in any respect injurious to the agent alone; and they approve or applaud, in proportion as he wisely consults his own welfare. They commend discretion, and blame indiscretions, according to the obvious degrees of caution on the one hand, or of culpable inattention on the other. They applaud or censure with greater warmth, those acts which indicate the design of the agent to perform something beneficial to another, or which is conducive to his injury. They reprobate those actions which are unjust respecting others, however beneficial they may prove to the perpetrator, though the obvious design was not to injure them, but to serve himself. They hold in higher indignation

and abhorrence, the deeds of injustice which are the result of cruelty; or where absolute evil to the subject was intended. For in these cases, they know that the heart is radically depraved, and under the government of the most malignant passions. They duly appreciate every act of justice, according to its degrees of worth; but they *admire* benevolence; and its most exalted exertions call forth enthusiastic acclamations of *praise* *.

## SECT. III.

### ON THE MERIT AND DEMERIT ATTRIBUTED TO DISPOSITIONS AND ACTIONS.

IN the preceding Section we confined our remarks, to the sensations excited in the breast of the observer, when he attends to the subject of Virtue and Vice in particular actions: But he does not simply applaud or censure, when he forms distinct ideas of the moral nature of the action, as good or bad, right or wrong: he forms equally distinct ideas also of *merit*, or *demerit*, in the agent. We cheerfully acknowledge that the person who

* See Note D.

possesses an amiable character, or performs actions of which reason highly approves, acquires a title to our love, respect, gratitude, &c.; and we deem him worthy of some *recompense*; according to his situation, exigencies, and the degrees of moral excellence he may have acquired. We hold it perfectly consistent with justice and propriety, that the man whose conduct is in every respect prudent and circumspect, should escape the evils to which the imprudent are hourly exposed, and enjoy the fruits of all his virtuous exertions; and we maintain, that he, who in all his transactions, is strictly just and upright, is entitled to a perfect exemption from the injustice and oppression of others. To him who labours for the good of mankind, a feeling of gratitude induces us to wish an exemption from evil, and a participation of that happiness he is so desirous to promote. We admit, without hesitation, that no one can be more entitled to the enjoyment of the good, than the man who delights to do good; and we resent the calamities that may befal him. But we feel very different sensations when we reflect upon a vicious character. This inspires displacency or contempt, and excites anger; and anger, however it may be subject to mistakes, always supposes *demerit*, which deserves a due degree of chastise-

ment ; and it often implants an impetuous desire to become ourselves the avengers. We judge it equitable that the person who, designedly or wantonly, induces distress upon others, should himself experience the feelings of misery. If benevolence at any time soften our resentment ; or humanity view his distressed and abject state with sentiments of pity ; we exclaim, " it is more than he deserves ;" and we are disposed to congratulate ourselves, on the triumph of more exalted principles over the severity of justice.

Thus, in addition to the applause and censure we may bestow, we think it just that the agent should enjoy good or suffer evil, arising from the nature of his conduct ; and though the opinions formed by his associates, respecting his character and deserts, may constitute a part of his reward or punishment, by the pleasing or displeasing impressions made upon his mind, these are never deemed the sole, or adequate returns. Our ideas are always directed to rewards or sufferings, that may more essentially influence his state of well-being.

As our sensations are in various degrees, according to apparent degrees of excellency or depravity in character and conduct, thus do we, in like manner, form different ideas of the nature and

gradations of *merit*, or *demerit*, according as the conduct and dispositions of the individual, appear to be founded upon the most exalted principles of action, or are perceived to be of an inferior kind. Merit and demerit may therefore be considered in three distinct points of view; as *absolute*, *comparative*, and *conditional*; with various gradations under each.

*Absolute merit*, relates to the disposition and conduct, which are uniformly regulated by a strong predilection for what is good and excellent in itself; which are always conformable to right principle, and under the direction of the best motives. To persons of this character we always award, to the full extent of good to which they are entitled, or the excellency of their conduct has a tendency to produce. Absolute demerit, on the contrary, results from the total predominance of a narrow selfishness; and prompts to the most nefarious acts, regardless of the interests, feelings, or rights of others; and no one can desire that such characters should enjoy the recompense due to exalted virtue.

*Comparative merit*, or *demerit*, relates to the favourable or unfavourable ideas, we form of one person, when compared with another, respecting some kind of superiority or deficiency; when ad-

vantages and opportunities may have been equal. We place the two characters in opposite scales; and without expecting that the one character should be perfect, and the other entirely worthless, we form our opinions, and make our decisions, according to the preponderance of good, or of bad, in either scale.

*Conditional merit*, and *demerit*, respects the performance of certain actions, in conformity to the injunctions of some one who stipulates the conditions. A promise is made to recompense certain services, with some particular remuneration; or a threatening is denounced against the omission. The man who conforms to the injunction, is entitled, by virtue of the promise, to the reward proposed; and he has reason to expect the punishment denounced against neglect. The reward may, from the liberality of the principal, far exceed the nature of the duty; yet according to the spirit of the compact, the performance confers a right to claim it; and the non-performance confers a right to the party, who has enjoined the service, to inflict the stipulated punishment. In these cases we observe that a person *deserves* the reward, for he has complied with the terms proposed; or, that he has incurred the penalty by his own neglect.

This species of desert has no necessary connection with that of the absolute kind. It may oppose every other virtue, but the apparent one of personal prudence. The injunction may be capricious; it may be unlawful; but a compliance entitles the agent to the reward; and the imposer would be deemed guilty of an atrocious injustice, were he to enjoy the advantage, and withhold the stipulated compensation. But when the action is in itself innocent, the merit of the agent resolves itself into personal prudence; into an attention to private interest. It is of consequence contemplated with the lowest degree of approbation; and the omission would be censured as an imprudence.

In all the above cases, some kind of *desert*, presents itself to the mind. In the first, that which is due to moral excellence, or moral depravity, is the most conspicuous; and our praise or censure becomes the warmest, or most poignant. In the second, moral excellences or depravities present themselves to the eye as standards, by which we measure and appreciate diversities in characters; without the expectation to discover either the one or the other, to an eminent degree. In the last, they are the least apparent, and perhaps do not exist *.

* See Note E.

The above principles naturally present themselves to a thinking mind, and all laws are founded upon them; as will appear in the following chapter.

## CHAP. II.

## CONCERNING THE LAWS OF MORAL OBLIGATION.

### SECT. I.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE SUBJECT; DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VIRTUE AND MORALITY.

HAVING thus inquired into the opinions and feelings of mankind, upon the subject of Virtue and Vice, we shall now proceed to examine upon what principles they are founded.

With the approbation or censure, arising from a perception of merit or demerit, are intimately connected our ideas of *Duty* and *Obligation;* of a something which *ought,* or ought *not,* to be done. *Obligation* properly signifies being bound to perform particular actions, or to avoid something prohibited. *Duty* respects that species of obligation which is due to another; and implies a conformity to his injunctions, or his interests. Thus, if there were not some kind of obligation,

there could be no right of requisition from another, nor place for censure. Proper conduct would simply produce its advantages without approbation; omissions and aggressions might be lamented, but no one could be blamed.

Obligation relates to some principle, or principles, which are considered as laws that are to be obeyed; according to which certain actions are to be performed, certain dispositions to be cherished, and others to be avoided. In common and familiar usage, the word has various applications; some of which are more pertinent than others. It may simply imply what is *necessary* to be done, in order to obtain a certain end. Thus, we say, "the man who is *obliged* to earn his own bread will be *obliged* to work." Sometimes it expresses a due sense of propriety, in conforming to certain received and approved principles. Thus, we say, "I was obliged to act as I did from a principle of honour, a sense of shame, or of gratitude." It frequently respects *obedience* or conformity to the commands of another; in which connexion it assumes the character of *duty*. In all these instances it is admitted, that something must be done, either as necessary to obtain a particular end, or not to violate some respected principle, or to avoid the ill consequences of disobedience. All human laws are obligatory upon the

subject; that is, he is bound as a member of the society to which he belongs, to act conformably to its injunctions, and rules. The laws by which it becomes obligatory to practise virtue, and desist from vice, are denominated *moral laws*, or *laws of moral obligation*. These now demand our attention.

The propriety of this denomination will appear, from what has been remarked, in our Introduction to the work before us *. It was observed, that under *morals*, were originally comprehended, habits, manners, customs, without an immediate reference to virtue. The term was afterwards applied to virtuous conduct;—and with peculiar propriety; for if manners and habits had a certain degree of influence, in the minuter concerns of social intercourse, when these *mores*, *manners*, and *habits*, assumed a *virtuous* character, they became still more important to society: since it is upon the practice of all the moral virtues, that the welfare, and even the existence, of society depends. In each acceptance of the word *mores*, both as *customs* and *morals*, the term is of a relative nature: it respects our commerce with the world; the manner in which we conduct ourselves

* See Ethical Treatise, Part I.

towards others, or are treated by them; and it belongs to all our social acts. But in these senses the word is not applicable to an individual, considered as in an isolated state. If his actions had no influence on society, he might be prudent or imprudent, but not moral or immoral, according to the spirit of the term. Suppose that he made the laws of heaven the rule of his conduct, obedience would be an act of *religion*, and not of *morality*. Gratitude, patience, submission, resignation, would constitute him a pious, not a *moral* man, according to the appropriate signification of the word. These considerations induced us to make the distinctions inserted in our Preliminary Observations *. It must, however, be observed, that in a state of society, personal virtues and vices, have always an immediate, or remote influence, of a social or relative nature; in consequence of which, every private vice partakes of an immorality, and every private virtue has a moral effect. It is, for example, scarcely possible for an intemperate or an indolent man, to injure himself alone; and, as the phrase is, to be "nobody's enemy but his own." For should he not have dependents to suffer by his vices, his *example* may prove injurious. As contentment, patience, resignation,

* See Introduction to the Second Volume.

are respectable, thus are they exemplary virtues, and they often shame others into an imitation; while the contrary vices of discontent and impatience, are discovered by a peevishness of temper, irksome and distressing to every associate. Thus, they cannot be separated in a practical point of view, but they still remain distinct ideas; and an attention to these, is of great importance in philosophical investigations.

In all laws, human and divine, three points, or distinct peculiarities, are observable:—the *object* for which the law was instituted;—the *manner* in which it is to be observed, or the rules prescribed for the regulation of conduct, that the object may be obtained;—and the *inducements* to obey. In all laws, human and divine, the object is to produce and insure some species of good; and to this the subordinate parts are directed, as means to obtain an end. This is the grand inducement to the enacting of all laws, even the most arbitrary and capricious. The despot seeks personal good, though he sacrifice the happiness of millions to obtain it. Good is obviously intended in those associations which promote slaughter, and devastation. Military laws are instituted to procure some essential benefits to the army, and ultimately to the cause it supports. They consist of cer-

tain regulations relative to discipline, by which the advantages derived from necessary subordination, skill, expedition, the accumulation and concentration of force, may be enjoyed; that a formidable power may be opposed to the enemy; either for personal security, the defence of one district, or the possession of another; and it is expected that a strict obedience to those rules will be procured, by conferring military honours on the worthy, and by the severe chastisement of offenders. The laws of war, as they are termed, consist of certain maxims of conduct, mutually received by the bellegerent powers, to mitigate as much as possible the horrors of war. The laws of civil society, profess to prevent violence, secure property, and maintain the public tranquility; and they contain certain maxims or rules of conduct, deemed subservient to these purposes. These they always enforce, by inflicting punishments on delinquents; for it is possible that no other remuneration can be awarded to the obedient, than their sharing in the general welfare. The laws of commerce, consist of certain positive injunctions, for a particular purpose, apparently beneficial; regulations apparently adapted to that purpose; encouragements, and penalties in order to enforce obedience. Every private society, has its specific object, its rules, to obtain the object, and inducements to

observe the rules. Thus, in every instance, the design is one, and the means are similar.

In the laws of morality, the same distinctions equally exist, but upon a larger, more important, and more comprehensive scale. The object, or the grand first principle of the law, is the diffusion of the greatest possible good; the subservients relate to those rules of conduct, by the observance of which alone, this great good can be secured; and certain considerations or inducements, are held forth to individual agents, that they may contribute all in their power, in every action of their lives, whether public or private, to the common fund of well-being. These laws belong to man, as man. They are not confined to particular communities, from which other communities are exempt; they extend to the whole human race, and each individual is interested in their operations.

It is the universal desire of all animated beings to *enjoy* their existence. Without *enjoyment*, life would not be a valuable gift. It is this desire which renders us solicitous to possess the *means* of enjoyment; and these we value so highly, as to give them the appellation of *good*, as well as the state of well-being, which we expect them to induce. The diversities of this good, within the reach of sensitive, intelligent, moral agents, have been am-

ply considered by us, in our Disquisition on the Nature and Sources of Well-being ; and in our analytical View of the Passions, it was fully shown that some species of good to be enjoyed by ourselves, or communicated to others, is the parent of every wish, is a stimulus to every action, and is contained in every motive. It is the source of all our painful passions and affections. The most turbulent, as well as the most placid, acknowledge this for their exciting cause. Its influence is obvious in the most vicious, as well as the most virtuous dispositions ; in the most frivolous, as well as the most important actions. We cannot imagine a plan to be formed, or an exertion to be made, where this principle is not to be considered as the spring perpetually operating, and directing all our movements.

Whoever believes in the existence of a great first cause, and ascribes to his almighty energy, the endowment of myriads of beings, with a susceptibility of agreeable impressions, from external objects, and with varied forms, powers, and instincts, properly adapted to the particular object pursued ; whoever contemplates the nature of man, his corporeal and mental powers, the superior structure of the human frame, and its peculiar adaptation to an infinitude of movements ;—the passions and affections of the mind, their specific

objects and final causes ;—whoever attends to the diversity of our intellectual faculties, and their peculiar adaptationto all the varieties and intricacies, with which our personal and social interests are so frequently connected ;—whoever meditates upon the various portions of good adapted to our sensitive, rational, social, and moral nature, must be convinced, that the promotion of good, in its different kinds and degrees, is the grand principle in the divine mind, presiding over his infinitely diversified creation ! The many troubles that surround us, the numerous circumstances that occasionally oppose, or retard the grand design, cannot obscure the facts, that all animated beings are rendered capable of enjoying much good, and that the means of much good are before them.

Our inquiries into the nature of virtue manifest to us, in what manner the choicest, and most permanent, good is to be obtained. The practice of virtue is a conformity to certain regulations, ordained by the supreme legislator, the observance of which is essential to human welfare : and the more perfect this conformity, the more effectually will the enjoyment of vitality, with its numerous blessings, be secured to us, from simple well-being to the most exalted state of happiness. We discover, by our investigations, the infinite importance of virtue, and are able to trace the manner in which virtuous dispositions and conduct secure

individual, and diffuse general good; and we are able to demonstrate that vice is in its own nature conducive to misery. All that is pleasing in vice is partial, selfish, transient. The small degree of enjoyment it communicates to the perpetrator, is always purchased by great diminutions of good, in some respect or other; and by the production of evil somewhere. It will be acknowledged, without a dissenting voice, that were all men entirely selfish, in every action of their lives; were they uniformly unjust, cruel, revengeful, the bonds of society would be dissolved. But if, on the other hand, the self-interest of every man were properly regulated, and retained within due bounds; if justice, with all its ramifications, were sacredly and inviolably observed; were compassion, always prompt to remove or alleviate incidental distress; were the fullest scope given to our intellectual faculties in discoveries and improvements adapted to our nature, and situation; were all the benevolent affections fully exercised in the performance of beneficent actions towards each other; this world would be a terrstrial paradise; and the present state of existence, an anticipation of future bliss. This being the case, he that wills human happiness, must enjoin the practice of virtue, as the only maens to obtain the important end. The rulesor laws of virtue are practical maxims to the produc-

tion of happiness; and they are efficacious to the minutest ramifications. The vicious are the disorderly members of a moral state: and were not the supreme governor more mild than his representatives, they would be immediately extirpated from the society they offend and insult.

It is to diffuse the greatest possible good, that the practice of virtue and laws of morality are rendered universal, absolute, immutable; that they are obligatory upon all persons, and in all places. The legislators of a province, or of an empire, enact laws, which are necessarily bounded in their object and operations. They may be accommodated to particular incidents and circumstances: they may be mutable: that conduct which yesterday was innocent, may to-day become a crime, against which the severest punishment is denounced; and tomorrow, it may be rewarded as a meritorious act. But the grand laws of morality, the injunctions to personal prudence in all its branches, to justice, veracity, integrity, to the practice of benevolence, being of permanent efficacy, are permanently obligatory. Imperfect governments may, either from ignorance, or partiality, or imbecility, connive at various offences committed against the state; or they may palliate crimes upon the plea of necessity or expediency; but divine wisdom discovers

no expediency in vice; nor admits of the carnival of a single day, for the indulgence of falsehood, profligacy, fraud, and cruelty.

As the enjoyment of good, is clearly the grand principle by which all our thoughts and desires are directed; as the promotion of good, is the grand object of the divine legislator, so it is, in order to augment and extend this good, that the uniform practice of virtue is enjoined upon mortals; and it was for this end, that we were rendered *moral agents*, by the great author of our existence.

We now perceive, that the laws of morality, are in themselves no other than an uniform series of virtues, enjoined upon us as the rule of conduct, for the universal benefit. This view of the subject presents us with the characteristic differences, between the ideas we affix to *Virtue* and *Morality*, *Vice* and *Immorality*. Virtue is the beneficial energy of an intelligent agent, which, by being rendered obligatory, for the benefit of mankind, comes under the denomination of a *law*. This is called the *moral* law, or a law of moral obligation; which, for the sake of conciseness, is expressed by the term *morality*; and its opposite is called *immorality*. It consists of two parts:—the one relates

to the act, the other to the obligation to perform it. As virtue and vice primarily respect some beneficial or pernicious energy, voluntarily exerted by intelligent agents; morality and immorality, suggest to the mind certain principles by which, the performance of the one is enjoined upon us, and the others strictly prohibited. They both respect the production of good or evil; and it is this common property which has, in some cases, created a confusion in our ideas, as if they were in all respects synonymous; although in fact *virtue* relates to the *operative*; *morality* to the *injunctive*, or *obligatory principle* of conduct. Virtue, abstractedly considered, consists of efficacious means to obtain important ends. When the use of these means is rendered obligatory, the application of them is a *moral* act. The terms may be frequently used, promiscuously, with great propriety; for that which we deem to be *vicious*, when considered as a pernicious energy designedly exerted, is considered as *immoral* when we advert to the laws which are violated. But, whenever precision becomes important, an attention to existing differences becomes absolutely necessary.

The different modes of speech which are observed in some connections, give validity to these

remarks. We often talk of the *love of virtue*, but never of the *love of morality*; because absolute production of obvious good, is more immediately the object of our affection, than the law which enjoins it. We never substitute *virtuous* obligation for *moral* obligation: the primary idea of the word virtue being directed to the beneficial act or disposition, and that of morality to a law and a sense of duty. Hence we speak of *moral* duties, and not virtuons duties.

In every species of virtuous conduct, some determined exertion, implying a resistance to contrary propensities, is frequently practised. This peculiarity enters into the nature of virtue, and it manifests a self-command, a triumph over contrary inducements. Hence it is that we should perceive a great and irreverent impropriety, were any one to speak of the *virtues of Deity*; for the Deity cannot in any case, be supposed to combat his own inclinations, or make an effort to be good. But we mention, without hesitation, the *moral perfections* of Deity, because we acknowledge him to be invariably governed, in his conduct towards his creatures, by unerring rules of righteousness and goodness.

## SECT. II.

### ON MORAL SANCTIONS, OR THE INDUCEMENTS TO PRACTICE VIRTUE.

THE institution of laws necessarily implies, that the proposed end cannot be secured without them; and it also implies, that dispositions and habits of a contrary tendency, are to be opposed and subdued; which as necessarily requires some degree of coercion. But where physical coercion cannot be employed; where there are minds existing that have wills of their own; where obedience cannot be obtained, without giving a pliability to this will, bending or inclining it towards the desired object, the sole power of a legislator consists in placing certain inducements before the Subject, by which his will may be influenced to obey; the subject still retaining the power to disobey, if he choose to suffer the consequences of disobedience. These inducements are expected to act upon some principle, inherent in human nature; by exciting some particular desires, or favouring some particular disposition, which, if it existed before, might be too feeble to ensure a regular conformity. These are called *legal sanctions*, and

from their influence it is expected, that those rules and regulations should be observed, which are to produce the benefit proposed by instituting the law.

The sanction of all human laws, applies to the immediate interest of the Subject. It announces a something which is to operate upon his state of existence; rendering that more or less happy; or, in other words, it excites in the obedient the expectation of some recompense, and threatens the disobedient with chastisement. Thus human sanctions solely operate upon the passions of hope and fear. Nor do they expect that subjects in general should be influenced by any other motives. The recompense consists either of some pecuniary reward, increase of property, or accumulation of wealth; and these relate to the augmentation of such means of good, as may be employed, by the recipient at his option: Or it holds forth some honourable mark of distinction, by which the meritorious individual is elevated above the multitude; and exhibited as peculiarly worthy of their esteem and applause; this applies to the social principle of our nature, which is delighted with tokens of complacency from our associates: Or by a promotion to dignity and power; which not only are honourable distinctions, but give a permanent authority and influence in society, highly

gratifying to the ambitious. The punishments are mulcts and fines; corporal sufferings; privation of liberty; public marks of disgrace, by which the enjoyment of life is greatly diminished, or destroyed; and finally, by the extinction of life itself. Such are the modes by which human institutions and human legislators, attempt to subdue every reluctance to obey their mandates, or determine the will to a conformity to their precepts.

The various duties of morality, are of greater extent than any of those injunctions rendered obligatory, by human legislation. They are not confined to a few objects, but they relate to every purpose which interests individuals or societies in every state, and in every stage of their existence. They are obligatory upon the whole human race, in the characters of conscious intelligent agents; as searchers after well-being; and associated with others, who are incessantly engaged in the same pursuit: and they are expected to extend their influence to another state of existence, when all sublunary associations and governments shall be for ever abolished.

These important peculiarities suggest to us the very interesting questions, what are the inducements laid before all mankind, which ought to operate as motives, determining the will to practice every virtue, and discharge every moral duty? What

principles within us are favourable to the practice of virtue, and are violated by disobedience? and what will be the consequences resulting from these opposite modes of conduct?

The continuation of our moral history may perhaps throw considerable light upon these questions. We shall therefore first enquire, what do human beings expect from each other as rational and moral agents? What do they consider as the proper motives of action in general; a conformity or nonconformity to which, constitutes, in their opinion, various degrees of merit or demerit; and entitles the agent to approbation or censure? and how far are these applicable to moral conduct in particular?

We shall in the next place, take a comparative view of the various inducements, admitted to be legitimate motives to the practice of virtue, and examine which of these is most promising of efficacy; most correspondent with the nature, desires and expectations of men; the best security against the seductions of vice; and most conducive to personal well-being; in the discharge of those duties which have the general welfare for their object? The admitted inducements or legitimate motives to action, possess the following characters:

They are such as are most consistent with the best interests of the agent.

Such as are becoming a rational being.

Such as are adapted to the social nature of man.

Such as are most interesting to a cultivated mind.

Such as are enjoined by a superior who has a claim to obedience, and whose injunctions cannot, or ought not to be resisted.

### I. SELF-INTEREST.

The desire of well-being is natural to every being that exists. To seek personal good, and avoid misery therefore, will be universally admitted to be a proper motive of action. We never reprehend the utmost efforts of well directed self-love. We never censure until the claims of others are invaded, or there is an indication of cold neglect respecting them. In such cases we feel a satisfaction at the disappointment of the

selfish. We advert with pleasure to that constitution in our nature, by which it is ordained that inordinate self-love shall defeat its own purpose; and that the man who sacrifices the social affections to private interest, must be a stranger to true happiness. But whoever should totally neglect an attention to his own welfare, would be considered as in a disordered state of mind, and excite our pity, not our approbation of his disinterestedness.

As the pursuit of well-being naturally implies the pursuit of the proper means, and the due use of the means when they are possessed; thus, if the cultivation and practice of virtue be most conducive to private happiness, we shall applaud him who is actuated by the principle of self-love, to prefer this road in his pursuit of good, to every other. We acknowledge, that, as virtue is productive of great personal benefits; as contentment, patience, resignation, augment the good and diminish the evils of life; as diligence opens new sources of welfare; as a subjugation of the turbulent passions, imparts a pleasing serenity to the mind, and escapes the evils attendant upon vice and folly; as inward peace is the companion of integrity; and as in acts of benevolence the heart glows with satisfaction, so, that man is wise, who endeavours from a principle of self interest,

to excel in all these virtues; while the vicious, experience that public ignominy accompanies the self reproach to which they are liable, by the absurd and depraved manner in which their self interest has been directed.

When virtue is practised from a principle of self-love, it is obvious that the rewards expected, are the natural consequences flowing from virtuous conduct and dispositions; and on the other hand, the natural consequences of vice contain its punishment.

### II. RATIONAL CONDUCT.

It is certainly expected that rational beings should act rationally. It is the province of reason to discover the existence, nature, properties, relations, influence of things in general; to discern the best and the worst, in every state and situation; that we may be enabled to direct every power and property towards the grand object. It was for this purpose that we are endowed with all those intellectual faculties which have been minutely investigated. It is therefore most obvious, that we shall possess the intellectual faculties in vain, either if we neglect to exercise them, or act counter to the clear and decisive discoveries

they may have made. We possess these keen and penetrating powers, that we may discern the road to happiness, through the mists and intricacies that surround us; and when we have made the discovery, these very powers themselves, will pronounce a sentence of condemnation, as often as we neglect to profit by it.

If therefore it be a fact, that the virtues of prudence, discretion, justice, benevolence, are highly productive of good, and the only effectual guarantees against the various ills to which we are exposed; if it be a fact that imprudence, and every species of vice, are destructive to human happiness, we are compelled by the laws of reason, to love and practise virtue, and to hate and shun vice, as decidedly, as we are compelled by the law of nature, to love happiness and hate misery. It is the character of wisdom to apply knowledge to important uses; and utility always respects the production of some kind or degree of good. It is the character of folly, to make an improper application of the knowledge we may possess, by preferring trifles to interesting realities; by searching after happiness where she is never seated; and where of consequence she can never be found.

It is therefore deemed obligatory upon every rational being, that he act rationally; that is, that he pursue and promote the greatest possible good,

by the most proper means. By a virtuous conformity to the dictates of reason, man possesses, whilst he diffuses happiness. By acting irrationally, he is punished with the loss of that good which he might have obtained; reaps the pernicious consequences of his folly; loses the esteem of the wise and good; is placed in their opinion, below the common level of his species; and the report of his own consciousness informs him that he is not calumniated.

### III. THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLE.

The social nature of man, not only multiplies his pursuits, his duties, and his claims, but constitutes a large portion of his sufferings and his enjoyments. It is here that some of the choicest affections are placed. It was formerly observed that the social principle extending to the state, conduct, and character of others, operates according to the nature and degrees of their connexions with us; according to their powers of communicating or receiving from us, either good or evil; according to their enjoyments or expectations, their sufferings or apprehensions; according to their occasional or habitual deportment, and to the degrees of merit or demerit attached to their

dispositions and conduct, as intelligent and moral agents.* Hence arise the offices of discretion, justice, liberality, compassion and mercy; the conjugal, parental, filial, fraternal, friendly, and benevolent affections. Here also are placed the complacential regards of esteem, respect, veneration, gratitude, admiration. It is from this source that we feel the pangs of envy, hatred, rancour, anger, resentment, and are exposed to irrision, contempt, and execration.†

These various connexions and relations, are greatly cemented by the mutual desire of being acceptable to each other; and by the dread of incurring displeasure. Hence it is that we seek the esteem and friendship of those, whose opinions we value, and to whom we are well affected; that we resent the injuries and neglects which are discordant to the sociability of our own tempers; and pour contempt upon those who, frequently or habitually, act inconsistent with the harmony of social intercourse. Such sentiments and dispositions naturally induce us to inquire, what kind of conduct will be most grateful to our associates,

* See Phil. Treat. p. 118. † See Ethic. T. Sect. iv. p. 316. Also No. ix. of Introduct. where the passions and affections, proceeding from the social nature of man are particularly considered.

or may incur their resentment; and we shall be assiduous to pursue the one and avoid the other. Success in our endeavours will inspire joy and satisfaction, a failure will vex and chagrin us. A conviction that we have exposed ourselves to their just censures, and that we are disgraced in their opinion, will excite the painful sensations of self displacency, confusion, and shame.

When the sentiments of the society with which we are connected, are perfectly conformable to reason; when they are favourable to every virtue; when its members know how to praise or censure, precisely where they ought; this natural desire of approbation and fear of reproach, will prove a powerful incitement to the practice of virtue; and the apprehensions of disgrace may suppress our propensity to the vices, which may be deemed indecorous and shameful, and even bring them into disrepute with ourselves.

The good opinion of others, united with the convictions of reason, and true conceptions of self-interest, will be highly favourable to the practice of justice in all its ramifications; will strengthen our endeavours to bear the evils of life, with a patient composure; animate our courage in the hour of danger; and may restrain our propensity to the ignominious vices of indo-

lence, ebriety, and lewdness; and thus may they finally induce the contrary habits.

If we consider mankind as one large family, and remark that the practice of virtue is, from the very nature of virtue, essentially necessary to the good of the whole; we shall perceive the reason, why, in every country, some degree of respect is paid to those actions which are deemed virtuous; and that acknowledged vices are covered with disgrace. Even the most depraved are disposed to revere the virtues, they are not disposed to practice; and will openly condemn the vices to which they may be secretly attatched. In such cases, the desire of public esteem will implant a disposition to conceal, as much as possible, the vicious propensities that are not eradicated; and to counterfeit the more ostensible or reputable virtues. It is true, by this duplicity of conduct, they expose themselves to ridicule and contempt upon detection; but they pay a tribute to the importance of virtue, and the powerful influence of public opinion, by being thus impelled to acts of hypocrisy, and the forfeiture of self-esteem.

The divisions and subdivisions of human societies, are marked by some particular principles, uniformly adopted by the respective members, and constituting their chief bond of union. To deviate from these principles is deemed a trans-

gression, and resented as a violation of the laws and rules of the society: it is considered as ignominious, and punished with disgrace. Where no other punishment is inflicted, conformity is expected from a *principle of honour*; and the forfeiture of this honour is punished with the most poignant contempt. The motive for conformity to this principle and its rules, is denominated a *sense of honour*. It induces the member to perform some actions and avoid others, from a regard to character. He courts the applause of the community. He often makes a thousand sacrifices to support his reputation, and sometimes fears the disgrace of his associates, more than the loss of life. When the laws of such societies are conformable to the purest principles of virtue, they will prove powerful auxiliaries to every other motive. The influence of good example is as encouraging, as bad example is seductive; and the harmony peculiar to virtuous associations, cherishes the love of virtue.

It is obvious that the motives to virtue, derived from the social principle, abstractedly considered, may be resolved into a modification of self-love. The disposition to recommend ourselves to others, by an attention to character, or the desire of applause, has self-love for the spring of action; but

it is a spring more refined and more pliable. It is connected with a love of the species, of which inordinate self-love is destitute ; and thus it begins to withdraw the affections from within. Here we perceive a disposition to accommodate ; in the other, to oppose. The suggestions of inordinate self-love are now suppressed. We disdain to monopolize when we are solicitous to please.

It is manifest, that the recompence expected from these motives, consists in receiving the applause and approbation of our associates ; and the punishment of transgression, is censure and contempt.

### IV. THE BENEVOLENT PRINCIPLE.

This principle, consisting in good-will towards others, manifested by a solicitude for their welfare, and a delight in their prosperity, must be highly favourable to the practice of all the social virtues. Sordid selfishness, that enemy to public felicity, is subdued. The beneficial disposition is in readiness. Nothing is wanting but powers, and wisdom to direct. Wherever the benevolent principle is duly operative, it is at once a most delicate, and a most efficacious motive to the practice of every social virtue. It not only avoids grosser

injuries, it enters into the minutiæ of discretion. It moves circumspectly, that it may tread upon no one, even by inadvertency. It feels pain at the utterance of a word that might prove displeasing to others; or at the suggestion of a thought that might operate to their prejudice. It considers strict justice as being scarcely entitled to merit; and the violation of justice, however secret and secure from censure, is most repugnant to its nature. It not only accommodates itself to the claims, but to the wants of others. It shapes its conduct, not according to what they have a right to expect, but to what they may require. It earnestly examines what evils it can remove; what afflictions it can soothe; from what dangers it can protect; what pleasures it can communicate. It cheerfully denies itself many indulgences, that others may rejoice in its bounty. It encounters many difficulties, to extricate those who are involved in greater. Benevolence is the animated and active principle of love; directing its benign influence over every created being, that is endowed with the power of sensation. It loves every species of virtue, because it perceives that virtue is conducive to happiness: It hates vice more than common venom, because of its more baneful effects.

We have already stated, that, as the extent of its influence cannot be equal to the wishes of a benevolent heart, as boundless good will cannot supply every exigency, it is compelled to select; and while some objects participate its bounty, others must remain destitute. This circumstance takes away the charge of culpable neglect, respecting particular omissions; and he whose dispositions and actions are directed by judgment and discrimination, is exempt from the penalty of censure or reproach, although his bounty should not extend to every indigent object. This wise use of a discretionary power is one cause, why each particular act of beneficence is in higher estimation than those of simple justice; why it excites admiration in the spectator, and the warmest gratitude in the participant. There are also more gradations in the exercise of this virtue, than in any other. Those acts of benevolence in which the selfish principle is most suppressed, in which compassion triumphs over apprehensions for personal safety, and mercy over the claims of rigid justice, or a spirit of resentment, are the most admired and extolled.

It is a great peculiarity in this principle of action, that we agree to consider the merit the greater, because the immediate obligation is the least. Admitting, that the laws of social intercourse de-

mand, not only that we should be just, but that we should be kind to each other, yet as they do not prescribe any specific rules, respecting either the object or the degrees of our exertion, these can alone be arranged by the nicer discernments of the intellect, and the genuine benevolence of the heart; and where the former discriminates well, and the other cheerfully excites to exertions and sacrifices, far beyond the demands of justice, we perceive the operation of a much superior principle. We applaud generous actions with peculiar emphasis, because they might have been omitted without the penalty of disgrace. We reward with those choice affections, love, gratitude, and admiration, the man who would not have been exposed to censure, had he not thus soared above the usual level of humanity. Benevolence has also the choicest rewards arising from within; those of joy, satisfaction, and self-complacence. The man whose whole deportment is strictly just, will add to the esteem and approbation of others, a certain degree of self-esteem, from the consciousness of his integrity; but in proportion to strenuous exertions and sacrifices, made for the promotion of happiness, will be the glow of self-complacence in the attempt, and of joy in the successful issue. A triple recompence thus attends successful beneficence. It participates in the hap-

piness of the object assisted; secures the approbation and respect of the worthy, sometimes to a great degree of admiration and love; and enjoys self-complacence from the superior character of its motives. The benevolent man reflects upon a deed of humanity with the greater delight, because he knows the good of the *sufferer*, and not *his own*, was predominant at the time; and the more *disinterested* the motive, the greater will be the recompence of self-complacence upon reflection.

The direct opposite to benevolence, is a spirit of malevolence in its designs, in its character, and in its sensations. Its designs are to inflict misery; its character is despicable; and its sensations are tormenting. There is some degree of pleasure attending the gratifying of every passion; with the exception of fear, which has no gratifications, and is absolute unqualified misery. But a malevolent temper can only enjoy momentary flashes of triumph, upon the success of some mischievous purpose, or the gratification of revenge; and these momentary flashes leave the mind in darkness and misery; dissatisfied with itself, corroded with envy and rancour, and probably stung with remorse. It is happy for mankind, that the self-tormenting nature of malevolence, is a kind of check upon its indulgence. Were there greater pleasures in the

indulgence, it would be guilty of more extensive mischiefs; while benevolence is formed, in its own nature, for the widest expansion; and the more it is expanded, the more it is enjoyed by the individual bosom in which it dwells *.

### V. THE BEAUTY AND EXCELLENCE OF VIRTUE.

We have had frequent occasion to observe, that our strongest attachment to many objects, is, at first, inspired by our considering them as the means and instruments of well-being; and from their having answered this desirable purpose, in particular instances, we finally place our affections upon them. Pleasing emotions are excited by the view of what has been beneficial; as we feel a repugnance at the sight of whatever can inflict an injury. The latent power of even inanimate objects to produce good, suggests pleasing, we had almost said *grateful* ideas. Hence that universal attachment to gold, or any other representative of wealth; and of wealth in all its forms. We know their powers to furnish a thousand pleasures and accommodations to the possessor, according to the nature of his wants, or the sugges-

* See Phil. Treat. art. Hatred, p. 29, passim

tions of his fancy. Our insatiable desires after happiness induce us to rejoice in an overflow of the means; and, although we may not be able to enjoy the whole, of whatever these means may be able to provide, we rest satisfied in the command we may have over them, according to the dictates of our own volition. These properties stamp such an intrinsic value upon them, in our estimation, that they become the objects of our *affection*, unconnected with any immediate design to render them efficient; and this has induced many philosophers to suppose, that we love some objects for their own sakes, independently of any benefit to be expected from them *.

Again, contemplative minds enjoy a satisfaction, in tracing the various kinds of relation which one thing may bear to another; in perceiving every species of adaptation in means to specific ends; and in contemplating plans and designs accommodated to particular purposes; although they may not have an interest in their efficiency. We love every thing which appears harmonious and graceful; and we are powerfully attracted by those objects, which are able to excite pleasing emotions within us. It is the gratification arising from the above sources, which constitutes the

* See Vol. I. Note E.

pleasure of the mathematician, the mechanic, the philosopher, the poet; of artists in every department; and excites admiration in the breast of every one, in whom judgment and taste are united.

Thus the man who contemplates virtue, as the means of happiness, will be struck with its superior adaptations, and transcendent excellencies. When he meditates upon the good it secures to the agent; the good it confers upon others; the order, regularity, and harmony, that preside in societies which conform to its dictates; the horrors suffered by the perpetrators of vice; the wretchedness they spread over a community; if every spark of virtue be not extinguished within his own breast, he will most cordially approve of the one, and condemn the other. In proportion as his own virtuous habits and propensities become strong and vigorous, will he be charmed with the beauty of virtue. He will turn from the deformity of vice, with disgust and detestation. These virtuous and moral sensations will themselves communicate such refined and exalted pleasure in the contemplator, that he may finally love virtue from a clear perception of its intrinsic worth. He may contemplate it with pleasure as performed by others;

without its immediate agency being beneficial to himself.

Such is the native excellence of virtue; so respectable is every indication of beneficial influence, or beneficial intentions, proceeding from a voluntary agent; so interesting in itself; so consonant with reason; so essential to human happiness; that it is impossible not to love it, when it does not prohibit some favourite passion or pursuit. All men honour virtue. All men detest the vices of others, with whom they are not in a league. All men value the smallest particle of virtue, which they may chance to discover in their own breasts; and they are eager to steal a colouring from the proximate virtue, to adorn the vice to which they are addicted. The pleasure derived from the most striking events of history, from fictitious scenes described in works of imagination, or exhibited on the stage, prove that the general suffrage is in favour of virtue. We may *laugh* at the wit which is connected with vicious ideas, but we never *approve*. The warmth of applause is always reserved for the triumphs of virtue. We are anxious for those, whose virtuous principles are exposed to severe and dangerous conflicts; we lament if they yield, and exult in their victories. We rejoice when villany is caught in its own

snares; and we retire gratified, when the curtain falls, on the just vengeance inflicted upon a monster.

These are indications of an inward and deep respect for virtue, which may exist in the breasts of those who are prevented, by habits of depravity, from the practice of it. How congenial therefore must it be to the minds of those who have been habituated to the practice of virtue! Who feel its benignant influence in their own conduct; and who are witnesses to the peace, order, harmony, and joy, diffused, according to the sphere of its influence! To the pleasures arising from the approving decisions of his judgment, from personal advantages in the course of a virtuous conduct, from the esteem of the worthy, from a heart glowing with benevolence; the man of confirmed virtue, adds the pleasures derived from a refined and exalted *taste.* He admires the *beauty* of right conduct. The symmetry derived from well-ordered affections, is far more interesting to him, than that of forms painted on the canvas, or chiseled out in marble. The voice of harmony, arising from the chearfulness of virtuous innocence, delights his ear more than all the melodies of music. The grandeur of virtue rising superior to every misfortune or seduction, constitutes, with

him, the *true sublime*; and excites in his breast, the elevated emotions of admiration and delight, to a much higher degree, than can be produced by the majesty of Nature itself!

### VI. POSITIVE INJUNCTIONS.

The principles we expect to operate as motives to action, and peculiarly appropriate to virtuous actions, which we have hitherto mentioned, originate from the nature and constitution of man, in his individual and social capacity. The rewards of right action are various species of good, which naturally arise from prudent, rational, equitable, benevolent conduct, and the inward satisfaction which accompanies such conduct. The punishment ensuing from opposite conduct, consists in a loss of some good; exposure to evil; censure from others; and self-disapprobation. These principles, observed or violated, are considered as laws of conduct. Thus, we speak of the law of prudence, the law of reason, the laws of society, of humanity, &c. These are deemed obligatory upon all mankind. We are bound to act conformably to them, or we forfeit our title to prudence, rationality, integrity, and humanity.

But there are other motives of conduct, and occasionally of virtuous conduct, in which the idea of *law* and *obligation* is much more obvious; and in some of which, care is taken to render the penalties as formidable as possible. To these a reference was made at the commencement of the present Chapter. These laws and injunctions may consist of certain rules and ordinances of our own; or they may be instituted by an authority we cannot, or ought not to resist.

Men, in their social character, and engaged in the complicated concerns of life, may agree to conform to certain regulations of their own appointment, which are enforced by various penalties threatened to the disobedient. These laws may not always have the practice of every virtue for their primary object. They may relate to certain conveniencies, or some local or partial utility; and the only virtue they require may consist in strict attention and obedience to the rules. The laws of states and civil communities, aim at the protection of person and property, from secret injury or open violence. Thus far they lend their aid to the other inducements to practise the virtue of justice; and they may be powerful restraints from many vices, to which the impetuous passions and depraved desires of men might impel them.

It is a peculiarity attendant upon human laws, that their sanctions chiefly operate upon the fears of men. In those which relate to the political œconomy of a country, *Hope* has, with a few exceptions, simply a reference to advantages to be enjoyed in common; such as the security of life and property; a general encouragement to traffic; exemptions from the burdens of particular requisitions, &c. Fear is chiefly personal. It has for its exciting cause, some evil menaced to offending individuals exclusively. The leading idea of Obligation is closely connected with the painful sensation of dread; and the magnitude of the offence is thus measured by the magnitude of the punishment. Among these punishments, disgrace and ignominy are constant attendants. In a country where a depravity of manners is prevalent, the mind is rendered familiar to many misdemeanors, from the force of evil example; but when the offender is singled out as a greater delinquent than any of his associates, when he stands alone as a criminal, he is exposed to the gaze and censure of the public at large; and the punishment of shame and ignominy is felt as the severest part of the penalty.

The power of individuals to enjoin obedience, is exemplified in the connexion that subsists between parents and their offspring; tutors and pu-

pils; masters and servants; free men and slaves; and in the uncontrouled authority of a sovereign. In these instances, the rewards and penalties, annexed to obedience and disobedience, are of various kinds. Filial obedience is expected from a child to his parents, from the consideration that they are the sources of his existence, the immediate agents and promoters of his well-being. Hence it is, that many offences against precepts, which may not have the practice of any particular virtue for their immediate object, may become criminal acts. *Disobedience* is a crime. Obedience to parents has for its recompense, their affectionate approbation, occasional encouragements and indulgences, and all the advantages arising from wise and salutary injunctions. The penalties of disobedience, consist in the displeasure of their parents, the additional punishments they may think it proper to inflict, and the natural consequences arising from the perverse negligence of wise counsels.

Obedience and disobedience to preceptors, tutors, &c. are virtually the same as to parents, of whom these delegates are the representatives, and by whose authority they act. The connexion between a master and a servant, is, in a *free country*, wholely conditional. The terms stipulated mark the line of duty; the advantages resulting

from obedience, and the disadvantages of disobedience; to which may be added, what contributes much to the happiness or unhappiness of this state, the satisfaction or dissatisfaction expressed by the superior.

The authority of a free man over his slave, must be ultimately resolved into the right of the strongest. The idea of obligation, is chiefly connected with that of punishment for disobedience. The dread of severe chastisement, is the habitual incitement to strict obedience. The kind and liberal disposition of the master, has sometimes operated upon the more ingenuous affections; has inspired both gratitude and hope; and while it has softened the hardships of servitude, it has augmented fidelity, and animated to minute and unremitted obedience, seldom equalled by those whose service is conditional, not compulsive.

Similar to the power of a master over his slave, is the authority of a despotic monarch, whose will constitutes the law of his subjects, and who rules the state according to his sovereign pleasure. The profusion of rewards it is in his power to bestow, or the dreadful punishments he can inflict, without controul, strongly operate upon the hopes and fears of those subjected to his domination; and render them most obsequious to his will.

*Religion.* Still more important ideas respecting the will of a superior, are inspired by *religious opinions.*

It has been the prevailing sentiment of mankind, in every age, that a connexion subsists between the human race, and a being, or beings of a much superior order; who not only direct the affairs of the present world, communicate blessings, or inflict evils in our passage through life, but have the future destiny of mortals in their own hands. It is believed, that some actions and dispositions are acceptable to these beings, and will ensure their future favour; while others will provoke their anger, and expose the offender to its dreadful consequences. These sentiments characterize Religion, according to the most comprehensive sense of the term. Religion, therefore, is the connecting medium between two worlds. By it, a prospect is opened of human existence beyond the limits of the grave, and solemn apprehensions of protracted misery, or cheering hopes of protracted felicity, are implanted in the breast. The obscurities that veil this subject, leave ample scope for the imagination to form a thousand conceptions of its own; but although most of these may be absurd, and contradictory to each other, yet every individual who admits them, is compelled to consider himself as placed in a situation infi-

nitely more important than if no connexion subsisted; or if the present existence of man were to terminate in annihilation. That desire of personal good, which operates so powerfully, when we feel ourselves under the controul of our fellow men, and which induces us to obey their severest injunctions, from perceiving that they are the arbiters of our fate, will naturally operate with superior force, under the conviction, that there are invisible beings above us, whom no mortal can oppose; possessing the power of dispensing rewards and punishments, the nature and extent of which are beyond human conceptions. Under the influence of such ideas, the obligations to obey will be most impressively felt. The high importance of these sentiments, is acknowledged and expressed by the word *Religion*. It is used exclusively, to distinguish the reverence and obedience *due* to such superior beings, from every other species of *obligation*. The word, in its etymology, signifies being *firmly bound*; being tied, as it were, again and again, destitute of all power to escape. Hence it is also, that a peculiarity of language is introduced, with universal consent, in order to strike the mind with solemn awe and reverence, as often as a reference is made to subjects which have an immediate relation to religion. Thus, an address to a superior invisible agent, is

termed an act of *worship*; and although the word is sometimes applied to mortals of high authority, it is obviously in a metaphorical sense, and in a style of adulation. The edifices set apart for offices of religion, are denominated *temples*; and they are said to be *consecrated.* These temples, and every appurtenance belonging to them, are venerated as *holy* or *sacred.* Those who are scrupulously attentive to the supposed commands of a deity, are said to be *pious*; and those who pay frequent and grateful acknowledgments are *devout*; praise is *adoration*; submission becomes *resignation*; and every other virtuous act performed from a sense of duty, does not simply retain its virtuous or moral nature, it rises into religious obedience. On the other hand, vice is considered as *sin*; to neglect the duties of morality, is not simply immoral, it is *wicked*; to think or speak irreverently on divine subjects is *profane*; and to set the laws of heaven at open defiance, is *profligacy*. A contempt of religion is *impiety*; and the robbery of temples and churches, is distinguished from common theft, by the more awful name of *sacrilege*.

These facts manifest that mankind unite to consider religious duties, to be the most obligatory of any; that the consequences of disobedience are supposed to be more tremendous and alarming;—that

obedience to beings superior to mortals, and whom no mortal can controul, is a mark of the truest wisdom; that the commands of such beings, are entitled to a precedency over the most exalted, and the most powerful of their own species; in a word, that we are bound, by all the ties of wisdom and prudence to *obey*, however opposite such commands may be to the propensities of the heart.

The motives to obedience from this source, are obviously founded upon the principle of self-interest, ardently desiring to possess the greatest possible good, and to escape from the most tremendous evils; and they operate solely upon our hopes and fears.

*Fear* is manifestly the strongest of all human passions. When it takes full possession of the mind, it suspends sorrow; extinguishes joy; checks the natural impetuosity of anger; nor can the affection of *Love* dwell with a servile dread. Every act committed under the immediate terror of punishment, menaced by a power which cannot be resisted, is deemed an act of compulsion; and it is admitted as an apology, or an alleviation, where the deeds performed are in themselves nefarious. But the fear of an agent whom no mortal can resist, is expected to be still more operative. The superiority of his nature, strikes awe into the mind;

the extent of his power being unknown, leads the imagination to consider it to be unbounded; and the might of the greatest earthly potentate appears to be imbecility, when placed in competition with it.

*Hope* is the next powerful incitement, acting in an opposite direction. It animates to that line of conduct, which is not only calculated to mitigate fear, but to procure actual enjoyment. Here an impressive sense of an unlimited power to communicate good, encourages the expectation that this good will infinitely exceed the utmost that mortals can bestow. History informs us, that the union of these two principles has induced ignorant votaries, with which absurd religions abound, to make every sacrifice, in order to escape evils of a still greater magnitude. They have patiently submitted to the severest hardships, in hopes of rendering themselves acceptable to the powers they worshipped, and averting their wrath. Of this truth the voluntary sufferings of different kinds, sustained with amazing fortitude by various devotees of the East, and by the monks of the Romish church, in the days of gross superstition, furnish many examples.

From this view of the nature and influence of religion, considered in the more enlarged accepta-

tion of the term, it is manifest that when ideas formed of religion are consonant with those of moral duties, they must be very powerful incitements to the practice of virtue. When it is uniformly believed that the injunctions of a superior, extend to every ramification of virtue, the belief promises to be most influential in maintaining an uniform tenor of virtuous obedience. Nothing can weaken its influence, but the apparent distance of time between the discharge of the duty, and the enjoyment of the expected reward; between the disobedience and the infliction of the punishment apprehended. This interval gives occasion to sensible objects to exert that power inherent in sensible objects, of seducing the mind from the paths of virtue, by the promise of present gratifications. A desire to indulge some forbidden passion, secretly suggests to the mind, that repentance, obedience, sacrifices and austerities, at any period of this intermediate space, will be sufficient to avert the contingent punishment, and perhaps entitle to the desired recompense.

It must, therefore, be readily admitted, that when a superior being, whose authority is irresistible, commands mortals to practise virtue, and enforces these commands by the sanction of rewards and punishments, the discharge of the duties

enjoined, becomes obligatory upon men as rational and as interested beings. They would otherwise be guilty of the egregious folly, of sacrificing the choicest good human nature can enjoy, and exposing themselves to the most tremendous evils it can suffer.

We perceive, from the above analytical survey, that, as the duties of morality have a much more extensive influence on human welfare, than any laws instituted by human authority, moral sanctions are more numerous and important; and inducements, are multiplied according to the diversities of obligation. Human laws chiefly operate upon the fears of individuals. Individual offenders suffer in the most exemplary manner, while the obedient are merely partakers of the general good. But in the practice of virtue, and according to the laws of morality, every particular act brings with it a certain recompense. Personal virtues amply repay the agent by the evil he escapes, or the positive good he enjoys. Justice, so essential to public security, peace, and harmony, is rewarded by inward tranquility, not to be disturbed by the risk of detection; and by the incalculable advantages derived from a good and upright character. Be-

nevolence enjoys abundantly in the very act of obedience to its dictates. Meditation upon these laws of morality, which secure and diffuse so much good, and which have such distinguished marks of excellence, gives infinitely more delight to the contemplative mind, trained to virtue, than can be enjoyed by the investigation of obscure, partial, accommodating laws of human beings; which are not always wise or good, and under the best regulations, have a tendency to prejudice one class of individuals, in order to benefit another. When to these we add the sanctions of religion, respecting either rewards or punishments, they are acknowledged to exceed either in encouragements or terrors, every promulgation, merely human, beyond the power of imagination to conceive.

## SECT. III.

### COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE MOTIVES ENUMERATED, RESPECTING THEIR DEGREES OF INFLUENCE UPON MORAL CONDUCT.

Although each of the above motives or incitements to action be good in itself, and be approved by every man, yet there is a considerable difference in their respective degrees of power and extent of application, when they are considered as motives to the practice of virtue. They are not equally subservient to its cause, in every state and situation, wherein the moral agent may be placed. We shall therefore endeavour to investigate, with all the precision in our power, the respective merits and defects of each; and ascertain their peculiar characteristics; that we may learn which of the inducements is most to be depended upon, in our expectations of the steady, uniform practice of every virtue, and the extensive diffusion of the beneficial influence of virtue, among mankind. We shall follow the order observed in the preceding section.

## *Self-Interest.*

It is a happy constitution of our nature, that interest and duty should be able to unite; and that while we are actually promoting the welfare of others, we may be gainers by the success, and even by the attempt. But self-interest does not always influence the mind in this manner. It is not a *motive to virtue alone.* It is, of all the principles of action, the most general. It excites to every kind of exertion which respects ourselves; whether it refer to the gratification of the natural appetites; indulgence of the passions; solicitude about the necessaries, comforts, elegancies of life. It prompts to the pursuit of pleasure, wealth, power. It is operative in all our expectations from others, and greatly influences our conduct towards them. Self-interest, imperfectly understood, is obvious in every *vicious* affection; in every malignant and self-tormenting passion; and in every nefarious action. To be influential, therefore, as a motive to *virtuous* actions, presupposes a due preparation in the mind of the agent. An enlarged perception, and a well disciplined heart are essentially requisite. No small degree of penetration is necessary to be able to keep this in-

terest in view, in the midst of those sacrifices which virtue may demand; to be convinced, that by submitting to a present loss, we shall be remunerated by future gain; and that we shall ultimately augment our happiness, by opposing the strongest propensities of the heart. Self-restraint, when the passions are strong, and the objects of the immediate gratification are before us, will not be the *first* disposition suggested to the mind, by the principle of self-interest; but it will demand the clearest perceptions, the fullest conviction, and the firmest resolution, not to prefer the present good, which courts our affections, to the prospect of good in reversion. We cannot expect such motives to act powerfully and uniformly, upon the minds of those whose passions are strong, whose judgments are weak, and whose habits are inveterate. Thus, notwithstanding it be admitted as an indubitable truth, that virtuous dispositions and habits are the most conducive to permanent well-being, yet it is a truth concealed from the ignorant and vicious: a depraved mind is not easily convinced, that the subjugation of the propensities, which are considered as the prime sources of enjoyment, is essential to its welfare. Nor will it be able to comprehend, that a renunciation of personal enjoyments, and a preference

given to the interests of others, is the securest road to personal well-being.

## *Conformity to Reason.*

The obligation to act according to the dictates of reason, certainly extends itself through every stage of our existence, from the first dawn of reason, to the dissolution of our intellectual faculties. It is a contradiction in terms to assert, that a being endowed with rationality, is permitted to act irrationally in a single instance. To be governed by reason is the grand prerogative of human beings. This faculty was given to direct every part of our conduct; to influence our choice; plan our pursuits; remove our embarrassments; superintend our pleasures; and to convince us of the superior importance of virtue. But the reasoning powers of every man are not, like instinct, perfect and unerring. The power is implanted, but the exercise is our own work; and it is a progressive work. It has been shewn, in another place *, that we are compelled to travel through perception, attention, inquiry, &c. &c. before we can arrive at a just discernment and a wise decision. If it be a fact, that man is born in ignorance, and that the appe-

* See Vol. II. Intellectual Powers.

tites and passions are in exercise, before reason is prepared to direct or controul them; it is no less a fact, that the unerring decisions of reason require much observation, and repeated experience, before a conviction can be obtained of the evils resulting from vicious irregularities, or just notions can be formed of the moral nature and tendency of human actions;—before we are able to examine the principles imbibed in our early days, receiving the sanction of example, and confirmed by habit; or resolve strenuously to oppose the rapid currents which may set in, against the uniform practice of that which is right in itself, and most beneficial in its effects. If these positions be acknowledged, it must also be allowed, that much is to be done before human nature can act uniformly as it ought, by the simple dictates of reason.

When we shall have learned to esteem and value, that mode of conduct which we deem to be virtuous, in consequence of enjoying its beneficial influence; and shall reprobate every vice which has proved pernicious; yet in the infancy of reason, many disgraceful mistakes may be made concerning the nature of particular actions. Through unavoidable ignorance, we may call evil —good; and good—evil. Communities of a small and of a large size, have not unfrequently

formed systems to themselves, which higher degrees of mental culture and civilization, have not only demonstrated to be erroneous, but detestable. Among the Gentoos, the virtuous and pious affections of the wife, are manifested by her determination to commit her body to the flames, in honour of the deceased husband; that is, by an act of self-murder. More civilised nations will admire the calm heroism of the sufferer, but execrate the custom. The Fakeer imagines it to be indubitable, that the conduct most acceptable to deity, consists in resolutely persevering in the most absurd and painful attitudes. Monks in the Romish church, have placed the idea of acceptable religion, and incumbent duty, in the observance of ridiculous vows and austerities of their own devising. Mussulmen have, without remorse, killed their children, upon a reverse of fortune, lest they should be reduced to the disgrace of poverty. We are told by Herodotus, that the primitive Greeks placed virtue in actions, which characterize with us, a lawless banditti; that is, in murdering the innocent, impotent, and unwary: and the wild Arabs are modern instances of the same principles. Among the Spartans, thefts committed with ingenuity and address, so as to escape detection, were encouraged as meritorious. Xenophon informs us, in his Cyropædia, that not only false-

hood and treachery were inculcated against national enemies, but at one period of the Grecian history, pedagogues were appointed to instruct youth in the arts of lying and deceit, until the scholars became too great adepts for the community to subsist. After Astyages had instructed his son Cyrus in every moral principle, the youth was surprised at the information, that these precepts related solely to members of the same community, or those in subjection to it; and that every species of treachery and deceit, towards an enemy, belonged to the science of war. These, and numerous instances of the same complexion, evince, that a considerable degree of moral culture is necessary, before persons of the most virtuous dispositions, acquire a knowledge of what is due from one human being to another; or become divested of those local and national prejudices, which render the laws of humanity of so contracted and partial an influence.

It has already been hinted, that the punishment of irrational conduct arises from the effect of such conduct. He that acts contrary to the dictates of his own reason, exposes himself to all the consequences of his folly, and the reproaches of his own mind. If he act irrationally, in opposition to the advice of his wiser counsellors, he will suffer the addition of their just reproaches. If a whole com-

munity be governed by absurd and irrational principles, its members may be too ignorant and insensible to reproach each other; but they must suffer a diminution of that good, which right principles and conduct would have ensured; and they may receive incalculable injuries from communities, that are wiser than themselves.

Thus, as reason is not of speedy growth, and proposes no other sanction to its dictates, than the natural consequences of things; as it is extremely liable to be obscured by involuntary ignorance, confirmed habits, and inveterate prejudices, which may be diffused over a whole community, we cannot expect, motives from this source, to be universally operative; or to possess power sufficient to stem the tide of vicious propensities, and counteract the force of evil example. A mind must be well informed, truly philosophic, perfectly calm, and exempt from dispositions and propensities which reason does not authorize, to be induced to walk in the paths of virtue, simply by the rule of right, without the co-operation of more interesting inducements.

## *The Social Principle.*

When the social principle manifests itself in particular affections and predilections, by which a

solicitude for the happiness of another is excited, these affections will induce us to promote the happiness of the beloved object; and the principle will be a faithful guardian of all those virtues which are termed social, as far as these strong affections shall extend †. It will insure just and honourable conduct; and it fosters a spirit of benevolence, by the repetition of beneficent actions. But the motives derived from this principle are, at first, very partial and circumscribed in their influence. It is long before they will induce a man to forego, in any degree, his own personal welfare for the benefit of any one, who is not an intimate acquaintance. Nor does the social principle imply a spirit of universal benevolence. In many cases it becomes hostile to this spirit, by forming associations tenacious of peculiar and exclusive rights, guaranteed to each other by its respective members.

But the social principle is not always favourable to virtue, even in these circumscribed and partial associations. It may simply be a modification of self interest. Personal advantage may be the only bond of union; and the approbation or censure of the society, may be the grand inducements to obey its rules. The most influential motive may

† See Vol. II. Sect. IV. Social Attachments, p. 316.

consist in what is termed a *sense of honour*, that is, a solicitude to obtain approbation, or to avoid disgrace.

The principal advantage attendant upon this motive of conduct is, that it dislodges insulated self-love. It permits actions to extend their benefit to others, from a principle of more refined selfishness; and it may be favourable to the practice of social virtues, even from a respect to self.

When we seek reputation and applause, by actions which are in themselves commendable, the influence of this motive will naturally lead us to display the more popular and striking virtues, without paying due attention to those of a more private nature. We may appear courteous, liberal, humane, in our public character, while we secretly practise the vices of fraud and peculation. It is possible that we may practise these, in order to obtain applause by popular actions. Humility, patience, contentment, being destitute of splendour, will not be noted down among our maxims of conduct; and we may possibly despise those who cultivate these virtues, as being feeble-minded, and destitute of spirit. The fear of censure and contempt, may operate to the concealment of our vices, and not their eradication; and a confidence of security from the

inspection of others, will remove every restraint upon the indulgence.

As the love of praise, and the principle of honour, operate with equal propriety upon different communities, they may possibly *promote* rather than *subdue* those animosities which are so fatal to the peace of mankind; and which the universal practice of virtue would completely annihilate. *A sense of honour* induces a warrior to expose himself to numerous difficulties and dangers, in attacking the enemies of his country; and a *sense of honour*, animates his antagonist to resist the attack with ardour and intrepidity. Thus one class of true patriots destroys another class, and spreads distress, at which humanity shudders, but "they are all honourable men." It may also be remarked, that as in every contest, one party must be the aggressor and the other the aggrieved, this honourable principle must frequently be enlisted on the side of injustice, and exert its prowess to the injury of the innocent.

The love of distinction, and a thirst of glory, which characterize this principle, are also subject to another unfavourable circumstance. Pre-eminence cannot be conferred upon multitudes. Although the love of glory may animate multitudes to exploits, highly advantageous to the common weal, yet the honour, being shared among many

individuals, it is proportionably diminished in its value. A state may possibly arrive to such a height of military glory, that heroism may become a familiar virtue; and the disgrace of not being heroic, may be much greater than the renown acquired by the display of this virtue. The repetition of magnanimous deeds, shall receive the award of simple approbation, and no longer call forth its proper recompense, the enthusiastic applause and admiration of the public; while the want of this virtue, shall be the more severely stigmatised, from its being unusual. Happily for its inhabitants, Great Britain has long been in this singular situation. The skill and valour of our forces, both by land and on the ocean, have so repeatedly performed wonders, that they cease to be wonders. The praises conferred upon one army or one fleet, have been the repetition of former encomiums. The hero, who has fallen for his country's good, at a former period, lies buried and almost forgotten, under heaps of heroes of a more recent date.

A *sense of honour* depends, in its operations and effects, upon the opinions of others. It must therefore be as various as their opinions are various; and thus it may excite to actions of the most opposite nature. The numberless advantages derived from the intimacies of social inter-

course, inspire the disposition to accommodate ourselves to their maxims and manners; but these may lead to the commission of every extravagance, and foster every vice. It is the fear of incurring ignominy, by violating the customs of her country, that prompts the female Indian to self-destruction. The love of fame may pervert the judgment to so great a degree, that such deeds as are the most condemned by unperverted reason, shall obtain the highest applause. Of this kind are the exploits of pirates and marauders. It is this which constitutes the virtuous prowess of the wild Arab, in the opinion of his countrymen; and animates him to rob or murder the unwary stranger, with triumph and exultation, unmixed with compassion or remorse.

We have already observed, that greater and less divisions of society, are distinguished by some particular principle received by their respective members; a deviation from which is resented, as a culpable violation of the rules and orders of the society; and is punished by all the disgrace its members can inflict. But there may be societies formed, whose principles are diametrically opposite to the principles of virtue; even in a country where the principles of virtue are well known and highly revered. There are associations of gamesters, for example, where the sole object of the members is

to despoil each other ; where they professedly meet " to undo or be undone ;" but HONOUR sits as president in the assembly, and dictates her commands in so loud a tone, as to silence the voice of justice and humanity. The debts of honour, that is, debts rashly incurred by a casual throw of the die, an unfavourable shuffling of the cards, or mistakes of the gamester; debts contracted by an eagerness to obtain the fortune of an associate, without any other equivalent than that of exposure to the same danger, are discharged with scrupulous exactness, while the honest and industrious tradesman, without whose aid they would not have been admitted to the seducing table, is exposed to embarrassments, and even to bankruptcy itself, by the unjust conduct of these *most honourable men*.

In like manner does a high sense of honour, as it is deemed, impose the cruel task upon a man, naturally courteous and humane, to suppress every worthy principle and exalted feeling; forbid him to indulge his inward disposition to forget a slight inadvertency, or the improprieties committed at a momentary impulse; and impel him to seek the life of his friend; to deprive society of one, perhaps two valuable members; to spread horrors over amiable and once happy families ; and satiate this honour by the commission of a deed,

which implants anguish in his breast, during the remainder of his days.

But this principle goes further. It constitutes the bond of union in a horde of banditti. While they laugh at general censure, and despise public punishment, they cannot support the contempt of their associates in iniquity. The fear of reproach inspires them with the desperate courage to rob and murder; and they expect renown from their comrades, in exact proportion to the atrocity of their conduct. Honour places the stiletto in the hands of a professed assassin, who is ready to plunge it into any breast to which his engagement directs; and who would think himself a disgrace to his profession, were he to relent, through the feelings of humanity, or divert the blow from the innocent and unsuspecting, to his guilty employer *.

## *The Benevolent Principle.*

From what has been advanced concerning the nature, influence, aud even personal recompense, attendant upon the endeavour to promote general happiness, or to practise universal benevolence,

* Note C.

it must appear to be much superior, in the extent of its efficacy, to any other motive that has been examined. It is both minute and universal in its operations. It avoids every possible injury at all times; and penetrates into the recesses of misery in order to relieve. But as it is an exalted, so is it a *rare* virtue; and it is peculiarly slow in growth. Self-love is prior to the social affections, apt to be much stronger in its influence, and more uniformly operative. A temper naturally sordid, an indiscreet indulgence of self-love in childhood and youth, and the adoption of contracted maxims, in more advanced life, or stages of society, under the supposition that they are *prudent* and *politic*, too frequently confine the benevolent disposition to narrow circles, when it begins to develope.

Those who maintain that benevolence is, in fact, a species of self-interest, a *refined* self-interest rightly understood, must acknowledge that this position is not an obvious truth. It is a discovery which can only result from much culture, and self-discipline, and habits of practice. It is long before the multitude will be purified from the dross of that more obvious selfishness, which consists in an appropriation to our own immediate use, or being the perpetual guardians of our own safety; and is a stranger to the satisfaction of yielding to

others whatever it is able to grasp to its own advantage. When the excellence of benevolence is acknowledged, it will gain many inactive admirers, to one genuine proselyte. The majority will applaud much sooner than they will imitate. We frequently observe also, that persons who are far from being destitute of this principle, will remain satisfied with a few occasional exertions of it; with the relief of such distress as presents itself immediately to the view, or as their affections are raised by striking and pathetic representations, rather than act upon it as a steady uniform principle, capable of infinite ramifications in the social intercourse, and of producing good in all.

A benevolence permanently operative, requires mental discipline of the most exalted kind, and a superior degree of self subjugation. It flourishes with most vigour, when these are united with a disposition naturally kind and benignant; but it cannot perhaps arrive at its due extent, without such a liberal intercourse with the world, as shall contribute to subdue those local and national prejudices, which are so general and so pertinacious; prejudices which are not only deemed innocent, but laudable, by the multitude who indulge them. Hence, as it is the most exalted and refined principle of action, we cannot expect its complete in-

fluence at an early period. It is the highest polish, which comes last; the Corinthial capital, which finishes, as it ornaments the column.

## *On the Beauty of Virtue.*

The beauty, the dignity, the sublimity of virtue, have frequently been urged as motives to practise it; and they are motives much too noble and refined not to be highly respected. But it will be proper to advert to the nature and extent of its influence, that we may ascertain its proper place in the catalogue of motives. When we speak of the *beauty* of virtue abstractedly, it appears, from what has already been advanced, that we are placing the *pleasures* derived from the contemplation of virtue, in the same rank with every other source of *pleasurable sensations,* to which the term *beauty* is applicable. The sublimest idea which the word conveys is, that of a refined gratification from what is pleasing to a cultivated taste; and should we be disposed to give her the precedency, it is alone from the perception that she is the most accomplished. The only idea of utility, which presents itself, arises from its being able to afford a refined mental gratification, in the contemplation of it; but this presents us with no

other inducement to cultivate virtuous dispositions, than what is common to the cultivation of the fine arts; and it affords no other inducement to avoid vicious pursuits, than the loss of a more delicate and exalted pleasure. But he that gives the preference to vice, will not repent of his choice, merely because the article is of an inferior quality. Let the virtuous mind despise the man who prefers the pleasures of vice, he will reply, "Every man to his taste: pursue your gratifications, and leave me to my own: you say they are inferior to yours, but I am contented." There may be some persons who, out of preference, "eat the husks which the swine do eat," and while their taste is vitiated and depraved, it will be in vain that you place higher delicacies before them.

The *beauty of virtue* is a favourite expression with some philosophers;and all who love virtue will acknowledge her beauty. But it must be confessed that her charms will never induce the multitude to "fall in love at first sight;" and it is probable that long before their tastes shall be formed, in a manner to be captivated by the beauty of this most deserving mistress, they may have been seduced by more sensible charms of a meritricious nature. Those who prefer the majestic beauty of Minerva,

to the seductive blandishments of Venus, will manifest a deeper penetration, and a more exalted taste But as these are not the necessary prerequisites in the admiration of the latter, her votaries will be more numerous. Heathen mythologists have always placed these two divinities in opposition to each other ; and they have always represented Minerva as being surrounded with much fewer votaries than her rival.

The truth is, the term *beauty*, when applied to Virtue, is an *adopted* and *metaphorical* term ; and as such it may illustrate a particular character or quality, but it cannot be considered as a moral principle of action ; for it can suggest no other motive than that suggested by its prototype, that is, the enjoyment of pleasure. According to the primitive signification of *beauty*, its constituent parts consist of qualities which strike the senses ; such as colour, figure, proportion, &c. &c. which produce pleasing sensations in the beholder. When the word is applied to subjects not visible to the eye, it means to express order, harmony, and such other qualities, as are calculated to produce pleasurable sensations, in the contemplative mind. We may naturally expect, that the prompt and extensive influence of pleasing qualities, will be according to the facility with which they are perceived ; and as sensible objects are most obvious,

the number of those who would yield to the impulse on their senses, may be expected greatly to exceed the contemplative votaries of a beauty, whose transcendent qualities are abstracted from sense. Natural beauty, being the quality of sensible objects, every property it possesses is exhibited at once; and although it may consist, like light, of component parts, yet, like light, it strikes the beholder at one percussion, and as if it possessed but one individual property. The beauty of virtue is not composed of such striking qualities. The peculiar nature of her charms is to be learned by observation, and experience; by contemplating the beneficial effects she produces to individuals, and to communities at large. But this directs our attention to the *dowry* she brings with her, and no longer confines our thoughts to the pleasing effects of beauty, simply considered. The mind that is so far advanced as to love virtue for its own sake, still admires it for the particular power it possesses of diffusing good.

Ideas of the *dignity* and *sublimity* of virtue, are still more refined, and consequently these are attributes, which will continue incomprehensible to the rude and uncultivated multitude. These terms are moreover applicable solely to some peculiar virtues, occasionally practised by more exalted

minds. There is no dignity in abstaining from knavish actions ; there is much dignity in pardoning a great offence, which we have full power to punish.

### *Human Authority.*

It has been already hinted that, when the laws of civil society correspond with the principles of virtue, they may become, in some degree, its guardians; and they may cooperate with some other motives. It is their peculiar advantage, that they are able to exert their influence over minds, which have not enjoyed the benefits of cultivation. This is an advantage not possessed by either of the principles of action, which have passed under review. The nature of the injunction and of its sanctions, may be rendered explicit and unequivocal, by a perspicuous statement; and when they are duly promulgated, no plea of ignorance can be urged, no lapse of time is rendered necessary for the slow progress of education, or the previous investigation of first principles, which might proportionably retard practice.

By the sanction of rewards and punishments, the fears and hopes of the subjects are powerfully excited. As hope and fear are the passions in our

nature most promptly and energetically operative; and as they have enjoyment or suffering for their immediate object, they are doubtless calculated to make a more instantaneous and vivid impression, than tedious inductions, or a speculative discernment of the aggregate of happiness or misery, attendant upon a series of virtuous or vicious actions.

The sanctions of human laws, are also calculated to act powerfully upon the social principle in man, by their being immediately connected with public approbation, or public ignominy. Through the medium of associated ideas, these laws may implant a certain detestation of that class of vices, which expose the offender to disgrace; and inspire a kind of predilection for those virtues, which may entitle to a flattering recompense.

But, with all these advantages, human laws are not calculated to dispose the mind to the love of universal virtue, or enforce obedience to all its injunctions.

We have remarked already, that it is a characteristic of human laws, and particularly of those which respect the civil œconomy of a country, to operate much more powerfully upon the *fears* than upon the *hopes* of men; and that the leading idea of *obligation*, is immediately connected with the painful sensation of *dread*. But fear is the

lowest, and least respectable of all the motives to action. It is principally adapted to such minds, as are supposed to be insensible to motives of a more ingenuous character; to such minds as are habitually servile, and whose sordid interests can alone be subdued by the terror of experiencing certain misery. Here the obligation to obedience may commence, and here also it may terminate.

Again, where the laws of an human legislator, with their penalties, have the most successful influence, of a virtuous tendency, they are chiefly directed against the vice of *injustice*, in some of its most obvious branches. Their grand object is to deter from the more gross and flagrant violations of life and property. Many violations of prudence, discretion, veracity; many secret injuries and egregious offences, are inevitably excluded from their code. Nor can human injunctions compel to acts of benevolence; or to the social, delightful, consoling, duties of love, gratitude, friendship, &c. which are such quick and lively prompters to the discharge of every social and relative duty; constitute so large a portion of human felicity; and can be seated only in the virtuous mind.

But human laws do not always inculcate the principles of virtue. They are sometimes unjust

and oppressive; and thus become patterns of immorality. They may in some cases, absolutely enjoin the commission of crimes. This is very observable when sovereignty uncontrouled, is seized by an usurper, whose wisdom is solely occupied in forming plans of ambition and aggrandizement; and who issues, without reserve, and without compunction, every mandate that may render them successful. Hopes and fears are now enlisted into the service of *vice*. The power of rewarding with profusion, or of inflicting the most dreadful calamities, renders all within the sphere of his authority the creatures of his will. Reward or punishment being sole motives to obedience, every consideration is sacrificed to these. The nature and tendency of the mandate is of no moment. Thus may the principles of virtue be most strenuously opposed, and a sense of obligation fatal to the laws of morality, be deeply implanted. Deeds of the most atrocious kind will be placed in the rank of duties, and be enforced by the most dreadful penalties. The perpetration of these may become the direct road to wealth and honours; while an adherence to the dictates of morality, may be laden with disgrace and misery.

Exclusive of these excesses, human laws, when suggested by the appearance of political necessi-

ty, or destined to answer some purpose of partial utility, have unfortunately the power of creating a species of artificial virtue and vice, highly detrimental to genuine morality. By rendering that mode of conduct criminal to day, which was innocent yesterday; by inflicting the same kind, and the same severity of punishment, upon offences committed against the laws of convenience and accommodation, which are denounced against the most flagrant crimes, the minds of the multitude soon forget the moral distinction between right and wrong. Inadvertencies, which were innocent before the prohibition, being confounded, in the punishment, with the blackest crimes; and intrinsic guilt being measured by the punishment and disgrace attached to an action, by minds that cannot accurately distinguish, the moral principle is obtunded: hopes and fears are capriciously excited; and the terrors of human laws denounced against slight misdemeanors, are confounded with the terrors of heaven, due alone to the most enormous vices.

It is obvious, from the above minute investigation, that although each of the principles enumerated may contain proper inducements, to the practice of virtue, yet they are of a partial influence, or they

require such a state and cultivation of mind as cannot be found, and are not to be expected in the generality of men, during the earlier stages of voluntary action, and of social intercourse. Self interest is an universal principle of action; and it relates to virtue, merely as one of the means of procuring personal good, in common with many others. There is also a refinement in this motive to virtuous practice, which neither the vulgar, nor the depraved, can easily perceive. A conformity to the dictates of reason, presupposes that all mankind are prepared and disposed to act rationally, from the first dawn of their existence. The social principle is partial, uncertain, treacherous; and of itself may lead more frequently to vicious than to virtuous conduct. Benevolence and the love of virtue, demand the prerequisites of high cultivation, and a well disciplined mind; and therefore cannot be the incipient principles of action. Were these the only motives to virtue, mankind would become totally abandoned, long before their power of action could commence; and this universal depravity, would of itself constitute an insuperable impediment to their beneficient operations. Human laws are, at the best, but of partial influence. They sometimes mislead, and sometimes they authorize or enjoin immoralities.

The effects of Religion upon human conduct, being correspondent with the conceptions formed of Religion, it demands peculiar attention.

## SECT. IV.

### ON THE RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES MOST CONDUCIVE TO THE UNIFORM PRACTICE OF VIRTUE.

We have shown that Religion, from its superior nature, and superior importance, is acknowledged to contain in it, the most influential inducements to act in conformity to the supposed mandates of the Being worshipped; and that the belief in the existence of a superior being, who is the arbiter of our destiny, and who lays his injunctions upon mortals, naturally induces with it the idea of *Duty* and *Obligation*. Thus the principles of every religion indiscriminately, by inculcating the doctrine, that beings superior to man, direct sublunary affairs, open a connection and intercourse between mankind, and these supernatural agents. As the duties of morality, abstracted from religion, respect mankind in their social character, thus it is admitted, that other duties and obligations naturally arise from this superior relationship; and that these duties consist in fearing the dis-

pleasure, resignation to the agency, and obedience to the will of the being worshipped. These sentiments are adopted, even in those religions where the affection of *love* towards this being, was never considered as a necessary ingredient. As the terms *virtue* and *morality,* best express the *social* duties, so the term *piety,* is employed to distinguish the dispositions and actions, which arise from the relation of man, to a superior order of beings. Every act of obedience, every attempt to ingratiate, every demonstration of zeal, every instance of resignation, are considered as *pious* acts, and *pious* duties.

Had this subjected state of mind, and reverential awe of their divinities, which were so conspicuous in the heathen world, been invariably connected with the duties of morality, they must have had great power and efficacy. But this was not the case. According to the system of the heathens, the most exalted honours they could confer on their deities, was to *revere their power;* and this idea of uncontrouled sovereignty operated, chiefly, if not solely, upon the hopes and fears of the worshippers. The *moral character* of the Deity, or the *moral* nature of his commands, were seldom taken into consideration. The duty and recompense, on the one hand, disobedience and chastisement on the other, were the only consi-

derations that influenced their minds. The characters of their deities were merely human characters, endowed with more exalted honours and extent of power. They possessed human failings; and to many of them the most enormous vices were imputed. As a more acceptable homage cannot be devised, than to propose the character and conduct of a superior, for models of imitation; as it is thus that the servile minions of the great, always court the favour of their sovereigns; ignorant devotees would indulge, without restraint, all those vicious propensities which were ascribed to the God whom they served! It was according to this principle, that the most abominable and cruel rites were performed in the heathen temples, as solemn acts of religion. Mercury was faithfully served as the patron of thieves. Ebriety became devotion in the temple of Bacchus; and prostitution in the temple of Venus. Discord and bloodshed were consecrated to Bellona; and human sacrifices in great abundance, have been considered as *pious* offerings, on the altars of malignant dæmons. In most of these instances the passions of hope and fear, would have powerful auxiliaries, in the congeniality of the service itself, with the depraved dispositions of the votary. It is obvious, that the worship of beings, supposed to require such services, and vested with such characters, must be inimical

to every principle of virtue. The supposition must have had a natural tendency to foster a cruel revengeful spirit, to trample upon the principles of justice, to extinguish benevolence, and to inflame every carnal propensity.

Hence it appears that Religion, being the most influential of all motives, when it makes an impression upon the mind, according to its natural importance, may, by erroneous conceptions of it, be productive of the greatest evils. False conceptions of the divinity to be served, and the duties to be performed, as often as they influence to correspondent actions, are as tremendous as the misapplication of an immense momentum, which will become injurious, or destructive, according to the magnitude of the power.

But there are other sentiments of religion, entertained by multitudes, particularly in these more happy days, perfectly consonant to reason, and containing within them principles and encouragements, to the practice of universal virtue. Sentiments, with which all the other motives to virtue already mentioned, perfectly harmonise; and from which they receive an additional energy. They are the same that were briefly stated, upon a former occasion, as being the richest sources of personal *happiness*, in every state and situation of life*.

* See Vol. II. p. 386, passim.

This important coincidence gives them a double claim to our particular attention.

It has been remarked that a Religion most productive of happiness, must renounce a *plurality of Gods*. The renunciation is equally necessary to secure an uniformity in moral conduct. The diversities in opinion, and consequent diversities of religious services among the heathen nations, were as absurd, and fatal, as they were numerous. The imagination that deities of the most opposite characters existed, naturally introduced the greatest contrarieties in their ideas of obedience, and in their own dispositions and characters; as well as in their rites and ceremonies. The diversities in the passions and predilections, which they ascribed to the Gods whom they served, destroyed the possibility of uniform conduct, or of a steady moral character among themselves; rendering that highly meritorious, in the opinion of one class of people, which was deemed impious by another. The confusion and contrariety of sentiments which thus prevailed, while they were injurious to the public morals, fostered a spirit of doubt and scepticism in the minds of those whose good sense opposed the vulgar notions; and who smiled at those ridiculous rites, which rendered religion as diversified and as absurd, as were the prejudices of mankind. By the admission of one univer-

sal sovereign, possessing one permanent character, our ideas of obedience are rendered uniform, and the expectations of all intelligent beings will be similar. The affections also, which most correspond with the sentiments entertained of the moral character of this deity, by being directed to one object, will be rendered more constant and more ardent, than if they were divided and subdivided among a number of objects, supposed to have similar claims; were we to admit of a perfect similarity in their moral dispositions. By acknowledging that divine homage is due to one being only, perfectly able to assist, and perfectly willing to bestow, every necessary good on his pious votaries, the worship of inferior and subordinate deities becomes superfluous. For whatever influence we may imagine them to possess, they are still to be considered as the instruments and agents of a superior, to whose power they are also subjected, and whose will must also be the rule of their actions. Consequently, as these subordinates can have no power or will of their own, independent of their principal; and as we cannot suppose, that their dispositions to benefit us, exceed the benevolence of the great first cause, who inspired them with whatever excellences they might possess; or that their revengeful propensi-

ties to punish, will prevail against supreme authority, addresses presented immediately to them must be unnecessary; and they are obviously derogatory from the honours due to the supreme. The affections of love and gratitude, and dispositions to obedience from these sublime motives, will inevitably accompany the immediate perception of obligation. Thus will the best oblations of the heart be presented to subordinates; to the indecent and impious neglect of the primary source of good.

II. A conviction that *Virtuous Conduct* is most acceptable to this being, and that the commission of vice, is disobedience to his will, is also indispensably necessary. Our remarks on polytheism fully manifest, that votaries, awake to their interests, will always endeavour to direct their conduct in such a manner, as to render themselves acceptable to the Gods they worship. They will rejoice, when the ideas they entertain concerning the requisitions of their deities, correspond with their own vicious propensities, and vindictive *passions*; and when the performance of what they deem sacred rites, is a gratification of these propensities; but when they imagine that the severest discipline, submission to the most painful sufferings, or the sacrifice of their favorite inclinations, are demanded, they still think it is their duty

to obey. They fear that omission will expose them to much greater evils, than those to be endured in the compliance; and they hope, that an indemnification will finally succeed. Considering these as principles founded in human nature, a persuasion that the deity loves and enjoins virtue, becomes necessary to constitute the practice of virtue an act of religion. Were we to suppose him to be indifferent concerning the moral conduct of moral agents, religious motives to the performance of moral duties could not exist. No other reward or punishment could be expected from performance or neglect, than what proceeds from the incidental circumstances we have enumerated above.

III. The practice of virtue, from religious motives, implies, that the deity whom we serve, has a perfect *Knowledge* of our conduct, of the secret dispositions of the mind, and the genuine character of every motive in the performance of every action. Without a conviction that he possesses this knowledge, the simple idea of his existence, or even of his predilection for virtue, would have no influence. For were he ignorant of dispositions and motives, the merit or demerit of the agent must remain unknown; and it would be impossible to inflict just punishment or confer suitable re-

wards. The supposition that his knowledge is imperfect, would induce the agent to make a practical distinction, destructive of uniformity in virtuous conduct; and he would be encouraged to indulge some favourite propensities, from the hopes that they would not be observed. It is further necessary to suppose, that divine knowledge extends to the nature and influence of moral agency; that it perceives, without the possibility of an error, certain indissoluble connexions between the precepts enjoined, and the ends which it has in view; ends that can alone be accomplished by the love and practice of virtue, and alone be frustrated by the habitual practice of vice. Such a conviction will induce to obey, where the propriety of the injunction may not be conspicuous. It will regulate the dispositions of the heart, and render the performance of secret duties as constant and exact, as the more open and ostentatious. When the Moralist is assured that a duty is enjoined, whether the conviction arise from the inferences of an enlightened mind, or from an immediate revelation, he will assiduously perform it; although it may at the instant appear in the light of a sacrifice; a diminution of the good he might have enjoyed; or an exposure to evils he might have shunned. He will always be assured, that a being of transcendent knowledge, may ob-

serve dangers when he imagined there was peace, ease, and safety; and that essential good is alone to be secured by walking in the paths ordained, although they may be rugged or thorny.

IV. To the attribute of knowledge, the Moralist must connect that of *Wisdom*. Wisdom consists in the application of knowledge to some purpose of utility. In the most intelligent of human beings, the acquisition of competent knowledge must be prior to the formation of plans, accounted wise; and an extensive knowledge of facts respecting properties, relations, influences, &c. must be obtained, before the inventive and directing powers of man can be exerted, in the application of the various branches of knowledge, to the accomplishment of any desired purpose. In the human species the attribute of wisdom, is not always connected with that of knowledge. Knowledge has been frequently collected and treasured up in the minds of individuals, like useless furniture, perhaps elegant and costly, which has never been employed to any beneficial purpose. Were we to imagine the deity to be of a similar character, we might entertain doubts concerning the merits or utility of the precepts enjoined. When we admit that the perception of certain relations, between modes of conduct and their results, forms the basis of his laws; and presume that the prac-

tice of virtue will lead to important issues, which can only be impeded by vice; and when we confess, that the commands which are the most irksome to our present feelings, are still the ordinations of perfect wisdom; our confidence is increased. The divine knowledge is no longer viewed simply as a foresight of what is most beneficial, but as connected with a certain arrangement; as a decree, that certain results shall take place in consequence of prescribed modes of acting. Such a conviction is calculated to inspire a resolution, both firm and cheerful, that we will encounter various dangers and difficulties, knowing that the wisdom of deity is able to steer us safe, through the consequences we dreaded; and will prove to our future experience, that the conduct enjoined was the only path to final and extensive good.

V. It is absolutely necessary, that the moral agent should believe in the *Justice* of the being whom he serves. We learn from our attention to the nature of *justice*, that it punishes no one beyond the extent of criminality; and that it will confer the stipulated recompense, notwithstanding it shall greatly exceed the intrinsic merit of the act. Hence it appears that the punishment must be limited, where the offence is not infinite; but that no law of justice demands a similar limitation, respecting the reward. The compact being

made, the veracity of the proposer becomes a security against a violation of it, to the disappointment of the party, who has complied with the terms. When the moral agent applies these principles to the subject of virtue, he must be assured that a just deity will make a distinction, between those who endeavour to obey his commands, and those who habitually and determinately violate them: he has a right to expect that a distinction of treatment will take place, according to a moral distinction in character. Notwithstanding his lamented deficiences respecting *absolute* merit, *conditional* merit belongs to him, by the unremitted exertion of his endeavours; and when the man who loves virtue and attempts to practise it, is weighed in the scale against the man who gives the reins to his lusts and desires, and derides all the precepts of morality, no one can deny his great superiority in *comparative* merit.

The philosophic Moralist clearly perceives a natural and necessary connexion, between the universal practice of virtue, and universal prosperity. He knows that disorder, confusion, misery, naturally result from general depravity; and being convinced that these results are according to the ordination of a wise being, he will also be convinced that the same wisdom, which has ordained so intimate a connexion between virtue and well-

being, vice and unhappiness, will himself be the perfect pattern of justice through every part of his dominions. The believer in a divine revelation, which enjoins the practice of virtue and forbids vice, under the sanction of promises and threats, believes that neither will be nugatory: and that the veracity of a just being, is pledged to act conformably to each declaration.

It is obvious that these conceptions of divine justice, have a more immediate influence upon the hopes and fears of responsible beings, than either of the preceding articles of belief. The other attributes, hitherto mentioned, do not necessarily imply an immediate connexion with the human species. They may be centered in a being to whom we are not responsible. They may simply be the subjects of approbation. But the expectation of a just and solemn retribution, applies to our feelings. It is addressed to our hopes and fears, by manifesting an interest of infinite moment.

VI. An incitement to virtue still more influential and encouraging, is, a firm belief in the *Benevolence* of the deity worshipped. The rational Moralist knows that benevolence, united with wisdom in a character, cannot be an imbecility, upon which the wicked may venture to presume. He knows that benevolence and wisdom, united with

the attribute of power, are *disposed* to effect, *can* effect, and *will* effect the best of all possible purposes. The observations which were made, in a preceding part of this work, concerning the nature of Benevolence, and its various ramifications, manifest its superior attractions to every other moral quality, possessed by an intelligent agent. This is goodness itself;—essential goodness, pure and unalloyed; and as such, it most powerfully attracts our love. The idea of justice always inspires respect; and in union with wisdom and power, it fills the breast of innocence itself with awe and reverence. It often inspires *terror*. The reason of the unjust, the wicked, and depraved, must approve of a sentence of condemnation; but such a display of justice, notwithstanding the approbation of reason, cannot possibly draw forth those affections which constitute happiness. It is a conviction of unbounded *benevolence* in a character, that implants *love* and cherishes *confidence*. It inspires a trembling hope, even under a consciousness of imperfections, from the full assurance that there will not be the slightest inclination of the balance to our prejudice; and that no plea which is admissible, will be rejected. Benevolence of character insures the promised reward to its utmost extent: for a benevolent mind is most disposed to those acts of justice, which are in the class

of remuneration. The love inspired by this character destroys the servility of obedience. The mind, under the influence of this affection, cannot be satisfied with a superficial observance of commands. It makes the minutest branch of duty a pleasure; which in every case is the best security to a consistency of conduct. It encounters difficulties with ardour, and surmounts them with alacrity and delight; looking for its most exalted recompence in the complacency of the object beloved. When the practical Moralist contemplates the nature of virtue, perceives it is essential to the enjoyments which are most satisfactory, refined, permanent, and extensive; when he is assured that the uniform and universal observance of its duties, would almost annihilate human misery; that it would secure the possession of every natural, and every social blessing; he loves his God for loving virtue. He makes the strictest obedience to the divine commands the joy of his heart; and he feels nothing irksome concerning them, but his own imperfections.

VII. A conviction that the one God possessing power, knowledge, wisdom, justice, and goodness, is the *Parent* of mankind, presents us with another influential motive to the uniform and cheerful discharge of every duty—that of *filiation*.

The multitudes who worshipped the heathen deities, were solely actuated by the belief, that these deities were able to confer benefits, or inflict evil upon men. A belief that they were the *Creators* of the world, and the *Parents* of the human race, did not form a necessary part of their creed. Various were their notions of the manner in which these imaginary beings had obtained their great superiority; but the wisest among them admitted of one creator, whom they called Jupiter, the father of gods and men; and this idea necessarily excluded the worship of other beings under the character of creators. The pagans entertained the idea of local deities; superintendants of particular districts, either beneficial or injurious. Hence it was that they occasionally worshipped the gods of neighbouring nations, which they had conquered, or by which they were subdued; that this partial and local interest might be exerted in their favour. Thus it is manifest that the opinion of the worshippers, of their being the *offspring* of the gods whom they deemed it their interest to serve, could not operate as a motive to obedience. But the *monotheist* is compelled, by the nature of his faith, to consider the God whom he worships, as the *universal creator*; and this belief introduces a more intimate connexion with the great le-

gislator whom he obeys, than could have been supposed by the heathen world. In consequence of this connexion, new inducements, new ties, new obligations, to the love and practice of virtue, present themselves.

The considerations, which hitherto have been advanced as motives, however rational and refined some of them may appear, are all to be resolved into that principle of action which has good in *prospect*. These motives imply that weak man is wise and prudent to look up to a superior director, to lead and befriend him in the midst of the dangers and difficulties from which he cannot escape; and to confer blessings which he cannot insure to himself. But such motives are still founded upon the idea of a *compact*. Both rewards and punishments are expected according to stipulated conditions. Obedience is still considered as an indication of the greatest prudence, and disobedience as the excess of folly.

But when this Being is considered as the *source of our existence*; without whose creative energy a state of consciousness, and of enjoyment would have been unknown, the most interesting and delightful of all connexions, that of *filiation*, takes place. The motives from example and analogy, which had such a baneful influence among pagans,

when they ascribed vicious passions and depraved propensities to their gods, will now become influential to the practice of the sublimest virtues; for we now suppose that the Creator has the dispositions of a wise and benevolent *parent* towards his beloved offspring. The veneration and respect which every human being, who is not in the last stage of depravity, entertains for the author of his days, is a bright pattern to the monotheist, and furnishes him with a powerful incitement to obey the commands, and imitate the example of the great and universal parent. He now contemplates the deity, not as a foreign or incidental cause of some occasional good, but as the *father* of beings rendered by himself capable of enjoying good; as the immediate source of all the good they can possibly enjoy; as the universal and incessant purveyor for a numerous and beloved offspring; directing their steps, instituting a mental discipline, that they may be qualified to act worthy of their high destination, and enjoy, in a more advanced stage of their existence, to the extent of their improved powers. If existence be in itself desirable—and that it is, every individual acknowledges who is not under some dreadful passion, or reduced to the depth of despair;—if there be any thing in life capable of imparting enjoyment; if there be

any valuable blessings in expectation, or any pleasure in the indulgence of hope; the pious offspring of heaven ascribes all to the beneficence of the universal father. He no longer views obedience simply in the light of a compact, but as arising naturally from the relation of a son to his parent. He considers every injunction as a necessary prerequisite to future advancement; and the practice of virtue as a preparatory occupation to qualify him for future well-being: vice is deemed a disqualification, as well as deserving of chastisement. Personal prudence is now associated with love and gratitude. The obedience is that of a *son*, as well as of a *subject*; and a refined sense of justice, is blended with the perception of advantage. A good son cheerfully acknowledges that a debt is contracted by his continually receiving blessings; and where, through the dignity and dependence of the benefactor, or the magnitude of the blessings, no adequate returns can be made, those of *love* and *gratitude* become peculiarly obligatory. As long as he continues to exist, and is eager to enjoy the various blessings of life, the moral theist thinks himself compelled, by the laws of equity, to comply with every injunction proposed by the author of his existence. Disobedience is not merely considered as an imprudence,

but as an *ingratitude* of the basest kind; as an *insult* committed against the Being, by whose bounty we are constantly sustained. Such motives to obedience are completely purified from the sordidness of interested considerations. For although gratitude be always excited by benefits received, yet they *are received,* and are no longer in *expectation*; and obedience consists more of a generous attempt to return the obligation, than of the interestedness of a compact.

Sentiments of the existence, attributes, and plans of deity like the above, contain the most extensive and most powerful inducements to practise virtue, that the imagination can possibly devise. They respect particulars, each of which is in itself calculated to produce some influence; and perverse must be that heart by which their united force can be habitually resisted! They have moreover the exclusive privilege of harmonizing in the most perfect manner, with all the other principles of action which have already passed under examination; and of augmenting the force of them all, without the most distant appearance of discordancy.

Such sentiments of Religion, as we have stated,

clearly point out *where* the truest Interest lies. They direct self-love into its proper channel. They indicate the extent and boundaries, within which the exercise of self-love is conformable to propriety, and meets with the approbation of the worthy and respectable among men. For they effectually prevent the abuse of this principle to the injury, either of ourselves or of others; while they encourage the fullest indulgence of it, as far as innocence, prudence, and discretion, will authorize. They filtrate from self-interest that sordidness with which it is generally mixed. They unite with the social principle; by instructing us to *rejoice*,—which is a pleasing state of mind,—in the welfare of others; and they point out the only method, by which self-love and social may become the same. They authorize the expectation of a full indemnity, where duty is connected with great sacrifices, which could not have been made; and with sufferings which would not have been endured, from any other motive, without the entire eradication of self-love; or the extravagant transfer of our own happiness to others, without the expectation of an equivalent. Upon religious principles, every sacrifice that is made, is considered as a duty, and becomes a voluntary obligation on the altar of religion; and the full assurance of

its being acceptable, renders it pleasant: and thus the man of piety receives in his sacrifices and self-denials, a much greater recompense than the apparent prosperity of a contracted spirit, can possibly bestow.

Obedience to the laws of such a sovereign, approves itself to the *Reason* of every one who believes in his existence. To acknowledge his being, that he possesses such attributes, and sustains so important a relation with his intelligent offspring, and yet to refuse obedience, is the excess of irrationality. The duties enjoined are the most rational in themselves; his right to enforce them cannot be disputed; and they are productive of the greatest possible good to each individual. The rational theist acknowledges the truth of all these propositions. He believes in the being of a God, whose moral character and conduct, do not offend the principles of reason in the minutest point. He admits that there is a perfect correspondence between the excellences of the divine character, and the precepts enjoined by him; and he is convinced that every injunction is indispensably requisite, for the enjoyment of the most exalted and most permanent blessings. If happiness be desirable in itself, that obedience which is required of mortals in order to secure and promote it, must be the most rational of all services.

The above sentiments of religion have a natural tendency to strengthen, refine, and direct the *social principle*. The pious moralist perceives that many classes of inferior beings are placed in a situation, where they are capable of receiving much good from the hands of men, while they administer to his comfort and support. But he loves the human species as the offspring of the same God, children of the same family, embarked in the same cause, destined to similar trials, agitated by similar fears, and encouraged by similar hopes; and he exercises the duties of justice towards them, with all the cordiality of friendship *.

This extensive view of the sociability of our nature, which religion authorizes, effectually destroys those minute associations formed in defiance of virtue. It will admit of no bye-laws which religion does not sanction. The maxims of conduct towards every individual, being founded upon the principles of integrity and philanthropy, social intercourse is not checquered by different clusters of animosities and friendships; or circumscribed by narrow principles and perverse dispositions. Enlarged conceptions of duty, founded on ration-

* See Note G.

al piety, break down those wretched mounds which contracted minds have raised, to interrupt the currents of universal good, and divert the streamlets into their partial communities; and they totally discountenance those false principles of honour, which are at variance with reason, justice, and humanity, and an opprobrium to every one who claims the character of a moral agent. Although the Moralist, whose virtues are strengthened by religious principles, be not ignorant of the great advantages derived from cherishing the social affections, and may wish to enjoy, as well as to deserve, the good opinion of his brethren, yet he will not make the applause of men his primary object; much less will he seek it by mean and servile compliances: But he will enjoy the approbation of the worthy with self-complacence, from a consciousness that it is the recompense of his having been actuated by nobler motives.

It is no less evident that those rational principles of religion, which strengthen the bonds of virtuous intercourse, are peculiarly calculated to cherish the *benevolent affections*, to the utmost extent. The intimacy of our relation to each other; our exalted station as vicegerents of heaven over the inferior creation, the example, the character, the commands of a beneficent deity, unite to en-

force the duties of benevolence in all their ramifications.

They also place the *excellence* and *beauty* of virtue in the most attractive point of view. The lover of virtue perceives, that his warmest admiration of moral excellence, is *approved by heaven.* He knows that his superior discernment and exalted feelings, are not subjected to the usual caprices of taste, for they are consonant to the rules and the model of a perfect unerring judge; and he is conscious, that the more he loves virtue, the more nearly does he imitate his God.

We will not disgrace the divine authority, by a minute comparison of it with any *human laws*; or attempt a parallel between the immutable laws of heaven, and the imperfect and versatile legislation of men; to which states and kingdoms are compelled to submit; which are frequently void of wisdom, when the intention may be beneficent; which sometimes authorize oppression, when they aim at being just; are cruel when they are intended to be wise; and too often manifest the caprices of power, without the least mixture of wisdom or goodness. Those who obey the laws of God, feel not the servility of bowing to an usurper, but the freedom of subjects who serve the so-

vereign of their choice ; and who has purchased a right to their obedience, by benefits perpetually conferred. They admire in the divine laws, the wisdom and goodness which seek to diffuse the most extensive advantages over innumerable beings, instead of being founded upon a narrow policy, or promoting local interest. They perceive in the sanctions of the divine laws, the prevalence of benignity over severity; and that the punishments by which they are protected, are not only founded on the strictest equity, but are calculated to secure the greatest good, through the extensive empire of the universal sovereign.

We perceive from these investigations, that, as obedience to the laws of morality, is of more extensive importance than obedience to any human laws, so are its sanctions more numerous and varied ; they are also admirably adapted to every state and situation, in which the subject can possibly be placed. They are not only operative upon the principle of self-interest, in common with every law, but they modify and refine this self-interest, until it become subservient to the good of others. They are so equitable and so rational, that the most refractory spirit cannot find a

pretext for rebellion, or disobey without being self-condemned. The punishments strike the mind with peculiar awe, though their nature and extent be unknown; and its rewards are most encouraging, though undefined. They are obligatory upon man, both as an individual and as a social being; and the mind that is duly trained to habits of obedience, finds increasing delight in the service.

## CHAP. III.

## INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF VIRTUOUS DISPOSITIONS, AND RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS IN THE HUMAN MIND.

IN our chapter on the progressive Nature of Well-being *, we have endeavoured to trace the gradations which exist in our pursuits and powers of enjoyment. It was observed that those objects which strike the senses most strongly, administering to our animal wants, and animal gratifications, are the first that attract the attention, and engross the thoughts of uncultivated minds; that the enjoyments of a superior and most satisfactory kind, are obtained last, according to the regular process of things; and that many intermediate steps must be taken, and much intermediate good may be enjoyed, before we arrive at a more exalted stage of human happiness. A progression not dissimilar, is observable respecting the influence of virtuous and religious principles on the mind.

Whether the depravity acknowledged and la-

* See Vol. II. p. 399.

mented, in the world of moral agents, be the effect of an original taint, (as some theologians maintain) or whether it can be fully explained, upon the principles advanced in the preceding volume, does not belong to the present subject. That there is much depravity existing in the human species, and in the human species *alone*, must be admitted ; but the enquiry before us is, when the human mind is plunged into this degraded state ; when depravity has prevailed to a deplorable degree, and every moral sentiment appears to be extinguished; from what principle in our nature is the commencement of a reform to be expected ? or by what train of thought and sensations, are we to expect progressive improvement in virtuous and pious dispositions and affections ?

It is natural to suppose that rude minds can only be worked upon in a rough manner. The paucity of their ideas, the shallowness of their knowledge, the slowness of their comprehension, and the grossness of their habits, must render them insensible to the more refined and respectable motives of action. Self-interest, ill understood, they have to a great degree, and incessantly operative. The reasonableness of one mode of conduct, and unreasonableness of its opposite, will seldom, if ever, be suggested by

their own reflections, and will be received with indifference when suggested by others. Their sociability may be very contracted; and with some dispositions, it seems more to be the occasion of quarrels and animosities, than of mutual benefits. If their good-will extend to their own offspring, and occasionally to an adjacent neighbour, it is all that can be expected; and as to the beauty of virtue, they will gaze with astonishment when it is mentioned. Respecting persons of this description, it is natural to suppose, that the strongest passion in the human breast, will be the first to operate against their strong and inveterate propensities, with any prospect of success; and observation confirms the supposition.

Admitting self-interest to be prior, in its influence, to every social principle, it will be equally allowed that *fear* or *dread*, is able to lay the strongest hold upon self-interest*. In the hour of imminent danger, the prevailing idea of good, is to escape from the impending evil. Terror is the acutest of all our mental sensations; nor can those under its influence, be diverted from its exciting cause, by any other object. While under the impression of dread, the most pleasing or beneficial acquisitions, however ardently they may have been desired in a more placid state of mind,

* See Note H.

lose all their attractions. The only wish is to *escape*; and that tranquil station which once appeared indifferent to us or insipid, now appears to contain every possible good. Terror has been known to humble the pride of the proudest, to make the arrogant and supercilious fawn upon those whom they used to insult; and servilely flatter the oppressors whom they detest. The most ferocious miscreants, when brought to condign punishment, with the terrors of death before their eyes, appear suddenly to have changed their natures, by the mild submission of their behaviour, and the marks of contrition they discover.

We may also remark, that the obedience of rude and undisciplined children, to the commands of their parents and superiors, is wholly founded on fear. The dread of corporal punishment, or of anger, are their sole restraints from doing wrong, or inducements to execute the orders which oppose their inclinations. When they are actuated by any other motive, even by the hopes of a reward, they have advanced a step in the path of mental culture; they are on the road which leads out of servility; for in this case the prevalent idea is that of a bargain, and not of a duty; if they would renounce the promised recompense, they still would think themselves free to disobey. But the idea of freedom is totally lost, where there is

absolute compulsion. Under the apprehensions of severe chastisement, they feel that they have not a will of their own. Refractory youths also, whose evil habits have been nourished by domestic indulgences, or by the seductions of bad company; and who had resisted the earnest intreaties or remonstrances of the most affectionate parents; have finally been chastised into obedience, when given over to the discipline of severe masters; or placed in situations that inspire them with the conviction, that there is no avoiding deserved punishment, but by obedience. The whole force of selfishness will now compel them to become obsequious and tractable.

The next principle that is operative, is Hope. The prospect of something very pleasing, or of some desirable compensation, is calculated to call forth the energies of the soul in its earliest exertions. Hope will not, at once, be sufficient entirely to change a perverse character; for no bribe will be equal to the prospect of vicious gratifications; but it may occasionally induce a person to abstain from his purpose, and will frequently excite him to the performance of various detached actions. The ardent expectation of supplying a particular want, or of superadding to their stock, will stimulate the sluggish to make exertions, and prove the commencement of a salutary self-de-

nial. It is this which subdues the native indolence of the savage, and prompts him to an activity the most opposite to his natural propensities. Where the habits are strong, and the propensities to be opposed very great, it is a first requisite that the expected advantages should be proximate. As barbarians are said to count but few units before their contracted intellects are lost in confusion, thus in morals, contracted minds cannot easily anticipate distant benefits, though great and manifold. The recompense must be immediate, in order to encourage exertions.

When this compensation is able to kindle desire, it becomes next in its influence to the passion of fear. But *Hope* is a motive of a very superior quality. The prevalent idea, in this case, is an *augmentation of good,* which certainly expands the mind more than the dread of suffering. The agent is also more conscious of his own free agency, in the performance of every act of self-denial, than when impelled by fear; and this perception, united with the prospect of good to be enjoyed, inspires a cheerfulness and alacrity of temper, which is in itself a reward, instead of that dejection of spirit, which distinguishes a slave, and which cannot lay the most distant claim to merit, or enjoyment.

In the infancy of obedience, even from this motive, it is probable that the mind will be indifferent respecting the moral nature of the injunction. Its only desire may be to surmount difficulties, and obtain the recompense. But difficulties surmounted, prepare and dispose for future exertions; and advantages obtained, inspire satisfaction. They introduce also the perception of a *meliorated* state. New desires are excited; new hopes are encouraged. Obedience becomes *facile*, and facility communicates the pleasures of habit. If the injunctions refer to any principles of an intellectual or moral nature, a profitable association takes place; and what was at first performed with a reluctance, which the hope of a reward alone could subdue, may, in the process of obedience, become itself a reward. A delight in exertions rendered familiar by habit, may also be accompanied with a grateful perception of something excellent. This perception ennobles and dignifies the service in the opinion of the agent; and it will commence, or quicken, a desire after intellectual or moral improvement. When this degree of progress is obtained, a pleasing sense of something *honourable*, of having performed something *good*, and a consciousness of *desert* inspiring *self-complacency*, will greatly augment the pleasures of the service. Obedience now becomes

more vigorous and accurate, than could have been expected from the mere impulse of fear; or even from the mercenary principle of a reward conferred by the superior.

The next operative affection we shall mention, is that of Love. Love, personal attachments, and preferences, are first inspired by a perception of benefits communicated by the object, and enjoyed by the subject. Minds, unaccustomed to reason, cannot be impressed with abstract ideas of moral excellence, deserving of affection; these are known to exist only by specific acts, and frequent emanations. The infant mind, however, feels the force of an argument without the aid of syllogisms, and quickly learns to infer, "there must be something good in the person who is always doing good to me." We readily acquire attachments to *inanimate* objects, possessing the power of communicating pleasure; and social attachments are more readily formed, by the attractive blandishments accompanying kind actions, united with the early influence of the social principle. The infant immediately gives a preference to its attentive nurse, whose fostering care incessantly places her before its eyes, and who is the only ostensible source of all its comforts and enjoyments. Whatever may have been advanced respecting the στοργη, or instinctive sympathy of blood,

the instances seldom occur which favour that hypothesis, compared with the innumerable examples of preferences given to the constant and affectionate attendant; to the no small mortification of the parent, the instrumental cause of its existence, and the provider of every comfort.

The natural consequences of strong personal attachments, are a desire of reciprocation, and assiduous attempts to obtain the good opinion and affectionate regards, of the person beloved. Obedience from this motive, becomes a source of still greater pleasure than can be imparted by any other cause; and it is uniform, minute, and extensive in its effects. A solicitude is now implanted, not merely to obey injunctions, but to anticipate wishes; to study the pleasure of a benefactor, and to surprize by some unexpected token of affection *.

Repeated acts of kindness will be considered by the recipient, upon the first dawn of reflexion, as indubitable marks of a beneficent disposition; and to the gratitude excited by repeated favours, are added habitual love and esteem for the friend and benefactor, which may rise to admiration. If

* See disquisition on the Sources of Well-being, § iv. p. 316, for the developement of the principles on which these observations are founded.

the benefactor be our superior in age, station, power, and understanding, various degrees of respect, veneration, awe, reverence, are engrafted upon the esteem entertained for his estimable qualities. These, uniting some portion of fear with our love and gratitude, inspire the greater caution against the commission of an offence. But fear, thus connected and modified, instead of retaining its servile nature, becomes amiable and liberal; and the self-love upon which it is founded, becomes refined and ennobled. Under the genuine influence of such principles, the only fear is, that of losing the affections of the object beloved, and the chief reward in contemplation, is that of cordial approbation ‡.

When love, gratitude, respect, and an earnest desire of reciprocal affection, are deeply seated in the mind, they impress it with the utmost sorrow and regret, upon being conscious of having given offence; or of having acted unworthily, either through inadvertency, peculiar temptation, or the sudden impulse of passion; and these will rise to the most painful self-reproaches, according to the aggravations that may surround the offence. But however agonizing this state of mind, and

‡ See Complacential Affections, vol. i. ch. iii. articles Esteem, Respect, &c.

however it may inflict self-condemnation, it is still an indubitable proof, that, notwithstanding such reproachful aberrations, great advances are made in virtuous dispositions and principles. Sordid dread begins with self and ends with self. Its sole anxiety consists in a solicitude to escape punishment; and it is a stranger to every other reflection.

Love commencing with those, whose benevolent affections have an immediate claim, and whose constant assiduities win the heart, naturally expands towards those who are within the sphere of social intercourse, unless it be checked by something peculiarly forbidding in their appearance or conduct. Attentions and engaging manners, will soon remove the instinctive shyness of a child, and teach the young pupil that the apparent strangers are *friends*, and not objects of terror; which is generally the first impression made by absolute strangers. They will thus be inspired with a degree of confidence; and confidence will quickly be succeeded, by the perception of many engaging and attractive qualities.

The circle may enlarge in a similar manner, until it embrace the neighbourhood. Mutual benefits derived from increasing intimacies by social intercourse, and the discovery of amiable dispositions, and respectable qualities, where they were

not supposed to exist, gradually remove personal prejudices, which ignorance had cherished; implant a conviction that there is something good in others, as well as in ourselves and in our most intimate connexions, and thus prepare the mind for a more favourable opinion of the human species; until it be at length discovered, that other men are, in the essential principles of human nature, merely exemplars of ourselves; possessing similar feelings, actuated by similar motives, agitated by similar passions, liable to similar prejudices, exposed to similar infirmities, capable of similar virtues; whose infirmities may be entitled to apologies similar to those we are disposed to make for ourselves, and whose virtues may possibly exceed our own.

We intend not to intimate, that the above is a sketch of the process which takes place in every individual mind. It is most fortunate that, in numberless instances, a sense of duty, and a disposition to obey wise and salutary injunctions, are formed in an imperceptible manner. In decent and intelligent families, and in well-regulated societies, where the best examples precede or accompany instruction, where the benefits derived from every thing orderly and lovely are felt, before reason and reflection are in vigorous exercise, the impressions of terror, and the servility of compulsion, will be utterly unknown; and the

and the more generous fear of offending from a principle of love, may be the only painful sensation. Yet it may be alledged, that even this happy state is the result of a process, which had taken place at some former period; before the thoughts and dispositions of well-ordered families, or of highly civilized communities, were arrived to this degree of perfection. As the ancestors of our most illustrious families were once plebeians; and the most elegant accomplishments, are but refinements from a vulgarity of manners which once existed, thus the more generous, and more noble principles of action, which appear so natural and easy to men of exalted virtue, are but the refinements and filtrations of those which were formerly more gross, selfish, and servile.

A process of a similar kind is observable as the human race, emerging from a more rude and barbarous state, advances towards civilization. The social principle, at first, operates within very narrow limits. It commences with family connexions or with smaller societies, who appear to have a common interest; who are closely united by the perception of some mutual advantage, or of the pleasures derived from social intercourse.

With these clusters, the social virtues commence. Such communities will be strictly faithful, honest, and accommodating to each other. They are actuated by the same principle, and seem to be animated by one soul; unless some cause of contention should occasionally intervene. But this powerful attraction of the individual members to each other, renders them in a great degree repulsive towards such communities, as are most proximate, but without the limits of their particular sphere. These detached associations confine their ideas of duty and moral obligation, each within their own circle. In the disputes with neighbouring districts, which so frequently rise from jealousies, supposed insults, or acts of injustice, every quarrel becomes a common cause. Every injury, or insult, which an individual member may have received, is resented by the whole of his associates, against the whole body of the opposite community. They become inveterate against each other, without paying the least attention to the moral nature of the offence, or to the grand principle of justice. Public spirit, and a sense of public justice, now consists in being faithful to their own townsmen, clan, or cast, or hordes, or in generous exertions to defend or promote their interest. It is an adopted principle, that no injustice can possibly be committed against a declared enemy. To gain

every advantage by any means in their power, is true policy; and to punish injuries to the utmost extent of power, is not only lawful, but indispensably requisite. To pardon, is considered as an infringement upon the common right of revenge; and a conciliatory spirit is ascribed to pusillanity, or to the low intrigues of cowardice.

The same principles, and a similar mode of conduct, extend from lesser associations to greater; from clans and hordes to kingdoms and empires. The constituted laws of larger communities are founded on self-preservation, or aggrandisement. An attachment to the state, justifies, in the opinion of sovereigns and their subjects, the employment of every means of destruction that can be devised or invented; and the practise of every art that can seduce, deceive, or ensnare. Such are the maxims of conduct in every nation upon the globe; though with various degrees of animosity and resentment, according to the adventitious circumstances, which may have created some difference in national characters. In a state of warfare, the applause of the country, self-approbation, disgrace, and shame, are regulated by them. In the earlier periods of society, the human mind appears to be entirely absorbed by these ideas. No conceptions are formed either of justice or of mercy, much less

of benevolence towards a stranger or an enemy. The nations which have been, in subsequent ages, distinguished for their urbanity and their polish, were originally a band of robbers. Herodotus informs us, that this was the origin of the Grecian states. Revenge for the infamous conduct of an individual, is said to have been the destruction of Troy. The wild Arabs think themselves fully entitled to plunder the caravans of strangers, and to commit murder in case of resistance. Savage nations make war, even to extirpation if possible; leaving dreadful revenge as a legacy to posterity. But in the midst of this barbarous conduct, the notions of social virtue, within their own circle, are strong and impressive. Their rude minds have the most faithful attachments: they are just and honourable to each other: they display undaunted courage in the face of danger; and endure, with insulting patience, the severest torments that can be inflicted by an enraged foe. The banditti and pirates of some countries, and the associated thieves of others, feel the necessity of observing the strictest justice, and of acting upon the principles of liberality. They have in their perverted and degraded state, such an exalted sense of honour and integrity, as is a reproach to those who look down upon them with horror.

Although the above facts may not give us the

most favourable opinion of human nature, they are founded upon a principle, the developement of which may finally be productive of the social virtues, to the utmost extent of their lenient and beneficent influence. The most circumscribed associations, and the narrowest bonds of union, confess that man cannot possibly enjoy life in an isolated state. He cannot exist in perpetual solitude. The human species have not only, in common with all other animals, a natural attachment to each other, but mutual interest demands mutual intercourse; and such is the constitution of our nature, that it is not difficult to *purchase mutual good-will by mutual acts of kindness.* It is this disposition which forms the harmony of the smallest circles; and events, which have a tendency to enlarge these circles, though they may be rude and injurious in their first operations, induce other events, which are highly favourable to extensive civilization. The wars and contentions commenced with savage hatred, if they do not absolutely extirpate the opposing clans, or nations, have a tendency to introduce a similarity of manners, and remove that shy disinclination to intercourse, which was one cause of enmity. The Subjugated receive the laws, and gradually adopt the customs of the conquerors; and although re-

duced to a state of dependence, hurtful to their feelings, they become in some degree partakers of the good-will of their masters. By lenient treatment, they are finally incorporated with the triumphant community; and they feel themselves to be members of the same body, though destined to inferior services. Their vanquishers perceive, that it is more to their interest to treat them as *subjects*, than exterminate them as *foes*; and thus are they secured from further injuries. The conquests of Alexander, and the whole Roman history, may be considered as histories of this process. The American Indians are reported to calculate advantages so wisely, that when the population of their tribes has been greatly diminished, by the devastations of war, they will not destroy or torture their prisoners, according to their usual practice, but adopt them into their tribe, and give them all the advantages of denizens. In numerous instances have the savage extirminating dispositions of of the most cruel conquerors, been molified by a bribe. The redemption of life and liberty, by large pecuniary mulcts, by ceding towns and provinces, softens the rigour of what they deem *vindictive justice*; and the sovereigns who have not learned to remit punishments, from the nobler motives of generosity and mercy, will not scruple to

sacrifice their abstract conceptions of personal justice to their immediate interests.

Similar effects of social benefit, arising from self-interest, are sometimes obvious in civil life, and among individuals of the same community; whose animosities may have been very great from some adventitious cause, either of a religious or political nature; and who may have construed mutual hatred into a laudable zeal for the important cause espoused. Their resentments have, in process of time, been softened down, by the fortunate discovery of some object or bond of mutual interest, which renders mutual toleration desireable to each party. They will unite in order to resist an enemy more formidable to both, than they are to each other. The man of business will cease to examine, wirh a rigid minuteness, into the religious or political creeds of those, with whom he wishes to form commercial associations, which promise profit or opulence. The operations of self-interest, ultimately soften those wrathful and revengeful principles which characterize savage manners; and which often disgrace more civilised societies, until some desireable bond of union shall finally present itself.

Thus in larger, or in smaller circles, the prospects of advantage become powerful antidotes to destructive and pernicious prejudices. The expansion of every species of utility, breaks down the mounds of separation, and enlarges the sphere of benevolence. Whatever promotes peaceful intercourse among nations, destroys the national animosities fostered by ignorance. Strangers begin to look at each other without horror; conceive that they may be of the same species; and finally associate as friends. The more frequent the intercourse, provided it be conducted with integrity and honour, the readier will suspicions give way to confidence and respect.

This is the natural tendency and prime advantage of extensive commerce. An interchange of benefits, although commencing in self-interest, generates affection. The rich fruits of good-will, thus produced, are of more intrinsic value than any other treasures ; they far exceed the choicest of all commercial exports or imports. The promotion of reciprocal interests is now preferred to plans of destruction; the blessings of peace take place of the miseries of war and devastation; the voice of rejoicing succeeds to the groans of the wounded, the lamentations of the ruined, and the wailings of widows and orphans.

Were not our attention chiefly confined, in the present inquiry, to the progressive operations of natural causes upon the mind, in its slow cultivation of the social virtues, we might also advert to the beneficial influence of Christianity. By spreading the important doctrine of pure theism, it has collected the different classes of mankind under one universal sovereign, and taught them to believe that their duties and expectations are similar. By the equity and benevolence of its precepts, and the attractive example of its founder, moral principles have been more widely diffused; and milder dispositions have been cultivated, even by vulgar minds, than were known to exist among persons of the same class in the heathen world. Cruel sports and pastimes have been abolished; nor is abject slavery so universal. The periodical dissemination of moral and religious principles from the pulpit, and even from the press, has formed a popular fund of knowledge, which is gradually humanizing the heart. The influence of that excellent religion might have been infinitely more extensive, had not its professors and teachers, halted so long upon metaphysical questions, and stirred up all the angry passions of their admirers, as well as their own, by incessantly engaging in polemical contests.

By the union of the above causes, the various classes of men, notwithstanding the diversities of nations, distinctions in governments, differences in religious and political sentiments which still subsist, begin to respect each other. They have subdued the injurious shyness of strangers, and are disposed to communicate reciprocal benefits. It is pleasant to observe, that when disputes arise between nations, from the supposed opposition of interests, earnest endeavours are exerted to reconcile differences, before an appeal is made to the sword. The amicable temper, cultivated in peaceful seasons, has taken root, and subsists amidst the horrors of war. Subjects begin to dread, instead of encouraging, the ambition of their sovereigns. Those whose profession is military, or who are compelled to engage in the contest, discharge their duty with intrepid firmness, but the savage fierceness which characterised former periods, gives way to the claims of mercy ; and the subdued are treated with commiseration. The subjects of contending nations begin to sympathise with each others distresses, with a strength of feeling that attempts to relieve. May we not hope, by the progressive cultivation of such happy dispositions, that the ambition of sovereigns will finally be checked and subdued ; that the pride, and extra-

vagant claims of rival nations, will give place to moderation and equity; and that mutual concessions of minuter importance, will purchase the incalculable advantages of perpetual amity?

In the above, we have endeavoured to trace the progress of the social virtues, by the natural operations of different passions and affections of the human mind; in consequence of which it expands from the contractedness of self, until communities at large become partakers of its affections, complacences, and benevolent wishes. Commencing, in its more abject state, with the servile passion of fear, it proceeds to hope; and by the reception of kind treatment, it gradually acquires personal attachments, with dispositions to perform correspondent duties. It is also manifest, that the narrow boundaries of particular societies, which distinguished ruder ages, are giving place to far more liberal principles; and that the false and contracted notions of separate and irreconcileable interests, will not always prove an obstacle to universal benevolence.

There is another passion, the beneficial effects

of which are merely personal; but its influence in promoting the private or personal virtue of individuals, is too great not to demand our notice: the passion, or affection of Sorrow.

We have considered Sorrow *, as expressive of a mental suffering, under the privation of some good, either in possession or expectation. Sorrow may proceed from adventitious circumstances, over which we have no controul; from the behaviour of others, or from our own misconduct. When we are conscious that what we suffer, was occasioned by any improper actions or negligences of ourselves, sorrow assumes the character of repentance; consisting of various degrees, from simple displacency or dissatisfaction with ourselves, to all the horrors of contrition and remorse. It is the peculiar characteristic of sorrow to render us thoughtful; and we have already remarked, that the pathological influence of the pas sion upon the animal system, corresponds with its final cause. Afflictions of every kind are replete with useful instruction. Some important lesson is always to be learned from them; and sorrow best disposes the mind to receive instruction, by the calm melancholy which succeeds to the first transports of the passion. We now ad-

* Vol. I. article Sorrow.

vert to the state in which we were before the calamity arrived; compare it with the present; feel and bewail the difference. We are convinced, by the unexpected privation, that there was more good in our former state, than our thoughtless minds had conceived; and this may induce a grateful habit of valuing our blessings, while they are in our possession. If the evils that befal us were totally independent of our powers of prevention, sorrow disposes us to direct our choice, and place our affections, upon more secure and permanent good. If we have been unintentionally accessory, we become disposed to enquire what share we had in the event; what line of conduct conduced to it; and in what manner it might have been avoided. In cases of direct culpability, we are taught that the objects of pursuit were improper, the motives unlawful, the means inadequate, or the manner rash and precipitate. Hence we acquire beneficial experience; are disposed and enabled, to make a wiser choice, and to act upon better principles in the future. If sorrows arise from events, which may have made an essential change in our state; should we be reduced from affluence to penury, from freedom to bondage, or from an exalted to a more humble station, we are taught the uncertainty of that species

of good, which perhaps had occupied our whole attention, and for which, possibly, we had sacrificed the best principles of the human heart. If we vainly boasted of our exalted station, or assumed haughty and supercilious airs, from a persuasion of our superior talents or merit, we shall now perceive the greatness of our error. We shall now learn, that it was our *station*, or *affluence*, and not *ourselves*, which commanded such appearances of profound respect, and such flattering attentions from others. We shall find that nothing was *our own*; and that all our glory consisted in the gaze and admiration of those very beings, whom we treated with contempt. Thus may we become proficients in the important science of *self-knowledge*, in a manner by no means flattering, but highly advantageous to our future interests.

We attempted to prove, in a former volume, that all the irregular passions may be ascribed to ignorance, the powerful influence of present objects, and inordinate self-love; and the sorrow, and anguish of heart which frequently succeed to these irregularities, promise to be the best preservatives against a relapse into former follies. If ignorance were involuntary, we are yet taught va-

luable knowledge by *experience*; which, of all others, is the most impressive instructor. If ignorance were the result of carelessness and inattention, self-reproach accompanying sorrow, will exert its influence to quicken future attention. By the melancholy consequences which too frequently succeed to our being fascinated, with the deceitful allurements of present objects, we are fully instructed, that their allurements *are* deceitful; that by yielding to their seductions, we are bartering away permanent peace and happiness, for the transient unsatisfactory gratifications of sense; or by the rash transports of anger, we destroy, in a moment, all the enjoyments of our social intercourse.

We have, in another place *, amply considered the pernicious effects of inordinate self-love, and have shewn, that as it is more culpable, and more dangerous in its excesses, than either of the preceding causes, it is also much more difficult to be restrained, or subjugated. It is deaf to the voice of reason, to the claims of justice, or the cries of misery. It is arrogant, revengeful, and implacable. Although the sordid nature of this principle be an impediment to all rational enjoyment;

* See Vol. II. p. 133.

though it sacrifice every thing that is generous and worthy, and is a stranger to the endearments of every social affection; though its predominant sensations be pride, anger, and perpetual discontent, yet to these it must submit; for a selfish disposition has no corrective from *within*. Of such a character the only remedy is from *without*, in the guise of an *affliction*; and the deeper the affliction the more promising the cure. The sufferings of adverse fortune, and a long train of disappointments, are highly necessary to chase away the dreams of superiority, and of an uncontrouled empire over our associates. The reverses of fortune prove that the power of the Mightiest is not innate; and that they merely act by a force that is servilely granted to them by others; that affluence is but a casual accumulation of the means of good, liable to dissipation; and that to be placed in the most elevated station, is to stand upon a pillar liable to be overthrown. Such calamities prove, to the most haughty, their dependence upon their inferiors; and may humble their pride, until they gladly receive a boon from those whom they once despised. Afflictions have been known to soften the hardest heart into sympathy with the afflicted; and to render those who were most insolent when in prosperity, humble and submissive when in a

state of adversity. It has introduced them into an acquaintance with characters infinitely superior to their own. They perceive that others possess the goodness of heart, of which they are destitute; and they are roused to a grateful astonishment, at acts of kindness, from the neglected and injured, as unexpected as they were undeserved.

Uninterrupted prosperity has a pernicious influence upon the heart. Overweening *Self* is always disposed to interpret our good fortune into superior personal worth, or superior abilities; and these it often claims, to the total exclusion of friends and coadjutors, whose kindly aids are soon effaced from the memory, or placed below their true level, as much as our own deserts are raised above it. Hence the absurd ideas of absolute independence, and their concomitants, arrogance and ingratitude. On the other hand, so peculiarly efficacious are afflictions, producing the genuine workings of sorrow, in its various gradations, that perhaps, no truly virtuous and amiable character was ever formed, without being somewhat trained up in this school. It abounds with information, which becomes the more impressive by its being purchased by our own experience. It teaches self-knowledge, so essential to self-government. It points out where wisdom

dwells, and disposes to listen to her counsels: it softens the heart into sympathy with others: it is peculiarly calculated to call forth and strengthen the passive virtues of patience, submission, resignation, humility, and the practice of moderation in all things. Great afflictions have a tendency to diminish the morbid influence of more trivial sufferings, that were formerly so irritating, and to augment our esteem for the consolations which are yet in our power.

A process in the operations of the passions, somewhat similar to the above, is sometimes observable in a change of dispositions and conduct, from an abandoned, to a religious course of life. When gross ignorance and depraved morals, are united in the same person; when selfish gratifications appear to have been the sole motives of conduct, and the excess of profligacy seems to bid defiance to reformation, the excitement of *dread*, respecting the divine wrath, has not unfrequently proved most successful. Persons of such a character, being solely governed by selfish motives, alarming representations, which touch this *Self*, more powerfully than the powerful objects of seduction, can alone become a counterpoise to their pernicious influence, or counteract the

depraved dispositions rendered inveterate by habit. Argue with the profligate concerning the irrationality of their conduct; assure them that they are violating the laws of society, and are forfeiting their title to its benefits; explain to them the superior advantages to be derived from the practice of virtue, they will hear you with perfect indifference. Expatiate upon the charms of virtue, they will not comprehend you. They see no charms but in the objects which indulge some vile propensity. Place before them the pernicious consequences attendant upon vicious courses, the poverty and disgrace to which they are exposed; threaten them with the chastisement of the laws, they may begin to listen, perhaps to be convinced; may resolve, struggle, and be again subdued. The present indulgence is immediate; poverty and want appear to be at a remote distance; and as to the terrors of human laws, they entertain the fullest confidence that by artifice, and address, or by the very chicanery of the interpretors of the law, they shall escape its penalties. To persons of this description, the infinitely more awful threatenings of much severer punishments, in a future world, at once terrible and certain; denounced with solemn authority, united with sympathetic concern, are the only probable means of

exciting a salutary alarm, and of inspiring them with all the horrors of remorse. They may thus be impressed with the apprehensions of danger; and be anxious to escape by penitence and reformation. The mind may thus be brought, by the operation of terror, into a state of *subjugation*; into a pliability of temper unknown before; thus it may become prepared for future instructions, in every religious and moral duty; and finally, it may be animated to the practice of virtue, by sublimer motives than those suggested by the servility of fear.

These effects of terror are frequently to be observed upon the minds of condemned criminals. Their nature appears to be instantaneously changed. Blasphemers *now* are terrified at the thoughts of appearing before that Being, whom they have despised. They read; they pray; they seek consolation from the pious. Tempers the most cruel and savage, now assume the appearance of mildness and humility, and profess to die in peace with all mankind. The execution of the awful sentence, leaves us in doubt concerning each individual, whether this anxious state of mind would finally have terminated in pious reformation; and the subsequent relapse of many that have received pardon, greatly augments these doubts.

The affection which, in the natural process of things, succeeds to lively terror, will be the affection of *Hope*. The penitent who has been driven by his fears to seek for pardon, will certainly be influenced by the hopes of obtaining it, or he would sink into the depth of despair.

When he trusts that his peace is made with an offended deity, where a genuine reformation takes place, this affection will introduce the pleasing sensations of *joy* and *gratitude* into his breast. An impressive sense of his infinite obligations, and of benefits, which exceed all thought, and for which no adequate return can possibly be made, will, according to the natural influence of love, joy, and gratitude, quicken in him the spirit of obedience to the divine will, in all the ramifications of obedience. Penitence is no longer excited by the immediate apprehensions of danger alone, but it becomes ingenuous sorrow, at having offended the divine benefactor. The dread and terror which the contemplation of the irresistible power of an offended Being first inspired, are now modified, by a conviction of his infinite benignity, into the profoundest awe and reverence. Love, gratitude, respectful fear, uniting with the strong perception, where true interest lies, will implant an habitual solicitude not to

offend. The consciousness of a relapse into former vices, will be productive of sincere contrition, in which the fear of punishment is no longer the only, or the primary impression. The poignancy of penitence will chiefly consist in the conviction of ingratitude; the perception of failings will inspire humility, calculated to augment caution, and also to suggest motives of patience and resignation, in all the afflictive scenes of life.

The above observations are founded upon the position, that the Subject has been in the lowest state of mental degradation, previously to the influence of any religious motives; that upon the first alarm of terror, his conscience discloses to him numberless evidences of depravity; and that he is convicted, by an inward testimony, of the habitual viciousness of his propensities, and profligacy of his conduct. But such convictions and painful sensations, are not to be expected, where pious precepts and example, have induced virtuous and pious habits and affections, from the early dawn of reason. The subject will entertain a just sense of his own failings, without those terrors which belong to reprobate minds alone. He com-

mences religious duties, at a more advanced stage of the process; and from an earlier period, he will be actuated by the nobler principles of love, gratitude, and filial awe, without those horrors which are the just and corrective punishments of the wicked.

*END OF THE ETHICAL TREATISE*

## *ERRATA.*

Page 109 l. 9 for inventive, r. invective.
112 l. 10 after condemnation, r. are indulged.
191 in the reference for C. r. F.

# NOTES

TO THE

# PRECEDING TREATISE.

# NOTES

TO THE

# *PRECEDING TREATISE.*

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## Note A.

After "although it primarily respects others and not ourselves." Page 33.

THE terms prudence and discretion, imprudence and indiscretion, may frequently be used with the strictest propriety; but the following example will shew us that cases may occur in which the distinctions we have adopted are of importance. Officious persons will often publish reports, or relate events, which both prudence and discretion should have taught them to conceal. They

were *imprudent*, because the discoveries they made were to their own prejudice; they were *indiscreet* because they gave offence, or were prejudicial to those who had a claim upon their discretion and secrecy. If we feel a greater propriety in this mode of expressing ourselves, than by inverting the phrase; and asserting that a person may be *indiscreet* respecting his own interest, and *imprudent* in doing what may prove offensive to another, the distinction is valid. The degrees of Indiscretion will, in this case, be measured by the greatness of the offence committed, and the force of our obligations to have been more cautious. The degrees of Imprudence will be measured, by the extent of injury to which any one has exposed himself, from the rank, character, power, or resentful dispositions, of the person offended.

## Note B.

After "unworthy and pernicious." Page 102.

It is very interesting to trace the gradual changes that have taken place in the signification of the term *virtue*, according to the progress made in knowledge and civilization. In the greek language αρητῆς originally signified *warlike prowess*, and it implied both valour and skill; being derived from ἄρης *Mars*, the God of war; whereas *Bellona* was considered as the goddess of impetuous unbridled courage. Virtue was originally supposed to consist in a spirited and meritorious activity, not in being passive, or even in cultivating the social affec-

tions. Such was the opinion of M. Aurelius, according to the observation of Dr. Beattie. These ideas were derived from the sentiments most prevalent in the earlier state of society, when the principles of general benevolence were but little known; when social attachments were very circumscribed, but yet, from their peculiar strength, they were *instinctively felt* as it were, without being reflected upon as the result of sentiment. A *stranger* was, at these periods, almost synonymous with an *enemy;* nor was an attention to the exigencies of a stranger viewed in the light of a moral duty. Virtue was alone supposed to consist in the exertion of force against an opposing enemy; thus it was considered as nearly allied to prudence, or as a ramification of prudence. No one but a good man, says Aristotle, can be prudent; it is not possible for a man to be properly good, without prudence, nor prudent without moral virtue. αδυνατον φρονιμον ειναι μη οντα αγαθον; ουχ οιον αγαθον ειναι κυριως ανευ φρονησεως, ουδε φρονιμον ανευ της ηθικης αρετης. Whatever is operative of good is in the Greek language termed αγαθος. Thus it is expressive of strength, skill, utility, good fortune, integrity, benevolence, and every species of excellence. We may remark also that the adverb κυριως properly signifies authoritative exertion; and *self command*, and ηθικης αρετης *moral strength*. The Greeks have also another word expressive of virtue, εγκρατεια, *inward strength*, which is obviously more applicable to the virtue of self command, than of prowess. Κρατος which signifies power of any kind, authority, dominion, is also expressive of excellence. The most distinguished and exalted persons, and chiefs,

are called κρατιστοι; and the word is frequently used in a connexion which implies pre-eminence.*

The consonance of these sentiments with those advanced in the text is self-evident.

When mankind became more civilized, and philosophers began to study the nature of virtue as a science; the signification of the term was considerably extended. Thus Aristotle divides virtue into intellectual and moral. Of the former kind are Wisdom, Intelligence, Prudence; of the latter, Temperance and Frugality; and other beneficial dispositions of the mind. "When we speak of *morals*, says Aristotle, we do not say a man is *wise* or *intelligent*, but that he is *gentle* and *temperate*. We treat a *wise* man with respect, but *laudable dispositions*, are what we call moral virtues." It is observable that in the above quotation, the idea attached to virtue is confined to its *personal* influence, or solely as it respects the agent.

Cicero proceeds somewhat further. He says, "the virtues of the soul, and of its principal part, the *understanding*, are various; but they may be reduced to two kinds. The first are those which nature has implanted, and which are called involuntary: the second are more properly called virtues, because they depend upon the *will*. These, as objects of approbation, are transcendently superior. Of the former kind are docility, memory, and all the virtues distinguished by the general name of genius, or capacity; the persons possessing them are called ingenious. The latter class comprehends the great and genuine virtues which we deem voluntary, as Prudence,

* See Xen. Cyrop.

Temperance, Fortitude, Justice, and others of the kind."*

From the above quotation we perceive that Cicero did not consider virtue as a quality of a personal influence, *exclusively*. It was admitted to comprehend *Justice*, which is a *social* virtue; and also others of the kind. The moderns confine the signification to those voluntary exertions, which have the production of some specific good for their object, or to the cultivation of the dispositions and affections most influential on well-being: and thus do they entirely separate it from those intellectual powers included in the characteristics given by Cicero; the important office of which is, to direct virtuous dispositions and efforts in a proper manner.

It is observable that the word *virtue* is seldom used either in the old, or new testament; and it is always in a very limited sense. It is in the old testament alone applied to female merit, or to female chastity. Thus Boaz says to Ruth, "all the people of my city doth know that thou art a virtuous woman."† Solomon tells us that a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; and her price is above rubies." "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." Integrity, Purity, Uprightness, Truth, Righteousness, are the terms uniformly employed to express a proficiency in the moral virtues.

In the english translation of the new testament, there are not more than four or five passages in which the word virtue occurs; and in these it serves to express the signification of two greek words, δυναμις and αρετη. In Mark,

* Cic. de finib. L. 5, C. 13. ex Edit. Davidii. † Ruth, ch. 3. v. 11.

ch. 5. v. 30. it is said "Jesus knew that virtue was gone out of him." ἐπιγνὸς ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ δύναμιν ἐξελθοῦσαν. The Evangelist Luke uses this word also in relating the same miracle. Saint Paul, in his exhortation to the Philippians, thus expresses himself; "finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest,—just,—pure,—lovely,—of good report, if *there be any virtue*, and if there be any praise, think of these things. Phil. ch. 4. v. 8. εἴ τις ἀρετὴ. In the II. Epistle of Peter ch. 1. v. 4. the apostle says, "according as his divine *power*, hath given us all things that pertain unto godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to knowledge and *virtue*." *Power* is here expressed by δυναμις, and *virtue*, by ἀρετὴ. In the 5th verse he adds "and besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith *virtue;* and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance, patience, &c.

ἐν τῇ πίστει ὑμῶν τὴν ἀρετὴν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀρετῇ τὴν γνῶσιν, &c.

It appears from the above quotations that when δυναμις is translated *virtue*, the term is expressive of a divine energy, of a beneficial nature; and ἀρετη is applied to that moral energy in good men which qualifies them for the acquisition of useful knowledge, and the practice of temperance, patience, &c. Both of these significations illustrate and confirm the assertion, that *virtue* alway implies a beneficial power, notwithstanding the diversities observable in its application.

## Note C.

After "That is, as a virtue." Page 109.

The opinions universally entertained concerning the intrinsic nature of virtue and vice, are termed by Epictetus *Preconceptions*. We shall quote his remarks on the frequent misapplication of these preconceptions to specific actions, as they illustrate the position advanced in the text, with humour and vivacity.

"Preconceptions are common to all men; and one preconception does not contradict another. For who does not lay it down as a maxim that good is advantageous and eligible; that justice is fair and becoming? Where then is the dispute? In adapting those preconceptions to particular cases. As when one cries, "Such a person has acted well: he is a gallant man." "No," answers another, "he has acted like a fool." The dispute between Jews, Syrians, Egyptians, Romans, is not whether sanctity be preferable to all things, but whether *eating swine's flesh* be consistent with sanctity or not. This was the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon. "What say you Agamemnon, ought not that to be done which is fit and right?" "Yes surely Achilles, what say you?" "Yes beyond every thing. Adapt your preconceptions then." Here begins the dispute. One says, it is not fit that I should restore Chryseis to her father." The other says, "Yes but it is." One or the other of them certainly makes a wrong adaptation of the preconception of fitness. Again, "if it be fit, says Achilles, that I should give up Chryseis, it is fit too that I should take some of your prizes."* &c. &c.

* See Mrs. Carter's Epictetus, 4to. ed.

## Note D.

After "acclamations of praise." Page 120.

That keen, yet bewildered Philosopher, Mr. Hume, whose superior powers of intellect could penetrate deeply into difficulties, from which his assumed principles could not possibly extricate him, would never have confounded essential differences so grossly, because of slight resemblances, had he considered the extensive production of good, as the best and most rational principle of action in intelligent, social, and moral agents. He would then have smiled at his own puny conceit, that punishing an adversary is Good, *because it gratifies revenge*; and that a desire to put on clean linen is a *virtuous* disposition of equal merit with the most generous action. He would have expressed gratitude to his washerwoman in a more pertinent manner, than by raising her to the same seat with the sublimest moralist!

## Note E.

After "And perhaps do not exist." Page 125.

The above distinctions are peculiarly important as they are calculated to have a moral influence. To vague and indiscriminate ideas concerning the nature of merit and demerit, may be ascribed those imprudent and dangerous invectives which are frequently uttered against the *merit of moral duties*, in a manner sufficient to intimidate minds

well disposed, from adding to their faith any of the virtues, lest they should commit the unpardonable sin of trusting to their own righteousness; and preference has not unfrequently been given to the state of the abandoned and profane, lest the feeble moralist who is struggling to relinquish their society, and purify himself from the mire in which they continue to be plunged, should impiously trust to the merits of his own pious efforts! Whoever contemplates the nature of absolute merit, must know that it cannot be claimed by imperfect man. Nor can any one who meditates upon the nature and duration of future blessedness, be so absurd as to suppose that his attempts to obey the divine commands, can, in the strict sense of the word, *merit* the high recompense of reward; particularly when he recollects that all the means and all the powers of obedience he enjoys, are communicated by the Being whom he serves. But surely the Supreme Director has a right to dispense his choicest and unmerited blessings, upon the conditions his wisdom deems to be most proper; nor can we conceive of terms more worthy of the deity, than the possession of those moral qualities which are essential to human happiness! Surely a compliance with these terms must give a title to the stipulated recompense, notwithstanding the immense disproportion between the service and the remuneration. The man who is conscientious in the discharge of his duty, is certainly a more exalted character, is better prepared for happiness, and has a superior title to the enjoyment of it, than the impious, negligent and inattentive; and although he renounce every claim to absolute merit, he ought to feel more inward satisfaction and self-complacency than the wicked. These

Exclaimers make no distinction between the satisfaction which accompanies conscious integrity, and the arrogance of a boasting Pharisee. Were they to scrutinize their own hearts with half the anxiety they express for the hearts of others, they might perhaps discover some degree of vanity blended with their indiscriminate censures; they might perceive that their hopes of acceptance with heaven, may in no small degree depend *upon the very merit of disclaiming merit*.

## Note F.

After "To his guilty employer." Page 191.

The german traveller, Archenholtz, presents us with a striking instance of the influence of this principle in a professed assassin. In his account of Italy, he tells us, that two Venetian noblemen having quarrelled, the one immediately engaged a celebrated agent of revenge to dispatch his antagonist, giving a minute description of his person and of the places he frequented at certain hours. The devoted victim, prompted by a similar spirit of malignancy, applied to the same assassin with a view to bribe him to execute his horrid purpose. The assassin recognized him, expressed deep regret that he was pre-engaged; adding that *as a man of honour*, he was compelled immediately to execute his commission; and he stabbed the applicant to the heart.

## Note G.

After "with all the cordiality of friendship." Page 226.

There is seated in the principles of infidelity, a predisposing cause of a cruel indifference to human welfare. For although cultivated minds may be useful and ornamental members of society, in spite of their speculative opinions, atheists will, generally speaking, be extremely prone to throw off every restraint, and seek to derive every possible advantage from their principles. They are most liable to unite in their own persons the two contrarieties, of great indifference to life with inordinate self-love. If they be placed in unpleasant situations; they will, without much scruple, pursue all the means of escape in their power. Their last resort may be an act of suicide, but if they can prolong existence with any degree of advantage, by the injury, or even the destruction of others, they will naturally prefer it. The indifference they feel for their own lives, compared with the sentiments of the man who considers the present as having an important relation to a better state, will dispose them to be indifferent about the life of another man, when it may suit their convenience. We may further observe, that we always place a value upon objects, in proportion to our perceptions of their qualities, powers, capacities, either of possessing, or of communicating good. The more exalted the object, the more deeply are we interested in its concerns. This rule pervades every department in nature. The life of an insect is of equal value to itself, with

the life of the nobler quadruped, yet we view the destruction of each with unequal sensations. In human society, our sympathy is much stronger when a catastrophe befals a man of eminence, than for an illiterate and obscure peasant. Whoever entertains such a humiliating opinion of human nature, as to imagine that it is destined to perish in the manner of brutes, will not consider the existence of man of much greater importance. He knows that life is of short duration; he is disposed to believe it to be worse than insignificant, and he will be disposed to treat it accordingly. The *religious man* feels his own dignity, perceives the high importance of his own existence, and ascribes equal dignity and importance to the nature and existence of his fellow immortals. He considers life as an invaluable treasure, and he is struck with horror at its being extinguished by an act of violence.

## Note H.

After "is able to lay the strongest hold upon self-interest." Page 233.

There is a passage in the Cyropedia of Xenophon, which represents the superior strength of dread to every other emotion, in a manner so perfectly consonant with our statement in the text, and illustrative of its principles, that we shall translate it for the english reader.

"Tigranes, the son of Armenius, in pleading with Cyrus in behalf of his father, who was captured in a revolt from the Medes, and according to the laws of war was

liable to the punishment of death; urged that his father had already suffered by the captivity of his whole family, and having the prospect of death before him, sufficiently to teach him wisdom for the future, if Cyrus would generously spare his life. Cyrus asserted that his punishment was not yet commenced. To which Tigranes answers, "Can any one be more severely punished than by excessive fear? Do you not know that those who have been desperately wounded by the sword of their adversaries, may still be eager to renew the combat; while those who are struck with a panic never dare to look the enemy in the face again?" CYRUS. "Thus you say that the fear of punishment is the severest of chastisements?" TIGRANES. "You know that I speak the truth. You know that persons who are under the dreadful apprehensions of banishment from their country; or who are compelled to engage in battle with the expectation of being subdued, are almost lifeless from anxiety. Navigators who are in danger of drowning, and those who fear servitude and chains, can neither eat nor sleep, through the sensation of fear. But such as are already banished, or subdued, or in servitude, frequently eat and sleep, better than persons who enjoy much better fortune. Many captives have died through the fear of death; nay they have laid violent hands upon themselves, to escape the punishment. So terrible is fear, and such is the dominion it exercises over the human mind."*

* Xenoph. Cyrop. Edit. Leunclav. Amel. B. 6. 7.

After "And thus are they secured from further injuries." Page 248.

As the preceding passage illustrates what we have advanced concerning Fear; the following extract from Mr. Jefferson's speech to the American congress in Nov. 1808; will prove that what has been alleged concerning the natural progress of civilization, and the gradual introduction of the true principles of equity, in place of the partial views of clans and tribes, is not merely theoretical, but a pleasing reality.

"With our Indian neighbours the public peace is steadily maintained. Some instances of individual wrongs have, as at other times, taken place, but in no wise implicating the will of the nation. Beyond the Missisippi, the Joways, the Saes, and the Alibamus have delivered up for trial and punishment individuals from among themselves, accused of murdering citizens of the united states. On this side the Missisippi the Creeks are exerting themselves to arrest offenders of the same kind; and the Choctaws have manifested their readiness and desire for amicable and just arrangements, respecting depredations committed by disorderly persons of their tribe; and generally from a conviction that we consider them as a part of ourselves, and cherish with sincerity their rights and interests; and the attachment of the Indian tribes is daily gaining strength; is extending from the nearer to the more remote, and will amply requite us for the justice and friendship practised towards them."

AN

# ETHICAL TREATISE

ON THE

# PASSIONS,

FOUNDED ON THE PRINCIPLES INVESTIGATED IN A PHILOSOPHICAL TREATISE

BY T. COGAN, M. D.

Nulla enim vitæ pars, neque publicis neque privatis, neque forensibus neque domesticis, in rebus, neque si tecum agas quid, neque si cum altero contrahas, vacare officio potest; in eoque colendo sita vitæ est honestas omnis, & in negligendo, turpitudo.—CIC. DE OFFICIIS.

BATH:

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1810.

AN

# ETHICAL TREATISE, &c.

## PART II.

## *On Conduct conducive to Happiness.*

IN TWO DISQUISITIONS.

I. On the influence of virtue upon personal and social happiness.

II. On Morality; its nature, laws, and motives.

# PREFACE.

IN the preceding volume on the subject of the Passions, an attempt was made to investigate their origin, exciting causes, specific objects, classifications, divisions, subdivisions, connections, various kinds and degrees of influence, &c. The Author flatters himself that, in the course of these investigations, some interesting facts have been brought to light; and that the existence of much greater order and consistency is become obvious, than could possibly have been imagined, by those whose principal attention has been directed to the excentricities, or who have suffered by the violence of the passions.

It is always pleasant to discover some degree of order, in the midst of apparent confusion; to trace the evidences of a regular system, where confusion seemed to be most predominant; and to remark final causes where accident or caprice were supposed to be the most triumphant. But the study of the passions and affections of the human mind, has a much more important object than these. It is not confined to the mere contemplation of a force, which we all acknowledge, and all have felt, both by its salutary and pernicious influence; it is a study, which also enables us to direct the impetus of the mind to its proper objects, temper the degrees of its energy to the peculiarities of the case, and place the more permanent affections on those things which cannot deceive or disappoint. For, although speculations of a philosophical nature may amuse and flatter, it is UTILITY alone which makes every species of knowledge of sterling value. Whatever honours we may be disposed to confer upon

distinguished exertions of intellect, without UTILITY, all the labours of the learned, are but more reputable amusements; and the most splendid discoveries of philosophy, unless they be as operative as charity in the promotion of good, are but "as sounding "brass or a tinkling cymbal."

Nor can any speculations be more important, than those which immediately relate to the *Well-being of Man;* which profess to regulate every desire of his heart, and every action of his life; which have a tendency to place him upon his guard, against the many evils to which he is exposed, and direct him to the attainment of the greatest good his nature can possibly enjoy! Dispositions and conduct, from the most trivial instances of prudence or imprudence, to deeds which merit the most exalted praise, or the severest censure, constitute the prerogative, felicity, or scourge of Man!

As the preceding analysis will have suggested these truths to the attentive reader,

they will also have manifested the great extent, and peculiar intricacy of the subject. Since the passions and affections are so numerous, complicated, various, and opposite; since they may be excited by such an infinitude of causes, and are frequently productive of the most momentous consequences; since every object with which we are connected, or which presents itself at any time to the mind, may possibly call forth some affection, and have some influence on our well-being; it is obvious that the study of the passions and affections, to the extent which the subject requires, must be a labour of patience, perseverance, and indefatigable attention.

It was under the pressure of this discouraging consideration, that the Author presented the first part of his plan to the public, in his *Philosophical Treatise on the Passions*; and although he secretly regarded the principles advanced in that work, as the basis of inquiries still more important, yet many doubts presented themselves respect-

ing its acceptance. He therefore directed his chief attention to investigations of a *Philosophical* nature; carefully avoiding to treat of *Morals* in any other point of view, than as subjects of *Philosophical Discussion;* that the volume might not be considered as incomplete or imperfect, should public neglect, or any other cause, forbid the prosecution of the subject. By the favorable reception of the introductory volume, he feels himself encouraged to resume the pen, in the hope of completing his plan. His present attempt appears to him still more important than the preceding: he has certainly found it much more arduous; so arduous that he has frequently been induced to relinquish the pursuit, through despair of surmounting its many difficulties. The present subject has not only a place among the most copious and extensive that could have been chosen, it is also the most complex. The investigator is in the utmost danger of being lost in the multitude of his

own ideas: For although he may clearly perceive that they are related to his subject, yet their immediate and peculiar relation to each other, may frequently be obscure and intricate. In various instances, great pains are necessary to simplify complex terms, and reduce them to their component parts; to mark similarities, and differences; to discover the precise place of arrangement to which particular parts belong, and in which they may contribute their due degree of influence, so as to give strength, uniformity, and perspicuity to the whole, and produce such a connected mass of evidence as may force conviction upon the most prejudiced minds.

The popular nature of the subject, presents us with another difficulty. We all desire to be happy, and are eager to catch at every thing which appears favorable to this desire. It is to obtain well-being, that we toil, and rest, we seek employment, covet amusements, inform our minds, or remain in indolent ignorance; that we

practise virtue or plunge into vice. When therefore the theory of well-being professedly becomes a candidate for public attention, every one who does not despair of its being obtainable, or has not chalked out a favorite path for himself; every one who does not despise investigations of this nature, as being merely speculative and visionary, or imagine that the Author has undertaken a task which he cannot accomplish, will have his expectations raised; and consequently great is the danger of his disappointment. The Author foresees that this will be the case with many, but he trusts, not with all. He is deeply conscious that he cannot treat the subject in a manner adequate to its importance, but he knows that what he advances, ought to convince multitudes of their folly; and he is certain that he is pointing out a much securer path to felicity than that which multitudes have chosen.

After much suspense, the plan pursued in the present treatise, is preferred to several others which were in contemplation, and which as they possessed certain advantages, occasioned no small degree of embarrassment. It presents us with a view of human nature in a progressive series, from the first desire after well-being—which in reality is synchronous with the first desire that is formed,—through its various attempts, struggles, and contests, and into its many pernicious aberrations, with their causes. It next introduces us to the contemplation of those intellectual powers, with which we are endowed by the beneficent Author of our nature; by which we are enabled to remedy the physical and moral evils surrounding us; to form accurate ideas concerning the nature of that happiness we are perpetually desiring; to discover the line of conduct requisite for the attainment of it; to trace the number and appreciate the importance of those motives which ought to influence every rational creature, at every

period of his existence, and in the midst of every seduction; and thus securely conduct us to the possession of all that good which human beings are rendered capable of enjoying.

The analytical method has been resumed, as far as it was possible, from a settled persuasion that the tediousness of the process is amply compensated, by the various and interesting points of view, in which we are thus *compelled* to prosecute our enquiries; and by the satisfaction derived from the certainty that our conclusions are the result of thorough examination. Most truths are contemplated with peculiar pleasure, when we become intimately acquainted with the principles on which they are founded; and when we are assured, after the minutest investigation, that to deny their reality or importance, is an impeachment of the understanding.

The author cannot give a stronger proof of his confidence in this analytical method, than by the freedom with which he has ventured to criticise, in the notes, various positions of our most celebrated metaphysicians; and attempted to solve difficulties with which they have been embarrassed. If any of his arguments should prove conclusive, the success can be ascribed alone to the advantages which previous enquiry after first principles, and a minute analysis of complex terms, have given him; and it may afford consolation to moderate abilities, should it appear that patient and cautious enquiry, will sometimes discover truths, which have escaped the notice of more exalted genius. The diligent huntsman who examines every track, and beats every bush with attention, will sometimes start game, which was overlooked by a much more arduous sportsman, who can spring over hedges and ditches, and leave the pedestrian far behind; or to express the same idea in the language of the venerable Locke;

"He who has raised himself above the alms-basket, and not content to live lazy on scraps of begged opinion, sets his own thoughts on work, to find and follow truth, will, whatever he lights on, not miss the hunter's satisfaction; every moment of his pursuit will reward his pains with some delight, and he will have reason to think his time not ill spent even when he cannot much boast of any great acquisition."*

That the analytical method has been greatly neglected in philosophical inquiries must be acknowledged; and to this neglect we may ascribe much of that confusion of terms, which is the perpetual source both of pernicious errors, and of misconceptions respecting truths which might have been rendered most conspicuous. Many extravagances have been advanced and received; sometimes from a total forgetfulness of fundamental axioms; and at others, from confused and inadequate conceptions of the terms employed in the investigation of a subject: much argumentation

* Locke's Epistle to the Reader.

has also been fruitlessly expended, because the contending parties have not cautiously sought after some acknowledged principles on which to found their arguments, or accurately attended to appropriate terms. It is more than probable that the grand advantage enjoyed in the pursuit of mathematical truths, is derived from a circumstance which is deemed essentially necessary to the mathematician; his having every part of the problem to be solved, placed before his eyes in the most conspicuous manner, which enables him to perceive the relation and force of each part, without defect or confusion. It is readily acknowledged that the complications so obvious in human actions, states, and motives, render it much more difficult to enjoy similar advantages; but it must be granted in return, that in proportion to the defect will be uncertainty and confusion; and that, in proportion to the diligence and caution with which we collect, weigh, and compare the various circumstances pertaining to our subject, the nearer

we shall approach to a conviction that yields with reluctance to absolute demonstration.

It is a most important observation made by that distinguished philosopher Dr. Reid, "as it is not sufficient to the discovery of mathematical truths, that a man be able to attend to mathematical figures, as it is necessary that he should have the ability to distinguish accurately things that differ, and to discern clearly the various relations of the qualities he compares; so in order to discover the truth, in what relates to the operations of the mind, it is not enough that a man be able to give attention to them: he must have ability to distinguish accurately their minute differences; to resolve and analyze complex operations into their simple ingredients; to unfold the ambiguity of words, which in this science is greater than any other, and to give them the same accuracy and precision, that mathematical terms have. For the same precision in the use of words; the same cool attention to the minute differences of things; the same

talent for abstraction and analyzing, which fits a man for the study of the mathematics, is no less necessary in this." The Dr. adds "There is this great difference between the two sciences; the objects of mathematics being things external to the mind, it is much more easy to attend to them, and fix them steadily in the imagination." See Intellectual Powers. Essay I. Ch. VI.

That so arduous an undertaking is very imperfectly accomplished, the author readily admits; but a conviction of the importance of pursuing the mode adopted has induced him to make the attempt. He confesses that all his hopes of success depend upon his determination not to use any important term without explaining his conceptions of its precise meaning; not to assume any thing as a fact which has not been proved; firmly, and yet cautiously to pursue admitted *data* to whatever conclusions they obviously lead; to trace consequences, as much as possible, from their source to their

extent; and thus carefully to peruse the history of human nature, and make a faithful report.

This process is necessarily circuitous. A considerable degree of patience is required, to pursue it through its various stages; and it is possible that some parts of the treatise will, to many readers, appear chargeable with a tedious and unnecessary minuteness; particularly in the definitions concerning the intellectual powers of man. The charge will be valid should any distinctions have been made, where no real difference exists; if otherwise it is peculiarly requisite, in a work of this nature, to notice such differences notwithstanding their minuteness; for each will lead, in some connection or other, to its own peculiar consequences. It is a just remark made by the Author quoted above that "if all the general words in a language had a precise meaning, and were perfectly understood, as mathematical terms are, all verbal disputes would be at an end,

and men would never seem to differ in opinion, but when they differed in reality." While we are investigating these minuter distinctions, the ample provision which is made for the accurate acquirement of useful knowledge become most conspicuous. We discover a rich variety of materials spread before us, and we are enabled to select precisely the term which our subject demands; we find it adapted to particular connections, and endowed with a due degree of influence.

In our *Philosophical* Treatise on the Passions, that plan was followed which appeared to be the best calculated to gain an intimate acquaintance with the passions, respecting their nature, character, incitements, &c. where the useful and pernicious, honourable and dishonourable, were frequently placed in contrast to each other. It is necessary in our *Ethical* Treatise to change the order; to separate the passions and affections of one description from their opposites;

and occasionally to recapitulate the characteristics of each, as far as they relate to the subject immediately before us. It is hoped that these repetitions will not appear unnecessary, when it is recollected that, in subjects of such intricacy and importance, perspicuity is of the first moment; and that it is preferable to offend against brevity, than to withhold a single fact which may be applicable to some useful purpose. Powers and principles of which the operations are perpetual and extensive, cannot be rendered too conspicuous, or be called to our recollection too frequently. As the present work is professedly founded upon the principles investigated in the preceding, it may in some respects be considered as a practical comment upon them; and this will frequently demand particular references. For as in the study of *physiology*, *pathology*, and *therapeutics*, an application is constantly made of the facts discovered in a course of *anatomy;* thus disquisitions on the right conduct of

the passions, must in a great measure consist in the developement and application of the philosophical principles previously investigated, relative to them.

It is essential to the analytical method to be minute in our examinations. The particular investigation of each branch of the subject must, of consequence, assume the appearance of a distinct treatise. The work is accordingly divided into distinct disquisitions. The immediate subject of each division will doubtless manifest its own importance, nor will their mutual relation be less apparent. How infinitely momentous, therefore, must that object be, to which they all have an immediate reference, and which communicates to each separate article the whole of its importance:—*Human Happiness!*

So many excellent things have been repeatedly advanced by men of distinguished talents, concerning the subjugation of the passions to the mandates of reason, that the

Author would have deemed it presumption to attempt adding to the treasures already before the Public, if he had not supposed that the mode of investigation he has preferred, has enabled him to detect some errors where they were least obvious, exhibit in a new and interesting point of view, many important facts relative to human conduct, which are already admitted, and render most conspicuous the principles on which the leading sentiments of every Moralist are founded, that *right dispositions, prompting to correspondent Actions, can alone be productive of personal and social happiness; and that the opposite must lead to wretchedness.* The moral Philosopher will not discover many new truths respecting the principles or duties of morality, in the following disquisitions; but it is possible that he may find those already known, arranged in lucid order, and placed upon the firmest basis. It is hoped that the young and irresolute mind, exposed to the seductions of vice, will be convinced

that they are seductions of the most treacherous nature; and that the partizans of immorality will be ashamed and astonished at the futility of their maxims, the ignominy of their conduct, and the meanness of their motives, when these are exposed to the severe scrutiny of reason; and that they will be alarmed at their inevitable exposure to the extremes of misery.

How far the Author may have *succeeded* in his expectations, is now left with the public to decide. He does not scruple to acknowledge that he will feel deep regret, should the decision be, that his time and labours have been employed totally in vain. He professes to love his species; he knows it to be the first ambition of his soul, to contribute a something towards their welfare; and therefore he cannot be satisfied with the meagre consolation of the Poet,

*In magnis voluisse* sat est.

Bath, Feb. 19, 1807.

# CONTENTS.


Page.

Introduction - - - - - - - - - 1

DISQUISITION I.

AGENCY OF THE PASSIONS IN THE PURSUIT OF WELL-BEING - - - - - - - - 3

CHAP. I.

*The beneficial Agency of the Passions, Affections, Emotions, and Predilections, &c.*

Sect. I. On the utility of the Passions and Affections - - - - 34

II. On the utility of the Emotions 60

III. On the utility of Predilections 71

## CHAP. II.

*Inquiry into the Irregularities of the Passions and Affections; their Nature and Causes.*

Sect. I. The Irregularities of the Passions, &c. in what they consist - 99
II. The Causes of Irregularities, considered - - - - - - - 119
1. Ignorance - - - - 121
2. Influence of present objects 126
3. Inordinate Self-love - 130

## DISQUISITION II.

ON THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS OF THE MIND AS GUIDES AND DIRECTORS IN THE PURSUIT OF WELL-BEING.

## CHAP. I.

*On the Acquirement of Knowledge.*

Sect. I. On the exercise of the intellectual powers in the pursuit of knowledge - - - - - - - - 152
II. On the different states of mind respecting the acquisition of knowledge - - - - - 186

CHAP. II.

Memory - - - - - - - - - - 199

CHAP. III.

Imagination - - - - - - - - - - 203

CHAP. IV.

Volition - - - - - - - - - - - 218

CHAP. V.

Consciousness - - - - - - - - - 237

CHAP. VI.

Summary of advantages derived from the intellectual powers, &c. - - - 245

DISQUISITION III.

INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND SOURCES OF WELL-BEING.

CHAP. I.

On the Nature of Well-Being - - - 272

CHAP. II.

*On the Sources of Well-Being.*

Sect. I. On the Sources, &c. adapted to the sensitive nature of man - - 282

II. On the affections constistuting Well-being - - - - - - 289
III. On particular attachments - - 306
and social affections - - - - 316
IV. On the exercise of the intellectual powers as a source of well-being 327

CHAP. III.

*On Religion as a Source of Well-Being.*

Sect. I. On the Objections made by philosophical Atheists, relative to Well-being - - - - - - 354
II. The State of Human Nature destitute of Religion - - - - 365
III. The Ideas of Religion which are conducive to Well-being - 383

CHAP. IV.

The Progressive Nature of Well-being 399

CHAP. V.

The Nature and Causes of Unhappiness. 420

CONCLUSION.

# INTRODUCTION.

BY Morals, we understand, in the present day, dispositions and conduct modelled according to certain rules, which are deemed obligatory upon rational beings. The words *mos* and *moralis* in the Latin language, from whence the term is derived, are equally applicable to *habits, manners* and *customs,* of every description; without any immediate implication of their being *good* or *bad;* but in the English idiom, the derived term has always a reference to *right* conduct. By a *moral* man, we understand one who practises virtue upon principle; by an *immoral* man, and a person of *bad* morals, one, whose manners and principles are vicious.

The term *Ethicks,* in its adoption from the Greek into the English language, is also confined to the subject of morals, according to our acceptation of the word. But it is more extensive in

its applications to this subject. *Ethicks* extend to the investigation of those principles, by which moral men are governed; they explore the nature and excellence of virtue, the nature of moral obligation, on what it is founded, and what are the proper motives of practice; Morality in the more common acceptation, though not exclusively, relates to the *practical* and *obligatory* part of ethicks: Ethicks principally regard the *theory* of morals. If, with some, we derive the word *ethicks* or *ethical* from ἦθος, which is also a general term in the original, comprehending *propensity, disposition, habits, customs, manners,* we have still directed the application of it in our idiom, into an inquiry into the *nature* and *obligations* of these, as well as to the *prescription* of certain rules of practice. If with other etymologists, we derive them from ἦθω *colo,* to *secern* or *separate,* they imply, in a metaphorical sense, the *filtration* of manners, as it were, a separation of what is most proper and refined, in disposition and conduct, from every thing improper, vulgar, and gross; which necessarily includes an accurate discernment of important differences, and of the principles on which they are founded.

In consequence of these distinctions between *ethicks* and *morals,* which are in common usage, the former is more generally considered as a *specula-*

*tive* science, and the other as more immediately *practical.* Thus in a *treatise on morals,* we expect that the author should particularly enlarge upon the rules, or duties, and motives of practice: and by an *ethical treatise,* we expect a more extensive investigation of whatever relates to the state and nature of man as a moral agent; and a more minute examination of the principles themselves, on which moral precepts are enforced. Hence it is that the words cannot be used synonimously in every connection. We cannot substitute the expression an *ethical* man, for a *moral* man; nor an *ethical* sense for that *moral* sense, which denotes a quick sensible perception of what is right or wrong in human conduct.

Presuming that the above distinctions will be admitted, the author has given the title of an *ethical treatise on the passions,* to the present work; although the subject of *morals* does not come under immediate consideration in the first part of it; which is confined to the developement of those principles that have a tendency to render the importance of moral conduct most conspicuous. But should any one refuse to admit the above distinctions, as not being valid in themselves, they may serve to convey to the reader more accurate ideas, of the author's design, which is to *trace the history of man, as a being who possesses passions and*

*affections, and who is also endowed with rationality*; to examine the connection of his passions and affections with his character as a *moral* agent; and in what manner they may be made subservient to the grand desideratum, WELL-BEING, both personal and social.

As this science embraces every principle that relates to morals, every action and every disposition of the human mind, the greatness of its extent must be sufficiently obvious; and its importance must appear to be in exact proportion to its extent. Since every thing around us possesses the power of making some impression upon our susceptible nature; since the affections are concerned, in a greater or less degree, in whatever we pursue and whatever we shun; since every thing which has the least relation to us, may, in some connection or other, excite some emotion, or call forth some affection; and since it is an important part of *ethicks* to inform us of the real nature and tendency of every influential object, this science must be considered as an universal monitor; every surrounding object may occasionally manifest its importance, and in every instance of attachment or repugnance, its friendly aid will be required.

The inseparable connection subsisting between the passions and affections of the human mind, and the dictates of morality, must have been notic-

ed, while we were engaged in our philosophical enquiries. It was on account of this connection that we deemed the subject deserving of such minute attention. We shall now attempt to apply the principles investigated to those *ethical* enquiries which immediately relate to the best interests of mankind.

As references will be continually made to the principles already established, it will be proper to bring the most important to our recollection by a brief recapitulation. They are the following:

1. The desire of well-being is natural to every being rendered capable of enjoying it.

2. This desire disposes us to *love* whatever we deem conducive to well-being; and to *hate* whatever appears to be inimical to it; to pursue the one when we think it attainable, and exert every endeavour to escape from the other.

3. Whatever apparently contributes to our well-being we are disposed to consider as a *Good;* whatever injures or endangers it, we are disposed to consider as an *Evil.*

4. Human beings are so constituted that every object of sense, every perception, every new idea

is able to produce some change in the state and disposition of the mind.

5. This change is effected by certain peculiarities in states and circumstances; by the real or supposed qualities of objects, and their apparent aptitudes to administer something good, pleasing, and acceptable, to some principle in our natures; or by their being able to produce the contrary effect.

6. When the influence of the exciting cause is so great that it violently agitates the corporeal frame, it produces some *passion* or *emotion,* correspondent to its supposed nature and tendency. If the effect be less violent and more durable, it becomes an *affection.*

7. The *appetites* refer solely to the corporeal wants or desires immediately excited by them; but they are the frequent occasions of various passions, either in the pursuit, or in the consequences.

8. When an object, of any kind, is presented to us in a sudden and unexpected manner, it excites the emotion of *surprize;* If any circumstances attending it, appear very intricate and confused, it excites *wonder;* If it be totally beyond the reach of our comprehension, from its extent, magnitude, or vastness, it impresses us with *astonishment.*

9. As these emotions are excited by the above attributes solely, and independently of any other quality, they may equally proceed from things or objects productive, either of *good* or of *evil*: and as they are designed to attract our attention towards the exciting cause, that we may become better acquainted with its peculiar properties, we have given them the appellation of *introductory emotions*.

10. Man is endowed with a SELFISH, and a SOCIAL principle. By the influence of the first, he is attentive to *his own* interests; and by the latter he is sensibly affected by the state and conduct of *others*.

11. The passions and affections, inspired by either of those principles, are always excited either by the ideas of *good*, or of *evil*.

12. These peculiarities point out a classification of the various passions and affections, under two heads; the one respecting the SELFISH principle, the other the SOCIAL; and also an arrangement of them under each class, according as they refer to GOOD, or to EVIL.

13. The passions and affections arising from *self-love*, in which the idea of GOOD is prevalent,

may be excited by the perception that this good is immediately present or indubitably certain; producing *joy*, and its correspondent affections; it may be absent, and the object of our *desire;* or it may be future, and we may be encouraged in our expectation of it, which characterises *hope*.

14. The Evil which personally affects us, may respect losses and disappointments, commissions or negligences of our own, productive of sorrow; may create painful apprehensions, or the passion of *fear;* or they may be inflicted and exposed to danger by the conduct of some *agent*, and thus be productive of anger.

15. The passions and affections connected with the *social* principle, and inspired by the idea of Good, may be distinguished into our *good wishes*, or *benevolent desires*, and *good opinions* concerning them. The first manifest themselves by the social and sympathetic affections; the others by inspiring love, gratitude, admiration, respect, &c.

16. The Evil which respects the social principle, is manifested by *malevolent desires and dispositions;* such as malignity, rancour, resentment, suspicions, &c. or by *displacency*, entertaining *unfavourable* opinions, of conduct and dispositions; which may excite horror, indignation, contepmt, disdain.

17. The passions being in their own nature transitory, and the affections more permanent, a state of permanent well being, or the contrary, is according to the permanent influence of the *affections.*

18. The passions and affections are, generally speaking, in themselves *agreeable,* or *disagreeable,* according to the supposed character of the exciting cause. Those inspired by the contemplation of *good,* are mostly of a pleasant nature; those conversant with *evil,* are the reverse.

19. Passions and affections, of each description, have an intimate relation to each other; so that, the mind under the influence of any particular passion or affection, becomes predisposed to impressions of a similar nature, or to indulge feelings of a similar complexion; and it is thus rendered less susceptible of impressions of an opposite character.

20. The *character* of the passions and affections, respecting their being honorable or disgraceful, is more accurately ascertained by the nature of their exciting causes, and the degrees of dignity and meanness attendant upon our attachment to these, than by our acquaintance with the particular seat

of the passion; whether it be in the corporeal frame, or in a spiritual principle.

21. Whatever be the seat of the passions and affections, the effects produced by them upon the participiant, are obviously *sensations* of a pleasant, or unpleasant nature.

22. Numerous causes conspire to create a diversity in the dispositions, pursuits and affections of individuals; by the influence of which, individuals not only differ from others but sometimes from themselves also; such as the influence of *experience, difference of sex, temperament,* &c.

23. The passions and emotions, by the manner of their acting upon the human frame, frequently exert a salutary or a morbid influence; according to the nature of the emotion, the degrees of its influence, or the state of the subject. Those inspired by the ideas of *good,* are, generally speaking, the most *beneficial;* and those arising from the perception or ideas of *evil,* the most pernicious.

24. The passions and affections of the mind, have an immediate, and powerful influence upon the train of our ideas; bringing forwards such as are most correspondent to their natures.

25. To be under the permanent influence of particular affections, or peculiarly prone to strong passions, influences general character. The passions and affections most productive of good, are the most respectable; and those which diffuse the greatest misery, are the most disgraceful.

26. Though the desire of good, be in reality the efficient cause of every passion and emotion, yet the immediate effects of each upon the mind, are according to its own specific nature. Some are during their influence productive of temporary well-being; while others induce immediate discomfort and misery.

27. The degrees of pleasing or painful sensations, arising from any passion or affection, are, in general, according to the character of the exciting cause, united with the strength of the impression: Those most productive of good, are calculated to render the subject the most happy; and those productive of the greatest evil, are most productive of misery to the agent.

The facts stated in the above epitome, will authorise us to consider the following axioms as indubitable. They demand particular notice, as the developement, elucidation and application of them, as principles and rules of conduct, consti-

tute the professed objects of the following treatise.

1. The first and most obvious principle, or axiom, which forms the basis of every other, is *The desire of well-being, is a natural, perpetual,* and *inevitable desire, of every being that has a conscious existence,* and *possesses* the *powers of enjoyment.*

This fact demands no proof; and does not require much elucidation. It has shone conspicuous through every part of our analytical enquiries, into the exciting causes of the various passions and emotions, that agitate the breast; it calls forth, and arrests every affection. Neither desire nor motive can exist without it. In every situation, we look around for the occasions of enjoyment. Plants that are placed in the dark, do not turn towards the smallest glimpse of light, with more certainty, than the human mind turns to whatever appears to be the means of happiness. If the present be not propitious, we place our expectations on something future; and we look upwards with eager hope to this well being, when plunged in the abyss of misery. Thus it is evident that every one *thinks* at least that there is such a state as we denominate *well-being* or *happiness.* Every one *feels* that his nature is rendered capable of various degrees of comfort and enjoyment. We *perceive,* or *think* we perceive, an

adaptation in various scenes and circumstances surrounding us, to something within us; and it is this which kindles our desires towards them.

2. *That we may possess well-being is the manifest object of our creation.* No one who believes us to be created by a wise and intelligent being, can suppose that these desires were implanted in our natures, totally without design. Every one who studies the human frame will perceive, that we are endowed with a wonderful sensibility, which connects us with every thing around us, and which renders every thing interesting to us; that every object of sense, is able, by the peculiar qualities it possesses, to administer something good, pleasing, acceptable to the sentient principle we possess; and that every perception, and every new idea it excites, may produce some important change in the state and dispositions of the mind. Thus we are prepared for the possession of good, by the desires and powers inherent in our constitutions.

3. But notwithstanding this obvious destination, we cannot be more eager after happiness than *we are conscious that misery abounds.* The too frequent subjugation of our minds to all the *painful* emotions, manifests our conviction that there is much evil in the world; for it is real or apparent

evil, which excites our hatred, and our fears; this is the source of sorrow and of anger; this stirs up within us the sentiments of indignation and horror, and is intimately connected with every malignant passion.

By adverting to the various passions and affections enumerated under the distinct classes of good and evil, we shall be convinced of the multitude of painful sensations to which we are exposed, from the real or imaginary evils of life; and that the misery arising from those passions and affections, which have *evil* for their exciting cause, is at least equally intense with the felicity derived from the possession of the greatest *good*. The agonies of fear, sorrow, remorse, despair, are as frequently, and perhaps more powerfully, felt, than extacies produced by the most fortunate events. They have often implanted such anguish in the breast, that life itself has been rendered an insupportable burden; the torments endured, having been deemed more than a counterpoise to numerous blessings which still remained in the possession of the sufferer.

4. These facts appear the more extraordinary, as *it is the professed object of the passions of each class, to secure that well being of which we perceive our natures capable.* They all refer to some immediate perception of good, or to characters,

qualifications, dispositions and actions, which respect the production of good, or endanger our possession of it. One class of passions indicates the *possession* of good, as joy, contentment, complacency; some communicate it by *reflection*, as benevolence, joyful sympathy, &c. The timorous and angry passions, behold it as taking its *flight*; all the modifications of sorrow suppose it to be *lost*; all the envious passions are jealous of its becoming the *possession of another*.

5. It appears also from the history of the passions, that *well being and happiness, are not an inheritance of which we take possession from the hour of our birth, and which we are destined to enjoy at our ease*. They are to be *searched after* with unwearied assiduity. We enter into life, destitute of every thing but simple existence. All that we enjoy in our passage through life, are *acquisitions*. They are the result and the rewards of our own diligence and care, or communicated by the diligence and care of others.

The only treasures at our command, in the commencement of our pursuit, consist in the *means* which are placed before us, and certain *powers* to use them.

However unwelcome these truths may be, particularly to the indolent, the whole constitution

of nature indicates that they are conformable to an universal and immutable law. Our desires, our hopes, our eager attachment to the means of good, our fears, and anxieties, our sorrows and disappointments, the passions of envy, even our transient fits of *joy*, are all correspondent with this our destination, to *pursue good*, while they demonstrate that we are never in the full possession of the bliss we seek; and when disappointed respecting any particular objects, we shall change our course, relinquish the pursuit of schemes and projects, which have deceived us, but few totally relinquish the pursuit of well-being, or place themselves down in the seat of inactive despair.

6. We observe, in consequence of this destination of man, that *perpetual attention is paid to the means of happiness; and strenuous efforts are made to possess that which is to make us happy*. By adverting to the exciting causes of the passions, we shall perceive that most of them respect the *means*, or *supposed* means of good, rather than the state itself. Our desires are practically directed towards those objects which appear to be the *causes* or *instruments* of good. Our *fears*, *hopes*, and *sorrows* generally confess these to be their objective causes. This eagerness after the means fosters ambition, inspires the love of power, and animates to the pursuit of wealth. The pleasing sensations

of contentment, satisfaction, complacency, love, gratitude, admiration, &c. are seldom contemplated as the objects of *envy*. The attention is mostly directed towards those things which promise to inspire one or other of these sensations. We remark, that there are certain situations, circumstances, and objects, which seem calculated to produce some kind of good; we imagine that if these were at our command that good would be our own. Our sanguine expectations, ascribe *absolute* good to them, from the persuasion that by the possession of them, we should secure enjoyment. Thus it is that the *means* and *instruments* of good become the *primary* objects of our affections. It is the *loss* of these which the virtuous themselves are prone to lament, and to *possess* these, that the vicious and depraved are guilty of injustice, or oppression, and are driven to the atrocious acts of cruelty and murder.

7. *The versatility of our passions, their occasional irregularities and extravagances, and the correspondent irregularities and extravagances of conduct they occasion, prove incontestably that mankind, in general, have very confused and imperfect ideas, either of the nature of happiness, or of the proper means to attain it.* If all men knew precisely in *what* well-being consists, and could accurately

ascertain, in all cases, the adaptation of certain means to certain ends, they could not commit such perpetual mistakes. They would at once perceive the *state* and the *means;* and there would be an uniformity of opinion concerning the one and the other; nor could we possibly plunge ourselves into the depth of misery, in our search after *happiness.*

8. From the contrariety of the passions, and the evils which are so frequently produced by them, it is most obvious that *the passions are no infallible guides to happiness.* They neither inform us in what well-being consists, and what may be most productive of it; nor do they enable us to speculate concerning the nature of the evil we may dread or resent. They are always excited by notions or *opinions* of the nature and properties of things, and of their being adapted to our state, or inimical to it; according as these opinions vary, do they create a diversity, and even an opposition in our passions and affections; so that we frequently cherish, at one period, that which may appear hateful at another; and shun with disgust and hatred, the objects we had pursued with fondness and ardour.

9. *Most of our passions and affections are occasioned by the* Social Principle *in man.* If we recur to the two great divisions of the passions marked in our analysis, we shall perceive that

those arising from the *selfish principle*, abstractedly considered, bear no proportion to those which originate from the *sociality* of our nature.

The introductory emotions are not indications of either. They may be produced by causes independent of society, or they may be excited by the actions, principles, or situations of our associates. This may also be the case with joy, gladness, desire, fear, hope, sorrow; as they may proceed either from personal or social causes. But hilarity or social mirth, all the ramifications of sympathy and compassion; all the affections of love, friendship, complacency, benevolence, gratitude, admiration, esteem, veneration; all the passions and affections which have been ranged under *malevolent desires*, and *unfavourable opinions*, as hatred, anger, malice, envy, indignation, contempt, &c. owe their existence to the state, characters, conduct, and dispositions of those with whom we are conversant. *Emulation* seeks to equal others: *ambition* to excel them. *Pride* and *vanity* proceed from comparing ourselves with others. The lust of *power* seeks to have dominion over those who are naturally our equals; the display of *riches* courts the admiration of surrounding spectators; and the love of *glory* seeks the public applause by popular deeds. So connected a being is man, that little would remain for him

either to love or to hate, to pursue or to shun, were he to exist in an unsocial and isolated state. Every appetite and passion and desire, beyond the sensations and requirements of hunger and thirst, or those of pain from accidental causes, have a relation to his *social character*. Every convenience, superadded to the power of gathering the spontaneous fruits of the earth, or of scooping water from the brook with our hands, is the result of some connection with animal life, or demands the aid of our own species; it is the important result of social intercourse, and induces dispositions and propensities which have a reference to others.

10. It has been remarked that *pleasing* sensations generally accompany contemplation of *good*, and *painful* ones are excited by the contemplation of evil; it is no less obvious that *the universal desire after good induces us to approve of such actions and dispositions as are beneficial, as also to applaud the agent; to condemn whatever is obviously of a pernicious tendency, and to censure the agent, whenever we suppose that he possessed the power of acting otherwise.* Thus we are naturally prone to annex the ideas of *moral excellence* or *moral depravity*, to the voluntary promotion of good or evil. This fact was rendered conspicuous while we were considering affections under the divisions of *complacency* and *displacency*. We are not simply *pleased* with the good that is done by acts of libe-

rality, compassion, and mercy, but we *love, admire, esteem,* and *applaud* the *agent,* according to the various degrees of moral excellency, which are apparent in his conduct. We not only *abhor* those deeds which are designedly injurious, but we are *angry* with the *agent;* and when we perceive the excess of turpitude, we feel *contempt, indignation,* and *horror,* upon adverting to the designing cause. Thus, by remarking the prevalent dispositions of moral agents to pursue one line of conduct rather than another, we form favourable or disfavourable ideas of *character.* Inadvertencies, or the actions committed under the sudden impulse of some violent passion, or extraordinary provocation, may be deemed and *palliated* as deviations from an usual tenor of conduct; but when these degenerate into *habits,* we form our opinions of the habitual state and dispositions of the agent's mind; and these opinions are accompanied with the emotions of resentment, contempt, indignation; whilst habitual mildness, modesty, kindness, compassion, &c. inspire the pleasing sensations of habitual love and esteem: nor can the agent be spoken of without our feeling complacency respecting his character, and a respect for his person.

11. Although much misery abounds, which it is not in the power of individuals to escape, and much good exists without their particular agency, yet we perceive that *many actions and dispositions of the mind are themselves productive of immediate enjoyment to the individual; where these advantages may not be the immediate motives for the indulgence of them:* on the other hand *many actions and dispositions are themselves sources of discomfort and unhappiness, even in cases where the professed desire is to avoid disagreeable sensations.* Love towards a meritorious object, complacency, gratitude, admiration, are examples of the first; where pleasure is inspired by contemplating the excellencies of others, and the affections are the most powerful because *self* is the least in our thoughts. Thus in the painful sensations of anger, sorrow, fear, &c. the mind being absorbed in the contemplation of evils, inflicted, or apprehended, suffers from these sensations themselves, independent of the evils, real or supposed, which were their exciting causes.

This general survey of the leading principles which we have endeavoured to develope in our elementary treatise, represents human nature in two distinct points of view : the one respects *Happiness* more immediately, and the other the *Conduct*

by which it is to be produced. The first comprehends, the state of man respecting well-being from the commencement of his existence, his desires after it, and endeavours to attain it, his partial success and partial failures: the evils suffered from those passions and affections which are its professed guardians; his ignorance concerning the nature of well-being, and its remedies.

The other respects those dispositions of mind, and that line of conduct, which according to general opinion it is incumbent upon him to follow; and the evil practices and dispositions it is deemed to be his duty to avoid. Under the first head, man is not considered in the view of a *moral agent,* but as an *interested* being; and our speculations are directed to his own powers and capacities to pursue good and to escape evil; and also to external means which present themselves, correspondent to the propensities of his nature; under the second head *moral agency* is the principle subject of investigation; the influence of virtue and vice on human happiness; the obligations imposed upon man to cultivate the one and subdue the other; and the motives which present themselves uniformly to act according to their direction.

We shall accordingly divide our subject into two principal points. The first respects *the influence and agency of the passions as productive of*

*good or evil; the powers we possess of directing and restraining them; and the objects it is their interest to pursue or avoid.* The other respects *the nature of virtue and moral obligation, and the practical observations, deduceable from them.*

# PART I.

# WELL-BEING

OR

# *HAPPINESS.*

# PART I.

WHEN we consider human nature as in pursuit of happiness, the following subjects present themselves as being most worthy of our attention. It is requisite to inquire what is the proper office and what are the uses of the passions, emotions, affections, and particular predelictions, in this important pursuit: in what their irregularities and pernicious influence consist; and to what causes they are to be ascribed:

To investigate those powers of nature, with which we are endowed, in order to direct us in the pursuit of well-being:

It is also necessary to form accurate ideas concerning the nature of well-being; what are the degrees of good to which humanity may attain; and from what sources is this good to be derived: and also concerning the nature and degrees of misery to which we are exposed, and the causes to which it may be ascribed.

# DISQUISITION

## THE FIRST.

## *The Agency of the Passions*

IN THE

## PURSUIT OF WELL-BEING;

OR THEIR

## OFFICES, USES, IRREGULARITIES, &c.

# DISQUISITION I.

## *Agency of the Passions, &c.*

THE incessant desire of happiness, united with our exposure to misery; the destitute state of man, upon his first entrance into life; his ignorance and mistakes concerning the nature of true felicity, or the means of ensuring it; the diversity of objects attracting attention, either by their encouraging or threatening appearance; our various connections and relations in life; the good or evil we are capable of receiving or communicating in our social intercourses; together with a sensibility of frame which exposes us to impressions of a pleasant or unpleasant nature, from every object, and from every idea excited; are obviously the natural, and efficient causes of those diverse feelings, which manifest themselves in the *passions*, *affections*, and *emotions*. Every impression made in percipient, and sentient beings, produces a change in their perceptions and sensations, which

frequently indicates or *betrays* itself, by external signs. The nature and characters of these influential causes being various, a correspondent diversity is produced in our sensations, and in their external tokens. Although every impression will have some relation to the grand object of well-being, as it arises from an apparent aptitude or inaptitude of objects to promote or impede our welfare, yet it will acquire a peculiar character, according to the nature, degrees, and causes of the excitement of the passions; and this effect may be legitimate, and beneficial, or the contrary. Until our knowledge shall become both accurate and extensive, and the dispositions of the mind perfectly regulated according to this knowledge of the existence, nature, properties, and adaptations, of every thing which may concern us, *unsuitable* impressions will be made; that is, *irregularities* will take place in our passions and affections; and while one class of them manifest their propriety and utility, others will be productive of the most pernicious effects.

When we were engaged in the investigation of the nature of the passions, emotions, and affections, the specific uses of some, and the noxious tendency of others, necessarily presented themselves to our attention. But as the various facts which had a reference to this subject, were dispers-

ed over different parts of the treatise, and were placed in the particular connection which the subject then required, it will not be improper to collect and arrange the principal ideas which have been already suggested, into one assemblage, and give them that particular direction which our present purpose demands. A concise summary will be sufficient.

We shall accordingly first enumerate, those passions, affections, and emotions, which are natural, and are calculated to be beneficial; and afterwards advert to the irregularities observable in many of our passions and affections, examine into their nature, and investigate their immediate causes.

# CHAP. I.

## ON THE BENEFICIAL AGENCY OF THE PASSIONS, EMOTIONS, &c. IN THE PURSUIT OF WELL-BEING.

### SECT. I.

#### ON THE PASSIONS AND AFFECTIONS.

1. *Love, Hatred, Desire, Aversion.*

FROM what has been advanced upon a former occasion concerning love and hatred, it appears that these constitute the two leading passions, from which all others are derived:* and their high importance to all animated beings is most obvious. These are the principles which excite every desire, and direct every action. They implant the affections by which we are attracted towards every thing which seems to possess good, or is able to communicate

* See Phil. T. chap. 1, Section 3.

it, and by which we are repelled from whatever appears hateful in itself, or threatens to render us unhappy. We have observed, that love and hatred are sometimes viewed as principles, somesometimes as passions, and sometimes as permanent affections; and in every character they are essential to our well-being. Without them we should sink into an universal apathy; every thing in nature would be as indifferent to perceptible and sentient beings, as to inanimate matter. It has also been remarked that *desire* and *aversion* naturally and necessarily flow from the principles of love and hatred, when the attention is directed towards particular objects, which promise to benefit, or threaten to injure us. They form the link of connection which subsists between the affections of love and hatred, and the objects immediately exciting them. As we cannot enjoy good without possessing the means of good, thus is the desire to possess such means a necessary concomitant to the love of well-being, and a powerful stimulant to such exertions as may secure them; and an aversion to the occasions of evil, is virtually the same as an aversion to evil itself. In every instance it renders the mind watchful and rouses its energies to repel, or escape from them. These facts have already been rendered so obvious, that farther enlargement would be superfluous.

### 2. *Introductory emotions of surprise, wonder, and astonishment.*

AS we are surrounded by an infinitude of objects, and exposed to an infinite variety of incidental circumstances, many of these will present themselves in a sudden and unexpected manner. The very possibility of an injury, or of unpleasing sensations, instantly places both body and mind in a posture of defence, as soon as either of these is apprehended. The specific object is thus in some measure held at a distance, that we may collect ourselves, and examine its precise nature. If it should possess no important qualities, nor a capacity to produce any farther effects, it is immediately dismissed and the alarm subsides. Should it promise good, surprise is accompanied by a glow of exhilaration; if it threaten ill, the emotion is accompanied with fear, and we are roused to repel or escape from the cause of an alarm.

As *wonder* is excited by whatever appears at once intricate and important, thus we immediately feel an irresistible desire to investigate. We attempt to trace all the mazes of intricacy, when there is a possibility of obtaining knowledge; or we seek relief from this inquisitive solicitude, by forming various conjectures, where we cannot investigate to the extent of our wishes: and although such conjectures may be imperfect and

unsatisfactory in themselves, they frequently furnish a clue to guide us to the truth.

*Astonishment* is an emotion which relates to something *great*, exceeding the usual limits or standards; exceeding all we know, and all that we conceived to be probable or possible. As there is a vastness in the exciting cause, so there is a singular elevation in this emotion. It seems to swell and extend the human faculties, that they may become commensurate with the object. It is always introduced by something of extraordinary importance, and inspires with unusual, I had almost said, with a dignified solicitude to investigate. Where it is excited by an excess of *ill*, it inspires salutary horror and indignation; by eminent *good*, the mind is pleasingly lost in admiration; by an unusual degree of *human excellence*, it cheerfully pays the proper tribute of praise, and warms the heart with a desire to emulate.

It is therefore, the office of all these introductory emotions, to lead us through ignorance, into various degrees of knowledge, where knowledge may be intimately connected with safety and utility, or consists in the perception of some extraordinary qualities. They inspire the mind with vivacity, perseverance and energy, adapted to the nature of their exciting causes.

### 3. *Joy, &c.*

Since happiness is incessantly pursued, and can only be obtained by the acquisition of means adapted to the end, thus whatever we deem worthy of being possessed, as conducive to this end, will necessarily make some impression upon our minds correspondent to its supposed nature, and our situation respecting it: that is, where indifference cannot exist, we must experience some affection relative to that object, according to our ideas of its powers to make us happy, and according to the degrees of our expectancy of success, or apprehensions of disappointment. As success will not consist in the simple knowledge of its being obtained, but in the satisfying of a desire, and in the supposed possession of a positive good, it will inspire those pleasurable sensations of *joy, satisfaction, contentment, complacency, &c.* according to the circumstances with which this success is surrounded. These are among the choicest of our sensations, and they communicate happiness independent of the good expected from their exciting causes. Joy is that delectable exhilaration of mind which we consider in many cases, as an ample compensation for the preceding misfortunes and oppressions. Joy is the due reward of our assiduity; it is the recompence of anxieties and solicitudes; the triumph of victory over diffi-

culties and dangers. The various kinds, and degrees of advantage obtained, produce the various kinds and degrees of permanent pleasure expressed by the terms contentment, satisfaction, complacency, &c.

Every object of desire appears, at the instant, to possess something which promises either utility or pleasure. If we be surprised by the *unexpected* possession of it, the heart is, for a season, *intoxicated* with joy. If the apparent good, struck us so forcibly when it was not in our possession, as to subdue the natural indolence of our dispositions, and rouse the mind to painful exertions, the success of our endeavours must necessarily produce some of the favourable changes in our sensations we have noticed.

### 4. *Sorrow.*

Whatever has been a been a source of consolation and enjoyment, or whatever has been contemplated as a blessing in reserve, must have acquired such a value in our estimation, that we cannot be indifferent respecting its loss: and should we be suddenly and unexpectedly deprived of this, without the prospect of an equivalent, or of indemnification, it must inspire that disagreeable sensation we denominate *Sorrow,* with its various degrees and ramifications, according to the ag-

gravations or mitigations of our loss. Sorrow is often the eulogy of departed blessings; and however enigmatical it may appear, the depth of our sorrow upon privation, clearly indicates that we had derived more comfort and satisfaction from particular possessions, states, situations, and expectances, than we had been conscious of, while we viewed them as our own, or within our reach. The influence of the good we lament was perpetually, though gently operative. It diffused a general sensation of well-being, without exciting the degree of attention requisite to investigate the cause.

The absence of sorrow constitutes indifference; but we cannot be indifferent about the immediate cause of our well-being, at the instant we are deprived of it, without being indifferent about well-being itself. The only mitigation to the pangs of sorrow, in such cases, consists in directing the attention, and in strengthening the affections towards some other good in our possession, or to be obtained by our exertions.

As the success of our plans naturally inspires joy, thus will dissappointments, when least expected, produce the unwelcome sensations of vexation and chagrin; which although so disagreeable, are often most salutary. They induce us to advert to the *causes* of our disappointments, and

inspire more caution either in the choice, or the pursuit. They serve to moderate the excess of ardour, aud render us more watchful, and prudently apprehensive of danger.

When sorrow assumes the character of *repentance* and *contrition,* it superadds, to the immediate effects of the loss, a painful perception of our own folly, which prompts to reformation, and is the securest guarantee against a repetition of the same conduct.

### 5. *Fear.*

The affection we indulge for that which we possess, must predispose the mind for painful apprehensions, when it appears exposed to imminent danger: and if we have ever experienced what it is to suffer pain and misery, the immediate prospect of these will inevitably excite sensations most opposite to those of pleasure. Such painful sensations are denominated *Fear;* of which *dread, terror, consternation,* are certain modifications, according to the various circumstances, enumerated in the preceding treatise. Nothing can mitigate or qualify these indications of fear, but a prospect of escape, or of possessing some other good, as an indemnification for that which is in danger.

Excessive Fear is by far the most painful of all our sensations. Fear is wholly engaged in the

contemplation of Misery; which contains not a single particle in its nature calculated to soothe and mitigate its agonizing influence. But still it is the vigilant guardian of well-being. It tries every expedient and makes every effort to escape the evil so much dreaded. Were we indifferent about things pernicious in themselves, they would frequently seize us totally unprepared, and overwhelm us when we might have escaped from them. Where the danger is real and pressing, the sensations inspired by the perception of it, ought to be keen and powerful, that we may be *impelled* as it were, to avoid it.

### 6. *Anger.*

When we have unjustly suffered privation, or when we perceive ourselves exposed to danger from the culpability of others, a spirit of resentment is raised. We charge the offender with various degrees of criminality, from that of thoughtless inattention and neglect, up to premeditated design; and we entertain quick and vivid, or more permanent sensations of an irritating nature concerning the agent, according to the supposed aggravations of the offence. Although our self-love be, in such cases, extremely apt to mislead our judgment, and we impute crimes where they do not exist, or imagine culpability to a greater extent than the act deserved; yet we are not so

formed as to be able at all times to contemplate good and bad conduct, with equal calmness of mind. Such an indifference would not only be inimical to enjoyment, but it would expose us perpetually to privations from the perverse and iniquitous conduct of others. Anger is, to the subject himself, an unpleasant sensation, that he may not be stimulated by inordinate self-love to indulge it upon slight occasions; yet it is much more painful to the object of our anger, unless he should be rendered callous to every social feeling: for to the person incensed, the desire of inflicting punishment, has, like most other desires, something gratifying intermixed with it; while the violence of the passion is calculated to inspire *terror* in the bosoms of those who are insensible to more ingenuous emotions.

It is a fact worthy of observation, that unless violent paroxysms of anger be indications of *insanity*, however agonizing they may appear in the subject, they do not excite the sympathy of spectators, like the transports of sorrow. We are disposed to consider the excess of anger as much more culpable than the excess of sorrow. We observe that the person offended has taken the redress of the injury into his own hands, while the afflicted are supposed to be without redress. Nor are we free from apprehensions lest violent transports should greatly exceed the limits of justice,

and inflict upon the offender too severe a chastisement. Hence it is that we are most disposed to sympathise with the object of wrath, attempt to palliate his faults, or suggest motives of forbearance and compassion.

### 7. *Desires.*

The nature, extent, and diversity of our desires, have been amply considered in our Analysis of the Passions. We shall only remark, as an evidence of their importance, that they are the most powerful stimulants to those changes and pursuits, which promise an addition to our present stock of comforts or supposed means of enjoyment, a liberation from whatever is painful and disagreeable in our state, and protection from whatever threatens to be injurious. Surrounded as we are by an infinitude of objects, each of which is capable of producing some augmentation, or diminution of good; plunged into an ocean of qualities, if I may thus express myself, either of a beneficial or pernicious tendency, the influence of our desires concerning them is extensive and unremitted. Our corporeal wants, the higher comforts and conveniences of life, our intellectual pursuits, social intercourse, with the claims and duties arising from it, the belief and expectancy of a future state, our peculiar sentiments, and even our doubts concerning religious subjects, all are perpetual sources of

desire, as each may inspire joy, or sorrow, hopes or fears, reverential and grateful feelings, anxious wishes and painful apprehensions; sensations these in which we are deeply interested.

From the above view of these *Selfish* passions and affections, it is easy to perceive that they naturally arise from the peculiarities of our situations, respecting the objects or circumstances which appear to affect our welfare; and although they may be improperly excited, and indulged beyond the dictates of reason, yet they cannot be eradicated, as long as we are capable of perceiving and feeling that some things are worthy of our love, and others of our hatred; that some objects, situations, and circumstances, and modes of conduct contribute to well-being, deduct from it, or expose us to dangers respecting it.

As in every state, and at every period of life, there are some things worthy of being pursued, possessed and retained; and as in the present state of the world, we are exposed to frequent injuries from inadvertencies or malevolent designs, we cannot expect a total exemption from their correspondent affections. For notwithstanding the changes which may take place in our desires, and the objects of our pursuits, yet as long as any thing shall remain *interesting* to us, adventitious circumstances will produce characteristic effects,

in a greater or smaller degree. Young and ardent minds, void of experience, possessing quick sensibility, and charmed by novelty, will doubtless feel more frequent and stronger emotions than the experienced veteran. They will more frequently feel the transports of joy, the ardour of hope, the impetuosities of anger, or supposed injuries. The *Aged* will grow indifferent about some things, acknowledge the vanity of others, and will moderate most of those desires by which youth is principally excited; but the frequent disappointments they had experienced in their progress through active life, where they might have expected them the least, and of injuries where they had been promised acts of friendship; of losses, where they had thought themselves most secure, will expose them to habitual suspicions and fearful apprehensions; yet notwithstanding these diversities, the primary passions and affections of love, hatred, joy, desire, hope, fear, sorrow, anger, with some of their modifications, will occasionally exert various degrees of influence, to the latest period of life.

It is also worthy of notice that, in the natural and legitimate influence of these passions, they act with various degrees of force and constancy proportioned to the final causes of their excitement.

*Joy*, though frantic is momentary, as it is simply the first percussion of the good we expect to be permanent, joy introduces an habitual cheerfulness, and goes readily over to the pleasing affections of contentment, satisfaction, and complacency.

*Anger*, in its violent paroxysms, is also of short duration. Being the destined guardian of good, and the professed avenger of wrongs, it is quick and precipitate in the discharge of these offices. After the first moments of transport, anger sometimes gives way to indignant resentment, where the injury has appeared atrocious; it sometimes yields to the remonstrances of reason; which has discovered that an heated imagination had greatly magnified the offence; and it is sometimes subdued by the pleadings of compassion.

*Sorrow* is, in its own nature, more permanent. The first agonizing transports are succeeded by *Grief*, almost as agonizing, or by corroding *Melancholy*. Our desire of well-being, naturally disposing us to feel sensibly the loss of a good we had enjoyed; we experience a painful privation until this void is filled up by the acquirement of some other good, as a substitute or equivalent. The moral influence of Sorrow, may also be con-

sidered as a final cause of its being in its nature more protracted than any other passion.

*Fear* is the strongest, as well as the most painful of all the Passions. Its most powerful paroxysms subdue every other. They extinguish Love, Joy, and Hope, check the impetuosities of Anger or Rage, and rouse the mind from the listless inactivity of sorrow. The object of fear is to guard the good of which we are in possession, or in expectancy, or to shun the evils of which we may not be able to calculate the extent and duration. The sensations excited for this purpose are painful in the extreme; because nothing can appear, at the instant, so important and desirable, as liberation from the impending evil; and they are rendered so agonizing that we may be impelled to make every effort, to escape the supposed calamity.

*Desires* towards minuter or intermediate objects, are in their own nature changeable. An object being either obtained, or totally lost, desire gives place to the emotion or affection that corresponds with the nature of the result. Desire towards some one grand object may be permanent. The magnitude of the good desired, appears in the prospect too great to be either diminished by distance, or obscured by difficulties. In these cases desire, as long as it is encouraged by hope, will

vary its pursuit of the means, while it remains unchangeable respecting the end.

Of all our passions and affections, *Hope* is the most universal and the most permanent. It incorporates with every other passion and affection, and always produces beneficial effects. By intermixing with our fears and sorrows, it excites to exertions, and prevents the horrid inactivity of despair. It animates desire: it is encouraged by success, and it is a secret source of pleasure in the transports of joy; for joy triumphs in success which hope presages will be permanent. As it administers consolation in distress; as it quickens all our pursuits; as it communicates to the mind the pleasures of anticipation; as, by its mild and yet exhilarating influence, it is the most salutary of all our affectionate sensations, it cannot be of too long a duration: and when sanctioned by probabilities, I had almost said possibilities, it cannot be too much indulged, as long as prudence permits the requisite exertions.

### *Social Affections.*

The indispensable nature of the various relative and social affections, is most obvious. Conjugal, parental, filial, fraternal attachments, constitute

domestic happiness, excite to those attentions and offices of kindness which divide and diminish the cares and burdens of life, render arduous tasks familiar and pleasant, incline us to bear with each others infirmities, and to correct and soften those asperities which a contrariety of interest, in the minuter articles of social intercourse, would otherwise engender.

Friendship selects individuals for particular manifestations of kindness. It admits us into an intimate acquaintance with peculiarities of plans, projects, situations, anxieties, distresses, which are carefully concealed from the public eye. It disposes and enables us secretly to administer the assistance, advice, and consolation so much required: It stimulates to extraordinary exertions on extraordinary occasions, extricates from embarrassments and assists pursuits, in cases where the calmer offices of benevolence, would prove inadequate.

The different ramifications of the benevolent principle, as delineated in the preceding volume, abundantly indicate, not only the general advantages derived from a benevolent temper, but their peculiar adaptation to the particular state and exigencies of the object; as we attempted to exemplify in the acts of liberality, pity, compassion, mercy, and the hazardous exertions of sympathy

when danger is imminent. The quick emotions excited upon such occasions, expose the benevolent heart itself to danger, that others may be rescued from impending death. Compassion alleviates distresses, either by the tokens of sympathetic concern, by administering the relief particularly required, or by the sublime acts of mercy and forgiveness. Liberality of disposition and conduct gives the highest zest and relish to social intercourse. It annihilates the petulance of selfishness, and envy, and censoriousness, with all their irritating and malignant effects. It is sure to communicate pleasure, and frequently at a small expence.

Gratitude, admiration, esteem, respect, veneration, &c. are those pleasing affections and emotions, which have for their object, virtuous, amiable, dignified character and conduct, and whatever is eminently great, wise and good. They pay the tribute due to different degrees of worth; while they inspire the breast of the admirer with an inward pleasure, which is a full indemnification for that sense of inferiority, with which they are accompanied. They also, according to the operation of the social affections, cherish the love of excellency, and dispose the mind to imitate a conduct which it *feels* to be respectable, amiable, and worthy.

Displacency, in its various degrees, from irrision to horror, is a pertinent reprehension of folly and vice, adapted to the degrees of their deformity. Its indications are calculated to cover the face of the offender with the blush of shame, and to confirm the indignant censurer in all his virtuous dispositions. In these moments, the contrast between the elevation of just and dignified conduct, and those atrocities which excite horror, indignation, and contempt, strikes the mind with irresistable force. Such strong emotions are occasional tempests of the soul, which lay prostrate in the dust, whatever is mean and base; while by agitating the virtuous affections to the very roots, their growth is invigorated.

We might enlarge upon all the ramifications, compounds, and derivations, of the leading passions personal or social, and shew that they have an intermixture of sensations, correspondent to their natures. Discontent and dissatisfaction, whether they respect our own conduct or that of others, imply a mixture of sorrow with disapprobation, or a portion of anger, according to the degree of culpability. Their proper office is to produce further reformation. Patience, resignation, humility, always alleviate the unpleasant or distressing sensations, natural to the state in which their soothing aid is required. They sometimes temper sorrow

with awe and reverence, by which it is greatly dignified; and they often inspire hope, which beholds brighter scenes behind the darkest clouds. *Terror*, which is the dread of something tremendous, is connected with such a degree of hope, and in some cases of anger, as excites to energetic reaction.

But it will not be necessary to particularize farther. The various degrees of utility, and the precise adaptations of these compound affections, where they are excited within the bounds of propriety and moderation, to the complicated circumstances of their exciting causes, will have sufficiently indicated themselves, while we were investigating the characteristic peculiarities of each. We shall only add, under this head, that of all the passions and affections, *Complacency* is, from its nature, the most replete with enjoyment. Complacency has been described as the compound of satisfaction and approbation. It is the peculiar recompence of some species and of some degree of *merit;* either of our own or of others, in whose welfare we are warmly interested. Introduced by pure unmixed joy, it inspires a permanent satisfaction dignified by full approbation. In complacency, reason and affection form a delectable union. No gratifications can be indulged to which reason does not give unqua-

lified consent; reason itself pronounces that we have a right to rejoice, and this renders the joy complete.

The general survey of the utility of the passions and affections which has been made, clearly indicates how closely they are interwoven with our very nature! How large a portion they make of *Ourselves!* Notwithstanding the irregularities with which they are so often chargeable, human nature could not exist without them. They are (as one expresses it) "more intimately connected with us than the limbs of our bodies. These may be amputated, and we should remain the same, but the passions and affections cannot be extirpated without the destruction of humanity." Were it a fact that the *Stoics* taught the eradication of every passion and affection, the immutable constitution of his nature, would not permit the most determined Stoic to act upon the principles he professed. He would be deprived of every motive to propagate his doctrines. He could neither take pleasure in diffusing his sentiments, rejoice in his success, nor grieve at his disappointment. Nor would he have any just *cause* to rejoice; for the completion of his scheme would consist in reducing the human race to a species of *automaton,* which might have been moved by wheels and pullies, instead of be-

ing actuated by a vital sensient principle. Without that power of sensation, immediately connected with life, and so characteristic of the passions and affections, man would become inferior to the lowest animal, and be reduced to a level with the vegetable creation. But it appears that the apathy which is supposed to be the basis of their principles, implied no more than a self-command against every violent and indecorous transport. It taught the blessings of a tranquil mind in the midst of the greatest evils. Its sole object was to render us superior to the misfortunes of life, by enjoining a total indifference to them. They admitted the παθη or *affections* of the soul, and gave excellent rules for their regulations.

Totally to condemn the first impulse of the passions, in every case, would be to exceed the dictates and perhaps the requirements of nature. The only argument on which the injunction is founded, is that of prohibiting the *use* of whatever is exposed to a pernicious *abuse;* which would, in fact, annihilate every species of utility. Though the passions are sometimes so impetuous, and the majority of them excite such painful sensations, yet as we have had frequent occasion to observe, there are states in human nature and seasons of life, where they answer the most important purposes. Nor

could we totally suppress them, without acquiring an insensibility which would incapacitate for energetic action,

It is however chearfully admitted, that violent transports of passion are not so necessary, nor are they so frequent, in the more advanced stages of society, as in its rude and infantile state. Where the objects of human desires are few, they naturally appear most interesting, and they are more apt to make forcible impressions, which manifest themselves by violent emotions. This was the case with the nations of antiquity most distinguished for the simplicity of their manners, and is still observable among savage nations. Wars in both these cases are not the result of the cool calculation of policy, but of national *wrath;* the cruelties of anger know no bounds, and are softened by no intreaties. To sue for mercy marks the *coward;* and to bestow it is deemed an act of *injustice.* The expressions of sorrow, which were familiarly exhibited among the ancients, would in modern days be considered as marks of insanity; such as rending the garments, lifting up the voice and weeping aloud, covering the body with sackcloth and ashes, the observance of fasts with rigid and protracted severities. Their joys were also manifested by bacchanalian extacies, and loud shouts of sarcastic triumph over a vanquished foe, which would be deemed indecorous

in more polished states. On such occasions the most exalted and respectable characters did not disdain to dance with the multitude, or to join in the public songs of exultation and triumph.

We may also remark, that in societies where government has not taken the redress of injuries into its own hands, by the enforcement of penal laws, every one thinks himself entitled to be the avenger of his own wrongs; and as the passions are corrupt judges in our own case, the quick and irritated sense of injuries will naturally prompt to inflict punishments, far exceeding the boundaries of justice: but in states where private offences become the objects of public animadversion; where justice is impartially administered, and were the power of inflicting punishment is denied to the offended party, the passions are not in such a perpetual ferment; the punishment being transferred into other hands, the violent stimulus to anger and revenge is greatly weakened, and tranquillity of mind is much sooner restored.

Although the love of glory, and a spirit of revenge, or the desire of rapine, inspired uncultivated nations with courage, and with an insensibility of danger in the hour of contest, yet their ignorance rendered them peculiarly susceptible of the fears that are generated by *superstition*. When most indignant to be afraid of man, they were afraid of almost every thing besides. Where-

ever they imagined powers and dangers to exist, over which they had no control, the stoutest hearts were not ashamed of being struck with a panic. The boldest heroes trembled at an unfavourable omen, and submitted, with an abject spirit, to those whom they imagined to hold communication with invisible beings. Terrors from these sources gradually diminish with their causes. Juster notions have nearly destroyed the malignant influence of spectres and dæmons: reiterated experience also, by enabling the subject to calculate degrees of danger with greater accuracy, relieves the informed mind, from those vain terrors which so frequently alarm the ignorant and inexperienced.

The multiplicity of pursuits which engage the attention of active and instructed minds, by multiplying the number of their desires, checks the impetuosity of each individual influence, moderates joy upon success, and renders disappointment less vexatious. The hopes of happiness, not being entirely centered in a very few objects, they are not so completely frustrated; nor is disappointment succeeded by that excess of grief and despair, to which others are liable, whose affections and exertions are solely directed to one point. Those habits of urbanity also which are the pleasing cements of society, in civilized and polished life,

soften the natural impetuosity of temper, and prevent the manifestations of violent and indecorous emotions, which are calculated to kindle similar emotions in the breast of others; and thus milder dispositions and calmer habits are gradually introduced.

Hence, although it may be morally impossible to suppress the stronger emotions by any effort of reason, where the predispositions, exciting causes, and national habits, exist in all their vigour, yet those transports of every kind which characterize persons of strong passions, and few ideas, and which had received the sanction of general example, may gradually diminish, or simply be called forth by great and extraordinary occasions: while the *affections* will be directed by the calmer conceptions of good and evil, of merit or demerit.

To conclude. This infinite diversity of relations of human beings with every thing around them, is the manifest cause of that infinite diversity in the passions and affections, which has rendered a regular arrangement so extremely difficult to the moralist. For we perceive that some are primitive, others derivative. Some are simple, others complex, some are chiefly operative in the more rude and uncultivated state of society, others in the more polished: Some are predominant in childhood, others in youth, and others in advanced years:

Some are intimately connected together, as love, joy, gratitude, among the pleasant affections; fear, hatred, anger, &c. among the unpleasant: Some are diametrically opposite, as love and hatred; hope and fear; joy and sorrow, &c. Some refer to the past, as sorrow, contrition, &c. Some to the future, as fear, anxiety: Some are the rewards of right conduct, as complacency: Some are the punishment of errors and crimes, as penitence and remorse: Some respect the present good, or evil, as joy, contentment, anger, envy: Some mark approbation, as complacency, esteem, admiration; others displacency as anger, contempt: Some are the punishments of inordinate self-love, as envy and jealousy; and others are the indications and rewards of disinterested benevolence, as the strong sympathetic affections.

## SECT II.

### ON THE UTILITY OF THE EMOTIONS.

THE Emotions have been distinguished by us from the passions and affections, as being more immediately their external signs. That is, every particular passion or strong affection, has its characteristic marks, by which we not only know that the mind of the subject is strongly agitated, but we are enabled to ascertain the character of the influential passion.

Many important advantages result from this constitution of our nature. Milder affections may lie concealed, because it would not be proper, in every case of their indulgence, for one man to be made fully acquainted with the dispositions and propensities of another. As long as these are latent, they may be inert; and where they exert no immediate influence, of either a good or bad tendency, it may not concern us to know them. But when the passions are strong and violent, or when the affections can no longer remain concealed, they prompt to correspondent *actions*, and these may not be indifferent. In such cases, it is frequently of great importance that the *spectator* should know the kind of impulse, that *his* conduct may be correspondent to it: that he may either soothe and moderate, encourage, direct, subdue, or escape from the consequences. This internal ferment can no longer be indifferent to us, when it is on the point of bursting forth to the advantage or disadvantage of the subject himself, or of those around him.

As therefore the social principle renders us deeply interested, in the state and correspondent conduct of our associates, it becomes important that we should know the peculiar manner in which they are affected by extraordinary circumstances. Hence it is, that every strong passion produces its specific emotion, by which each passion is distinguish-

ed from the others; and we know, with an infallible certainty, what passes within. These external signs are so characteristic and so strongly marked, that they frequently enable us to detect the hypocrisy of language: they receive full credit, in opposition to the strongest verbal declaration, of a contrary import.

But the utility of the emotions is not confined to the advantages of discrimination; the changes, manifested in the corporeal system, perfectly harmonize with the nature of the passion or strong affection, and are obviously calculated to produce impressions on the minds of spectators, most adapted to their character. This view of the subject, is curious and interesting, and may perhaps appear novel to some of my readers; we will therefore give it a moment's attention.

The striking eccentricities of joy; the lively accents, the quick and animated gestures, the sprightly eye, and enlivened countenance, the eager desire of communicating to others all the circumstances relative to the acceptable tidings, are admirably calculated to spread the pleasing contagion, and awaken the endearing congratulations of our friends, who by rejoicing with those that rejoice, augment their felicity. When joy is the issue of particular exertions, when it is the result and re-

compence of some concerted plan, every witness is excited and encouraged, by these incontestible indications of felicity, to make similar efforts. Such pleasing manifestations that difficulties are to be surmounted, and that anxious doubts have been exchanged for delightful realities, animate the languid, kindle fresh hopes in the desponding, and redouble the ardour of the most active.

The pleasing affections of *contentment, satisfaction, complacency,* and *hope,* diffuse a captivating vivacity, or a chearful serenity over the countenance, at once indicating inward placidness of mind, and disposing the spectator to a participation. They manifest where true enjoyment is seated; and were men wise they would consider these sensations, as the grand objects of pursuit, and value the means alone according to their power in producing these ends.

The external tokens of *conjugal, parental, filial, fraternal* affection, or of warm and sympathetic *friendship,* by manifesting what passes within, awaken love, gratitude, and reciprocal attachments. They soften and appease anger, and put indifference to the blush.

The indications of love, considered as a personal predilection, in the intercourse of the sexes, ope-

rate still more powerfully. The expressive countenance and speaking eye, which, while they reveal the passion, confess that it is mixed with varied degrees of hope and fear, silent dejection, or assiduous desires to please, exert their united influence to kindle pity, gratitude and sympathy; those precursors of reciprocal affection. The obvious disposition to please, inspires a disposition to be pleased. The lover is instinctively prompted to exhibit his good qualities to the best advantage, and he cautiously conceals his unpleasant ones, without any studied *intention* to deceive. The passion itself disposes to every thing that is pleasing and agreeable; softens, for a time the natural rudeness of his character; and could he always remain the *lover*, he might become permanently amiable.

Thus it is wisely instituted, that in the nearest and most interesting connections of life, the expressions of the countenance should manifest the strength of our affections, by which a reciprocity is inspired, or augmented.

The open unaffected benignity conspicuous in the countenance of a benevolent man, increases the value of his kind offices, in the eyes of the recipient. His benevolent smiles manifest the attractive goodness of his heart; and while they diminish the reluctance to be benefited in a delicate

mind, they greatly magnify its estimation of the benefit.

The concern inscribed upon the countenance of the Compassionate Man, indicates a sympathy which ingratiates and soothes. It affords consolation to the afflicted, to observe their distress reflected, as it were, from the countenance of a sympathetic friend; and where compassion is manifested by acts of mercy, the admiration and gratitude they inspire are best calculated to render contrition sincere and permanent.

*Anger* is conversant with injuries, and it rouses the whole frame to repel them. It inspires the language of menace; it renders the aspect terrible; and it gives energy to the muscular system; these unite to strike the offender with dread. The injured are thus empowered by the emotion itself to inflict the merited chastisement, while the guilty are impressed with fearful apprehensions, and thus rendered more unequal to resistance. When anger is accompanied with the marks of contempt and disdain, a severer satire is inscribed on the countenance, than the utmost force of language could express.

The dangers which render courage a virtue arouse the mind, brace and invigorate the corporeal system, and thus augment the powers of action and of resistance.

The first agitations of *Sorrow*, are most emphatical signals of distress, demanding succour from every quarter: by its plaintive voice and dejected mien, it invites to friendly and consoling sympathy; while it relieves oppressed nature by its tears. The adversities productive of sorrow too frequently proceed from presumptive insensibility to danger, from thoughtlessness and inconsideration; or from the violence of our passions; those inexhaustible sources of error in our choice, in our expectations, and in our conduct. A privation of the good we had in our possession, or concerning which we had indulged the most sanguine hopes, introduces, as it were, a new order in our state, and gives a new direction to our purposes and pursuits.

Disappointments lead us to reflect more minutely upon the nature of the blessing to which we were so strongly attached, and also upon the adventitious circumstances which deprived us of its possession: in the one case we are rendered more disposed to prefer objects of a more durable nature, and in the latter, to be more upon our guard against the surprise of privation. These united, render that pensive mood which succeeds to the first transports of sorrow, highly important. The mind is now disposed to reflection; its former levities are checked and suspended; its insensibility is removed; it is softened to receive the dictates

of wisdom, and to be impressed by those salutary instructions which were so frequently refused admittance. The love of solitude so peculiar to grief, is highly favourable to that train of reflections suggested by the affliction; and the afflicted mind ardently seeks the leisure so requisite for these important purposes.

The energetic influence of *Terror*, rouses the frame, either to repel or to escape from instant danger. It places the body instinctively in an attitude of defence; it throws unusual force into the limbs to effect an escape; and when this is impracticable, the wild horror mixed with savage fierceness of countenance, inspires the assailant himself with dread.

*Abject Fear* which views some tremendous evil impending, from which it cannot possibly escape, as it depresses the spirits, so it enfeebles the corporeal frame; and it renders the victim an easy prey to the evil he dreads. But is not this abject state of mind and body, intended as an humble suit to commiseration, as the last resource? The pallid horror inscribed upon the visage, the trembling debilitated limbs, are such indications of a subdued mind and of internal sufferings, as call aloud for sympathy, in the moment of distress;

and must dispose all, but tyrants and cowards, to listen to the dictates of compassion and mercy, where they can be safely shewn. Abject fear is the most prevalent, when connected with conscious guilt. It is seldom experienced to the extreme of agony by a virtuous sufferer. Does not this suggest the idea, that when the vicious are completely subdued, their *sufferings* have still a claim upon our commiseration, as far as prudence or security will permit?

It has been noticed that the blush of *Shame* may arise from different causes. It may proceed from *conscious guilt,* or from an excess of *modest diffidence.* The shame of *criminality,* while it is the commencement of deserved punishment, frequently leads to a full detection of the crime; and yet it has a tendency to mitigate wrath, by the certain indications which it gives, that the heart is not totally depraved. The *blush of Modesty* attracts the most favourable attentions, as it is the mark of a virtuous sensibility; and being occasioned by the union of exalted ideas of perfection, with conscious deficiencies, it strongly solicits and it obtains indulgence.

*Jealousy,* being a mixture or a succession of all the passions, varies its appearances according to the complexion of the emotion predominant at

the instant; and consequently it may occasionally excite irrision, contempt, or commiseration, according to the degree of its influence, and of the probabilities on which it is founded.

*Envy* and *Malice* having no one object of utility, and not admitting of an apology; being vice and the punishment of vice, at the same instant; and the punishment not exceeding the crime, they set a mark upon the countenance which inspires horror without exciting the least compassion.

It is observable that *Surprize, Wonder, Astonishment,* however strongly they may be marked, seldom if ever excite sympathetic emotions correspondent with their strength. Is not this because they are simply introductory of the influential qualities which immediately relate to well-being? The chief effect they produce upon the spectator is to excite curiosity; they render him desirous of knowing the efficient cause of these strong emotions, and to share in the result of farther investigation.

We may also remark, as an incidental advantage arising from the constitution of our natures, which renders every passion and stronger affection so visible to others by its characteristic signs, that it greatly increases the pure, innocent, and exalted

pleasures which are derived from the cultivation of the fine arts. We are so formed as to delight in imitations of every description. The disposition to be pleased from this source, manifests itself in the most trifling and the most dignified subjects; in the delineations and descriptions of objects, inanimate and animate, from the lowest plant and reptile to the human form; from the mimickry that charms less cultivated minds, to the interesting and sublime subjects with which the most refined become enraptured. In this extensive range, the human character, dispositions, and actions, as they are manifested by attitudes, gestures, and countenance, are placed in the most exalted rank. The faithful and spirited representation of these constitutes the grand excellence of the Drama, is considered as characteristic of the sublimest poetry, and immortalizes the statuary and the painter. The pleasures extended and multiplied, from this inexhaustible source, are too numerous and too influential upon human enjoyment, to be passed over in total silence.

## SECT. III.

### ON PREDELICTIONS: OR

### *Advantages arising from those various causes which create a diversity in our dispositions & affections.*

IT has fully appeared, in the preceding Essay, that the cardinal passions of Love and Hatred, are so deeply implanted in the human mind, that they must exist, and exert their influence, as long as we possess the power of perceiving characters and qualities, in situations and objects, which are deemed of extreme importance to well-being: We have also shewn that the passions immediately derived from love and hatred, to which every one is exposed, from the peculiarities of his situation, respecting interesting objects, as joy, sorrow, hope, fear, anger, desire, are so interwoven with our natures, that they cannot be totally annihilated, without a total change of the human character: It was moreover remarked that, notwithstanding these general laws, there is not an uniformity in the operation of the exciting causes of the various passions and emotions; that some persons may feel the pangs of sorrow, by incidents which would inspire others with joyful transports; and some may pursue with ardour, objects from which others

would turn away with disgust. This diversity arises from a diversity in our ideas, concerning the character of the means or instruments, supposed to be productive of the one or the other; and these ideas are rendered by an infinitude of incidental circumstances so various, that few individuals are uniform in their sentiments, either respecting the nature or the means of happiness. Some of the more obvious causes of a diversity, both in opinions and affections, have been enumerated and enlarged upon under the following heads: The *Influence of experience, difference of sex, of temperament: the progress of our nature from infancy to advanced years: national customs: the force of habit: the principle of self-love: influence of education; of novelty; of fashion: love of singularity: popular prejudices: associated affections: the manner in which information is conveyed: imitative tones and gestures: rhetoric and oratory: the Drama, or scenical representations: and various predisposing causes.*

These peculiarities have in some cases an irresistible influence; in others they operate with more or less uniformity according to circumstances; some are whimsical and capricious; others create a characteristic diversity between one person and another, in situations apparently similar; and others produce a diversity in the dispositions and affections of the same individual, at different times and at different periods,

Although some of these influential causes may appear whimsical and extravagant, and others peculiarly liable to abuse, yet many advantages arise from that constitution of our nature, by which we are brought under subjection to them. By means of some, we gain instruction; by others our pursuits are usefully diversified; by some, our tastes and dispositions are admirably adapted to our situations, and we are thus rendered contented and happy, under circumstances which might have become irksome and tormenting; and by others, particular affections and propensities are occasionally excited, which are best adapted to the incidents of the moment.

We will take such a cursory view of them, as may be sufficient to illustrate these positions.

The infinite advantages derived from *Experience* are self evident. By experience we not only *know* with infallable certainty, but we *feel* what, and how things are. We become both intimately and irresistibly acquainted with all those facts which experience has placed before us. We perceive with pleasant, or unpleasant sensations, the nature and relations of things, and we are made *to feel* disadvantages resulting from particular modes of conduct, which however erroneous, we were extremely unwilling to relinquish. Experience is a faithful instructor of the most ignorant, and monitor of the

most obstinate. It is this alone which is able to reclaim the headstrong and perverse, by making them *feel* the consequences of those errors that proceed from strong prejudices, and exaggerated conceptions of things. It enstamps an inestimable value on whatever is found to correspond with preconceived opinions and favourable sentiments entertained, concerning particular states, objects, and principles of action. Experience is the result, or rather the personal application of certain facts; and every fact thus rendered indubitable may some way or other, be productive of the most important consequences, as it will always enable us to place our love and hatred, our desires and aversions, upon their proper objects.

*Sexual predilections* are manifestly adapted to the principal designs and duties of our respective stations; that each sex may take pleasure in those objects with which they are destined to be the most conversant; and that our affections may accompany our duties, in the different walks of life. Domestic and more sedentary employments, are so different from those which are arduous, laborious and foreign, that a diversity, both in the powers and dispositions of the agents, is highly requisite. The predominant forms and constitutions obvious in each sex, point out their respective provinces; and it is a happiness, that the dispositions

are, in general, correspondent with their make. These laws, tho' they are obviously written in legible characters by the hand of Nature, are not so rigid and absolute as to forbid every exception, but no considerable change could take place without manifest and pernicious incongruities. A most uncouth and heterogeneous mixture of characters would succeed to the pleasing distinctions, which are so observable in the present order of things. The masculine manners acquired by the softer sex, and the effeminancy adopted by the stronger, would excite mutual contempt and disgust. May we not subjoin that these ideas receive confirmation, by the occasional specimens of the effects produced by the transmutation of labours in civil life? that where the female is employed in the hard manual labour of men, she becomes masculine, coarse and vulgar? and where the male is incessantly employed in those occupations, which are better adapted to the delicacy of the softer sex, he frequently loses all that is manly in his character, without attaining any of those graces that adorn the female? these intruders thus become

'Unfinish'd things, one knows not what to call
'A Generation so equivocal.'

The diversity of tastes and pursuits arising from *Temperaments*, contributes to the production of an agreeable and an useful variety, correspondent with

that immense diversity, so obvious in various states and situations, and in the qualities of various objects. As the instincts and appetites of the inferior creation are diversified in every possible manner, in order that there may be no waste in that ample provision prepared by the Supreme Director, for these numerous and diversified beings, so without a diversity of tastes and predilections in the individuals of the human species, there would be an useless expence, and absolute waste in the various qualities of objects, many of which would remain unexplored and unknown. Whereas, according to the present constitution of things, each individual is enabled to select his favourite object, investigate its nature, discover its peculiar properties, and the advantages to be derived from them; and thus while he gratifies his own peculiar inclinations, does he imperceptibly augment the general stock of knowledge. We may also add that the diversity of pursuits arising from this cause, diminishes that competition of interests which would inevitably accompany the eager desires of numbers.

The gradual changes of disposition which take place in our *Progress through life, from infancy to advanced age,* are perfectly correspondent with the change of state experienced at each period. They are all adapted to the peculiarities of each stage. They are such as become neces-

sary to ourselves, or enable us to be useful to others. The desires of the *Infant* are few, and totally confined to its animal wants, because every other desire before capacities were formed for a correspondent pursuit, would, at that early period, be superfluous and tormenting. The affections and predilections of *Young minds* are such as prepare them for future seasons of action. They are such as make them acquainted with every thing about them; such as invigorate the body, and even in the hours of playfulness imperceptibly enlarge their stock of knowledge. The fickleness with which they are chargeable, if it be not indulged to a capricious extreme, introduces them to a general acquaintance with a variety of objects, before the attention is engaged in particular pursuits. While the little rivalships and frequent collisions of humour, serve to awaken ambition, and become useful correctives of that predominant self-love, which is so often indicated by perpetual encroachments or petulance of temper. The dispositions most observable in *Manhood* are consonant with the more confirmed powers both of body and mind; more extensive connections, growing importance, and enlarged sphere of usefulness, which characterize the adult. The predominant affections of *Age*, often become the rewards or punishments of our prevailing dispositions and conduct, while we were

passing through the different scenes of former years; and they are generally such as gradually prepare the minds of those who have conducted themselves with propriety, for quitting the scenes of action, such as soften the horrors of dissolution.

*National Customs*, in almost every country, form no small portion of the comfort and happiness of its inhabitants. An attachment to the region that gave us birth, and a predilection for its customs and manners, is one of the strongest propensities in our natures; which time and absence cannot entirely subdue. This has frequently animated to the most glorious atchievements in its defence, and excited general indignation against the opposite conduct. To betray the interests of our country is universally deemed the act of a parricide. Partiality for the place of our nativity, reconciles the mind to all the inconveniences and severities of climate, sterility of soil, the hardships of oppressive governments, and the still greater severities of absurd and barbarous rites; which it is not in the power of individuals either to change or to escape. In consequence of this general predilection, the associating principle operates with such power, that the inhabitants of every district feel an *unity* in the collective mass, and they consider mutual support simply as a modification of self-defence. Without these sentiments and sensations, weaker

individuals would be continually exposed to the insults of the stronger, or fall a prey to the inroads of neighbouring tyrants.

Notwithstanding the absurdities, and the enormities, to which the inhabitants of different countries patiently submit, with apparent disgrace, yet this principle of attachment and predilection is not only natural, but unavoidable and necessary, in the less cultivated state of mankind. Before civilization and the developement of the rational faculties have taken place, it is the only rule by which individuals can be governed. The child must have an implicit confidence in the opinion and conduct of its parents; and those who are completely ignorant, naturally look up to the more knowing for guidance and instruction. For, however erroneous both may be, they have no alternative. They who are not able to judge and act for themselves, must submit to the authority of their superiors. It is natural for them to presume that others, who are in more elevated stations, who are more advanced in age, whose judgment is maturer, and whose experience is more extensive, will uniformly act according to the best principles and wisest plans; and to these they are disposed to yield unqualified obedience. Nor is there any other principle by which associated bodies can maintain their associated character. Hence it is

that in all savage nations, each horde is one family. Every custom is adopted in the full confidence that it is precisely as it ought to be; and their early initiation into it, gives it a decided preference to every other in their *opinion*, as well as their *affections*. In like manner every injury committed upon an individual, is resented by the community at large, without their making the least enquiry into the merits or demerits of the case.

But when, in the progress of mental improvement, the capacity of descrimination arrives, it brings different principles and obligations with it. A discovery that the conduct of their predecessors was not always regulated by the maxims of wisdom and equity, gradually disposes to make some salutary change; and in proportion as the love of justice becomes prevalent, a sense of obligation to defend the conduct of every member of the community, however culpable, and avenge the harsh treatment he may have received, however it may have been deserved, will diminish. The *genuine* rules of justice founded upon *knowledge*, are now to take place of the *spurious* ones which were founded on mere *opinion*; and culpability, is to be alone attached to the person of the *offender*, and not to the whole community to which he may be a disgrace.

The force of *habit* is a power similar to the pre-

ceding. It makes us contented and chearful in particular situations, and connections in life, which may not be the most favourable. By virtue of this accommodating power, we become reconciled to various scenes, which would otherways have been unpleasant and irksome; and we learn to suffer hardships without a murmer. By means of its happy influence, we contract a fondness for things of a very inferior value, and deem them to be treasures. We are taught to prefer whatever has been rendered familiar to us, to things far superior in themselves, to which we are comparatively strangers; and thus do our desires become much more moderate and less tormenting. Habit spreads a charm over all our relative and social connections, and familiarizes us to imperfections which cannot escape our notice. It gives such a facility of action, in our various occupations, that we no longer perceive the difficulties and intricacies that embarrass the inexpert: and the facility with which that business is performed to which we are accustomed, leaves the mind at liberty to attend to other objects.

No one will for a moment dispute the utility of that *Self-love,* which creates a peculiar attachment for every thing we call our own. Without this, beloved Self would be stript of all its possessions;

it would have no recompence for the most arduous enterprizes; no indemnification for all the vexations and disappointments of life. This also gives a relish to the smallest acquisitions. The idea of exclusive property, makes the infant delighted with its doll, as well as the connoisseur with his cabinet of paintings; and the humble itinerant is as satisfied with his ass or his mule, the servant and companion of his travels, as the opulent nobleman who exults in the superior beauty or speed of his coursers; and as highly values himself for their exploits, as if they were his own.

The high importance of *Education* was fully manifested while we were enlarging upon its influence on the characters and dispositions of men. Its professed object is to furnish the mind with competent knowledge, and enable it duly to appreciate whatever appears useful and interesting. It is this which either communicates, or strengthens and exalts, a particular cast of character; cherishes the best affections, and directs them to their proper objects; calls forth every valuable talent; introduces confirmed habits, in whatever is useful or excellent; renders that familiar and pleasant which is to be the principal occupation in life, or which may render our station in it respectable and beneficial.

The *Love of Novelty* is a powerful stimulant to all improvements. It is intimately connected with the desire of learning, and greatly contributes to a rapid progress in every useful art and science. It is also a proper balance to those propensities in our nature, which, in their excess, would be highly pernicious. As in physics, the *centrifugal* force is necessary to counteract the *centripetal*, thus were there no operative counterpoise to the force of *national customs and inveterate habits*, these would become effectual checks to every improvement. Our first affections and predilections would be entirely engrossed by the few objects surrounding us, from our earliest infancy, or in the most contracted spheres of existence. We should remain so fully contented with the humblest and most abject state of being, that all the powers and capacities of our nature would stagnate; and century after century would roll over our heads, leaving the human race in perpetual bondage to pernicious prejudices and contracted habits; to prevent such permanent imbecility, we are endowed with the love of *Novelty*. By this fortunate principle we are eventually roused from that lethargic state in which customs and habits, whether national or personal, would have for ever detained us. We are induced to observe, with an eager attention, things of which we were before

ignorant; to examine into their nature, properties, and comparative excellencies. An acquaintance with these, is calculated to excite within us new desires and affections, correspondent with their apparent powers. Thus are we repeatedly making experiments, the result of which may possibly prove beneficial to ourselves, or to the community at large. After we have learned to appreciate our new acquaintances, they sometimes become additions to our former comforts, sometimes rivals and substitutes. The discovery of a something better, moderates our esteem for what we may have valued much beyond its worth; and thus are we liberated from those attachments which would have effectually impeded our progress in well-being. By the observance of those useful properties which many novelties bring with them, we become restless in states and situations to which nothing but *ignorance* could have reconciled us; and are both disposed and enabled to improve our condition.

It must however be remarked that mere Novelty cannot of itself add a particle to our permanent happiness. It is the office of this striking quality to allure us to contemplate some other quality or qualities, which constitute the characteristic nature of the novel object; and from these alone we are to expect the permanent influence. If these be

formed to produce some essential good, they enable us essentially to ameliorate our state. If on the contrary, they be superficial and transcient; if they be simply calculated to amuse the fancy or administer to our pride and love of distinction, the strong impression of their utility is soon obliterated, and we feel ourselves disappointed in our expectations. Hence it is that many of those properties introduced to our acquaintance, by Novelty, gradually diminish in our esteem, while the impressions from *Habit* daily increase. We might adduce as instances, all those pursuits which administer to our pride and vanity, and have for their sole object little frivolous distinctions between man and man. Such as richness of apparel, splendid furniture, sumptuous dwellings, and other marks of grandeur and superiority, which dazzle the eyes of spectators, and excite their admiration or their envy. As these are the only effects which such distinctions can produce, and as they have nothing solid or satisfactory in their nature; admiration being a transcient emotion, and envy not being a respectable one, their pleasing influence is also of short duration. The possessor himself feels that they have not communicated that happiness he had expected from them. His remaining attachment finally resolves itself either into the force of habit, or into the reluctance which his pride inspires to

become retrograde in his situation. It is those novelties alone which promote additional and permanent comfort, which can induce us to relinquish former habits without regret, or with entire satisfaction of mind.

Thus have long attachments and the love of novelty, a natural tendency to counterbalance each other. Were it not for the force of habit, we should be carried away by every novelty, and be making perpetual changes, without any advancement: were we not allured by novelties, we should never emerge from the lowest state, to which we had been familiarized by customs and habits. The reluctance we experience to deviate from the paths to which we have been long accustomed, may sometimes prevent us from walking in one that is better, but it frequently prevents us also from losing our way; when the nature of the attractive novelty is well ascertained, and it is found to possess qualities productive of utility, then does our attachment to customs and habits become inveterate and pernicious; whereas the changes to which we are prompted by novelty alone, expose us to the loss of what we already possess, without supplying an equivalent.

The *Love of Fashion* is manifestly an adventitious, not a primary principle in our nature. In

its excess it is a sickly perversion of the social principle. It is generated by an union of a fondness for novelty, with the love of imitation; and it partakes of the vices of each parent rather than of their virtues; possessing the fickleness of the former and the servility of the latter. In its more moderate and legitimate influence, it may communicate occasional pleasure, by the introduction of an agreeable variety; but this variety to be agreeable, must neither be violent nor rapid. It frequently calls forth the talents of various artists, and has thus afforded temporary advantages to thousands. But enjoying arbitrary power, like every other tyrant it is perpetually abusing it. By despising the guidance of reason and good sense, it retards the progress of elegance and taste, while its votaries persecute those for singularity who possess them. It is most inimical to permanent utility and permanent enjoyment; compelling us to relinquish numerous advantages, when they are no longer in the mode. It entices persons of genius to direct their talents to some particular object; and when they have acquired skill, and address in their respective branches, and are rejoicing in the success of their labours, the fickleness of its nature leaves them in a state much more deplorable than that from which it had taken them. Nor can it provide support for a new class of the indus-

trious, without involving those who lately administered to its caprices, in the depth of distress.

The *Love of Singularity*, proceeds from a restless mind, possessing some portion of genius and tinctured with a large portion of vanity. It prefers *novelties* to *truths*, and aims at being distinguished for its *talents*, rather than its *deserts*. It is a copious source of error, as it despises nothing so much as obvious facts, and as the sophisms and paradoxes in which it most delights, may in a few sentences, occasion more perplexities and embarrassments to the mind, than it is in the power of volumes to remove. Yet even this disposition has been occasionally advantageous. It has sometimes produced the strong efforts of an aspiring mind, to break through the trammels of a perverse education and inveterate prejudices; and although the tenets it advances may be as distant from the truth as those it explodes, yet by *daring to think*, it has enervated the influence of implicit faith; and by encouraging others to exercise their judgment, it has made some atonement for its own crude notions, and fallacious reasonings. In short the novel propositions boldly advanced by persons of this description, somewhat resemble the boasted remedies of Empiricks, which, when they are not totally inert, possess powers that in the midst of much mischief, may, in singular instances, prove more

efficacious than some medicaments which may have been in the course of regular practice for a series of years.

The *Influence of popular Prejudices* has also been adduced as one cause of the diversity of our affections; and although the instances recited were manifestations of *abuse,* to which this principle is peculiarly liable, yet there are certain situations in which it may prove beneficial. Popular prejudices may, in general, be considered as the implicit exercise of that species of sympathy, which arises from the sociableness of our nature, and from the particular attachments acquired by mutual intercourse. These attachments are frequently formed, and always strengthened, by some one point of union or agreement, which constitutes the centre of the circle: Such as being inhabitants of the same country or of the same district, being educated at the same seminary, engaged in the same pursuits, possessing a similarity of taste, being members of the same society, or possessing a conformity of opinion on subjects of religion politics, &c. Such circumstances corroborate the the associated affections, and produce preferences and predilections which resemble, in a smaller sphere, national customs. They naturally inspire the disposition to be more friendly to those who resemble ourselves, and thus constitute a por-

tion of our own circle, than to others who are in a distinct sphere; and as such are more frequently within the circle of our immediate connections, we have more frequent opportunities to exert these cordial dispositions to their advantage.

The disposition thus formed, unites a certain degree of selfishness with sociality. It becomes the guardian or promoter of some principles, pursuits, or dispositions, which are possessed in common. It forms a kind of phalanx in support of character, professions, sentiments, and measures, concerning which there is a similarity in opinion; and thus it enables the associates to resist with greater probability of success, the attacks of their opponents. It prompts us to afford that kind and degree of assistance to those who appear deserving of our aid, which may be requisite to draw them forth from obscurity, enable them to advance their fortunes in the world, and distinguish themselves in public life: and in such instances, it emulates the advantages which we have ascribed to the influence of private friendship. Without these aids, each individual, being totally indifferent to every member of the community to which he belongs, would have to combat various impediments and difficulties, by his own strength alone; and he would frequently feel his power inadequate to the task. Thus, although popular prejudices

cannot in any case be considered as the test of what is right, or proper, yet when they coincide with what is right and proper they become powerful promoters of it. [See Note A.]

In the section where we enlarged upon the influence of the *associated Affections*, we gave several instances of their beneficial as well as pernicious effects.* To these we shall refer the reader, and shall only observe at present that, from some of the instances given, it appears that they enlarge our sphere of enjoyment, by the pleasing recollections which they produce, and by creating an endearing intimacy with even inanimate objects. They become, in some instances, powerful auxiliaries to the promotion of our interests. They may be made the handmaids and the cherishers of our virtues; place us upon our guard, by the perception that vice itself has its introductory affections as well as virtue; and they render particular situations, states, and employments, much more pleasing and acceptable, than they would have been without their friendly aids.

The different degrees of effects produced by the *various Modes in which interesting scenes are presented* to us, ought not to be passed over in silence. There are obvious marks of utility in this constitution of our nature.

* See Phil. T. Pt. ii. Chap. ii. Section 13.

From the pages of history we acquire a general knowledge of mankind. We are made acquainted with a great diversity of characters, motives of action, means employed, with the result, &c. &c. and thus, is our stock of useful knowledge rendered very extensive. We also learn how to conduct ourselves in similar circumstances; and are enabled to profit by the conduct and experience of others, without committing their mistakes, being guilty of their crimes, or suffering their misfortunes. While these are the only purposes to be answered, we can wade through narratives of vice and distress, not only with patience, but with some degree of pleasure; and we are prompted both by sympathy and curiosity to proceed in our enquiries. Nay we feel our minds strengthened in the love of virtue, by the interest we take in the sufferings, or the triumphs of the virtuous; and we feel a conscious satisfaction in the detestation of those vices and horrors, which so strongly arrest our attention in the perusal. Did our sensations rise higher than to this point, we should close the book, and prefer continuing in our ignorance, rather than suffer the agonies of sympathy or the agitations of indignant horror; or we should be rendered miserable to no valuable purpose. When conduct and events are impressed upon the imagination, by the circumstantial narrative of a *Spectator*, the subject approaches nearer to ourselves; the business is

brought home to us; we feel the possibility of being placed in similar circumstances, or being witnesses to similar events; and we enter more deeply and warmly into every affecting particular. The mind is therefore prepared and disposed for action, or for those stronger sympathies, which such interesting scenes may require. But when *We Ourselves* become actual spectators, our sympathy is excited to the utmost, and we are instinctively prompted to a conduct best adapted to the exciting cause; and thus are we enabled to act a beneficent part in the distressing drama, to which we are witnesses.

The important uses to which *Eloquence* and *Oratory* may be made applicable are self-apparent. As they are such powerful instruments to move the will, they are able to produce all that the will can determine to accomplish. In skilful and honest hands, they may be most successfully employed to calm each turbulent passion, and eradicate each unworthy affections; to arouse the patriotic virtues; animate the mind to struggle with difficulties and dangers; instil the principles of benevolence and compassion; dissuade men from persevering in the path which leads to their own destruction, or from being the authors of misery to others. "Eloquence says an anonymous author, governs states without violence; it obtains subjects without

the force of arms; it subdues their wills by sweet compulsion; it gives battle and gains victories, without the effusion of blood."

The *Drama* being a lively representation of men and manners, may be rendered subservient to the most valuable purposes. Under the direction of the unskilful and depraved it has too frequently become the school of every immorality. It has been made to ridicule unfashionable virtues; to establish false and pernicious maxims of conduct; to destroy that horror which ought always to accompany the success of villany; and it has rendered scenes of treachery, intrigue, debauchery, and riot, familiar and pleasant to the minds of the superficial and unthinking. Under proper regulations, it becomes not only a rational amusement, but the school of valuable knowledge. It may be made to inspire every noble principle and virtuous affection. By its histories it is adapted to perpetuate interesting events, in a manner that makes the most lasting impression upon the memory. By its delineation of character, "it holds the mirror up to nature." It shews us ourselves, our passions, our prejudices, our foibles. It teaches us the knowledge of the human heart, in its versatilities, its excellencies and defects. When it traces the natural consequences of human motives and human conduct, with a due degree of accuracy, it sets forth all the advantages

of experience, without its troubles. It is able to inspire us with the love of every thing that is great, noble, and amiable, and with the detestation of every thing that is mean and infamous. It may refine the taste and soften the manners; and by virtue of that concatenation of the different affections which has been formerly noticed, it may cherish and improve the sympathetic feelings.

It is however observable, that too great a fondness for pathetic scenes, either in novels or at the theatre, has rather a tendency to blunt our feelings for particular instances of real misery than to quicken them. By being perpetually conversant with fictitious distress, the keen and beneficent effects of novelty and surprise *are worn out;* and the mind being long accustomed to the higher colourings of art, will finally experience that these are become absolutely requisite to excite the proper sensation. It is thus rendered indifferent, perhaps disgusted, at the simple or squalid miseries of real life; and although our dispositions, and general habits may be so far improved, that we may be elevated above every thing that approaches to absolute cruelty and ferocity of manners, yet we shall not be awakened to the relief of misery with that promptitude which might have been expected; nor possess that genuine sympathy we may be tempted

to ascribe to ourselves, from the exalted pleasure we take in the representations of fictitious misery.

The occasional influence of *external Circumstances*, or *predisposing Causes*, manifestly proceeds from a law of our constitution highly beneficial in itself. It is a natural consequence of that susceptibility to external impressions with which we are endowed; and it is of some value in preventing too great a monotony of disposition in the same individual. But the fluctuations of temper occasioned by incidental causes, may, under the direction of reason and good sense, be productive of very great advantages. By virtue of this law, the subject himself is made to experience what is most favourable to good or to bad impressions; he has it in his power to avoid the latter and encourage the former. He is enabled to escape the danger while it is remote; while his exertions are the least painful, and his success certain. He may thus render his *humours* instrumental to the cause of virtue. Although the best feelings derived from such adventitious means may lay no claims to merit, yet by a wise application of the laws of association, they may terminate in amiable and virtuous habits, and therefore they may in the issue be productive of merit.

The versatility of temper proceeding from these occasional causes, being assiduously watched by

an attentive monitor, will present him with many opportunities of suggesting wise counsels and friendly admonitions, with great advantage, which would have been nugatory if urged in less favorable moments: and thus may the changes produced by predisposing causes become conductors to virtue, as they are too frequently precursors of every thing that is vicious.

There is another important advantage to be derived from the numerous causes specified, as conspiring to create a diversity in our opinions, dispositions, and affections. Their influence, which is in many instances irresistible, holds forth a lesson of mutual forbearance and charitable indulgence. When disposed to entertain a censorious disposition, and express our resentment, or even our *surprise*, that others should think or feel differrently from ourselves, in cases we deem to be the most obvious and indisputable; we ought to consider the force of natural propensities, habits, customs, education, &c. which exert such influence over the judgment, and then candidly to enquire how far these may have influenced our own? We ought not to feel indignant because others submit to a force, which it would not have been in our power to resist. If *we* should not have been able to discover the truth, or to cherish the best affections,

when all these powers were operating against us, why should we expect *others* to accomplish a task to which *we* had been unequal? If natural talents, integrity of heart, and purity of motives, perhaps not inferior to our own, have not preserved them from errors, the only emotions we should feel, are *joy* and *gratitude,* that we have been placed under the influence of more fortunate circumstances; united with *compassion,* for those who are not as yet extricated from mental bondage. Although our opinions may finally be the result of reason, and our dispositions conformable to her dictates, yet it becomes us to reflect upon those circumstances which enabled our reason to act in this superior manner, and the circumstances which have cast our affections in the choicest mould; and we have full evidence within ourselves, that reason has not yet completed its office, if we do not make ample allowance for others destitute of our advantages.

## CHAP. II.

## INQUIRY INTO THE IRREGULARITIES OF THE PASSIONS AND AFFECTIONS; THEIR NATURE AND CAUSES.

### SECT. I.

#### THE IRREGULARITIES OF THE PASSIONS, &c. IN WHAT THEY CONSIST.

IT has been shewn in the preceding Essay, that Human Nature is endowed with various Passions and Affections, in order that they may operate as means to obtain certain and important ends. These ends have immediately or remotely, a relation to *Well-being*. When, therefore, the Passions and Affections are excited in such a manner as is productive of that end, they are useful and proper; and in exact proportion as they have a tendency to deviate from it, they become improper, irregular and injurious. In all deviations, the constitution of nature, by which we are rendered susceptible of such impressions, is abused to the most pernicious and fatal purposes. We are destined to experience inconvenience, discomfiture and un-

happiness ourselves, and we are in danger of diffusing Misery in proportion to the extent of our influence.

The nature of an abuse is indicated by our knowledge of the *Use* of any thing. Whatever is *useful* acts as a mean to obtain an end; and the degrees of its utility are estimated by the degrees of its suitableness to the desired purpose. *Abuse* may therefore be considered, in the positive sense of the word, as the application of certain powers to other purposes than those for which they were destined; or the use of them in such a manner as to frustrate the designed object, and to produce different or opposite effects. The term may also be supposed to comprehend a *negative* import. A culpable *Neglect* to exert those powers which might have been usefully employed, deserves the appellation of an abuse, both as it indicates a state of mind dissonant from the ends of our creation; and also as it takes its origin from the misapplication of some other principle, such as improper attention to other objects, timid caution, or a criminal love of ease, which enervate the mind, and render the powers it possesses, indolent and inactive.

Thus respecting the passions and affections with which human nature is endowed, if their object

be to protect us from evil, and to promote individual, social, or general happiness, it will be universally allowed that every deviation from these constitutes an Abuse. They are not excited or indulged according to the original intention of the endowment; or according to the nature of the salutary and beneficial powers they possess; and some inconvenience, some evil or other must inevitably ensue.

It is asserted by all Moralists that moderation is the basis of permanent enjoyment, and a moment's attention will convince us that it is absurd to think otherwise. For the greatest good possible being the legitimate standard, every *deficiency* or *excess* in our attempts to attain it, is a deduction from what might have been enjoyed. This truth lies couched in every word that is used in the present connection. *Deficiency* expresses a falling short. *Excess* relates to some violence which goes beyond it. Every thing we deem *extra-vagant, eccen-tric,* &c. is considered as deviating from the right line; or as flying off from that centre around which every thought and every action ought to form the radii and the circle. Every species of enjoyment has its acme and its bounds. If the height be not attained, something of a privation remains; if it be exceeded, some power or principle of hu-

man nature is violated; and that which forms a perfect and beautiful figure at the precise focus, becomes inverted and deformed by stepping beyond it. Thus, for example, deficiency of food on the one hand, or excess on the other, are detrimental to the corporeal frame; whilst moderate indulgence refreshes and exhilarates: Too much rest induces languor; too much exercise, fatigue; while a due degree is salutary to mind and body. It is the excess of an affection that becomes a passion, and the want of due affection, constitutes a morbid apathy, that incipient gangrene of the soul.

The perversion of the passions and affections from their proper influence, may consist either in the undue and pernicious excitement of the stronger passions, or in the indiscreet engagements of the more permanent affections, either respecting the nature of the object chosen, or the degrees of attachment to it. For when the passions are not excited on the proper occasion; when, for example, there is a total insensibility to danger, where it is the greatest and most obvious, or to the most important losses, or to the grossest injuries; when a total indifference is shewn towards objects which are calculated to interest every one; the mind is either elevated above them by being pre-occupied by some very exalted principle; or it is in an unnatural and diseased state; or this indifference may be the result of an apathy acquired by the

disappointment of immoderate desires and affections, terminating in discontent and disgust, and exchanging the excess of incitement for a total insensibility. The one indicates that an extraordinary counterpoise to the usual affections and emotions is in powerful exercise; the other that a species of inanition has taken place from preceding excess. Various instances have been adduced, in our analysis, of the abuses which arise both from excess and misapplication. As truth is one and simple, and surrounding errors infinite, thus the passions and affections, the most natural, innocent, and laudable, have but one point of perfection in their indulgence. If they attain not this point, they are impeded by the undue influence, that is, by the improper exercise of some other passion and affection; if they exceed it, they run into the contrary extreme, and become injurious to some other principle, disposition, or affection, which ought to have been regarded.

The cardinal affections of Love and Hatred, become pernicious, when they are directed to improper objects, or indulged upon those which are in themselves lawful, to a degree beyond the boundaries of reason and propriety. The misapplication of the principle or affection of Love, is to value that as a good, which is in itself an evil; or to give

that preference to inferior objects, which is alone due to those possessing higher qualities, or with which we are connected by some special and indispensable obligation. The principle of Hatred is abused, when an aversion is entertained for that which is a real good, on account of some peculiar quality it may possess, which is unpleasant to our feelings: or if we suffer an aversion to exceed, in any case the limits, which reason, justice, humanity, prescribe. When this hatred is directed against individuals of our species, where it has not been merited, or when it exceeds the degrees of delinquency, it becomes an injustice of the most criminal nature. Exemplifications of such an abuse were given in our investigation of the nature of malevolence, malignity, envy, rancour, censoriousness, cruelty, &c.

The abuse of Self-love consists in a desire of things which are improper or pernicious to us; in pursuing inferior objects to an excessive degree and to the neglect of things which are most important; in attempts to monopolize and engross the means of enjoyment at the expence of those who have an equal claim; in illicit indulgencies and gratifications to the injury of others. Where a contrariety presents itself, where private interest and the good of others stand in competition, Self-love will in common cases, incline us

to prefer our own advantage. This being a principle on which all would act, excepting in particular and extraordinary circumstances, no one has a right to censure it. But when these advantages are pursued by unjustifiable means, by deceit, injustice, oppression, Self-love becomes inordinate. Again, if by making smaller sacrifices of profit, ease, pleasure, we are able to communicate some essential benefit to others, that Self-love is base and reprehensible which is deaf to the voice of compassion, and refuses to administer aid to the wretched and necessitous.

As the universal or primary passions of Joy, Sorrow, Fear and Anger have each their object, they have also their limits. Joy becomes inordinate when it greatly surpasses the good obtained: by exciting fallacious hopes it inevitably terminates in disappointment. The passion is abused, when it inspires us with an undue confidence in ourselves, or in the advantages acquired; and when it prompts us to insult, and treat with indignity, those over whom we may have triumphed. If it be excited by improper objects, it gives a false report of happiness, which may conduct us into the most fatal errors; or it is a mistaken exultation respecting events which must prove injurious somewhere.

The excess of Sorrow is pernicious to ourselves, by being destructive to health, by depriving us of

the power of enjoying the good which is still in our possession, by enervating the mind, and incapacitating it for the performance of its various duties.

Although every allowance should be made where the affliction has been great; and although the depth of sorrow may be permitted for a season, to render the mind less sensible to surrounding comforts; yet habitual and obstinate *Melancholy* degenerates into an abuse of the passion. It is a species of injustice to others. *It is a tacit, but a very expressive denial,* that our surrounding friends possess, any longer, the pleasing power to communicate that happiness they had been accustomed to communicate. It deprives them of that share of our attention and complacency to which they are entitled; and of all those comforts which the chearfulness of social intercourse is so well calculated to produce. It is also the parent of *impatience, discontent, peevishness, repinings,* &c. those unpleasant, and unlawful sensations.

The excess of Fear is not only an extreme weakness, but it is dangerous. Where fear is improperly placed, precaution will also be improperly directed; and thus will the mind be thrown off its guard against the approach of real evils. It

settles also into pusillanimity, which disqualifies either for acting or suffering with propriety.

Where Anger is excited without due cause, it stimulates to punish the innocent, and brings those into temporary disgrace who may perhaps have merited our praise. When indulged to excess, it becomes itself, an injustice: it is the commission of an injury, much greater perhaps, than that which it attempts to punish. It fosters implacable hatred, and all those unworthy desires and dispositions which we have contemplated as characteristic of Malevolence, and degenerate into outrage, violence, and murder.

If the Kindly Affections be improperly placed, or indulged to excess, they are either thrown away, or they become the occasions of mischief. The object cannot possibly make the returns we expect; hence we are exposed to the pangs of disappointment. The excess of affection cannot be indulged, without the commission of a robbery upon those who may have equal or superior merit, and equal or superior claims; while it is liable to prove injurious to the favoured party.

These ideas are exemplified in the partial fondness of indiscreet parents, for some individual of their offspring, whom if it do not find, it generally leaves the least deserving; renders him indo-

lent, insolent, and assuming; while it depresses the spirits of his equals, or inspires them with *envy, jealousy,* and *hatred* against the pampered favourite. Even the *compassionate* affections indulged to excess, may become injurious; they may prove encouragements to impostors, indolence and vice; and when they are directed into an improper channel, they disqualify us for administering assistance and consolation to those who are more deserving.

The Desires that relate to our corporeal wants, when indulged in an inordinate manner, are peculiarly disgraceful, and peculiarly pernicious. These lay no claim to respectability in their most moderate and licensed gratification, and they are most pernicious in the abuse. The Epicure, who places his supreme felicity in the pleasures of the table ; and the Glutton, whose chief enjoyment of life consists in the indulgence of his appetite, and who wastes by his excesses, the gifts of Providence which were intended for the support of his animal frame in the discharge of its duties, and to invigorate the powers of the mind, after they have been exhausted in useful services; these characters are considered by common consent as upon a level with the lowest of the brute creation. Excesses of this kind induce disease upon the corporeal system, and obtund the powers of that soul whose operations alone can indicate the superiority of our rank.

The Drunkard voluntarily renounces for the seducing cup, that rationality which is the prerogative of his nature. He shortens the period of his existence, or treasures up a large collection of infirmities, for the evening of his days. The strength of the sexual passion was wisely appointed to secure an uninterrupted succession of animal life. The importance of this end increases in proportion to the superiority of the species, and the comparative value of its existence; the Beings therefore who indulge in these sensual gratifications, in a manner subversive of the ends proposed by nature, are guilty of an offence against nature, they meanly attempt an evasion of its sacred laws. They frequently induce deserved misery upon themselves, and, what is still more unfortunate, too frequently entail *undeserved* misery upon others.

Every Desire may become inordinate; that is, it may degenerate into an absurd or pernicious excess. The desire of *Wealth*, when it degenerates into *avarice* becomes a pernicious absurdity. It checks the circulation of that which, by being diffused, might diffuse comfort and enjoyment. It rests in the means of enjoyment or of usefulness, without producing either; and thus completely annihilates those very purposes for which wealth has been coveted. When the desire of riches

prompts to illicit means of gain, it becomes fraud, deceit, injustice, oppression, and villany. The excess of *Emulation* tempts to the use of unlawful means; and it inspires hatred and animosities between rivals and competitors: and the *Ambition* which treads upon the rights of mankind, is usurpation and tyranny. To expend the *devotional Temper* upon imaginary beings; to attempt to please the best of Beings, by frivolous rites and ceremonies, by an uncharitable attachment to particular doctrines, propagating them by violating all the laws of justice, humanity, and common sense, is an abuse of Religion. In short every amiable quality and every virtue, misapplied or indulged to an excess, degenerates into a pernicious abuse. Mildness of disposition is proximate to an insipid tameness, destitute of energy where energy is most required. The excess of courage becomes rashness; of boldness, impudence; the excess of caution is timidity; rigid œconomy is related to avarice; and liberality borders upon extravagance.

It may be supposed, upon a superficial view, that some of our irregular and pernicious passions and affections, cannot have the most remote connection with those which are innocent and beneficial. They appear to be originally and radically vile and depraved, and to possess an inherent ma-

lignity, which entitles them to a distinct and opposite class. It will perhaps be asserted that envy, malice, implacability in resentments, and cruelty, at least, are of this complexion, and that pride, avarice and ambition, are scarcely exempt from the charge.

We have attempted to analyse these various passions and affections in our philosophical treatise, and if the explanations there stated be received, they will sufficiently point out the genuine sources of every extravagant and inordinate passion, without the necessity of recurring to principles which are merely hypothetical, and also liable to numerous objections.

Avarice is an inordinate passion for gain. The term may be applied to the eager anxiety with which it is sought, and by which it approaches to rapacity; but it more usually expresses a disposition to hoard treasures, without having the disposition or spirit to use them. In both cases it is the excess and perversion of that desire of gain which may in itself, not only be innocent, but laudable, by becoming the grand spur to *industry*; the only means by which numbers can enjoy the comforts of life, support those who are dependent upon their exertions, or become serviceable to the community. But an attachment to the means,

may gradually steal upon the mind in such a manner as totally to defeat the end. The affection now becomes a disease. The avaricious man, prefers to live in wretchedness and want, by totally depriving himself of that good which it was his original desire to procure, rather than diminish the means in his possession, by the purchase of it. *Ambition,* in its most criminal excess, is simply an abuse of that personal affection which renders every man prone to seek his own advantage and pre-eminence, in preference to that of his neighbour; a principle which under proper restrictions, and wisely directed, may be productive of extensive utility. It is a stimulus to *Emulation* which indicates itself by exertions: and altho' pre-eminence cannot be the lot of every candidate, yet by his exertions he will have advanced himself in the scale of honour and in the powers of utility; and the fruits of these may disseminate their beneficial effects over the community.

Envy, malignity, implacable resentment, may justly be considered as an improper and unjust perversion of the principle of Hatred. They originate from the criminal and despicable Self-love of *little minds,* in consequence of their observing the superior advantages of others; or from their brooding over something displeasing in their conduct towards themselves.

In our analysis of Envy, we have considered it as the effect of inordinate Self-love, indicated by the union of pride, sorrow and anger. Extravagant ideas of personal merit, induce us to behold with a criminal displeasure, the good possessed by others, united with a resentment no less criminal, that it has not fallen to our own share. Hence this corroding passion, hateful as it is in itself, may be legitimately traced to principles, implanted within us for important purposes.

Malignity is a species of hatred and resentment, rendered criminal by its motives and its excesses. It is mostly generated by an Envy that is impatient to punish; which contemplates what is desirable in the state of others as a crime deserving chastisement. In these wretched paroxysms of Self-love, a malignant temper affects to be governed solely by the love of justice, when it attempts to imbitter the sweets of prosperity, to blast a reputation that eclipses our own, to reduce to the common level those, whom Envy pretends to have been raised above it by means unconnected with merit; or when it rejoices in the ill fortune of those for whom we may have imbibed a personal hatred.

Thus we may consider Malignity as a vile and baneful compound of principles, which in their separate characters may be permitted to occupy a

place in the human breast. It is the perversion of hatred in consequence of self-love, which confounds and perverts every idea of justice.

Cruelty is, perhaps, the most inexplicable disposition which can disgrace humanity. Deliberately to inflict misery, to take pleasure in the groans of the tortured, exceeds the bounds of common depravity. But the universal horror that it excites, indicates that it is not a *common* character; that it is no constituent part of human nature. It is exclaimed against with united voices as *inhuman*, and consequently thrown as it were with contempt and abhorrence, at a remote distance from the failings incident to humanity. It is manifestly an engendered passion, arising from a combination of adventitious circumstances, such as perverse education, envy, hatred, cowardice, resentment, which conspire to harden the heart and sour the temper, to foment implacable hatred, and inspire a thirst for revenge which exceeds the offence, while it madly supposes, that too great a sacrifice cannot be made to vindictive justice. It is such an exaggeration of self-love as renders the subject insensible to every thing but this worthless Self.

When Cruelty accompanies the lust of power, it acts as a mean to obtain an end: when exercised in the uncontrouled possession of power, it is frequently the result of previous habits which have

induced a total insensibility to the state and feelings of others. It sometimes proceeds from a wanton exultation in absolute dominion, which openly defies the Subjugated to resist or complain; and sometimes it imagines a grandeur in being able to imitate the vengeance of heaven by spreading desolation, when the heart is too depraved to imitate its beneficence.

These few instances of the nature of abuse, in the passionsand affections, sufficiently indicate why they deserve theterm.*Abuse*. They indicate that impressions and dispositions which are useful and necessary, at certain seasons, and to a certain degree, may in other circumstances become the causes of extensive mischief: For the excess, or misapplication of the passions and affections, does not simply terminate in the loss of that particular effect which was expected, but it frequently becomes introductory of a long train of complicated evils.

Since the beneficent effects derived from each passion and affection, can alone proceed from their due exercise; and since aberrations are so numerous both in kind and degree, to what dreadful and accumulated evils is human nature occasionally exposed, by those very passions which are the professed guardians of its well-being! In proportion to the number of his advantages and the

variety of objects which appear capable of communicating delight, does the danger increase, of Man's becoming superlatively miserable! That very complication of circumstances which might extend, vary, and multiply his enjoyments, and to which increased knowledge, extensive experience, diversified pursuits, social connections, give birth, may be rendered the sources of accumulated distress! The more he can obtain, the more he has to lose; and the more are the causes of anger, sorrow, fear, jealous apprehensions, multiplied and increased! The more social and benevolent his dispositions, the more may his heart be agonized by surrounding distress! The pleasures derived from his social connections are frequently interrupted, and sometimes destroyed, by the misfortunes or irregularities of some individual within the circle. The stronger his desires and the warmer his pursuits, the more is he exposed to the severity of disappointments, the greater his danger of exceeding the boundaries of virtue, of reaping vexation, repentance and remorse, and of becoming the agent of complicated misery to others!

Were we to take a survey in our recollection, and sum up the quantum of wretchedness, of which we so loudly complain, we should find that by far the greater portion proceeds from the Abuse of the passions and affections. May it not be

asserted, that there is no evil incident to human nature, excepting corporeal diseases, or the absolute want of the necessaries of life, which may not be ascribed immediately or ultimately, to disordered passions and affections? And may we not add, that both disease and want would be almost unknown, were the impetuous passions under proper controul, the selfish affections indulged with moderation, and the benevolent ones duly operative?

### *General Summary.*

It appears from the extensive survey of the passions, emotions, and affections which has been taken in the course of our investigations, that they are to be considered as particular changes produced in our sensations and dispositions, in consequence of certain impressions made upon the mind, either by the operation of external circumstances, or of inward suggestions. These changes prove agreeable or painful, according to their nature, according to the character of the exciting cause, or the ideas we have of its qualities; and according as it appears adapted or repugnant to our natures. When these sensations are powerfully excited, they are productive of external signs correspondent to their specific characters and the degrees of their influence; and thus are they made manifest to

others. These external tokens are also correspondent to the nature of the exciting cause, by virtue of which, various useful and moral purposes may be answered.

All our passions, affections and emotions, relate to things which appear interesting at the moment, to some good received, in expectancy, in suspense, lost; or to evils suffered, committed, apprehended. They are all excited by different modifications of Love or Hatred; and however various or opposite in their natures, they all acknowledge the desire of well-being for their common parent. The transient nature of the passions and emotions, demonstrates the versatility of our tempers, the imperfections, uncertainty, and mutability of our state. The prevalence of *affections*, the degrees of their intenseness and the nature of their objects, manifest the prevalence of disposition; stamp innocence or guilt, virtue or vice, excellence or deformity upon the human character, and constitute the permanent happiness or misery of man.

When apparent good is to be pursued, or evil to be avoided, the Passions and strong Affections are roused to action. Without these, cool and uninfluential approbation or disapprobation, would accompany the contemplation of good or evil, unattended by mental or corporeal exertions, to appropriate the one or escape the other: With-

out these, human nature would lose its character, and be transmuted into an inconceivable species of being.

The Passions and Affections therefore, constitute an essential part of man. Through their medium we find ourselves connected with every object around us, and become more intimately acquainted with their innocent and useful, their pernicious and dangerous qualities. When the passions and affections are excited by proper objects, and in a due degree, they indicate a healthy vigour of mind, which spreads its benignant influence over the whole system. When they are improperly placed, unduly excited, and under no other direction than that of inordinate self-love, they become the torments of ourselves and the scourges of mankind.

## SECT II.

### INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSES OF THE IRREGULARITIES OF THE PASSIONS AND AFFECTIONS.

SINCE every natural Passion and Affection, well directed and well regulated, has its proper object and its uses; and since the abuse is so detrimental to the very design for which the passion was implanted within us, it becomes a subject of wonder that human nature should be so continu-

ally missing its aim; that our desires of happiness should be so perpetually frustrated; and that those very passions, which are excited by the love of good, are stimulating us to the pursuit of it, and are professed guardians against the dangers to which this good is exposed, should themselves become the grand and extensive sources of the most poignant misery! It seems, upon a superficial view, as if we were formed to be tantalized; as if we were destined to have the shadow of good before our eyes, in order to be seduced into evil by attempting to attain it; to be created with ardent desires after well-being, which are never to be realized; and to pass our days with the prospect of some bliss before us, which is to recede from our grasp with a celerity equal to that with which we pursue it! Nor is this the complaint of a few discontented individuals, or of those who, from a combination of extraordinary circumstances are exclusively become the children of distress; it is a general complaint, it has been uttered in every age, in every situation, and at every period of life!

These facts naturally suggest an inquiry, *What can be the cause of such a phænomenon?* Is it the irrevocable law of our Constitution that we shall be incited to pursue what we are never to attain? Has some Evil Being blinded our eyes, perverted our judgment, destroyed our powers, and blasted

all our fairest hopes? Or are we ourselves the culpable causes of so much misery, while apparently surrounded by so many means of happiness?

In the consideration of these difficulties, it is not my design to become either the partizan or opponent of the hypothetical notions to which they have given rise. Endeavouring to be the faithful historian of nature, to the utmost of my abilities, I shall confine my whole attention to such causes as are universally acknowledged to exist; the operations of which are so extensive, that every instance of abuse, of depravity accompanying the abuse, and of misery that follows, may be explained by them. Should any other causes be superadded, they must be enforced by different arguments than those arising from necessity.

No one has ever denied the existence of the following causes: *Ignorance; the Influence of present Objects; and of Inordinate Self-Love.*

Let us briefly consider the influence of each in rendering the Affections irregular and Passions excessive; and thus inducing a disorder in the directions and operations of those Passions and Affections, which have the desire of good for their professed object.

1. *Ignorance.*

From our introductory observations it appears that man was born in total ignorance: that every advance he makes, as an individual, from infancy to manhood, and from the first dawn of existence in

his social character, to the most improved state of society, is the result of knowledge and experience gradually acquired. It has also been frequently remarked, in our analytical view of the passions, that we are so constituted, as to be rendered susceptible, in some way or other, or at some particular period, of every thing around us: and it has been observed that every thing around us possesses various qualities or attributes, calculated to have some agreeable or disagreeable effect upon us; and to contribute a something towards our well-being, or deduct from it: we have further noticed that our desires or aversions, respecting these objects, arise from an aptitude which they possess, or seem to possess, from some particular *adaptation* to our nature, situations, and humours, on the one hand, or on the other, from a something that is repugnant to our ideas and feelings.

These facts plainly indicate that a *knowledge* of the existence of influential objects, and a very minute and discriminating acquaintance with their natures, powers, and properties, becomes essentially necessary, in order to ensure to ourselves their kindly influence, or to escape whatever might prove pernicious or displeasing. As long as we remain totally ignorant of things possessing inherent powers of good or evil tendency; as long as our minds remain dormant and inattentive to their qualities, they are to us as if they had no existence.

We are like persons asleep in the midst of the busiest scenes of action; or plunged in palpable darkness, which conceals all objects, however numerous and important: and in every case where we have formed wrong ideas of those qualities, powers, or properties, if we attempt to act, we must inevitably commit innumerable errors. Hence it is, that knowledge is uniformly compared to light, and ignorance to darkness; the inability of the eye to see and distinguish, and of the mind to perceive, being perfectly analogous. From the *ignorant* Man, both good and bad, beyond the things immediately before him, lie so completely concealed, that they are not known to exist. Through Ignorance we are prone to estimate some things much too highly, depreciate others much beneath their value, and to remain indifferent respecting things which may be calculated to promote our best interest. Ignorance often walks in the midst of dangers, and thinks itself secure. It foresees no pernicious consequences in conduct, by which the most *Intelligent*, are the most alarmed. It is deceived by false principles; it argues erroneously from true ones, or draws improper inferences from partial documents. Ignorance is guilty of perpetual mistakes concerning character, conduct, and motives; and thus witholds approbation and affection, where they are justly due; excites hatred, envy, jealousy, and all the malevolent affections,

where they are the least deserved. It often rejoices when it ought to weep, and laments when it ought to rejoice. The ignorance of his powers, his motives and his qualifications, too frequently induces a man to appreciate his own talents or accomplishments much beyond their deserts; inspiring him with pride and vanity, discontent, ingratitude, and envy. Not knowing that others are wiser than himself, he is often eager to take the lead in situations for which he is the least qualified. He may imagine that he has arrived at the summit of knowledge before he has laid the foundation; and thus he prepares disappointment for himself, and vexatious injuries for others, by dangerous and fruitless attempts. Self-ignorance will sometimes also create a diffidence and timidity destructive of proper exertions, by which the most promising talents become useless. Supposing him to possess the best disposition that ever graced humanity, an ignorant person must for ever wander in a labyrinth of error, where he will meet with disappointments and vexations at every turn. In a word as Knowledge is *Power,* so is Ignorance *Imbecility ;* which is not unfrequently, as dangerous and detrimental as determined vice. It neither knows what is good, nor how to pursue it: nor where to place the best affections; nor can it calculate the fatal consequences which will follow the indulgence of the most pernicious passions.

Notwithstanding the injurious consequences flowing from ignorance, are many and great, we must observe that it is not characteristic of that ignorance which may be ascribed to the want of information, or to unavoidable inexperience, to excite passions and affections which are irregular or illegitimate in themselves; but simply to err respecting the choice of the object, the degree of the emotion, or the strength of attachment. When guided by ignorance alone, we may not be conscious that we are going wrong, though we walk in the paths which lead to ruin.

There is a species of ignorance which is highly culpable in itself, as it arises from careless inattention, where attention ought to have been exerted; and this necessarily deprives of many advantages which might have been obtained, in our search after happiness. It disposes us to draw improper inferences, and form hasty resolutions, which due consideration would have prevented. It is this species of ignorance which inspires with pride, vanity, and self-conceit, obstinate perseverance in the wrong path, without attention to the admonitions of those who are more experienced than ourselves. It is this which seduces us into false ideas concerning the state, and conduct, and motives of others; inspiring sorrow, fear, anger, with all their complications; such as personal hatreds, envy, jealousy, discontent, repining, &c. It also is the cause

of our so frequently mistaking the means for the end; and induces us to conclude that felicity consists in the possession of the means and instruments and occasions of some of the enjoyments of life, such as wealth, honor, power, title; hence it is that sordid avarice is indulged, and that injustice and insatiable ambition, take the lead in order to obtain them.

### 2. *Influence of Present Objects.*

According to the wise constitution of our make, things present and immediate, are destined to affect us with peculiar force. We are thus excited and disposed to act according to the apparent demands of the occasion. Were we always affected by every fact, power, and property, according to the precise degree of its intrinsic importance, and not according to the degrees of proximity, there would be perpetual excitements, and a perpetual waste of correspondent affections, without any valuable purposes being answered by them. We should live in a vortex of useless sensations. Inferior objects therefore, when *present,* are permitted to make a stronger impression upon the mind, through the medium of the senses, than their absent superiors. Our attention is aroused and directed towards them, that we may obtain the immediate good, of which they promise to be productive, or avoid the immediate disadvantage with which they

threaten us. But this law, which presents us with a wise and proper rule of acting, where no interference of competitorship exists, is exposed to the grossest abuse. The influence of such objects is often permitted to obliterate all the salutary impressions, which much superior qualities may have made upon the mind. Their apparent powers to delight us, impose on the affections, and may inflame desires for immediate gratification, at the expence of the choicest principles by which the human heart can be governed; or of the most refined and permanent happiness in reversion. The presence of such objects seduces the affections to give a preference to the advantages or enjoyments of the moment, to the most promising assurance of extensive good which appears remote. It may render us so impatient of what is immediately irksome and disagreeable, that we shall frequently attempt to obtain a release by unlawful means, or under the strongest probabilities of augmented evils, at some distant period.

The influence of present objects is conspicuous in the gratification of the animal appetites. The impetuosity of desire kindled by immediate objects of sensual enjoyment, like a powerful torrent, breaks down every barrier which reason and principle attempt to erect. It is also obvious in the sudden gush of anger, in irritable minds, on the quick perception of an injury, prompting to

all the horrors of revenge. It magnifies present dangers, and instanstaneously increases their number, until a few pigmies shall appear a formidable host of giants. It gives poignancy to the losses and disappointments of the moment, however trifling their nature, or insignificant their consequences: and which would scarcely be perceived were all our remaining enjoyments to present themselves to our view, with a force equal to their importance.

The pernicious influence of present objects is also perceivable in our social intercourse, and by the abuse of the sympathy of our nature. It is this which renders evil example so contagious, and enervates resistance to maxims and conduct, both pernicious and abandoned. It favours the pertinacity of customs and habits, after reason has been fully convinced of their absurdity. It gives irresistible power to fashions the most preposterous, introduced by inventors and patrons the most frivolous and contemptible.

This cause of irregularity chiefly affecting the passions excited by animal propensities, sudden transports of anger, and the social principle of imitation, the passions and affections themselves may still be natural, or such as, in some circumstances and situations, may be lawfully indulged. Their offence may consist either in excess, improper choice of objects, or the violation of some other

principle, to obtain immediate gratification, which ought to have been revered as the rule of conduct. There is not an animal appetite which may not, under certain circumstances, be indulged. Anger, when it prompts to protect our rights from invaders, or inflict due punishment upon a criminal, is perfectly consistent with the dictates of nature; Fear properly excited is the guardian of safety: and the assimulating influence of Social intercourse constitutes one of the pleasures of social life, and may become the handmaid of virtue.

Irregularities from the influence of present objects, are often committed in direct opposition to our better judgment; but the dispositions excited often pervert the judgment at the instant. The particular propensity produces a train of ideas, favourable to its indulgence, which crowd in upon the mind to intercept the influence of better principles, and silence the dictates of dispassionate reason. Nay, equally reluctant to forego the gratification desired, and to relinquish our title to rationality, we have recourse to a thousand subterfuges, in order to seduce that reason we are ashamed to violate. We attempt to vindicate our conduct by various arguments, which in our cooler moments we acknowledge to be fallacious and futile. Of this propensity several instances were given in

the chapter of *Associated affections*; to which we refer the Reader.*

### 3. *Inordinate Self-Love.*

The principle of Self-love is the earliest, the most universal, and the most operative principle in Man. It exists long before we are conscious of any of the exertions of reason; and is prior to every social affection. It is a principle common to all animated natures; without it vitality would be destitute of charms, for none of its objects would be pursued as desirable or beneficial.

But Self-love, and the ardent desire of well-being, which is inseparably connected with it, are peculiarly liable to excesses of the most extravagant nature. A power which operates so strongly, universally and perpetually, must have a tendency to great irregularities, unless it be moderated and counteracted by antagonist principles. Where Self-love is indulged without controul, it is capable of enormities that astonish and confound! It becomes deaf to the claims or miseries of others! It perpetually aims at a complete monopoly of happiness, and employs without hesitation the basest means to obtain it. When it possesses power, it is the parent of every species of tyranny and oppression, with all the dreadful passions they in-

*Ph. Treat. Part II. Chap. II. p. 255.

spire, and the calamities they diffuse: and when it is fortunately circumscribed in its influence, it breeds all the little corroding passions of envy, hatred, jealousy, peevish discontent, &c. This also inspires pride and arrogance by some vain conceit of superiority of rank, station, or worth; and justifies to the selfish heart, revenge, hatred, and every species of malignity. Ignorance may be productive of many evils unintentionally, which upon the retrospect it may sincerely lament; the strong desires excited by present objects, may occasionally suspend the influence of those better principles which exist within the breast; but this Fiend frequently commits *intentional* mischief, and rejoices in its success, in the midst of all the horrors produced. It sometimes detains the mind in the most determined ignorance of every thing which respects the claims of others, or moral obligations towards them. It never resists the gratifications of the moment, from any other motive, than the expectancy of completer indulgence at some future period. It scruples not to offend against the clearest convictions, and it frequently perverts the judgment to such an extent that it erects self-interest as the sole standard of equity. It entertains no other idea of *wrong*, than of what is injurious to *Self;* and it establishes acts of injustice and cruelty as claims of *right*. It retains sophistry to

plead the cause of usurpation, and subpœnes every petty interest to give evidence in the cause. It listens with keen attention to every argument which coincides with its own advantage ; while it fortifies the mind against the most powerful attacks of pure uncorrupted reason, as being an enemy the most to be dreaded. It is this which so frequently conceals the folly and baseness of conduct by adopting the mildest appellations, or by giving it the garb of virtue. Thus, as by the wand of an enchanter, mean avarice is converted into laudable economy; cowardice into prudence; the most atrocious cruelties are deemed, by the tyrant, salutary chastisements. The violation of every principle of honour, in all the arts of seduction is softened down into Gallantry; while the murder of a *Friend* for an imaginary or a trifling offence is exalted into a high sense of Honour !

It sometimes happens that when sentiments of integrity, justice and humanity begin to solicit attention, the selfish passions and affections will suggest arguments to palliate or justify principles, maxims, and conduct, which the Uninterested, and Unbiassed uniformly condemn. Submission to superior authority, the laws of long established custom, the right of conquest, the love of glory, revenge for imaginary injuries, under the pretended love of justice, even the colour of the skin and shape of a leg, have each in their turns, been urged to

vindicate to ourselves and to the world, sentiments and actions, which uniformly oppose the uncorrupted opinions of mankind.

But when this inordinate Self-love does not attempt to convince the judgment, it sternly opposes its dictates, mocks at its remonstrances, and triumphs in the commission of injustice, oppression, and cruelty.

Hence it appears that this disposition fosters the most hateful and most baneful of all the passions. It is peculiarly prone to generate adventitious passions and affections, which are a disgrace to our nature; which are always criminal without exception, and without a palliative; such as envy, inveterate malice, and cruelty.

Since each of the causes above-mentioned produces separate effects, so inimical to human welfare; since each has its own characteristic perversions of the passions and affections, and is chargeable with the correspondent evils, what miseries may not be diffused by their union? What can be conceived more fatal to the welfare of mankind, than the darkest ignorance, the presence of objects either exciting desire or aversion, and ungoverna-

ble self-love, united in the persons of those who possess the power to accomplish every purpose of their hearts? This dire assemblage constitutes the perfection of tyranny with all its baneful consequences! It diffuses the agonizing sensations of fear, dread, consternation, grief, anguish, and horror, in every direction; and fills those regions of the earth with misery, which become subject to its wretched empire.

Thus, from the examination of each of these principles, separately and conjointly, it is easy to perceive that there is not a disorder or irregularity in our dispositions and conduct, which cannot be resolved into them. In some instances they may exert their own characteristic influence singly. We may, for example, commit many offences and irregularities through ignorance or mistake, without the seduction of present objects, or the inordinate influence of self-love. We may, on the other hand, be led astray by the impulse or temptations of the moment, contrary to the conviction of our own minds; clearly perceiving both the criminality and the danger of our conduct: and inordinate Self-love may coolly determine to violate every principle of reason, and deliberately commit that which it knows to be wrong. They have each their distinct characters also. Ignorance by mistaking the nature and properties of things

and the nature and effects of particular actions, may commit a thousand irregularities: or by mistake may place its resentments and attachments upon the most improper objects; and have every passion and emotion excited without a just and adequate cause. It may do mischief in a thousand directions, where it intended good, without being conscious that it was impelled by the influence of present objects, or instigated by a criminal attachment to Self. The seductions of sense show their power chiefly in the love of pleasure and sensual gratifications, in the pernicious influence of example, and in the violent transports of passion, from any sudden and unexpected cause. The irregularities committed by exaggerated Self-love, are the most pernicious of any. The predominance of Self-love frequently detains the mind in a kind of insolent ignorance, and exposes to all its consequences. It yields itself up to the influence of present desires and present objects, whatever may be their nature or consequences, and it deliberately tramples upon every social virtue, and every principle of humanity. (See Note B).

The above remarks will be sufficient to explain the cause of those Irregularities in our passions and affections, which pervert the design of their existence. One or other of these causes has ope-

rated wherever Evil, either in a greater or less degree has been experienced; and were these completely regulated or subdued, human nature would have little to apprehend from any other principle which hypothetic notions may have suggested. It must however be confessed that in the infancy of our nature, many of these irregularities are inevitable. To be ignorant, is the earliest lot of humanity. Every individual of our species is born into a world, where he is surrounded by an infinite multitude, and an infinite diversity of objects, to which he is a perfect stranger! He is rendered susceptible of impressions, and destined to feel emotions, according to his Ideas of the respective qualities of these objects, which must, at the commencement, be crude and erroneous. An accurate knowledge of their specific powers, is only to be obtained by the repeated experience of ourselves or of others; and by proper observations and deductions founded on experience. Thus is every particle of the requisite knowledge a distinct acquirement. Many imperfections, will present themselves; many expectations must prove fallacious; many calculations erroneous; and many fruitless essays will terminate in sorrow, vexation, and disappointment; many affections will be wrong placed, until our failures have convinced us of preceding errors, and inspired us with subsequent caution; until the

experiments which have been made of the various qualities, of every thing connected with us, shall enable us to discriminate with more precision, and chuse with greater wisdom.

At this early period of our existence, the different passions, resemble the *Antennæ* of feeble insects, which enable them to feel their way, as they are creeping over the surface of things; by means of which they discover what is pleasing and adapted to their natures, what is displeasing and may prove injurious. Our natural wants create desires; desires animate us to the use of means, and with hopes of success; success inspires confidence in our future plans, and we enlarge our pursuits, according as our knowledge and experience are expanded. On the other hand, ill success inspires sorrow, implants caution, and creates salutary apprehensions. The appearance of immediate danger excites fear; impediments, designedly or incautiously, laid in our way by others, provoke anger, which in the infancy of human nature, is the only mean we possess of protecting ourselves, connections, and property. As many mistakes must exist, respecting proper objects of the affections, and the degrees of influence they ought to exert over us, thus will the cardinal passions of love, joy, fear, anger, and sorrow, be improperly

directed, or indulged beyond the boundaries of moderation.

These errors, so inevitable at the commencement, it would be in the power of increasing experience and due observation to escape, in our progress towards improvement, were there no other impediments than that of ignorance. The joint experience of ourselves and of others would, in process of time, direct us into the right path, would enable us to appreciate every thing according to its value, and to act according to its acknowledged worth, were we not fascinated by present objects; and did we not sacrifice every consideration to the gratification of the selfish principle.

But however culpable *these* causes may be, when they are admitted as the constant rules of action, yet some degrees of knowledge and experience are necessary to restrain their influence. The gratification of our senses is a natural desire; and there are seasons in which these gratifications are innocent. The powerful influence of present objects is, in many cases, useful and necessary; and it is alone by experience and observation, that we are enabled to learn, in what cases an implicit submission to this influence, may be pernicious to ourselves and fatal to others. The Self-love which

is so natural, universal, and perpetually operative, may also be supposed to be frequently inordinate and irregular in its earliest operations. It is a spring of a strong impulsive Force, which possesses a constant tendency to act in every direction; and this Force is in exertion before any other principle can be brought forwards to oppose it. The operations of the Social principle are manifestly subsequent to those of Self-love. Affection, friendship, gratitude, duty, refined self-interest, not being coeval with the other, we may naturally expect that it will sometimes exert too great a degree of energy, before these beneficial restraints and counterpoizes can be brought into salutary action.

There is a sense in which every aberration of the passions may be ascribed to Ignorance. In those aberrations which proceed from the strong influence of present objects, it may be urged, that the impetuosity of the exciting cause renders the mind ignorant, at the instant, of all the evil consequences, which may follow its indulgence; that the torrent of ideas which flows in upon the mind, chiefly consists of arguments and inducements to act in conformity to the desires of the moment. It is too well known that strong desires are dangerous sophists. They artfully suppress every objection, and rapidly collect every motive favourable to the propensity; and thus spread a temporary cloud of ignorance over the soul. Inordinate self-love will

be acknowledged to be perpetual blindness. It manifests a total ignorance of the nature of happiness, or where it may be found. It completely torments itself, by its absurd manner of pursuing well-being; and while it attempts to monopolize the largest portion, it ignorantly permits the choicest blessings to escape its grasp! Yet both these kinds of ignorance are very different from that which is connate with the human species. They are marks of ignorance which owes its existence to inclinations and propensities which are most inimical in their own nature, to well-being. This species of ignorance may continue long after that which is the result of inexperience is removed; notwithstanding the power of its removal is more immediately invested in ourselves. It arises not from an involuntary error in judgment, but from perverse dispositions, and can only be dissipated by improving the heart.

The above statement indicates the necessity of that kind of mental culture, which moulds the prevailing dispositions and propensities; which can alone relieve from the torment of evil passions, and painful emotions, and prove favourable to those predilections and permanent affections, in which true happiness resides.

These facts present us with a large field for discussion, and will become the subjects of future investigation.

# DISQUISITION

## THE SECOND.

ON THE

## *Intellectual Powers of the Mind,*

AS

## GUIDES AND DIRECTORS,

IN THE

## PURSUIT OF WELL-BEING.

# DISQUISITION II.

*On the Intellectual Powers of the Mind, as Guides, and Directors, in the Pursuit of Well-being.*

THE above inquiry into the practical tendency of the passions, the final causes of our being endowed with some; and the irregularities, confusion, and misery consequent upon others, will have clearly evinced the truth of a position advanced, that the passions, considered in themselves, are not calculated to be our guides and directors, in our pursuits after Well-being. For although there may be a pleasing and beneficial diversity in the indulgence of some propensities of human nature, occasioned by incidental circumstances, as we have attempted to show under the preceding article; yet the legitimate influence of such circumstances is very circumscribed. Were we, in every case to listen to the suggestions of passion alone, they would very frequently lead us into a course directly opposite to that of happiness; they would plunge us into every extravagance, and expose us to every calamity.

It becomes therefore a most important question, Whether we be destined, by the constitution of our nature, to be incessantly exposed to unhappiness, and to be agitated by evil and pernicious passions, without suitable means to oppose them? Are we thus to be driven into every danger, by their impetuosity, without a compass to point out where we are going, or a pilot to direct our course? If this were the immutable destination of Man, we should inevitably suffer greater calamities than those to which *inferior* natures are exposed. For as the vital powers of inferior beings are more confined, so are their wants and desires. They are led by the hand of instinct into the *right* path, though it be *narrow*. The few objects with which they are conversant, are easily accommodated to their contracted stations; whereas the multitude of objects with which our more enlarged perceptions make us acquainted, may contribute to our misery; and every desire which these are calculated to excite, may become an augmentation of wretchedness!

Such gloomy ideas of our nature and destination, can alone be dissipated by a conviction, that the human species possesses powers adequate to its extensive wants, and to its more enlarged capacities for enjoyment; and that it is furnished with the ways and means of possessing a superiority in happiness, as well as in station.

But in fact no one ever seriously supposed it to be the destination of man, that he should be solely governed by his passions. The most ignorant will sometimes perceive that human beings possess *rules* of action, by attention to which they are able to avoid many calamities. Those who yield the reins to their impetuous passions, will often acknowledge that they are doing *wrong*; that they are *inconsiderate;* that they are acting *unwisely* and without *reflection*. When we behold others the sport of follies, or of tormenting passions, we all unite in the accusation that they are acting *irrationally;* that they violate the dictates of their own *understanding* and oppose their *better judgment*.

To these Powers of a superior nature, destined to guide the legitimate passions and affections into the right course, and to control every propensity that is irregular and pernicious, we shall now direct our attention; and we will examine how far they are qualified to perform the task allotted to them.

"The faculties of our mind," says Dr. Reid, "are the tools and engines we must use in every disquisition; and the better we understand their nature and force, the more successfully we shall be able to apply them."

The office of these powers is to instruct us in the knowledge of ourselves, our real wants and our mental resources; and of the existence, modes of existence, characteristic properties, influence, connections, of every thing, and every subject, with which we may have any concern; that we may discover, on what to place our affections; the due degree of affection that each particular object may merit; and the due degree of hatred and aversion we should entertain towards those causes which endanger our welfare; that we may be able to select the proper objects of our choicest affections, the indulgence of which constitutes so large a portion of our felicity; that we may be able uniformly to act in such a manner, as to procure to ourselves, and communicate to others, as large a portion of *Good,* as the state of humanity will admit, and escape the numberless ills to which it is exposed. It is also their office to place before us the line of conduct most productive of the grand desideratum HAPPINESS, both as individuals, and as connected and social beings; and render the mind familiar with such motives as may counteract and subdue its irregular propensities.

In every instance where the passions are excited, or the affections attracted, there is but one degree of sensation, or mode of action which is perfectly accurate, while the gradations of error, from ex-

cess or defect, may be innumerable. A clearness of intellect is therefore necessary to avoid the pernicious consequences of confusion; and a power of deep penetration, to develope subjects which are intricate, and discriminate essential differences. It has been remarked that our passions and affections are invariably excited, according to the impressive ideas we entertain of the nature and qualities of objects, and the conceptions formed, at the instant, of their being more or less adapted to promote present enjoyment, or future welfare. It is therefore of the utmost consequence, that our conceptions of these should be just and accurate; without which, our affections must, at times, be improperly placed, and our passions roused by unlawful objects, or to a pernicious excess. For although right dispositions are not always attendants upon competent knowledge, yet this knowledge is not only preparatory to right dispositions, but absolutely necessary to render them efficacious. Where our knowledge is sufficiently extensive and accurate, where every part of a subject is comprehended, to the whole extent of its influence, whether good or bad, we may safely conclude that a correspondent *disposition* will be formed; if the mind be disengaged from the influence of every other affection inimical to it. Where a predilection has been already indulged, strength-

ened, and supported, by the powers of example and habit, both judgment and affection may be perverted; Reason itself may be solicited to find arguments in support of our propensities: But when the mind is not pre-engaged, when it can be brought to contemplate all those properties which are in themselves most excellent and advantageous, the contemplation will terminate in a happy predilection.

The irregularity of the passions and affections, has been ascribed to three causes: Ignorance; the influence of present objects; and Self-love. These evils can only be counteracted by knowledge, by preventing present objects from having an undue degree of influence, and by restraining the principle of self-love within due bounds. In each case, the directions of the intellectual powers are equally necessary, though their offices may be different. Ignorance can only be counteracted by competent knowledge: and where the least mistake may lead into practical error, this knowledge must be proportionably accurate. The influence of present objects cannot be opposed, without a conviction that, in particular instances, they are irrational, improper, and pernicious; or without calling up various considerations as motives and as a shield to ward off the danger. It may not require, in the first instance, an extraordinary

exercise of the rational faculties, to convince any one that inordinate self-love is irrational, yet we may find it an arduous task to place the conduct of the selfish man in such a point of light, as shall induce him to correct his selfish propensities; it requires competent knowledge, to collect arguments adapted to some leading principle in his nature, which may act as a counterpoize to such an enormous power; either by implanting fear, exciting his compassion, kindling the blush of shame, or convincing him that the attempt to monopolize happiness must inevitably occasion the loss of it.

The Intellectual Powers of man have been the frequent, and favourite subject of philosophical investigation. The ideas of their dignity and triumphant superiority, over every other faculty observable in the most perfect of all other animals, is gratifying and soothing to us; and the peculiar intricacies attending the interesting subject, have served to stimulate genius to exert its choicest talents. Most of our metaphysical readers will be intimately acquainted with the many excellent treatises that have been written on this branch of philosophy; and they will readily permit the author to confine himself to such remarks as are intimately connected with the subject im-

mediately before him. Studiously avoiding therefore, every disquisition merely *theoretical,* he will direct his whole attention to what may be deemed the *moral history* of the intellectual faculties; trace their various powers to instruct and guide us in the pursuit of Good, by the acquirement of competent knowledge; and by the establishment of such principles as will enable us to regulate our passions and affections, according to wise and pertinent rules; and thus secure the more sensitive or impetuous parts of our nature, from the degradations and injuries arising from improper indulgences, and ensure to ourselves that happiness we are incessantly pursuing.

The offices of the intellectual faculties conducive to these purposes are the following:

I. To acquire competent knowledge.

II. To retain, or recollect knowledge, for the application of it to suitable purposes.

III. To imagine, or exert a creative faculty.

IV. To will, or determine to act.

V. To be conscious of our own state, and every part of our own operations.

See Note C.

## CHAP. I.

### ACQUIREMENT OF KNOWLEDGE.

THE first object of the intellectual faculties is to acquire useful knowledge, or to obtain a competent number of just, and pertinent ideas, concerning the existence, nature, and properties of things, their relations, influence, &c.

However simple the operations of the mental powers may appear to be respecting the acquirement of knowledge, superficially observed, a minuter attention will evince that they are both extensive and complicated: being diversified according to the particular state and relation of the various subjects of knowledge, and the degrees of evidence by which they impress the mind.

As it is alone by the exercise of our intellectual powers that we are able to chase away pernicious ignorance, our acquaintance with them cannot be too minute; for in proportion to a deficiency in this knowledge, do we leave a recess for ignorance undisturbed.

It is also observable that as it would, in many cases, be extremely dangerous to act upon an uncertainty, or where the acquisition of knowledge is partial and imperfect, thus is a provision made in the constitution of our nature that we may escape this danger: the mind itself being placed in various states of uncertainty or of persuasion, according to the degrees of evidence which present themselves, respecting the truth, or falsehood of any fact or proposition which may engage its attention.

We shall consider the subject in both these points of view.

## SECT. I.

### *On the exercise of the Intellectual Faculties, in the Pursuit of Knowldedge.*

#### 1. IDEAS.

AS the possession of *Ideas* has hitherto been considered essential to every branch of knowledge, it will be necessary to explain, before we proceed to specify the various exertions of the intellectual powers upon the subjects of knowledge, in what senses the word *Idea* is to be understood in the present connection. It is a term relative to which some clear conceptions may be formed, al-

though it eludes a concise and accurate definition. It is used both in a general and in a specific sense. In its most extensive acceptation, it is expressive of every thing that has an immediate relation to a *thinking mind,* whether it be actual thought, that which is received into the mind as a subject or object of thought, or deposited there to be recalled by memory, or that which is the result of thinking. In a word, it is that which is peculiar to mind, of which we are conscious, or may become conscious by reflection, from whatever cause it may proceed, in whatever manner it may be produced, or whatever may be the nature of the change which takes place in the seat of thought. It is that wonderful something which pertains to the thinking principle, it is its exclusive property, is indicative of an awakened state of mind, and which the mind knows to exist with such an infallible certainty, that we consider the conscious possession of ideas, as the strongest evidence of our own existence.

An Idea is the grand exciting cause of every passion and affection: it instigates the whole of our conduct; it pervades and directs every internal operation of the mind; it is clearly known by every one who has the power of thinking, but it defies every definition. Whether Ideas be innate, whether they be phantasms, or images, of an im-

pressive cause, whether they be excited by particular vibrations of the brain, are questions calculated rather to amuse or teaze philosophers, than to instruct them; and in whatsoever manner these questions may be resolved, the most important fact is, *we know that we possess them*. We know that they constitute the delight, or the torment of our lives; though we may never learn *what* they are, or the nature of their efficient cause. Ideas therefore constitute the *Germ* of all our intellectual powers; the genus, of which every distinct exertion introduces a different species. (See Note D.)

### 2. PERCEPTION.

Perception is that faculty by which the mind is informed of existences; and it is consequently the inlet to all future knowledge. Its grand office is to connect us with the material world and its various parts. It enables us to see their existence, their more obvious qualities, connections, influence, &c. Perception, abstracted from every other power, refers simply to the knowledge thus obtained, and not to any particular exertion of the mind to obtain it. Perception originates from the influence which external objects have upon the different organs of sentient beings: and it is the term selected for the purpose of denoting the slightest impression which objects make upon us, through the medium of one or other of our

senses. It necessarily implies the influence of some external cause; and such a degree of sensation excited, as to produce an idea, or a species of thought in the mind concerning it. This seems to be the primary, and most appropriate signification of the term, in its application to the mental powers. The word, in its etymology, signifies *seizing*, or *laying hold of, taking, receiving, &c.* by a mechanical or physical operation; from this signification it is transferred to that operation of the mind, by which it receives a knowledge of things around it. Hence, like many other words employed to express the different faculties of the mind, it was originally *metaphorical*, though in the process of its frequent use, we lose sight of the metaphor, and it aims at being independent of its original.

Applying the term to this primary import, the following process seems to take place in every act of perception. It implies, the existence and agency of an external cause; the effects of their agency upon the organ, inducing some particular change which cannot be more clearly denoted, than by the term *impression*, although this is merely a metaphor borrowed from a mechanical operation; some degree of sensation induced, which may be more or less pleasing, and which introduces to a knowledge of the exciting cause.

It is in consequence of this power of perception that we are rendered susceptible of pleasant or of painful sensations. Deprived of this faculty, no modification of the nervous system could communicate delight, nor could violence committed upon the corporeal frame, produce agonies; for although the term to *perceive* either pleasure or pain be not in common use, this deviation seems to arise from its being deemed too *feeble* an expression, to denote a very powerful and interesting sensation, in consequence of its being so frequently applied on subjects which are milder in their operations; but it is often expressive of an incipient sensation, that is of a pleasant, or unpleasant nature. Thus we say "I perceived an unpleasant heat and pulsation in the part, though it did not arise to absolute pain." "I *perceived* something agreeable, though I cannot say I *felt* much pleasure at the performance." (See Note E.)

It is moreover a singular fact, that the term perception is used by Philosophers to denote the *faculty* of perception, rather than any particular *act*. Thus we speak of perception in general, and of the organs of *perception;* but when we wish to express a particular exercise of this faculty, we prefer a more specific mode. We say I *saw* a man, or a tree, and not I *perceived*. I *heard* a noise, I *smelt* the odour of musk, I *felt*

pain, &c. and not I *perceived* a noise, odour, or pain: and when we use the word *perception*, connected with either of these sensations, it is to denote some particular circumstance attending it. When we say I *perceive* a tree, the expression is not so full and immediate, as I *see*; we expect some circumstance to follow relative to the object; either that the vision is feeble and imperfect, or that it has some peculiarity; as I *perceive* that it *grows*, is *fading* &c. We never say I *perceive* music; but I perceive that it is agreeable; I *perceive* you bear the pains you *feel*, with great patience, &c.

As by the exertion of various powers, the mind is capable of obtaining clear and distinct ideas of what passes within, as well as those immediately produced by external objects, thus is the word frequently employed, both in conversation, and by our best authors, to express the thoughts of this class also: and it is extended in this sense, to every subject presenting ideas to the mind, although it should be of an abstract nature. Thus we say I *perceive* your meaning; I *perceive* the force of your argument; I now *perceive* the difference between your hypothesis, and that of other philosophers.

Perception may be deemed the basis of every other mental operation; whether it relate, to an

object submitted to the senses, a principle discovered, or a proposition advanced. It is therefore absolutely necessary in every case, that the perception should be clear and distinct: without which the subject may not deserve the exertions of the mind, or its powers may be exerted to no valuable purpose. (See Note F.)

### 3. ATTENTION.

In simple perception, the mind seems to be passive; it is at least totally unconscious of its being active, at the instant. The effect produced by the efficient cause, may consist in an impression, too slight to call forth any particular exertion of the mental powers; but *Attention,* expresses the immediate direction of the mind towards any particular object or subject, which may have been perceived; or to the particular idea which may have been raised. Attention may be excited by the vividness of the impression, by the strength of a sensation, or quick apprehension of something important. Attention selects some few impressions, or some ideas, from the multitude that swiftly pass through the mind into oblivion, without awakening distinct perceptions, or withdrawing the mind from the objects by which it was occupied at the instant. By *perception* we are *empowered,* by *attention* we manifest a *disposition* to ob-

tain a knowledge of any subject. In *perception* the mind is acted upon *impulsively* by its cause, so that we cannot, at all times, avoid perceiving; in *attention* we *voluntarily* exert our mental powers, to obtain a certain portion of knowledge concerning it.

Attention produces the following mental exertions.

4. INQUIRY.

Inquiry denotes a particular examination of certain parts or circumstances, relative to the subject or object of our attention; such as its reality, mode of existence, qualities, relations and connections, influence and the evidences, on which these are founded.

5. OBSERVATION.

This word may, in many connections be considered as synonimous with the two preceding terms; in others it has a specific difference. It indicates an attention or inquiry which has some particular object in view, and some immediate purpose to answer. The Latin term from which it is borrowed, expresses an attention which is to *serve* some end. Hence it denotes an attention which is to produce a particular state of mind, correspondent

to the object of attention, such as being upon our guard, watching the conduct of others, paying reverence, obedience, and respect, where they are due. In conformity to the original signification of the term, to *observe*, with us, is not simply to *attend*, but to notice some important peculiarity, which produces a result, or makes a correspondent impression upon our minds. Thus we say that a person has not only been attentive to a subject, but he has made several pertinent *observations* upon it. We *observe* or watch the motions of an enemy, we *observe* days and seasons, we *observe* due decorum where we wish to shew respect; a subaltern *observes* the orders of his General; and a pious man *observes* the commands of heaven. Thus *Observation* implies an attention which is connected with some particular act or disposition of mind, according to the nature of the object to which our attention is paid. These instances and many others which might be mentioned, confirm the position of Professor Reid, that *Observation* respects the attention to things *external*.

### 6. CONSIDERATION.

The specific meaning of this word, seems to consist in its being more frequently applicable to the good or bad *consequences* of things, than either of the preceding: to think upon the possible *results*

of particular plans, conduct, or principles that may affect happiness. Consideration, therefore, relates more immediately to what has been received into the mind; not to things external, like attention and observation, but to some important ideas suggested by them. Thus we impute imprudent conduct to the want of *consideration*, more frequently than to the want of *attention*, or *observation*: and if any thing be proposed to which our concurrence is solicited, if we do not immediately acquiesce or refuse, we say, I will *consider* of it; that is, not only pay some attention to it, or observe what you say, but, I will weigh every circumstance that may serve as a motive for acceptance or refusal. The plural number is frequently used to express these reasons or motives exclusively. Thus we say, I was induced by *several considerations* to pursue such a line of conduct; to accept or reject the proposals made, &c. Here the cause is manifestly substituted for the effect; more explicit phraseology would have been, I was induced by those motives which presented themselves, in consequence of consideration.

*Remarks* are sometimes synonimous with observations. Thus we fay, He made several remarks or observations; but its specific difference consists in noticing, or marking again, such peculiarities, of any kind, which close attention has expo-

sed to view. Thus it is applicable to every thing that is extraordinary. When we speak of remarkable events, occurrences, conduct, we mean that there is something in them so unusual as to deserve being noted, or marked. This appearing to be the genuine signification of the word Remark, it does not express a distinct act of the mind, but a reiteration, as it were, of one or other of the preceding. It is not distinguished, like them, by its appropriate substantive, because it is obviously a certain species of observation. It is the professed object of the Critic to make proper *Remarks* upon subjects submitted to his attention. But whether it be the unfortunate lot of human compositions to possess more imperfections than excellencies, or whether Critics themselves are more disposed to censure than to commend, the word *Remarks* begins to have a suspicious appearance; and unfavourable Ideas are excited by it, when unaccompanied by an explanation. If any one should say, *He made his remarks upon it,* simply, we should suspect that they were rather of the *unpleasant* kind; to remove all suspicion, it is become necessary to add, *judicious, sensible, ingenious Remarks, &c.*

### 7. REFLECTION.

Mr. Locke applies this term to that act of the mind, which renders the influence of external ob-

jects, productive of the knowledge of them. In this sense, it is the commencement of *attention*. It signifies also to re-attend, re-consider or to *bend the mind again* to the particular subject. It is peculiarly applicable therefore to subjects demanding reiterated attention. Dr. Reid confines it to the attention paid to the subjects of our own consciousness. This may be the philosophical acceptation of the term, but not its exclusive meaning; for in its more common or popular usage, it is often preferred to express those comments or remarks which are the result of reflection. Like the preceding term, and from a similar cause, it is now more frequently applied to disagreeable remarks, than their opposites; to censure, rather than approbation. When it is said that one man reflected upon the conduct of another, we do not suppose it was with sentiments of *approbation*.

8. INVESTIGATION.

This term is chosen to express a minute inquiry; the deepest research possible into a subject, and every thing relative to it; its nature, origin, powers, relations, &c. It attempts to trace every vestage. Investigation seeks to remove difficulties, and to fathom depths. It examines patiently the respective evidences, where reports concerning a particular fact appear to be opposite and contra-

dictory. It seeks to discover latent truths; and attaches itself, with singular earnestness, to things which appear extraordinary, intricate, and interesting. The word is peculiarly applicable to subjects of a philosophical nature.

*Examination, Scrutiny, &c.* have a signification very similar. The former does not imply so deep a research, or that the subject is so intricate. It is chiefly applied to the collection of facts respecting a particular subject, whether these facts be more or less easy of access. *Scrutiny* is applied to a very minute examination in particular cases, where the minutiæ of facts are peculiarly requisite.

### 9. CONTEMPLATION.

Mr. Locke describes Contemplation to be "that power by which we keep the idea which is brought into the mind, for some time actually in view." But although his statement cannot be opposed, yet it is not sufficient to distinguish this act of the mind from several others. Similar powers may be exerted in attention, observation, investigation, &c. The word Contemplation, best expresses that specific operation of the mind, which confines its whole attention to particular objects of great and solemn importance. We have had frequent occasion to remark, that words borrowed from other languages, notwithstanding great deviations from their original import, yet retain a resemblance in

many striking particularities; and this is obviously the case with the word under consideration. We are told by Etymologists, that it is derived from *Templum* or temple; and that the places from which an extensive survey could be taken of surrounding objects, and which could be seen from every direction, were by the ancients denominated *temples*. Such places being consecrated to the worship of their Deities, were themselves revered. Hence a solemn and important connection was established between the place, the objects, and the spectator; who was consequently discriminated from common observers, in common cases, as a *contemplator*. Doubtless it is from such circumstances that the word *contemplation* still retains the idea of solemnity. It is never applied to things common or trivial. Whatever we contemplate is supposed to be of high importance. It implies a serious, steadfast, survey of objects peculiarly interesting to Well-being. This act of the mind does not imply that the subject, is obscure, confused, and intricate, though it admits the idea of *vastness*. In *Contemplation*, the mind is wholly engrossed and absorbed, in the consideration of great, important qualities and attributes of the object, or consequences from the subject contemplated.

May we not subjoin, that in *Contemplation*, the mind chiefly dwells upon subjects which are in

themselves peculiarly grateful, by their seeming to possess peculiar excellencies? For although it is not confined to such subjects exclusively, yet it is more frequently applied to them. The rich miser is said to *contemplate* his stores, as his supreme good. The sanguine projector anticipates by Contemplation, the beneficial effects of his schemes and plans; the *pious Man contemplates* the perfections of Deity, and the joys of a future state; while the *poor Man* is said to *reflect* upon his poverty; and the Indiscreet, to *reflect* on the effects of their folly, and not to *contemplate* them.

### 10. MEDITATION.

*Meditation* unites to attention, observation, and contemplation, the idea of a result, which it is in our own power to produce. We examine, investigate, and contemplate a subject, to become acquainted with its properties, or to be duly impressed by them; in *Meditation* we dwell upon the powers or properties discovered, until they exert an influence upon the mind, and dispose it to act according to the discoveries made, in order to follow some plan, execute the plan in the best manner, or call up resolutions to act. We *meditate* how we shall behave upon particular emergencies; what we shall say to enforce a particular object, or to vindicate ourselves from particular charges. A public speaker *contemplates* his sub-

ject, and *meditates* what he shall say upon it; in what manner it should be treated; how he shall arrange his ideas, and express them in the most acceptable, or most forcible manner. Thus *Meditation* implies self-collection and forethought, respecting the subject which we have been considering. This signification of the word is perfectly analogous with the primitive application of *meditatio, meditor* &c. by the ancient Romans.

To *ruminate* is a metaphorical expression, taken from those animals which ruminate or chew the cud: and it signifies reiterated meditation.

In consequence of these various acts and operations, the mind becomes enriched with knowledge; and according to the different points of light in which subjects have been considered, obscurities removed, and difficulties surmounted, we are said to *understand, comprehend,* and form *clear conceptions* of things. These expressions, though they all refer to a desirable state of mind after its researches, have their own particular and characteristic significations.

### 11. UNDERSTANDING.

This word expresses such a clear and decisive knowledge of a subject, or of some particular branch of it, as to supersede the necessity of far-

ther enquiry concerning it. The word is, however confined to facts, statements, propositions, relations, differences &c. which are proposed to the mind, without the medium of the senses. It is not said that we *understand* what is in reality an object of sense, or whatever we see, smell, taste, or feel; and yet in almost every language, the idea is conveyed of knowledge equally certain. In the Greek, εννοεω, επινοεω, literally signifies, what is lodged in the mind, or what is with it or upon it, and συνιημι a something which goes with us. In the Latin, *intelligo* is strictly speaking that which we *read* within ourselves: the English, and the Saxon from whence it is derived, intimates that the mind stands under the object, and views it from below. In the German and Dutch is a metaphorical *standing at a certain distance;* and thus it supposes the subject to *stand before* the mind, as if it were equally obvious to our senses. Thus they all express a perfect clearness of perception. Understanding refers to truths of every description which are not the immediate objects of sense. It penetrates into the nature of facts and existences, ascertains the evidences on which they are founded; has a perfect insight into plans and projects, degrees of probability or improbability, consequences, &c. This mental power we call the *Understanding;* and it is so necessary and so extensive in its operations, that by common consent it is used as a general

term to denote all the faculties of the mind. Thus a *Treatise on the Understanding*, is considered to be synonimous with a *Treatise on the Human Faculties* in general; and to be *void of Understanding* is a term of disgrace, which implies that the subject has neither the power nor the disposition to attend, reflect, conceive, or to employ any one faculty of the mind, in a consistent and proper manner.

### 12. COMPREHENSION.

This term expresses an extent of Understanding, which embraces or lays hold of various subjects, or various parts of the same subject, however numerous and complicated, in a clear and unembarrassed manner; so that a precise idea is formed of their natures, relations, influence, &c. Thus we say, I now *comprehend* the sense of the passage; I *comprehend* the whole drift of the argument; what you assert is beyond my *comprehension*.

### 13. CONCEPTION.

*Conception* also expresses clearness of ideas, or the mutual perception of every part belonging to a subject, in a conspicuous manner; but it is preferred in such cases, where there had been some confused and imperfect notions concerning the subject. It supposes that obscurities are finally

overcome. Consequently it is most applicable to the statement of facts, which appeared intricate or inconsistent on a more superficial view; and to complex propositions which were at first unintelligible. Thus it is the result and reward of peculiar attention and investigation. Strictly speaking, Conception refers to having clear ideas of a thing, whether it be a fact or not; in this it differs from Understanding which refers to facts alone. It differs from Comprehension, in its not being of so extensive an import, and also in its still leaving something to the imagination. When we say, I *conceive* your design or your meaning, it relates to a simple design or proposition, in preference to saying, I *comprehend;* and if there be the least doubt remaining, whether our notions or ideas be accurate, we say, I *conceive* your meaning, &c. and not I *understand.* Conception refers to the state of our own minds respecting the subject to be known; and concerning which we entertain some notions, which may be accurate or may be otherwise. Hence we say, he formed very erroneous *conceptions* of the matter; but he cannot form an erroneous *understanding.* It is sometimes said in common discourse, you understand me wrong; but the obvious meaning is, *you do not understand me.* The term is obviously a metaphor taken from the formation of a fœtus. It supposes an entire conformation as it were; such a complete arrange-

ment, I had almost said organization of ideas, concerning the subjects which engage our attention, that nothing remains imperfect or defective, in the *idea*, though it may not be correspondent with the *fact*. It is doubtless, in consequence of this idea of Conformation being annexed to the term Conception, that it is so peculiarly applicable to Designs and Plans that are in contemplation; and to works of Imagination, from which Understanding or Comprehension, simply considered, are excluded. An Architect must not only understand his business, or comprehend the various objects his employer may have in view, respecting an edifice to be built, but he must *conceive* in his own mind, a plan adapted to the object, before it can be accomplished in a convenient and commodious manner. The Painter must have *conceptions* of his subject more or less accurate, before he can sketch a design; and also the Poet, before he can execute his Poem, either to his own satisfaction or that of others. Hence it is that the term Conception is equally applicable to works of *Imagination* as to ideas of another class; and as requisite in the productions of genius, as in the knowledge of facts. Clear ideas are necessary in every subject, whether it respects the acquirement of knowledge or the execution of plans; and the phrase *clear conceptions*, expresses the ideas of each class with equal perspicuity, while *understanding and compre-*

*hension,* respect facts alone. The man of an inventive imagination and of fine conceptions must understand his subject, or his imagination would be extravagant, and his conceptions, distorted or imperfect; but it is not requisite for a person of sound understanding to possess those powers of conception, which are essential to the production of works of art. (See Note G.)

### 14. DISCERNMENT.

*Discernment* is that power of the understanding by which we know, that the object exists in a particular manner, and possesses certain properties and relations, by which it is distinguished from, or connected with other objects. Discernment traces differences in the midst of similitudes and points of resemblance in the midst of descripancy: it cannot be deceived by false appearances: it penetrates into character and motive, notwithstanding all the artifices of concealment: it detects falsehood and deceit, though clothed in the garb of truth and innocence: it discovers the just and proper connection of things, their immediate influence on each other, and the probable result: it perceives the nature of a cause from the effect produced: it knows when to admit of analogical reasoning, and when to reject it as fallacious and unsatisfactory. By the exercise of discernment, we perceive the reasonableness of many desires,

and the imprudence or absurdity of others; the evil that lies concealed under the appearance of good, and the happy consequences that may result from apparent evils. In short, it is by the exercise of this power that the mind is preserved from that confusion and embarrassment which is experienced by the *Inattentive* and *Undiscerning*, when a general mass of knowledge lies before them; without which simple Attention would remain useless and inert, or be rendered injurious by an erroneous application. It is alone by the power of Discernment, that the well disposed mind is enabled to act as it ought.

### 15. DISCRIMINATION.

*Discrimination* is that peculiar species of discernment, which enables us to make proper distinctions. It enters into minute peculiarities; discovers the smaller gradations, or shades of difference, in the same subject, or in those which have a close affinity with it; perceiving the nice, though just and necessary distinctions, which escape common observation. It is by this power of the mind, that Moralists and Metaphysicians are enabled to correct their own ideas, and detect the errors of subtile and fallacious reasoners, on subjects of an abstract nature. It is by this that natural and speculative philosophers, arrange the various branches of their knowledge, in a clear and lucid order, dividing,

and subdividing, bodies, or subjects which have various degrees of affinity with each other, into classes, orders, genus, species, varieties, and thus are enabled to obtain and convey to others, distinct ideas of those minute particulars, which in some circumstances and connections, manifest themselves to be distinctions of great importance.

That power of the mind by which we are able to discern and discriminate, is sometimes called its *judgment.* He that exercises a true discernment, and nice discrimination, is said to possess *judgment.* Although this word is adopted into the English language through the medium of the French, yet its origin is obviously from the Latin *Jus,* that which is *right,* in the most comprehensive sense of the term. Judgment always implies a *just* decision. We never call any one a *person of judgment* who decides *erroneously.* When it relates to accuracy of knowledge, simply, on complex subjects, or in minuter cases, it principally assumes the title of *discernment;* when it relates to subjects of *fancy* and *taste,* or is employed about the conduct of *moral agents,* it becomes more *sentimental* in our ideas. We say that a garden is laid out with *judgment* and *taste;* that is, the proprietor or his agent, has exerted his skill to hide defects, multiply beauties and conveniences, and augment pleasurable sensations. When we decide concerning the actions of

men, which are not indifferent to their own welfare or that of others, it becomes most respectable, and venerable, constituting the dignity of a *Judge*.

### 16. ABSTRACTION.

Is that singular power of the mind by which we are able to separate, in idea, qualities, and characteristic peculiarities, from the bodies and subjects to which they essentially belong; and consider them as if they possessed a distinct and independent existence. By means of this faculty, the boundaries of our knowledge are most astonishingly enlarged and extended; perpetual circumlocutions, and the repetition of tedious explanations, are avoided; and subjects imperceptible to our senses, are treated as realities, with a clearness and precision, as if they were rendered obvious to our bodily organs. Thus for example, by observing the emotions in the human frame, consequent upon certain states, and dispositions of the mind, we obtain as clear ideas of the *passions* and *affections*, as if they were *personified* to our sight. We are able to distinguish them into those which are beneficial, respectable, productive of happiness; and those which possess the opposite characters, as clearly, as if they were visible beings; and as decidedly, as if *Angels* and *Dæmons* were in action before us.

We are not a little astonished, that modern Chymists should be able to make accurate experiments upon invisible elements; should ascertain the quantity of hydrogen and oxygene which is necessary to constitute water, and the proportions of oxygene and azote which enter into the composition of vital air; that they should be able to pour elements, imperceptible to the eye, out of one vessel into another, with as much facility and precision, as if they were the grossest fluids: yet their ability is not so surprising as that manifested in metaphysics; where powers and properties, discovered by the sole exercise of the mind, without the aid of one physical experiment, are as obvious to the understanding, and as pliant to its operations, as a bar of iron is to the operations of fire, or to the smith's hammer! By examining into the particular circumstances of human conduct, the mind is as capable of distinguishing between an innocent purchase and a culpable theft; between accidental death, man-slaughter and murder; between the nature of justice and injustice, as it is to distinguish shapes, colours, magnitudes, &c. which strike the senses.

### 17. ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS.

This power of the mind is, in its mode of operation, directly opposite to the preceding; and it appears still more wonderful, because the mind is

not always as in the preceding, *intentionally* active. By virtue of this principle we are able to collect in one assemblage, an heterogeneous mass of knowledge, like rough or raw materials to be worked up as fancy or judgment shall direct. By means of this, an expression most insignificant in itself, the most trifling thought, or uninteresting subject, may introduce various other thoughts and subjects to the mind, in consequence of some slight or fanciful analogy supposed to subsist between them, however great the difference in every other respect, or opposite their natures in their most essential qualities. This power instantaneously introduces a kind of classification under some adventitious circumstance of time, place, slight similarities, striking discripancy, external or sensible qualities, shape, colour, origin, mode of introduction, tendency, previous connection, accidental combination, &c. &c. The influence of this principle is often directed, and facilitated by the particular state of the Cogitant, his moods, the vigorous and lively, or indolent and gloomy state of his mind, the prevalence of certain affections, or more impetuous passions. Thoughts apparently the most remote or discordant, compared with those which were occupying the attention, are thus brought forward, frequently unsolicited by any attempts to recollect, and in defiance of natural order or relation.

The influence of this principle is of boundless extent. It commences at the earliest period of life, gives a powerful and often a permanent bent to the disposition of an infant; it suggests crude ideas and fallacious inferences to children and illiterate persons, in their first attempt to reason; it affords amusement to active and playful minds in the composition of acrostics, anagrams, rebuses, alliterations, charades, rhyme, puns, in sallies of wit, in fable and allegory. It is the source of all metaphorical language, the soul of rhetoric, and the basis of analogical reasoning. It nourishes every affection and inflames every passion. It is the chief prompter to the recollection of ideas treasured up in the memory, and it preserves innumerable multitudes from sinking into perpetual oblivion. It expedites habit, both in the actions of human beings, and in all those animals which have been taught the imitative arts by the ingenuity of man.

It will be needless to enlarge upon this copious subject in the present connection; as the doctrine of association has been exemplified and illustrated upon former occasions. We gave instances of its power when we were contemplating the relation which subsists between the passions and affections; and when we treated of associated ideas and affections, as having a place among the causes of diversities in our predilections.* (See Note H.)

* See Phil. T. Pt. II. C. I. Ob. III. & C, 2 Sec. 13.

18. REASON.

The term *Reason,* with its derivatives and compounds, is used in various senses in different connections. We shall principally consider it in that sense, by which the mental faculties are more immediately distinguished from those which have already been mentioned. By reason, the reasoning powers, the rational faculty, we are to understand in this place, the capacity to draw inferences from facts, or propositions established or admitted. Perception, attention, investigation, &c. do not necessarily imply this power; and they are seldom used in a sense which fully expresses it. They refer to *facts* simply, and to a right *understanding* of the particular qualities, or minuter circumstances which relate to them. These are the *basis* of reasoning. The knowledge of facts enables us to form certain propositions, from which various deductions or inferences may be drawn. The mind may thus be enriched with an infinitude of truths, as indubitable as the facts upon which they are established; truths, that by exciting proper dispositions and directing conduct, may more immediately contribute to the production of happiness.

Every fact rendered obvious to our senses, or that is received into the mind as an abstract truth, possesses powers and attributes, which in certain

connections, must be productive of results more or less beneficial or pernicious in their tendency. It is the immediate province of the reasoning faculty to discover these, in order that the determination of the mind may be directed towards its proper object. It is by reasoning that we are enabled to judge of causes from their effects, and also to discern in what connections these effects may themselves become important causes. By virtue of this power we are qualified to argue, that in cases perfectly similar, the issue will be the same; and to infer from the known properties of bodies, what will be the result of the application of these properties to particular cases. It infers from obvious propensities, connected with situation and circumstances, what will be the conduct and characters of individuals; and from the knowledge of characters, it decides concerning the degree of credit which is due to their testimony. The preceding powers of the mind, which have been enumerated, are confined to the discovery of existencies, powers, relations; *reason* suggests what may be their future influence in cases where they have not been tried. It is by reason, founded on observation or experience, that we acquire a conviction that certain dispositions or actions will prove beneficial or injurious; that certain stations will be advantageous or the reverse. It is by reasoning that we determine concerning the truth of

historical events, and form our opinions of the characters and motives of distinguished agents. Thus it not only increases our knowledge, much beyond the most extensive observations of individuals, or the most ample communications from others, but it becomes more immediately conversant with the good or pernicious tendency of states, powers, operations, &c.

It would be foreign from our purpose to state the various ways in which these reasoning powers are exercised, or those modifications of argument by which the legitimate conclusion is obtained. To develope these is the peculiar province of logic; a science which professedly teaches the art of reasoning.

The extensive importance of this faculty is self-apparent. Its utility is experienced every day of our lives; for every resolution we form, and every step we take, is the result of an inference. This renders it such a distinguished faculty of the human mind, that *reason*, like the term *understanding*, is often used to express all its intellectual powers. Thus when we say that a man is a *reasonable being*, that he is a *rational creature*, we mean, not only, that he is capable of argumentation, or of drawing inferences from certain premises, or even that he

is capable of acting rationally, but that he possesses every other power in a superior degree.

Reason being the basis of justice, the adjectives *reasonable,* and *unreasonable,* are frequently used in a *moral* sense: the first expressing the virtues of equity and moderation; the other, their opposites. Thus we say of a man who is *moderate,* that he is *reasonable* in his demands or expectations; if he require more than can be justified by any moral principle, that he is *extravagant* and *unreasonable.*

The capacity of discovering truths being the distinguishing characteristic of rationality, renders the term applicable to the human species only. The power of reasoning is so feeble and circumscribed in the lower order of animals, that they are not deemed *worthy* of the epithet: while on the other hand, more exalted beings are placed in our estimation *above* the epithet. We speak of *intelligent* agents, and superior *intelligences,* but we never term them *rational* beings. To apply the word to *Angels,* would have a ludicrous effect; to apply it to the great Source of Reason would be profane. To *Deity* we ascribe *Intuition;* and we suppose that the intellectual powers of the higher orders, in the scale of created beings, approach to intuition; at least that they are infinitely

too quick and penetrating, to require that tedious process to which we are compelled to submit, in our pursuits after knowledge. Thus it is that rationality is ascribed to man alone.

### 19. JUDGMENT.

*Judgment,* considered as distinct from every other power which has been examined, may be deemed the final sentence pronounced by our minds, in consequence of the evidence adduced by the exercise of our reason. The province of Attention, Observation, Investigation, Discrimination, &c. is to obtain an accurate knowledge, of the facts submitted to our consideration. *Reasoning* is that process, by which we attempt to acquire a knowledge of other truths, deducible from these. *Judgment* is the issue and termination of that process. It relates therefore to some *rule* or *law,* that has been regarded or violated; to some end proposed, which has been successfully or unsuccessfully terminated; and to plans, schemes and maxims, which are established as tests of conduct and dispositions; thus it is peculiarly applicable to human agency. In judgment the powers of the mind sit as it were as umpires, and pronounce concerning truth and error, truth and falsehood, propriety and impropriety, aptitude and inaptitude, merit and demerit. This is called Judgment, by way of emi-

nence; of which discernment and discrimination are species, and which appear to be inferior, because they are exercised about subjects of inferior importance. Altho' every man of sound judgement must have the power of discriminating, in cases which are particularly intricate and perplexed, yet every act of discrimination is not an act of the judgment of which we are now speaking. Attention and observation may discover a diversity of qualities in objects, and discriminate the peculiarities of each, without making any decision respecting their aptitude or inaptitude to particular purposes. We may behold a great diversity in the conduct of individuals, without trying them by any law of interest, propriety, or rectitude, and without passing sentence upon their conduct and character. According to these distinctions a person may possess the power of ratiocination to a considerable degree, and yet be deficient in judgment. By false logic, by arguing from arbitrary assumptions, by drawing hasty conclusions from imperfect analogies, by considering subordinates as principals, and principals as subordinate, &c; a person may argue shrewdly, often perplex others, and sometimes himself, which could not be the case, if the judgement were clear and accurate. These ideas will be illustrated and confirmed by our adverting to the manner in which a judicial process is frequently conducted. Great extent of learning, much in-

genuity may be employed, and designedly employed, with a view to *mislead the judgment*; whose office it is to decide concerning the truth, where truth is propriety, wisdom, equity. (See Note I.)

By tracing the progress of the human intellects in the acquisition of knowledge, we observe gradations which are curious as well as most interesting. Its commencement consists in a simple *idea*, or thought impressed, which is connected with simple *perception*. This solicits *attention*, and according to its various degrees of importance, disposes to *observation, consideration, investigation, contemplation, meditation, reflection*. These eager, and voluntary operations of the mind, are absolutely necessary, in order to form *clear conceptions, right understanding*, an enlarged *comprehension* of some subjects, and nice *discernment* and accurate *discriminations* concerning others; and these acquisitions enable us to *abstract* essential qualities in our minds, from the subjects in which they are seated, to assemble others in new combinations, to *reason*, or draw important inferences, and finally to *judge* or decide, concerning their excellencies or defects, their good or bad tendencies, their merits or demerits. Such are the powers which amply compensate for that ignorance in which we were born! By these we are enabled to steer our course through the numberless errors, to which inexperience may

expose us, and surmount every difficulty and embarrassment, in search after important, and influential truths!

## SECT. II.

### *On the different states of the Mind respecting the acquisition of knowledge.*

THE view we have taken of the various powers and operations of the mind, respecting the acquisition of knowledge, manifests that the portion of it obtained by the first impression of objects upon the senses, or by superficial observation, is comparatively small. Various degrees of attention are necessary, as the subject is more or less obvious, more or less complex. Various circumstances intervene which obscure the truth or create embarrassments concerning it. These peculiarities occasion different states of mind, and produce different degrees of acquiescence or opposition. Some facts are self-apparent. They need only to be exhibited, or stated, to be received without hesitation: Some require a certain degree of consideration, before assent can be given: Some are so blended with error, that the nicest powers of discernment are required to distinguish the one from the other. Some errors appear, in certain circumstances, so similar to truth, that we are in danger

of being deceived by them; and some truths wear so suspicious an aspect, that we are disposed to reject them. Experience teaches us that events take place, notwithstanding strong appearance of a contrary issue; and also that our rational expectations have been as frequently disappointed.

Hence arise two classes of ideas, the one referring to the state of the subject itself, the other to the state of our minds concerning it.

The state of the subject relates to its being *possible, impossible, probable, improbable, credible,* or *incredible*; that of our minds, to the kind or degree of impression made, in consequence of the nature and degree of evidence they appear to possess.

*Possible* implies that, although many arguments present themselves against the existence of any particular fact, the truth of a proposition, or the success of a plan, yet there is no absurdity or absolute contradiction in supposing, that the fact, or proposition affirmed may be true, or that the plan may succeed. Nothing is impossible, which does not involve an obvious contradiction to some incontestible principle.

In whatever is thought *probable,* we admit that there is a considerable degree of evidence in

favor of its reality, or power of being realized; though the evidence may not be complete; or some difficulties still remain which cannot be fully explained. *Improbable* is when the balance of evidence appears to be against the proposition advanced.

*Credible* and *incredible*, not only refer to the state of the subject in question, but to the degree of influence, it should have upon our minds. In the first, we suppose, that although the evidence be not complete, it ought to have a certain degree of influence; the other considers the objections so strong that the proposition ought not to be admitted.

This brings us to the other class, respecting the state of our minds, according to the degrees of evidence for, or against; and this is expressed by appropriate terms, enabling us to describe the precise degree of acceptance any fact or proposition may have obtained. Of such terms the following are the principle.

It has already been observed that, the most simple impression made upon the mind, in consequence of its adverting to any particular object of thought, is generally distinguished by the term *Idea*. By this term therefore we mean not to ex-

press either the truth or falsehood, of the subject of thought, or the sense of our minds concerning it, or to describe the *efficient causes* of any particular affection of the brain, but simply that distinct impression which engages the mind at the instant it is made, without reference to any other circumstance concerning it.

*Apprehension,* sometimes expresses the idea of our beginning to understand a subject; sometimes it is expressive of expectancy. It was formerly used by metaphysicians to denote what they termed the third act of the mind; though it has been proved to be inadequate to the purpose. In its general application it has something uncertain, suspicious, unpleasant attached to it. Thus we say, "I am not certain, but I apprehend you are in an *error,* not that you have discovered the *truth.* He was apprehensive of *danger;* or I had very *painful* apprehensions concerning a particular event, &c." (See Note C.)

Thus it does not express either the state of the mind, or its exertions, in the pursuit or possession of real knowledge, so much as its hovering over some disagreeable circumstance, concerning which we entertain suspicions that they may or may not be true. We have accordingly given it a place in the present connection.

*Notion,* sometimes expresses an idea simply, but generally speaking it expresses something more. It often denotes *opinion,* or *sentiment* that we are beginning to form; as "I have some *notion* that such an event will take place." Sometimes it is synonimous with clear conceptions.—"I begin now to have *a right notion* of the subject;" or "I have but *an imperfect notion* of it." This word is preferred when we entertain any suspicions concerning the opinions of another; it is deemed most expressive of *whimsical* and *unfounded* ideas. We say, these are *mere notions* of the brain, and not ideas of the brain:—They are very *extravagant notions;* and if an individual should form any visionary project, we exclaim, it is *a notion of his own.* (See Note D.)

So many opportunities present themselves of using the word with these marks of censure, that it begins to be in disgrace; and it is seldom applied to an opinion or sentiment that meets with our cordial approbation.

It is for these reasons that we have excluded this term, as well as the preceding, from the connection which more immediately refers to the acquisition of real knowledge.

*Opinion* generally implies more than a simple notion. It professes to be the result of enquiry,

and to be founded on some rational principles. It is preferred to express sentiments which have acquired a degree of stability, and which have been embraced by numbers. *Popular opinions* is a more common expression than popular *notions,* or popular *sentiments.* Thus we say that a person has very *odd* notions, and the public *opinion* is entirely against him; and not that he has odd *opinions* but that the general *notions* are against him.

*Sentiment,* is an opinion which has a close connection with moral and religious subjects. When we say, "he is a man of just sentiments," we refer to mental worth, as well as accuracy of opinion. We give our *opinion* of plans and projects, and form our *sentiments* of character and disposition. *Sentimental* writing is expressive of refined morals; and we form exalted *sentiments* of Deity, not *opinions.* The word is derived from a sense of feeling, and in most modern languages it implies a mental sensation. Thus it respects opinions that are connected with a peculiar sensation of a pleasing or displeasing nature. Accordingly it is always accompanied with some degree of predilection or aversion, approbation or disapprobation, and thus indicates that the affections are engaged. These peculiarities render the term most applicable to conduct, dispositions and character, in which we perceive a tendency to good or evil. "He is a man

*of excellent Sentiments;*" that is, he possesses principles and dispositions, that dispose him to worthy actions.

*Conjecture.* This expresses a degree of belief founded upon slight evidences. It ventures upon an opinion, confessedly without being fully authorized. Having ascertained certain facts, we begin to *form conjectures* concerning some circumstances connected with them. This principle may, when indiscreetly adopted, be productive of many extravagances. It may prompt us to build favorite hypotheses upon very weak foundations, and to ascribe the conduct of others to wrong motives, according to our prejudices for or against them. When indulged with discretion, a Conjecture affords some relief to the mind from the inquietudes of ignorance and uncertainty. It provides a temporary substitute for knowledge; and it frequently suggests ideas which lead to the discovery of truth.

*Doubt* relates to what is not deemed to possess proofs sufficient to render it worthy of belief. It admits that there is a certain degree of evidence respecting a fact or a proposition; but it implies that the evidences of an opposite tendency are more predominant. Thus it respects the *Incredible.*

*Hesitation* supposes that the balance is so even, that the mind does not know what to chuse, or which consideration ought to preponderate. It is the fluctuation of the mind in critical cases, previously to its taking a decided part. Hesitation may relate either to belief, or conduct.

*Belief* expresses the state of mind relative to what are termed *probabilities*. It indicates the assent of the mind to certain facts or propositions. It allows that the subject may be attended with difficulties, but contends that the preponderance of evidence requires that they should be embraced as truths.

*Disbelief* expresses the rejection of some opinion or proposition which is suggested as an article proper to be credited; and which of consequence is thought by others worthy of being embraced.

*Unbelief* chiefly respects religious subjects. This is sometimes a rejection of sentiments which others receive as articles of religious faith; and sometimes it is applied to the doubtful state of the mind itself, respecting the due degree of influence which received truths ought to have upon it.

*Unbelief* in articles which are deemed of the utmost importance in religion by its professors,

is stigmatized by the title of *Infidelity*. Thus Christians apply the term to those, who either disbelieve the Being of a God, or reject christianity: while Christians are deemed Infidels by the disciples of Mahomet, because they reject the doctrines of that Prophet.

*Credulity* is placing a much greater confidence in the assertions, promises, statement and representations of others, than the nature of the evidence will justify.

*Incredulity* is not confined to the negative of the preceding, but expresses the contrary extreme. It implies that assent is withheld improperly, and in opposition to the evidence which ought to preponderate.

*Scepticism* is universal Doubt. It is an habitual suspension of all belief. It listens to no arguments which have not a tendency to excite doubts. It seems to perceive a repulsive force in every fact, as often as the mind has the least disposition to approach it. Universal Scepticism is a mental Chaos, where innumerable ideas are in perpetual motion, without the capacity of discovering any basis; or power of arranging themselves in any kind of order.

*Conviction* is the contrary. It is a full assent of mind to the truths proposed. It has surmounted

every doubt and difficulty; and admits the proposed fact in all its force.

The progress which we have made in knowledge; our deficiencies; the proper or improper use we make of it, are also accurately discriminated by appropriate terms. Thus we use the word

*Knowledge* generically, to express the state of mind which relates to the acquirement of facts, perception and conviction of truths of various kinds, whether they respect existence, modes of existence, attributes, relations, &c. This constitutes the basis of successful pursuits, and effectual rules for proper conduct. The opposite to this knowledge we distinguish by the term *Ignorance.*

*Ignorance* expresses the absence of knowledge, a vacant mind, a defect of intellectual energy, either from indolence and indifference, or from being deprived of those means and objects which are necessary to impress perception, awaken attention, and call forth into action the other mental powers.

*Error.* By Error we understand an imperfect attempt at some specific knowledge. It supposes that the intellectual powers are in exercise, and

that some degree of knowledge has been obtained; but it is indicative of a defect either in knowledge or judgment. It evinces that information is incomplete; or that there is a want of right discernment, a just discrimination, to apply the knowledge acquired to the successful investigation of some latent truth. Hence it sometimes believes without sufficient evidence, at others it doubts where it ought to believe. In reasoning, it assumes false principles, or draws wrong conclusions from those admitted. Error may attempt to walk in the right path, and too often boasts that she has discovered it, but is soon lost and bewildered, like a stranger in a dark and dreary region, seduced by the imperfect glimmerings of light.

*Wisdom.* According to its etymology, this word is synonimous with knowledge, in its common application it often expresses a sound judgement or just discernment : but its distinguishing characteristic is, that it best expresses the *right application of knowledge.* A *Wise Man* is not contented with the accumulation of knowledge, either for self-gratification or for vanity; he will attend to its *uses.* Wisdom adapts means to ends, surmounts difficulties, escapes dangers, concerts and executes plans productive of prosperity and happiness. The man who possesses ample means, which may have been acquired, by the intense

application of his mental powers, without attempting to apply them to some valuable purpose, may be admired for his *learning*, but not for his *wisdom*.

*Folly* is the reverse of Wisdom. It consists in not applying, or in applying to an evil purpose, that portion of knowledge we may have acquired. It permits favorable opportunities to escape unimproved. Where it is active, it is active Error, without deriving an excuse from Ignorance. It is most presumptuous where Wisdom is the most circumspect, and is sure to miss the aim which Wisdom alone can obtain.

*Craft, Cunning, Artifice,* express the application of superior knowledge, to deceive the unwary and inexperienced, for unjust, mean and unworthy purposes.

All these terms had originally a good import, implying power, knowledge, skill, but the frequent abuse of these to selfish views, has finally brought the terms into disgrace, and they are now almost universally applied to some species of deceit or treachery.

*Simplicity* is the contrary extreme. So far from designing evil, it scarcely knows that evil exists. Though it may, in reality, possess more knowledge

than cunning or artifice, yet its ignorance of mankind, and its unsuspicious temper frequently renders it their dupe. There is a simplicity which indicates native good sense, connected with a degree of ignorance which surprises. It is observable in the young and inexperienced, whose minds are active, and dispositions amiable, but whose want of information, betrays them into erroneous and ludicrous opinions. They substitute nature for art, in cases where art has lost sight of nature; and they expect to find those principles and rules of conduct in the more refined state of society, which are only to be found in the simplest. It is guilty of ludicrous offences against the laws of custom, or the etiquettes of fashion, although by its reasoning wrong, according to prevailing ideas, it frequently evinces just and accurate conceptions of what is right. This kind of simplicity is distinguished by the name of naivité. (See Note K.)

If an apology should be expected from any of my readers, for dwelling so long upon these minute distinctions, I submit the following to their consideration; should any of these distinctions prove upon examination to be unfounded, the author will have to regret that he has wasted the smallest portion of their time, and so much of his own, in searching after distinctions which have no

existence; or should inaccuracies be detected in any of the above explanations and definitions, notwithstanding the pains he has taken to avoid them, he will hope that the light which may have been cast upon other terms investigated, will atone for that error; but he strenuously contends that where distinctions exist, it is a duty incumbent upon those who profess to study the operations of the human mind, to investigate and state them with all possible precision. Such differences do not exist in vain; and the numberless embarrassments to which philosophy has been exposed by inattention to minute distinctions, is a full indication of their importance.

## CHAP. II.

## MEMORY.

THE powers hitherto enumerated relate to the acquisition of knowledge, and to the different states of mind produced by the various degrees of evidence with which the subjects of knowledge are surrounded. Memory is that wonderful power by which we are able to retain or recollect, the portion of knowledge we may have acquired, by any of the preceding exercises of the mind. It is by Memory that the knowledge possessed through the medium of the senses does not escape, and sink into oblivion, when the efficient cause ceases

to act; and that the knowledge of facts is possessed, with an accuracy and precision, which enable us to distinguish them from the capricious phantoms of the brain. We are also enabled by the use of this faculty, to recollect those conceptions which had been formed, or ideas entertained upon various subjects, even of the most abstract nature; as the results of observation, reflection, meditation, &c. or the deductions of reason; to compare these with the present train of ideas, appreciate their importance, correct their defects, and apply them to subjects immediately under consideration. It is by virtue of this power that the faculty of discrimination may have a reference to the *past*, as well as be employed about the objects before us; and that the various facts, with their numerous consequences, which our former experience, observation, and reading had treasured up, become the directers of our present or future conduct; and exert all the power which is exerted by present objects.

Memory includes the powers of *Retention*, and of *intentional* or *accidental recollection*. By the first, we deposit and preserve in the seat of memory those facts, conceptions, and ideas which have been impressed on, or suggested to the mind, in such a manner, that although they be not constantly present to the perception, we have the ability to recal them at particular seasons, or upon particular exigencies. Whatever system theoretic

philosophers may adopt to explain the cause of reminiscence, they must unite in admitting, that in every instance of mental impression, some particular modification of the vivified brain has taken place, relative to the particular object which has been presented to our notice; in consequence of this we *know* that it had occupied the mind at a former period; for upon its subsequent appearance, it is recognized as an *acquaintance*, and not viewed in the light of a *stranger*. Although many years may have elapsed, without our becoming conscious that the idea had been received into the mind, or the impression had been made, some particular incident may recal it to our remembrance, and demonstrate that it has not been completely obliterated.

*Recollection* is that power of the mind by which we call forth to our mental *perception*, some portion of that knowledge which memory has been accumulating. This may be effected by a direct effort of the mind. We run over a number of ideas, which have a relation to the subject, and which bear some resemblance to the one required, until we discover that which was the specific object of our research. At other times, the latent idea presents itself unexpectedly, in consequence of those more capricious exertions of the associating power which has already been considered: by these exer-

tions the aids to recollection *are infinitely multiplied:* a variety of thoughts pass in review, and we are enabled to select those which are most appropriate to the occasion. These facts are also strikingly illustrated, by the impulse of any particular passion or strong affection, which revives numberless mental impressions; arousing them as it were from their latent state, and bringing them into vigorous action. The passion becomes, if I may thus express myself, the rallying point around which the multitudes press, which have any connection with the particular state of mind, in order to encourage, vindicate, excite, deter, expostulate, persuade &c. according to the nature of the passion and the object in contemplation.

The above concise view of the nature of reminiscence, manifests it to be the connecting medium between the past and the present, enabling us also to form plans for the future; and it gives to things absent and remote, all the influence of facts newly discovered, or newly placed before us.

## CHAP. III.

### IMAGINATION.

BY *Imagination* we understand a *creating power* possessed by the mind, enabling it to form numberless ideas which are not the immediate result of external impressions, or of recollection: and it is thus distinguished from *perception,* and *memory*. The employment of every other power which we have mentioned, has for its professed object the acquisition of knowledge; but this object is not an essential characteristic of the imagination. Many of those mental exertions are also occupied with the thoughts of *others:* and they relate to real or supposed facts, which exist, and would have existed, if our thoughts had not been employed about them. By the *Imagination,* every man *creates* thoughts; they are entirely *his own:* and they might never have existed had they not occurred to the individual mind. It is by the force of Imagination that certain images, phantoms and conceits, frequently present themselves, although they may not be authorized by reason, nor have any prototype in nature. These sometimes die away, like the visions of the night; answering no permanent purpose, their impression is soon ef-

faced; sometimes they may suggest ideas which farther attention discovers to be important, or which lead to correspondent experiments, and terminate in giving shapes and forms to unwrought materials; or, amidst the wildness of conjecture, they often furnish hints, which the judgment knows how to improve into useful plans, and consistent theories.

Many circumstances contribute to the production of ideas of this class; but there are none more operative than the *associating* principle, and the *passions* and strong *affections* of the mind. By virtue of associations which proceed from supposed resemblances, discripancies, contrarieties, the slightest coincidence of time, place, situation, or from corporeal sensations, particular moods, &c. innummerable ideas of a novel nature are perpetually suggested to the mind.

The imagination is sometimes *productive* of passion; and, as we remarked upon a former occasion, it seems to constitute the difference between a *passion* and an *affection*. Hence it is that our sanguine hopes, the ecstacies of joy, violence of anger, the depth of sorrow, and the agonies of fear, so frequently proceed from causes which are in themselves of the most trivial nature. It was the imagination that gave instantaneous force to sudden and unexpected events, by which our stronger passions

were excited, before we had leisure to examine the nature of the subject, or the degrees of its importance; or before the powers of discernment were operative in detecting the error. On the other hand, a *Passion*, or a strong *Affection*, when excited, gives existence to a flow of ideas; many of which may be perfectly novel, are correspondent to the nature of the passion, increase its violence, and inspire a disposition to justify its extravagances.

Such is the influence and energy of this wonderful faculty, that, in vigorous minds, the imagination alone, without the aid of any real incident or external cause, is able to produce all the effects of the most interesting realities, and to excite every emotion to which human nature is subjected; so that the mind captivated by its delusions, shall seriously grieve at fictitious distress, cordially rejoice at supposed triumphs, feel horrors at the wild fancies of the brain, become indignant at a baseness which was never practised, elevated at ideal sublimiry, and enjoy the force of ridicule at the exposure of follies, that had no existence. The strong attachments of all ages to the effusions of poetry and to theatrical representations; and the torrent of novels which inundate the present age, illustrate, and evince the truth of the above remark. (See Note L.)

The exercise of every other faculty requires a certain degree of calmness and sedateness of disposition. The mind *collects* itself in acts of attention, observation, investigation, &c. and carefully detaches the subject, upon which it is engaged, from every thing that is foreign. The imagination, uncontrolled by any other power, admits every idea presenting itself, without distinction. Hence it forms the most heterogeneous and extravagant combinations of thought; which the mind sometimes mistakes for realities, being totally unconscious of their incongruity and absurdity. Of this fact the wild extravagances, observable in dreams, when the reasoning faculty is dormant, and the incoherences uttered by persons in a delirium, or in a state of insanity, furnish innumerable instances. In cases of this kind, the imagination is awake and lively, running over a multitude of ideas, without the exertion of the discerning and discriminating powers of the mind, either to select, or to combine with judgment, for some consistent purpose.

In persons the most collected, whose faculties are in the most rational and salutary exercise, this faculty is perpetually operative, although its operations may not be sufficiently energetic to attract particular notice. The imagination first starts the ideas which Philosophy itself explores, selects, di-

gests, and converts into science. Every conjecture is a thought *created* by the mind, and as often as conjectural inferences are inconclusive, they are the deceptions of the imagination: for every conjecture is a novel thought formed by the mind itself, neither received from without, nor having any prototype in nature; and it demands the aid of farther researches, or of experiments, to stamp it into a *fact*, and rescue it from the imputation of being merely imaginary. The operations of Imagination are the precursors of every work of art, whether it be of utility, fashion, or taste. The idea is first formed, that certain arrangements and combinations of the powers and properties observable in bodies, or of certain conceptions of the mind, will be productive of some particular effect either of advantage or pleasure; the mind is encouraged to make exertions in order to prove the validity of the primitive idea: and in consequence of such exertions, other ideas or conceptions are suggested, correspondent to the nature of the object, until the design is accomplished.

It was these facts which iduced us to observe, upon a former occasion, that the term *conception* is frequently applied to the Imagination, or rather to a certain precision in our ideas concerning the subject, which is previously requisite in every promising effort to give these ideas a consistency, and render them efficacious. Every work of art was, at

its commencement, a creature of the Imagination; and the perfection of this work depends upon the clearness of our conceptions of its various parts, and of their designed effects before, or during the progress of the execution; that is, upon a mental perception of the aptitude of certain ideas, conformations, combinations, &c. which may suggest themselves for adoption, and the inaptitude of others which are to be rejected. Where the conceptions are inaccurate, the production will be incomplete and unpleasing.

The Imagination enters also into the plans and expectancies of every day and every hour. In our anticipations of futurity, it is frequently employed upon the various circumstances that are expected to arrive, according to particular incidents which may have taken place, or according to the usual course of things. Whether we consider the probable events of to-morrow, as the continuation of a train that has taken place to-day, or as the issue of plans and determinations to which we cannot foresee an impediment, we still model and fashion them according to our own fancy; and although the great outlines may be conformable to our expectations, yet these were in reality no other than probable *conjectures*; and these are never accomplished completely accordingto the ideas previously formed.

The above statement indicates that the Imagination has various degrees of vigor, which are marked by correspondent epithets. In its mildest and most temperate exertions, it is occupied in forming *conjectures, apprehensions, suspicions, notions, opinions,* which require the application of some other faculty to ascertain whether they be genuine or fallacious. *Conceptions* may refer, as we have already remarked, either to clear ideas formed of the various subjects of knowledge introduced to the mind, or to its own suggestions. *Conceits,* although originally synonimous, are now degenerated into false, frivolous, abortive conceptions. *Phantoms* express those stronger images formed by a heated Imagination, by which the mind itself may be deceived, in supposing them to be realities; but these strong Images under the direction of the judgment, are the richest materials for the sublimities of Genius. *Fancy,* although derived from the former term, is chiefly employed to express the lively, playful ideas by which the mind is principally *amused.*

Although the range of the imagination be so extensive, yet its boldest and most eccentric flights are in conformity to those impressions which real objects had made upon the brain. It cannot invent or suggest ideas, which have not some rela-

tion to facts; which are totally detached from the existences, powers, and properties submitted to our senses; or from the articles of knowledge acquired by the understanding. These we are able to combine into diversities that are infinite, and to form into the most incongruous shapes and extravagant conceptions; but the greatest excesses consist in the incoherence of their connections and arrangements, or in the misapplication of those materials which a well-regulated imagination is able to apply to admirable uses.

If the above observations be admitted they will indicate the precise office of the imagination. It is not destined to act alone. Without direction, it is wild, extravagant, and pernicious. But it is destined to suggest an infinitude of ideas from which the calmer faculties may make a due selection, and which they may render applicable to the most important purposes. Without its creative powers, all human knowledge would be confined to a few perceptions alone, impressed upon the mind by the medium of the corporeal organs, and these perceptions could only arise from the most obvious and striking properties of bodies; the organs not receiving aid from instruments, in the formation of which the imagination is concerned, their perceptions would be few and inaccurate; and we should of consequence be detained upon a level with inferior beings; not an exertion could be made, beyond what relates

to the lowest stage of simple existence. Thus it is the imagination which furnishes the most ample materials; but it is the office of reason and judgment to combine and shape them into something productive of good.

This combination of the reasoning and discriminating powers, with the thoughts suggested by the imagination, constitutes Genius; whose characteristic it is to discover interesting truths or to form pleasing, or useful combinations; that is, to enlarge our sphere of knowledge by investigating or developing important facts, which could never have been known, without its exertions; to multiply the conveniences and accommodations of life by ingenious inventions; and to augment our enjoyment by various combinations of thought, which call forth pleasing and dignified emotions, or charm by the lively and interesting figures presented to the mind.

These exertions of the human faculties are always considered as the most exalted, and the most wonderful. High respectability is attached to a proper use of the preceding faculties. A quick *perception*, accurate *discrimination*, just *judgment*, are valued as excellencies. Whoever duly exercises the mental powers, either in the acquisition

of knowledge, or the application of it to proper purposes, is respected as a man of *Capacity*, of *Abilities*, as possessing *Talents;* that is, as cultivating and improving his mental treasures. But the superiority of men of genius, in the general estimation, is marked by the very epithet itself. Genius was originally deemed *supernatural*. The happy possessor was supposed to hold converse with a superior order of Beings; and it was thought that the *Genii* themselves, immediately inspired him with his supereminent powers.

The operations of genius are consequently threefold. They are observable in every new discovery, or improvement in the sciences; in all the works of art; and in the agreeable fancies of the brain. But, in each department, the relative proportions between the imagination and the calmer faculties, are very different.

In the pursuit of Science, *fancy* is the least apparent, but the reasoning and discriminating powers are most conspicuous. In consequence of a portion of knowledge, acquired by the exercise of the preceding faculties, some conception is formed in the mind, distinct from the knowledge obtained. This at first is a conjecture, an opinion, or a conjectural inference, which excites a disposition for farther investigation. An eagerness is produced to bring conjectures, opinions, and inferences, to the test, and to be assured of their truth, where

truth appears highly important in itself, or introductory to more extensive knowledge. Truths being once ascertained, become to the philosophic mind the basis of other conjectures, other pursuits, other experiments and researches; until Humanity itself seems to soar above its nature, and to dwell among beings of a superior order. In occupations of this kind, Fancy, instead of being courted, is shunned and dreaded, as a seducer into the paths of error. Every conjecture is suspected, until it has been scrutinized; and it is possible that the philosopher himself, though in the pursuit of what is just and true, may not be sufficiently grateful to that imagination which afforded essential aid to all his investigations. A Genius of this description is usually honoured with the epithets of *deep, penetrating, and profound.*

The *Inventive* faculties are chiefly employed in the perception, and adaptation of powers and properties inherent in bodies, to certain purposes of utility, convenience or amusement. The mind perceiving that every body existent has its properties, by which it is discriminated from surrounding bodies, and that wherever a property exists, it may in some connections be productive of beneficial effects, it is conjectured that these may be combined for some useful object. For this purpose the artist employs his genius in making laudable

attempts; and to the successful exertions of his powers, are we indebted for those numberless aids which place us above the animal creation; which assist the philosopher in his attempts to extend the boundaries of knowledge, supply the various wants of the human species, mitigate and remove many of the evils to which the ignorant and uncultivated are exposed, augment our conveniences, and diversify our amusements. It is observable that in an inventive genius, imagination and discernment are equally conspicuous; and in many cases it would be difficult to determine which is predominant. Those who excel in such exertions of genius, are extolled for their *ingenuity*, and have the character of being *ingenious*. Where mental *pleasure* is the principal object, genius professedly ranges in the wilds of fancy. It collects those ideas which are calculated to excite grand and pleasing emotions, or to cherish some favourite affection. It will often acknowledge that the scenes themselves are fictitious; nor does it search after any other *truths* than those of *resemblance*. It will often content itself with the *appearances of probability*, and in some cases, of *possibility*. In this department therefore, the pleasures of imagination are the primary considerations of the man of genius; and the chief exercise of judgment is to select and arrange his thoughts in a manner that the delusion may disappear, and that

all the interesting effects of reality may be produced upon the astonished and delighted mind. According to the designs and tendency of these productions, whether they be to elevate and transport, by the grandeur of the ideas, to inspire the sympathetic emotions, or to chear and amuse by presenting lively pictures to the mind; the agent is entitled to the character of a *sublime,* or a *sportive genius.*

The successful exertions of human talents in the discoveries of science, or in the creation of what may be useful or pleasant, naturally produce correspondent effects upon the minds of those who are conversant with these respective productions of genius. They are instructed, and they feel themselves to be improved by the acquisition of useful knowledge; they enjoy the comforts, conveniences and elegances, derived from the arts, and the inventions of the Ingenious; and they are highly *gratified* by the amusements of Fancy, which, under a judicious direction, have a tendency to elevate the dispositions above the more sordid pleasures, derived from objects merely sensual.

It is observable that to the latter class or to *mental gratifications,* belong those which are denominated the *pleasures of Taste.* Although knowledge of every kind be pleasing, and every discovery,

even in the abstruser sciences, has its charms; yet these are held in too great a veneration to render the term *Taste* applicable to them. A *taste* for Geometry, or the Mathematics, or Astronomy, or Metaphysics, or Theology, would appear a very exceptionable mode of expression; and although it has been recently applied to the devotional part of Theology, where the feelings of the heart, are more immediately concerned than the abstractions of an investigating mind, it is by a kind of sufferance, and scarcely consistent with the dignity and solemnity of the subject. Nor is the epithet applicable to those arts in which Utility or Convenience are the sole objects. Its appropriate application is manifestly to works of *fancy;* and to those productions which have a tendency to *amuse* the mind, and communicate a *mental gratification,* independent of Utility. Hence it is that Poetry, the Drama, Romance, Music, Painting, Eloquence, refined Wit and Humour claim it as their own; and when it is applied to the useful arts, such as Architecture, or the Mechanics, it refers to the Beauty, Grandeur, Elegance, which are conspicuous in the conformation, *superadded* to the advantages proposed.

Nor is it difficult to understand the reason of this peculiar application. *Taste* is manifestly a metaphor derived from the pleasures of the palate, which is one of the organs of sensation. Although,

in the metaphorical use of the word it expresses a more refined pleasure, yet it is simply a *pleasure;* and it is also communicated by means of those organs of sense, the Ear and the Eye: in these respects therefore they are nearly related. But the analogy goes farther. The sciences may justly be compared to *food,* whose primary office it is to nourish the system, and in which wholesome, nutritive and invigorating qualities are the principal objects, and not the pleasures of Taste.

These mental enjoyments, indicated by the word *Taste* may be compared to the *relishing* properties of the food, which in itself is nutricious; or to the *condimenta* which are used to render it more palatable; and which are so grateful in themselves, that they are frequently taken solely from the pleasurable sensations they excite.

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that although persons who excel in works of Fancy, cannot be destitute of Taste, yet it is not requisite for every man of Taste to possess Genius. A due degree of cultivation may communicate this refined pleasure, to those who have not skill or energy of mind sufficient to produce similar works of Genius. They may relish what they cannot create. (See Note M.)

## CHAP. IV.

## VOLITION.

THE various faculties we have hitherto contemplated, wonderful as they are, would be of no use did we not also possess the power of acting, according to the knowledge which we may have acquired, or the conceptions we may have formed, by the exercise of those faculties. It would be in vain that we perceived, distinguished, reasoned, judged, remembered, invented or formed plans in the imagination, if all these operations were condemned to terminate in barren speculation. Their most important office consists in preparing the mind for Action, and enabling it to act with propriety and efficacy. It would be less vexatious and tormenting to remain in a state of stupor, without the exercise of any of these mental powers, than to form ideas of Good which we had no capacity to realize; to be tantalized with distant views of interesting objects, to which we could not make approaches; or to contrive and invent, what could never be executed. In vain would our judgment be convinced, respecting the injurious tendency of things, if a constitutional and insuperable inertness rendered every exertion of the mental pow-

ers to escape the evil, totally impossible; and in vain would a certain tenor of conduct appear to promise the most beneficial effects, if the mind had no agency of its own to pursue it. The endowment which is designedly adapted, by the Author of our frame, to these most important purposes, is distinguished by the term—*Volition.*

It is by the faculty of Volition that every man directs his own conduct, in every situation and employment of life. He feels its power in the exercise of every other faculty, which has passed under our observation; not excepting that of organic perception, which is not always an involuntary act: and it is by Volition that he is enabled to direct his conduct, in a manner conformable to the impressions which the exercise of any of the preceding faculties may have produced. It denotes the uncontrolled, final, and efficient determination of the mind to act in a particular manner, according as circumstances may present themselves; or to give the preference to one mode of acting rather than another, when both are equally in our power.

This faculty is sometimes expressed in the English language, by the substantive, the *Will,* or a *Will,* and the verb *to will.* But unfortunately for precision, both these terms have various significations, and this circumstance has occasioned much

embarrassment in philosophical researches. *To will,* is frequently considered as synonimous with to *wish,* to *desire,* to *incline* towards any thing; the *Will,* a *Will* as frequently express a direction or a command given to others, as a Rule for their conduct, and the final determination of the mind concerning our own. The adjective *wilful* sometimes denotes *design,* and generally *obstinacy, stubbornness*; the participle *willing* indicates a ready Inclination. *Good-will* or *Ill-will* refer to kindly or unkindly Dispositions, exclusive of any determination of the mind. In addition to these various acceptations of the term, it is also in the English language a sign of the future tense.

As each of these significations has its destined place, the necessity of its being closely confined to that place in philosophical researches, is most obvious, that it may not be confounded with others to which it may have the nearest resemblance; and it is upon this account that we shall attempt to ascertain what is meant by *Volition,* or *to will;* considered in a philosophical sense, in distinction from every other signification which may be applicable to it.

*Volition,* or to *will,* as expressive of the exercise of *Volition* in this philosophical sense, may be considered as comprehending the following particulars: It implies some leading principle of action;—Incitement or Inducement to perform a certain act;

—a Desire or Inclination formed by this inducement; Ability to act according to the desire or inclination inspired;—the Motive which proved influential in determining the mind;—the Determination itself,—and the final Act. Without every one of these, no act of philosophical Volition could take place; as will appear from the following explanations.

1. The *Principle* is that which constitutes the basis of conduct; without which no influential ideas would have been suggested; no particular incitement or inducement would have been operative. It is that which existed in the breast of the agent, as a general predisposing cause of certain modes of conduct; whether it may have originated from peculiarity of temperament, from education, national customs, personal habits, propensities formed by example and imitation &c. It is according to the specific nature of this principle, that the diversified actions of intelligent beings may be distinguished into those which are wise, or unwise, virtuous, vicious, beneficial, injurious &c. When we speak of principle, we mean that something within the mind of the agent which directs his propensities, constitutes the prevalent rule of his actions; and is preparatory to particular acts, which, however they may vary in other respects, remain true to their origin.

Hence it is that we say that one person is actuated by a principle of Love, of Honour, of Ambition, of Benevolence; another by that of Hatred, Envy, Selfishness &c.

2. These principles may exist in an inert state; but they exist as latent causes of dispositions, propensities and actions, which may be immediately produced by exposure to incidental circumstances. *Incitement* and *Inducement* relate to the influence of these incidental causes upon the mind, by which a propensity or disposition is inspired, to act in some particular manner, conformable to the prevalent principle. If this principle had not existed, incidents would not have become incitements; and without the incidents, the principle would have remained dormant. Thus when we speak of Love as a Principle, it is not necessary to consider it as perpetually operative; nor has it a direct reference to a particular incitement; but when we consider Love as an *Affection* placed upon some particular object, we necessarily suppose that the object possesses certain attributes or qualities, which operate as *Incitements* to the affection, and to a conduct correspondent to it. The man distinguished for a principle of Benevolence in his bosom, stands prepared to act with liberality and compassion; but the particular wants and distresses of others are the *Incitements*, requisite to render

the benevolence of his temper immediately operative of good. By Incitement or Inducement therefore, is understood whatever disposes the mind to act in a particular manner, at certain seasons. The Incitement or Inducement may operate by means of certain qualities in the object, which seem conducive to something pleasing or beneficial; or it may consist in the suggestions of our own minds, relative to some advantages to be derived to ourselves or others, immediate or remote, by the performance of certain actions, or some evil that might accrue; but in every case, the expectation of some species of good, constitutes its essence. The specific difference between *Incitement* and *Inducement* seems to consist in the following particulars: *Incitement* best expresses the first impulse of the influential cause, by which a disposition is awakened; *Inducement* best expresses a progressive influence, by which the mind is gradually drawn towards the object. The first is the most sudden and lively, the other the most deliberate. The agency of the passions is most observable in the first, that of reasoning in the latter.

3. Our incessant love of well-being predisposes us to seize every opportunity to enjoy, or possess the means of enjoying. *Desires* are therefore soon kindled in the breast, by whatever appears favorable to this grand object; and exposure to the in-

fluence of those incitements, may possibly inspire such *inclinations* and *propensities*, as shall change the whole tenor of our conduct; in cases where no impediment to our acting according to the desires excited, presents itself.

The nature of desire has been so fully investigated in the preceding work, that a particular enlargement in this place would be superfluous. We shall therefore confine ourselves to the definition which has been given of it as "a sensation excited in the mind by the view or contemplation of any desirable good, which is not in our possession, which we are solicitous to obtain, and of which the attainment appears at least possible." It is obvious that an exemption from evil is included in the definition, as being a desirable good.

4. It is not always in the power of *Desire* to be efficient. Volition implies also the *Ability* to act according to the disposition formed, or the propensity created. Should impediments present themselves which we cannot remove, to *will* would degenerate into a *wish*; it would become an *impotent* desire. It would simply mark a *passion* or a *disposition*, which could never be gratified, and not a final *determination* of the mind. The impediment may arise from some imperfection in our make, rendering us impotent of doing what others are able to execute; or from a foreign con-

trolling power, which prevents the exercise of the natural powers we possess, and impedes the performance of the deed, without suppressing the inclination. In either case no act of volition can be accomplished.

5. If no impediment of any kind present itself, this desire will be immediately succeeded by a *determination* to act in a manner correspondent to it; the act will be immediately performed and volition will be complete. But there are cases in which various impediments, exclusive of natural inability or foreign control, may present themselves. Strong objections may arise to counteract the desire generated by the incitement, and these may finally influence the will to determine against the propensities first excited. Such propensities may be checked or suppressed, by motives of prudence, of humanity, of indolence, of cowardice, of religion &c. That is, different incitements or inducements presenting themselves from other sources, may operate upon the mind, so as to counteract the original propensity, and influence it to determine upon a very different line of conduct than what had been intended.

Hence it appears that all Incitements and Inducements are not equally efficient. Some are simply operative in giving a certain bent and inclination

to the mind; while others lead to the determination which produces the act itself. They both agree in exciting dispositions and propensities; but those of the latter class are predominant, and produce the very act which we term an act of Volition.

We shall venture to distinguish the latter class, by the appellation of *Motives*, because, if the above statement be admitted, it clearly points out a philosophical distinction between a *Motive* and an *Incitement* or an *Inducement*. It shews that there is a place for each, and marks the boundaries of each. A mere *Incitement* or *Inducement*, simply disposes the mind to act by raising desires; that which is become a *Motive* finally determines the mind, which in this connection is called the *Will*, to act in a particular manner, without which the action would not have been performed. The distinctions themselves exist. This cannot be controverted; and the terms selected to express each, both from their etymology and general signification, are best adapted to characterize them, by pointing out subsisting differences. The one, *Inducement*, best expresses that which acts upon the mind, producing the *Inclination*; the other, *Motive*, best expresses that incitement or inducement which by gaining the ascendency, finally had the power of determining the will. Thus, philosophically speaking, there cannot be two *opposite*

*Motives,* the one impelling the mind to act, and the other restraining it from acting. There may be various reasons, considerations, and inducements, which by their contrarieties, will hold the mind in suspense, and prevent the determination; but that which has finally triumphed, and produced the decision of the will has been the *Motive.* Where many considerations have united to influence the particular decision, the union of their powers will have induced the mind to yield to this influence, with greater promptitude; and thus we may be induced by *several motives* to perform the same action; but we cannot be influenced by contrary *Motives* to act, and not to act at the same instant. If no opposition should occur to the desires or inclinations which exciting causes have implanted, the pleasure to be enjoyed by satisfying the desire, will prove a *Motive*; and in such cases, the inclination and the motive are one. But if considerations or inducements of a stronger nature, suppress the first impulse, and determine the will, these become *the Motives,* and the others remain under the description of *Incitements* or *Inducements.* Under an inducement the resolution is forming, the mind is powerfully led towards the object; but still it is not decisive like a *Motive.* In every *Motive* we have been induced, by certain considerations; but we may have had strong in-

ducements to act in one manner, which have been over-ruled by stronger inducements, which form the Motives to act in a different manner.

It is usual in philosophical disputes concerning the freedom of the will, to assert that the *strongest motives will prevail.* If the above distinctions be admitted, the assertion will appear to be inaccurate or superfluous. That which determines the will *becomes the Motive* by being the strongest inducement, and the efficient cause. So that, the motive does not prevail because it is the *strongest,* considered in competition with other *Motives;* but it manifests its strength by its *prevalence;* that is by its *becoming the Motive.*

We might illustrate and confirm these ideas, by adducing numberless modes of speech in familiar discourse, which perfectly correspond with them. But an instance or two shall suffice. Were any one to assert that "he had very strong *motives* for residing in the country, in preference to town," we should naturally suppose that he was already resident in the country, or that the resolution was taken. But this inference is not so immediately attached to the declaration "that he was strongly *induced* to reside in the country;" for we might still suppose that he was prevented by important motives. From this example, it is evident, that we feel an impropriety in calling that a *motive* which was uninfluential, or was not productive of

the correspondent act. When an act is performed, we may with equal propriety ask what was the *motive* or *inducement*? Because they both operated in the same direction; and the inducement, unopposed, became the *Motive;* but we never inquire what was the *Motive* of an inefficient propensity, which was over-ruled by other considerations. Nor do we apply the word Motive to any train of thoughts which have not been productive of action. It is more pertinent to say, what were your *Reasons* or *Inducements* for indulging such strange thoughts, than, what could be your *Motives.* But if these strange thoughts lead to strange actions, the inquiry into the *Motive* of action would be conformable both to strict propriety, and common usage.

Again, philosophers maintain that the will cannot be determined without a motive; for there can be no effect, say they, without a cause. By this assertion, *motive* and the cause of human actions, are considered as synonimous terms, and were these philosophers to give a definition of a motive, founded upon their axiom, they would distinguish it from a *physical* cause, by asserting that a motive is a certain idea, or train of ideas excited in the mind, which, in particular circumstances, becomes the efficient cause of some specific act, or determination of the will, in rational and intelligent

agents. But this definition, or any other that is similar, would be nugatory, if there could be two species of motives of contrary characters; the one efficient, the other inefficient.

Thus it is evident that, whatever indulgence may be occasionally given to popular language, the term *Motive* cannot, in philosophical propriety, be applied to very strong inducements, which have not been efficient. The very etymology of the word corroborates this position. It is said to be a motive because it is the *causa movens;* that which actually moves to the performance; it cannot therefore with any propriety belong to such considerations, or inducements which were not the *moving* causes. They had a certain influence upon the mind; they may have been the causes of much uneasiness, and of a great degree of mental agitation; but they did not influence the mind to act in a particular manner, and therefore were not the *motives* of that action.

We have dwelt the longer upon this subject, because precision in our ideas concerning it is of great philosophical importance. By considering a motive as the efficient cause, operating upon the mind of an intelligent agent, and influencing his determinations to act in a particular manner, notwithstanding various suggestions, incitements, or inducements to the contrary, we acquire an accuracy and precision, the want of which has been

the source of much obscurity, and this obscurity of much disputation.

From the above investigation of the nature of motives, both their number and their diversities must be very apparent. Every principle seated in man; every object surrounding us, every connection and relation in life, is able to furnish its motive to influence the will. The various appetites, passions and affections, with their infinitude of excitements, as well as higher considerations, are able to determine the mind to prefer, decide, and act upon the decision. These various motives may consequently be distinguished into those which relate to the dictates of reason, or of the passions; that is, to some approved and adopted rule of conduct, or to the strong desires and propensities of the instant. They may derive their origin from the selfish, or from the social principle; from the eager pursuit of personal good, or solicitude for the welfare of others; from every consideration which benevolence can suggest, and situation in which wretchedness may be placed. They may proceed from sentiments of esteem, respect, and veneration; from every species of malevolence, and from the various kinds of displacency, which improper conduct is calculated to excite.

But although motives may be derived from such opposite sources, and possess such opposite characters, yet they may still be traced to that grand spring of action, the *Love of Well-being*. They are immediately inspired, and variously directed by the two cardinal principles and affections of *Love* and *Hatred*, towards some apparent good, or apparent evil, respecting ourselves or others. These truths have shone so conspicuously in every part of our elementary treatise, that farther enlargement would be superfluous.

6. The *Determination* of the mind follows the inducement which has become a motive. This is emphatically termed *to will*. To will manifests a freedom and sovereignty which are more flattering to our nature, perhaps, than the exercise of any other of our mental faculties. In cases where no suspense has existed, and the ability is complete, to desire, to will, and to act, are as it were instantaneous operations. Where any intermediate considerations had created a suspense, this will to act is expressed by the term *decision*, which presupposes some kind or degree of preference, between contrary inducements; similar to the exercise of the judgment between contrary positions. If an embarrassment have arisen, or various considerations and inducements of opposite characters have sometimes disposed the mind to one mode of acting,

and sometimes to another, to *will* is often expressed by the stronger term to *determine,* which implies that there has been a contest which is now terminated; and the will is fixed, after the agitation, of uncertainty. Thus we say, "I have been deliberating upon the affair, and having considered it in various points of view, I am at length come to the following determination." The word *resolution,* which is frequently applied to the will, is often used in a sense still more emphatical. It supposes that the previous contest has been very great; that many difficulties and objections have opposed themselves, which required a considerable degree of firmness to *will* in opposition to them, which, after many efforts, are finally *resolved* or melted away.

*Determination* is more applicable to obscurities, intricacies and difficulties, which had held the mind in a state of uncertainty. *Resolution* more immediately respects contrarieties which have presented themselves to the mind, or the oppositions, solicitations or remonstrances of others, over which it has finally triumphed. Thus we say, "I found it difficult to *resolve;* he is *resolved* to do it in spite of all we can urge; *he has taken his resolution* and nothing can move him; *he possesses great resolution; he is a resolute man, &c.*"

7. The *act* itself terminates the process of Volition, and fully indicates that the mind did not simply

cherish inclinations and desires, or form an impotent wish. When we *desired,* we should always have acted correspondently, had we not been prevented by some unforeseen impossibility or intervening motive. When we *determine,* we shall execute, unless we be *unexpectedly* checked by a power which *suddenly* presents itself at the instant; for had this power been in action at an earlier period, we should not have *determined,* however ardently we might have wished or desired. Should some very powerful *motive* present itself, it would change the resolution; the intended act would not be performed, and another would be substituted in its place, which would become the *act of Volition.* Should an *Assassin,* whose hand is uplifted to commit the murder, be deterred from his purpose by the horrors of conscience, *the act of Volition* is then manifested by his *abstaining* from the deed; while his villainous *propensities* alone were indicated by the resolutions he had formed. Thus it appears that the accomplishment of the act is a constituent part of *Volition,* without which, incitements, desires, resolutions are incomplete, for they are inefficient.

These peculiarities respecting Volition, render it an attribute of the *intellectual faculties,* and distinguish it from a *wish* or *desire* which belong to the *affections.* If philosophical Volition be made synonimous with *desire* or a *wish,* Volitions may

be formed in the midst of impossibilities; for we often *desire* what we cannot accomplish. They would also respect the past as well as the present or the future; as we often *wish* that particular events had not taken place; and that upon certain occasions, our conduct had been different. (See Note N.)

Every voluntary act is characterized by the following important peculiarities:

1. It produces some change in the grand pursuit of well-being; it brings us forwards in a greater or less degree, or it retards our progress. Every change is marked by a perception of something pleasant or unpleasant, of immediate or remote utility, or of some inconvenience or injury, personal or social. Although the act may appear very trivial in itself, it produces a certain alteration in the usual state of things, introducing a new train which is always of some extent, and sometimes conducive to innumerable consequences.

2. We felt ourselves absolute masters, before the resolution was finally taken and the deed performed. We were conscious of a sovereign and controlling power. It depended upon *ourselves*, whether things should remain in their former state, or receive that kind and degree of alteration it was our pleasure to give them.

3. But the act once performed is irrevocable. All our power over it is lost for ever! It will

work its own way to the production of good or evil. We who were absolute masters, become passive subjects to all its consequences. It may advance us in the scale of well-being; it may destroy all our expectations; it may extricate from misery or plunge us into it; it may mark our characters with the stamp of wisdom or with that of folly; it may call forth the blessings or the execrations of those around us!

Thus it appears that Volition is the most important faculty of the mind; for the exercise of which every other faculty is preparatory; to which every other is subservient. Their chief excellency consists in their enabling every act of Volition, to become an advancement in our progress towards well-being and felicity.

## CHAP. V.

### CONSCIOUSNESS.

THIS term, like many others, has been variously used, and may frequently be used in different senses without impropriety or confusion. But it is the only term we can employ to express the attention of the mind, to *itself*, to its *own* state and operations, its sensations, perceptions, thoughts, determinations, and motives. It is that kind of knowledge which immediately respects *Self*. It constitutes the secret perception of what passes *within* ; of that which may be perfectly concealed from others, or, concerning which they can form very imperfect conjectures, from certain external indications. In addition to every other operation of the mind, by Consciousness, we distinctly know that these operations are in exercise. We not only perceive, attend, consider, reflect, contemplate, discriminate, reason, judge, but we *perceive* that we perceive, attend, consider, &c.

The operations of Consciousness, obviously demand, in some cases, a distinct effort of the mind, by which it makes a pause, as it were in its pur-

suits, to consider for a moment that it is pursuing; and without this exertion we may scarcely be conscious that we possess Consciousness. It is possible for the mind to pursue various objects with so much ardour, to contemplate subjects highly interesting with such abstraction, and to be so intent upon favorite plans, and schemes of our own devising, as to have no distinct perception of our efforts. We are also able to perform many actions, rendered familiar to us by habit, without being conscious at the instant, that we are doing them; that is, without such an attention to our own exertions, as was found necessary at the commencement, or as constitutes a Consciousness, that we are employing ourselves in that particular manner. At other periods, in cases of extreme moment, the mind may be so absorbed in self-contemplation, that external objects cease to make their usual impression upon us; we scarcely perceive any thing but our own existence; and it requires a strong impulsive force to awaken us from the reverie. It was a favorite idea with *Des Cartes*, that thought, or the faculty of thinking, afforded to every man the most convincing proof of his own existence. *Cogito, ergo sum*, was his argument. Perhaps this argument would have been stated more forcibly, by the position *I feel conscious* that I am thinking, and therefore *I feel* that I exist. For although the want of Consciousness,

be no proof of non-existence, yet the inverse must be true. If nothing existed, there would be nothing to feel.

Consciousness, in its slightest exertions, is a bare perception as it were of our perceptions, or simply the knowledge of the particular state of our minds at the instant. In its stronger exercise it is productive of distinct sensations, indicating their existence by the various degrees of pleasure or pain, which accompany them. For no sensation which is sufficiently strong to attract attention, and produce consciousness, can be perfectly indifferent; it must confer some degree of pleasure or the contrary. To suppose pleasure or pain to exist, without our being conscious of the one or the other, is to suppose them to exist without being felt, which is to annihilate their nature. It is the power of consciousness, therefore, that makes particular situations, nay existence itself agreeable or disagreeable to us; that constitutes the reward of our labours, and the affliction of our disappointments. Whatever advances we may make in the road to well-being, without *consciousness*, without perceiving, feeling and knowing that we enjoyed the good obtained, it would be in vain that it was denominated a good. Our various pursuits are of no value, except as they promote a *conscious* well being; and it is the conscious per-

ception of evil that warns us to shun it, or compels us to deplore what we cannot escape.

But the most interesting and most important office of this faculty consists, in its empowering us to pass a judgment upon ourselves. This enables us to examine into our own conduct, dispositions, and motives of action, where no eye can penetrate, and where the most scrutinizing may be deceived. According to the report of our own minds it is, that we enjoy inward satisfaction, self-approbation, and self-complacency, where the conduct has been upright, the motives pure, and the issue beneficial: Or it is from this principle that we suffer regret, contrition, self-reproach and all the horrors of remorse; where we have suffered headstrong passions, and illegitimate desires to gain the ascendency over the best principles, both of the head and the heart. The sociality of our natures makes us solicitous to enjoy the approbation of those around us. Every person though he may not seek popularity, feels a satisfaction in being esteemed and respected by his associates, and he is ashamed at the detection of an act which deserves their censure. The conscious principle not only enables us to perceive these facts, but secretly and explicitly informs us whether we *deserve* the one or the other: and the conviction of our own minds will either alleviate or sharpen the pain we may suffer from their contempt, it will de-

crease or augment the pleasures of their approbation. A Consciousness of the propriety, integrity, and benevolence of our motives, must unite with the commendations of the Discerning, in order to implant complete satisfaction in a virtuous mind. If we have been so far mistaken in our ideas as to act improperly, though from the best of motives, we may feel very unpleasantly from the cool indifference or censures of those we esteem, but we shall still retain the consolations of the *mens conscia recti.* If we seek the applause of the public alone, their loudest shouts cannot compensate for a conscious defect in our motives. A full conviction that this applause is undeserved, that it would have been withheld, or changed for contempt, had not the secret springs of our actions lain concealed, will inspire a secret dissatisfaction, a self-reproach, which the external pomp of applause must rather increase than subdue. It is alone when a consciousness of the integrity and benevolence of our intentions, is in unison with the commendations of those whose praise is the highest presumption of merit, that complete harmony can be enjoyed. Self-complacency uniting with the pleasing and exhilarating effects of the social disposition, leaves nothing, concerning that object to be farther desired.

It is a melancholy inconvenience which attends the disapprobation of our own minds, that we cannot easily escape their reproaches. The censures of *others* may be avoided by absence; or they may proceed from misconceptions, capable of being rectified; or they may be suggested by a malevolence of temper, itself most deserving of censure, but we cannot escape *our own* disapprobation; nor will the largest share of *Self-love* suggest, that it is ill founded. On the other hand, the great advantage of an *approving* conscience is, that it is always with us; that it gives zest and spirit to the most brilliant scenes of external prosperity, and is our best support in scenes of distress. It has frequently irradiated the gloom of a dungeon, and given ineffable joy to individuals, while every compassionate bosom was lamenting their sufferings.

Thus it appears that our happiness or misery is seated in the *conscious Principle*. It is Consciousness which enables us to enjoy our joys, our contentments, satisfactions and self-complacencies; which renders wrath so irritating, and our griefs and sufferings so oppressive. It is Consciousness that feels the stings of contrition and remorse, and constitutes the rich rewards of a benevolent spirit. It is the seat of self-approbation or of self-condemnation, gives perceptibility to our mi-

nuter feelings, and renders the stronger so transporting or so insupportable.

The faculty of Consciousness, constitutes the link, which unites the other intellectual powers with the *affections* of the heart. Without consciousness these could not exist; we should become Automatons. The manifestations of wrath, would resemble the insensibility of Ætna pouring forth its fires: and tears would flow from an unfelt cause, like rivers from the unconscious source. It is Consciousness that communicates the milder rewards accompanying intellectual pursuits, and gives that delightful feeling which accompanies the more exalted operations of the mind. It is the reward, and anticipates the rewards of virtue. It is the punishment, and it anticipates the punishment of vice. It whispers in our ears what we *are*, in opposition to what we may *seem* to be; it supports in the midst of defamation, and torments in the midst of applause.

The species of Consciousness which immediately refers to the merits and demerits of our own actions or motives, is distinguished from conscious perceptions, which are less interesting, by the appellation of *Conscience;* and this, in consequence of its discerning, discriminating, condemning, absolving, or approving powers, is sometimes represented

as an accuser, sometimes as a witness against a criminal, and sometimes as a judge, holding its tribunal within, and passing a sentence of applause, acquittal, or condemnation, according to the accurate knowledge it possesses of the most secret actions, and most latent motives. Metaphorical language has been so perpetually employed relative to this species of Consciousness, that *Conscience* has been considered as a distinct principle within us; and as metaphorical language is not always uniform or accurate, this Judge has again been converted into a *Dæmon* or an *Angel*, according to the nature of his decisions. Thus we speak of being haunted by an evil Conscience, or consoled by an approving one. (See Note O.)

## CHAP. VI.

### SUMMARY OF THE ADVANTAGES DERIVED FROM THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS.

THE above investigation of the intellectual powers of Man, and of the properties peculiar to each, must convince us in the most impressive manner, that ample provision is made in the constitution of our nature, to subdue native ignorance, to direct our affections towards their proper objects, to protect us from impending dangers from without, and to counterbalance any pernicious propensities which may have been generated in our own minds.

As we are connected with every thing around us, and are deeply interested in their nature and properties; as we are capable of receiving good, from a suitable adaptation of their peculiar qualities, to our exigencies; and as many evils may arise from mistakes and improper applications, thus we are endowed with those more refined and unempassioned Powers, whose office it is to point out the objects worthy of our affections, and to place us upon our guard against their opposites.

The objects with which we are connected are infinitely numerous; their powers and properties infinitely diversified; of which some are obvious, others are latent, some are simple, others are complex; some objects possess apparent similarity with essential differences, and of others the essential properties are the same, where discrepances are apparently great. But to surmount these difficulties, we are enabled to perceive, attend, consider, reflect, contemplate, investigate, understand, reason and judge.

By these exercises of the mind, it is in our power to obtain the most clear and accurate knowledge of every thing, which is interesting respecting them. Every object made known to us thro' the medium of the senses, may some way or other, be rendered conducive to our well-being. The powers of discernment and discrimination, place numberless qualities before the eye, which would otherwise have lain hid. By these powers we are enabled to ascertain the precise adaptation of the qualities discovered, to the minutest circumstances in our situations. They enable us to extend our views beyond the horizon of sense, and render invisible realities, conspicuous and familiar to the mind. They elevate Man from that sensitive state which allies him to the brute creation, and communicate to him the more exalted pleasures of the soul, which ally him to beings of a superior order.

They teach us where the best affections are to be placed; how they are to be encouraged and indulged; inform us when particular inclinations, habits, customs, are beneficial, when pernicious. They point out that medium in which the passions, emotions, and affections are innocent and useful; and when they become extravagant, injurious, and disgraceful. It is by these that we acquire a knowledge both of our rights and our duties, as social beings; that we distinguish between what is good and evil in moral conduct; that we know where true worth exists, the degrees of approbation which are its due; and that we are able to mark the conduct which merits reprehension and disgrace.

Where subjects are intricate and embarrassing, we are admonished by the very constitution of our nature to doubt, hesitate, believe or disbelieve, according as the force of evidence shall render particular propositions, probable, or improbable, certain or dubious; that we may not too readily embrace errors, which in some connection or other may prove pernicious; or reject truths, which always contain the latent power of being advantageous. We are thus disposed to approach towards or recede from, various principles proposed to our consideration, according to the degrees of evidence that accompany them; by which we are prepared to adopt or reject, with equal

facility, according to the result of farther examinations.

By the powers of *Memory* and *Recollection*, we are enabled to use accumulated stores of knowledge in the most advantageous manner, to compare the past with the present, and to form probable conjectures, or obtain a prescience of the future. By Memory we collect various facts, propositions, or axioms, of which a knowledge was obtained at different periods, into one assemblage, and upon these we may exercise our discerning, discriminating, and reasoning faculties, so as to establish important rules of conduct in every pursuit, and in every situation of life. It is through Memory that we enjoy the inestimable advantages of *experience;* and that we recall the result of experiments which have already been made. We recollect our feelings in former situations, when they were *painful,* when *pleasant,* and what were the efficient causes of each sensation. We recollect the consequences attendant upon particular modes of acting, whether they were beneficial or injurious; how far our previous expectations were answered or disappointed; and we recall to our minds the specific causes of the one or of the other. It is thus we are enabled to appreciate dangers and the means of safety, learn to fear and to hope according to probabilities, instead of being agitated by the suggestions of an extravagant imagination. By ex-

perience we bring many opinions to the test, become assured of their validity, or detect their fallacy; and in our pursuit of other plans, and other objects, we are encouraged to proceed with more boldness, on the one hand, and warned, on the other into more caution, according to former results, in cases that appeared to be similar.

The beneficial effects arising from the *Imagination* are most conspicuous. It forms the embryo of every thing which originates from human intellect; and introduces to every portion of knowledge, that is not conveyed to us by the immediate agency of the senses. It is the commencement of all speculative science, and consequently the source of the innumerable advantages derived from it. By the inventive faculties of the mind, so closely connected with science, and in which the imagination takes the lead, we are enabled commodiously to supply our wants, multiply our comforts, as well as to delight the senses. This amicable union of the sciences with the arts, affords to man an ample compensation for the defects and imbecilities that accompany his birth. The arts and sciences conjointly, raise him far above the confined instincts of the irrational creation, and all the natural advantages they possess. These mark his superiority, by enabling him to render every species of animal subservient to his own use. These

powers, in their humblest exercise, manifest the distance of the savage from the forest beasts which surround him; and it is thro' the medium of these, that human nature is able to emerge from a rude and savage state to the highest degree of culture and civilization; is able to advance from the simple supply of its necessities to the enjoyment of innumerable comforts, elegancies and luxuries; from ignorance to a degree of knowledge which approximates man to a superior class of beings. It is through the inventive faculties that the social principle in man enjoys the advantages of sociality. By the intercommunication of ideas, ignorant mortals acquire degrees of knowledge that are an astonishment to themselves; and by their combined efforts, weak mortals contrive and execute plans, the importance and magnitude of which almost exceed belief. Mountains are levelled into plains; barren wastes rendered productive; unhealthy climes become salubrious; nutrition is varied and augmented to keep pace with increasing population; vessels are constructed to unite distant nations; languages are formed to express our multiplied ideas; and symbols invented by which to communicate them to the remotest distance, and hand them down to the latest posterity! Human faculties have studied the vital mechanism of the human frame; the laws by which it is governed and preserved. They enable us to disco-

ver the noxious or salutary properties of surrounding bodies; to escape the former, and appropriate the latter. Human faculties command the elements. They render the raging fire subservient to our purpose; subduing bodies the most refractory, and transmuting them into substances that administer, in numberless ways, to the convenience and comforts of life. The winds, the mighty current, and still more powerful vapour, become the instruments of Good. Their impetus is directed not only to diminish human labour, but infinitely to surpass all human efforts! The ingenuity of man has penetrated the bowels of the earth, and discovered stores which, from the depth of their situation, seemed to defy every research. The ingenuity of man has learned to analyze, not only substances obvious to the senses, but *invisible* bodies; it ascertains their component parts, their nice proportions, their beneficial or their noxious powers. By the discoveries and inventions of human intellect, clouds are disarmed of their thunder, and tremendous lightnings made to pass in harmless currents; distant worlds are brought under our immediate inspection; the motions of the heavenly bodies are accurately traced; and the laws by which they direct their courses clearly ascertained.

Imagination, united with the powers of discernment, thus distinguishes man from the brute crea-

tion, and renders him capable of every improvement to an incalculable degree, and of progressive enjoyments to an immeasurable extent. For it is this which has framed and fashioned every instrument of utility, of convenience, and of taste. It has worked from the meanest tool to the most complicated and powerful machinery; from the humble shed of the peasant, to the sublimest style of architecture: from the excavated trunk of a tree, to the stately vessel that traverses the mighty waters: from the fancied pictures on a wall, to the productions of a Raphael: from the oaten reed, or the cord that vibrates, to the most exquisite instruments of music. It diverts by its fancies, and elevates by its sublimities. It promotes and refines our pleasures. Every thing that delights in the sallies of wit, in the sublimities of poetry, and the charms of elocution, proceeds from its creative powers. To the Imagination is the fashionable world indebted, for its gayest amusements, and for the luxuries, and splendours by which it is captivated.

As the preceding faculties of the soul respect the acquirement of knowledge, treasuring it up in the memory, and exerting the inventive faculties for the most desirable purposes, thus are the determinations of the *Will*, the grand directors of all the other powers. Without Volition they would for ever remain inert. It is according to the man-

ner in which the powers of Volition are exerted, that we are enabled to judge of the neglect, the use, or the abuse of every other faculty. These cast the important die, upon which the possession of Good, or Evil may irrevocably depend.

By the power of *Consciousness* we are made to enjoy or to suffer, from every thing around us, and from every thing we perform. By this power we ascertain and appreciate the influence of every quality in objects, of every desire towards them, and of every determination of our own minds concerning them. It is through this that we learn the value of *Experience,* and are prevented from recollecting former states and conduct in vain; that we become disposed to direct our future conduct according to the issue of the preceding; and to value states, situations, and projects, according to what we have *felt.* By this faculty the mind reads itself; penetrates into its most secret recesses; knows its own propensities, desires, resolutions, and actions; and according to the discoveries it has made, is it enabled to convert former errors into the means of future advantages, and even render former defects the parents of future excellencies. In this principle is seated the high recompence of some dispositions and conduct, and the severe scourge of others.

It fully appears, therefore, from the minute inquiries which have been made into the Intellect-

ual powers of Man, and their respective offices, that we are not *compelled* to walk in the dangerous mazes of ignorance, without a lamp to direct our steps, or to yield to the impulse of every turbulent passion, without a monitor to warn us of the consequences: and that we are not confined by any immutable law of nature, to the lowest stages of humanity, without the possibility of improving our state.

It appears also that the intellectual faculties are so constituted, and so diversified, that they may be applied, and they ought to be consulted in every state and exigency of life. There is not a situation in which we can be placed, or an object to be pursued, or avoided, or an occupation in which we can engage, or a subject we can study, or a connection we can form, which does not require their friendly aid. From the first dawn of reason to the most advanced period of life, these are destined to be our guides. It is for them to superintend our earliest predilections; direct our choice; select wise and appropriate means to obtain the most desirable ends; to inform us what we are entitled to expect from others, and point out the duties we owe to them. It is by the careful exercise of one or other of these powers, the writer of this treatise has advanced thus far in those inquiries, which the reason of every one will convince him to be most interesting; and from their direc-

tion that he hopes for success. It is for the intellectual powers of his readers, minutely to examine and admit his principles, or to confute and detect his errors.

The above remarks prove also the truth of a position formerly advanced, that according to the beneficial order of things, knowledge ought invariably to precede the affections. To indulge certain affections concerning any thing, presupposes that its qualities are already discovered, and their importance ascertained. For it is alone with the qualities and characters of objects, that the passions and affections are concerned; and it is their province to submit to these, according to the reports which are made by the intellectual powers. The passions and affections are unable to discover any truths. They are disqualified for this office. The moment they are excited, a train of thoughts, correspondent to the nature of the passion immediately follows, and these are very apt to bring the mind under a false bias, by throwing a preponderancy of argument, that is so frequently mistaken for weight of evidence, into the favored scale. Strong emotions immediately collect every thing which has a tendency to strengthen and justify them, either to ourselves or others; and they rob us, both of the disposition and power, to investigate with coolness and impartiality. It is, in a word, the office of the intellectual powers

to examine and to judge, to discover *what* things are, *how* they are, and *why* they are, as we perceive them; what is their nature, what their effects; to decide what *ought* to be, and what ought *not* to be. The office of the passions and affections is to *feel* and *dispose* to act according to their faithful report. When these important ends are obtained, the indulgence of the passions and affections to the degree they justly claim, becomes proper and laudable. It is the discharge of a debt due to the nature and qualities of the object, to ourselves, and to others, who may be influenced by the state of our minds. It is a conformity to the laws and designs of our existence. The rational gratification of every passion and affection in its place, is the source, and the continued source of all the comfort and happiness we can enjoy. Inclination now gives wings and energy to duty. We are stimulated by desires to follow plans which reason dictates and approves, and every branch of our conduct becomes a ramification of enjoyment.

When we advert to the passions and affections of the human mind; their diversities and ramifications; the various properties contained in their exciting causes, each of which is calculated to exert a specific influence; when we reflect that a right choice and right actions, are but as *units*, while error either from choice, from excess, or defect, has diversities and gradations almost incalculable,

we are disposed to suspect, that mankind are destined to go wrong. But when we pay minute attention to the ample provision made for every possible exigency, to the powers with which we are invested, in order that we may penetrate into the deepest obscurities, and disentangle the greatest perplexities, we stand amazed that human nature should deviate so widely and so perpetually, from that path of happiness in which it is so anxious to tread! Yet notwithstanding the ample assistance obtained from the mental powers; notwithstanding it is evident from the many instances stated above, that these powers have not been altogether inert, or exercised in vain; we still hear the voice of complaint; we still know and experience that misery abounds. Nor will any one assert that our advancements in felicity, are equal to this progress in various branches of knowledge. Nay, some have doubted whether such acquisitions have not proved detrimental to human felicity; whether the increase of knowledge has not been an increase of sorrow. They have seriously maintained that savage ignorance, connected with savage manners, is superior to all the boasted exertions and productions of Intellect. 'In what do the keenest exertions of the keenest faculties terminate, say they, but in various and unsatisfactory speculations at the best? How often are these Intellects employed

to obscure and vilify the truth; to reduce us to a state of chaos; to furnish arguments by which we perplex common sense, and refine upon first principles until their existence becomes a subject of doubt? Of what service is it to discern the demerits of actions over which we can have no control, unless it be to cherish unfavorable sentiments and dispositions towards our species? What useful purposes are answered by the power of recollection, sufficient to indemnify us for the bitter remembrance of our follies and our misfortunes? Does not the comparison of our former happiness with our present lot, frequently serve to augment our misery? Have the most ingenious exertions of the inventive faculties discovered the means and implements of true felicity? Do not our restless cravings, multiply with our conveniencies? Are not we rendered more delicate, and susceptible of uneasy sensations, the more we are indulged?

Do the most astonishing exertions of human art ensure enjoyment; or procure gratifications adequate to their expence? To what better purposes are stupendous pyramids, magnificent temples, palaces, amphitheatres erected, than to administer to the pride of the opulent, and strike the gazing multitude with an imposing awe? and what is still more melancholy, have they not been erected by the labour of slaves, incessantly goaded to the performance of the arduous task? and by exac-

tions which rendered the Subject, miserable amidst these exhibitions of opulence and grandeur? The connection formed with distant countries, has it not been more afflictive to the surprised and innocent inhabitants, than beneficial to the bold and oppressive adventurer? Have not the most fortunate discoveries proved sources of pernicious luxury and extravagance? Have they not destroyed the salutary balance of simple life, introduced an inequality of wealth, that has fostered the pride and arrogance of the possessors, perverted their morals, and kindled envy, jealousies, rivalships, discontent, and repinings in the bosoms of others? To multiply the conveniencies and elegancies of life, what is it but to multiply wants, and to create new desires in those who were comparatively happy in their ignorance? Even where the apparent blessings of manufactures and commerce are more extensively diffused, do not want and squalid poverty become more visible and alarming to every one who penetrates beyond the prominent, but delusive exhibitions of national prosperity?'

To these many objections there are many answers. It might be remarked that, as they are professedly made by the very exercise of these intellectual powers, they must terminate in solecisms which destroy all their authority. For if no other

use be made of our rational faculties, than to increase our discontent, it would have been better for the objectors to remain in the savage state, for which they seem disposed to give the preference. This would have prevented them from discovering the miseries arising from their own understandings. We might ask them, whether they do not enjoy a considerable share of satisfaction in making these complaints? Whether the train of reasoning by which they would support their hypothesis, be not an amusing exercise of these despised powers? Whether they be not also inspired with the flattering idea of superiority over those, who are more contented with their own intellects, and the consequences issuing from them? and whether the ambition of being distinguished for unusual depth of understanding, and the pleasure of making converts to their opinions, do not sometimes induce them to think better of these powers than their system will admit?

We may also remark that a declamatory mode of reasoning is always to be suspected. A lively imagination, or an impetuous passion, assiduously collects every specious argument which may be subservient to the object desired, while with equal assiduity, it conceals every fact of an opposite tendency. To form a true estimate of high civilization, compared with the savage state, the advantages and disadvantages of each should be placed be-

fore us, and duly appreciated. It must be admitted as an indubitable truth, that the miseries to which a savage life is exposed, are of an absolute or positive nature. They arise from the peculiarities of the state itself; nor can they be subdued in any other way than by emerging from it. The disadvantages arising from civil life are *contingences*, of which progressive cultivation may be competent to the removal; and were the intellectual faculties operative of good, to the full extent of their powers, they would discover the means of augmenting the advantages to be derived from civil intercourse, by removing every inconvenience which has furnished a subject for declamation. (See Note P.)

Although no one can argue against the intellectual powers, but by such an exercise of them as confutes his principles; nor can any one who considers them as the gift of a wise and intelligent Being, consider them as an useless or pernicious endowment; yet the facts upon which every objection of the kind is founded, must be admitted to exist. Much incidental misery does arise from a quarter whence we might naturally expect the most friendly aid.

Unfortunately, to every other power we possess, is superadded the *power of perversion*. The most

pertinent inferences from allegations which cannot be denied, are, that knowledge alone, carried to a considerable extent, and the most admired exertions of the intellectual faculties, are not of themselves sufficient to secure to us that felicity we ardently desire; that the removal of ignorance is but one step, and in some cases but a preparatory step, to the removal of still greater impediments to Well-being; that the removal of one species of ignorance, is too frequently an introduction to some other; palpable darkness being too frequently succeeded by a false or imperfect light, which, while it disposes to action, inevitably leads us astray; that partial knowledge is the parent of error in principles and practice, and may lead to consequences which total ignorance would have escaped. But the legitimate inference from all these facts, and these concessions is, not that the exercise of the intellectual faculties is in itself pernicious, but that they have not been exercised in a proper manner, or to a due extent; that the discerning and discriminating powers, have not always accompanied the disposition and the capacity to amass knowledge, or to exert the inventive and creative faculties in certain combinations; that Wisdom has not always presided in our plans, our choice, and our determinations; that in seeking for obvious and fascinating Good, we do not always perceive, or attend to the Evil closely con-

nected with it; or that we are deficient in skill to secure benefit from the one, without suffering from the other.

That there is some species, or some degree of Good, in the objects universally pursued by mankind, is self-evident. There must be some property which may administer to our comfort or delight, or is gratifying to some principle within us, or there could be no incitement to the pursuit. But if we expect from it more than it can possibly afford, we must be disappointed; or if we consider *that* as a principal, which is only subordinate, and neglect the former for the sake of the latter, there must be a great deficiency in our enjoyment: If we make great sacrifices for small gains, the balance is proportionably against us: If we plunge ourselves into permanent distress for the sake of a temporary advantage or a momentary gratification, we become absolute bankrupts in felicity.

Instead therefore of peevishly rejecting certain means and states of well-being, because they do not render us completely happy; instead of employing our reasoning powers to collect sophistical arguments, in order to vindicate discontent, we should prove ourselves to be more deserving of these distinguished powers were we minutely to enquire, how far the objects we pursue with the greatest ardour, can administer to good? Why we

are so often disappointed in our expectations respecting them? In short we should enquire whence it proceeds that we so often plunge ourselves into absolute wretchedness, in seeking for apparent good?

These questions can only be resolved by forming to ourselves some consistent ideas of Well-being, on the one hand, and of Evil or Misery on the other; by examining what powers we possess for enjoyment, what are the means adapted to the end; in what consists that state of existence which is painful and irksome to us, and the circumstances we should assiduously avoid? This will prepare us for other enquiries of equal importance, respecting the temper and conduct of ourselves and others, which are best calculated to insure the happiness amply provided for us, and escape the unhappiness to which we are exposed.

# DISQUISITION

## THE THIRD.

### INQUIRY INTO THE

### NATURE AND SOURCES

### OF

# WELL-BEING.

# DISQUISITION III.

*Inquiry into the Nature and Sources of Well-being.*

IT was asserted in our introductory remarks, that the great diversity in our passions and affections, the momentary impetus of some, the extravagance of others, and the versatility with which particular objects are alternately pursued and avoided; the painful disappointments felt, when our attempts have failed, and the dissatisfaction which so frequently accompanies success; are the strongest indications that mankind in general entertain imperfect, confused, and contradictory ideas, concerning that Well-being, so incessantly desired; nor are they more accurate in their ideas of the Evil they are solicitous to avoid. Hence it is that they pursue wrong objects, or employ improper and unsuccessful means. They seek permanent well-being where it cannot possibly reside; and they mistake slighter inconveniencies or temporary sufferings, for evils of the first magnitude.

These remarks are fully justified and confirmed by numerous facts which have been already stated.

Yet it must be acknowledged that notwithstanding our many errors, notwithstanding we are surrounded with so much misery, mankind are still able to form some ideas of well-being, both as to nature and extent. They know when they feel *well, comfortable, happy;* when they consider existence as a *blessing;* and when it is their principal desire to remain in the possession of their present comforts, or to augment their number. The experience of mankind tells them, that these ideas of well-being, may sometimes be suggested by a certain placid state of which they are conscious, sometimes by the gratification of particular desires which may be excited occasionally; and sometimes by the indulgence of some particular affection or emotion, which is pleasing and agreeable to their feelings. They also know that it is the grand occupation of their lives, either to pursue or to cherish objects, which may prove the means and instruments of good, either by gratifying their desires, improving their state, or calling forth some pleasing affection; and that they are solicitous to protect such blessings from incidental danger or designed assaults. The whole History of the Passions, as they have been contemplated in our analytical treatise, demonstrates these facts. It manifests an universal persuasion that some kind or degree of

well-being is attainable, while it betrays the general ignorance concerning the specific nature of well-being, and the right methods of securing it.

But it is very extraordinary that, although the *possession* of Good be the incessant desire of every individual, mankind in general take so little pains to form adequate notions of this good; to examine minutely in what it consists, and by what specific means it can be obtained. They appear to give themselves up entirely to the chance of receiving different impressions from surrounding objects, as they pass through life; or they permit the strong and vigorous influence of present objects, to be their sole guides; and it is with difficulty they are convinced by experience itself, that the dissatisfactions and vexations they suffer, proceed from the seductions of these guides. They eagerly pursue the more immediate, or most agreeable sensations arising from the gratification of their appetites, and the indulgence of the prevalent passion, without calculating the sum of good or evil which will be the probable result.

It is surely of the first importance, that we entertain just ideas of that for which we are all anxious; that we ascertain in what Well-being consists; the degrees of felicity human nature is rendered capable of possessing, and the sources from whence alone they are derived, pre-

paratory to our pursuit of the means we consider as adapted to the end.

Without some consistent ideas of well-being, it will be impossible to decide whether the objects we are so anxious to obtain, as the means of happiness, have any connection with it; whether the possession of them, although so generally desired, be in any respect calculated to place us in a state which all men would pronounce to be *Happy;* whether we may not deceive ourselves by some vague conceptions concerning various kinds of gratifications; and precipitately indulge some prevailing humour, without examining if such indulgences will constitute the whole of well-being, render it permanent, and progressive, or essentially deduct from it.

To be the better enabled to form a genuine estimate of that which all men pursue, it will be proper to collect together some of the leading characteristics of Well-being, state its various degrees, examine the specific nature and qualities of the means pursued in order to obtain the end; and trace their peculiar adaptation to the nature and constitution of Man. In our Analytical View of the Passions, some of these subjects have been occasionally noticed; but as our observations were cursorily made in various connections, and for various purposes, it will be necessary to treat them in a more connected and ample manner, and en-

ter minutely into various particulars, which have not as yet demanded our attention.

In the pursuit of this object, we shall, in the present Disquisition, observe the following order:

First we shall make some observations on the nature of Well-being, and the degrees of Well-being attainable by Man.

In the next place, examine the various sources of Well-being, and investigate the specific character of each.

The above inquiries will be introductory to some observations respecting the progressive nature of Well-being; and also

To an examination of the nature, and causes of human misery.

## CHAP. I.

### ON THE NATURE OF WELL-BEING.

AS the nature of Well-being is most intimately connected with its sources, and will be more fully understood, by an attention to *their* influence, it will not be practicable to treat this part of our subject at large, in a distinct and separate manner. We shall therefore confine ourselves, under the present head, to a few introductory observations.

That a state of Well-being is a state of agreeable *sensation,* is a position which no one will doubt. Where no feeling is excited, we are dead both to pleasure and pain. To an attentive percipient, no impression or perception can be totally indifferent; some degree of predilection and aversion will be created, which constitutes the commencement of Well-being or of the contrary: for predilection and aversion cannot exist with insensibility. We had a singular instance, under the article of *Sentiment* of our minuter feelings, when it was remarked that they accompanied our favorable or unfavorable opinions, of the conduct and character of others, with whom we may have no immediate

connection; there can therefore be no difficulty in admitting them to extend to the minutiæ of our own existence. See also what has been advanced under the Article *Consciousness*.

Nor will it be disputed, that a sense of well-being is a sensation *agreeable* to our nature. This is so evident a proposition, that nothing can be added to make it more intelligible and convincing. It is always produced by something that is *pleasing* to us; and it renders existence valuable in our estimation, as long as we are conscious of the impression. Were it not for this quality, it could never be desired.*

Experience also informs us, that agreeable sensations may be infinitely diversified, according to the seat of them; according to the nature of their exciting causes, as these are simple or combined; according to the degrees of their influence upon the Percipient, and according to the habitual or occasional sensibility of his frame, or to the prevailing disposition of the moment.

Our agreeable sensations are usually distinguished into *Corporeal* and *Mental*. The first relate chiefly to our animal appetites, or to the enjoyment of external objects by the organs of sense;

* See Phil. Treat. p. 21, also Notes C and F.

in the other, the powers of the Mind are more immediately engaged; hence they are deemed more refined and intellectual. These distinctions properly mark the two extremes: For it does not appear that the mind can be wholly elevated above the corporeal sensations. Its desires are towards them; it is conscious of their indulgence, and of their effects. On the other hand, the most exalted of the mental occupations are through the medium and instrumentality of the corporeal powers; and will, in some cases, produce emotions which indicate how much the corporeal frame may be influenced by the state of the mind. Each species equally belongs to the common nature of Man, whatever may be our opinions concerning the peculiar seat of each.*

The sensations under each class admit of various degrees, which are expressed by correspondent terms. The lowest state is denoted by the term *agreeable*; that is, there is something in our feelings, in our situation, in the scenes around us, or in some peculiarity, which we experience to *agree*, at the instant at least, with our nature, with our desires and propensities, or with our humour. There is some kind or degree of *adaptation*, which is *acceptable* to us; and although it should not possess sufficient force to arrest our affections, or ex-

* See Vol. I. Obser. 4, On the Seat of the Passions.

cite strong emotions, yet it is very *acceptable* to us, and forms as it were the commencement of well-being.

The next degree is expressed by *pleasure, pleasing, pleasant.* The cause of a sensation which we pronounce to be pleasant, is acknowledged to possess a power beyond simply *agreeing* with our nature or propensities, for this may be so gentle in its influence, that the mind scarcely adverts to it. Pleasure assumes the appearance of a positive Good. The *agreeableness* of our state may sometimes be occasioned, by perceiving our release from what has been *disagreeable; pleasure* is of a more positive nature. Under pleasant sensations, we are fully *conscious* that we feel agreeably, that our sensations are very desirable in themselves, and the objects exciting them worthy of our ardent pursuit.

As all sensations exciting a perception, or consciousness of Well-being are at the instant, *pleasant, pleasing,* productive of *pleasure,* thus are these equally applicable to the enjoyments of a more sensitive, or of a more refined and mental nature. Yet it is observable that when we speak of Pleasure indefinitely, we are supposed to refer moreparticularly to sensual enjoyments, and to the indulgence of the animal appetite. These ideas are suggested when it is said of any one, that "he is

fond of *pleasure,*" that "he pursues his *pleasures* to the neglect of his duty," &c. Where the word is applied to *mental* enjoyments, it is used with an *explicative,* as the "*pleasures* of the imagination, the *pleasures* of hope, the *pleasures* of religion," &c. These different modes of expression arise from the perception, that in the gratification of the appetites and passions, the *strength* of sensation is most obvious; they are sensitive in the common acceptation of the word: and as pleasure from these sources is of short duration, the term itself is used to denote this species of enjoyment, in contradistinction to Happiness, which expresses a more permanent state of Well-being, from more refined sources.

Whatever has proved instrumental in supplying our wants, or satisfying a desire previously excited, is *grateful* to us; and we chiefly use the term in this connection. Thus we speak of the *Gratification* of our desires, of our propensities, of our appetites, of our passions; even of *Anger* and *Revenge,* although they have something turbulent and painful in their nature. Desire being in itself an uneasy sensation, while it has before it some object which, at the instant, promises possession of Good, the satisfying of a desire is, generally speaking, grateful on two accounts; it unites to the release from the preceding uneasiness, an acquisition of the Good desired; which gives an augmented power to the pleasures of gratification.

Sensations of this nature are so acceptable, at the moment, where the object desired seemed to possess peculiar powers of gratification, that the indulgence is frequently termed *Enjoyment*. An expression which perfectly corresponds with what has been remarked concerning the nature of joy; which is generally excited by the sudden and prompt completion of an ardent wish. A high degree of enjoyment is distinguished by the epithets *delight, delightful*. As Gratifications, have in many of their connections a *sensual* character, *delight* is more immediately applicable to the *mind*. It is mostly descriptive of pleasures of a *mental* nature; and of such scenes as are calculated to exhilarate the spirits. It is not in its proper place when applied to the grosser indulgences of Sense; but it has an affinity with the pleasures of Taste; in which organic sensations are introductive of mental enjoyments; and it is peculiarly appropriate to the refined and exalted Affections. Although we may be permitted to speak of the *pleasures* of the table, no one but a confirmed Glutton will dare to speak of the *delights* of the table. We are authorized to take *delight* in *music*, in *dancing*, and in the pleasures of the *chace*, in all the pleasing and exhilarating scenes of nature, and in the contemplation of works of art: and we are commanded to *delight* in the practice of virtue, in the exercise of the social and benevolent affections, and in the offices of Religion.

*Amusement* is the agreeable occcupation of the mind, of a more gentle influence. The objects of amusement are confessedly of a trifling nature. They serve to fill up the void in those who have nothing interesting before them; and they occasionally afford acceptable relaxation to the industrious.

*Extacies, Raptures, Transports,* denote an excess of delight. They carry the Subject out of himself. He appears deprived of the power of self-restraint, or of exercising a control over his feelings. Extacy is mostly applicable to the excess of Joy; Rapture is more intimately connected with subjects of sublime meditation; and they are both indications of the most exalted pleasure. Transport indicates a violence or excess in the passions of any kind, whether they be of a pleasant or unpleasant nature. Thus we speak of the transports of joy, of anger, of grief, and of terror.

The above expressions are chiefly applicable to occasional sensations of the pleasurable kind: and they do not necessarily imply a perpetuity. They may all of them be excited by transient scenes, without placing Man in a better state, than that in which they found him. Things agreeable, pleasant, gratifying, delightful, and productive of momentary extacies, may soon expend their influence, without leaving the mind in a desirable state of Well-being. Some of them may be succeeded by

the disagreeable sensations of regret; and others by still more painful repentance and remorse.

Well-being, in its more permanent state, is distinguished by the appellation of *Happiness*. This is a generic term, applicable to every source of mental enjoyment indiscriminately. It indicates a distinction between sensual pleasures, or even those inspired by more refined objects of taste, and such pleasures which are eminently seated in the Mind. The pursuits which are stigmatized as *Carnal*, are never considered as productive of Happiness. Nor do we apply the term to the enjoyments derived from the fine arts, or the contemplation of any of their productions, or to the effects of mere amusements. It is only applicable to a pleasing state of the mind, commencing with contentment, quickened and augmented by the other affections or passions of joy, satisfaction, complacency, &c. It is familiarly used to express the pleasures derived from social intercourse; thus we are *happy* to see a friend, happy to serve him; happy to hear from him, and happy to discover a similarity of disposition or sentiment, with those whose character or judgment we esteem.

As Happiness consists of various stages or degrees, and may be implanted by objects possessing various degrees of excellence, the most important of these are characterised by peculiar and appropriate terms, such as *felicity, bliss, beatitude*.

*Felicity* is derived from a Latin word which simply expresses Happiness, yet in its adoption, it conveys a more refined and elevated idea, or a still greater degree of well-being. Although we may always be *happy* to see a friend, yet we shall not always possess *Felicity* at the interview. It must be a most intimate friend, in whose company and conversation we take peculiar delight; and whose well-being we contemplate with peculiar satisfaction. By this illustration we discover, that felicity not only expresses a more refined degree, but a more permanent state of well-being. Indeed it principally refers to a *state* of happiness; it is the result of a minute and extensive survey of those circumstances, in our situation, which promise to be the sources of permanent pleasure; by means of which we enjoy contentment, satisfaction, and exercise the social, and complacential affections of the heart.

*Bliss* expresses Happiness from the most exalted source. It applies to the felicity enjoyed by superior Intelligences, and even by the most perfect of Beings; and it is alone deemed applicable to *human* beings, whose minds are elevated above sublunary enjoyment, and filled with transports by the contemplation of celestial subjects.

*Beatitude* is also elevated above every thing that is mundane; but it principally characterises that state in which bliss is enjoyed; to which it appears

to have the same relation, as felicity has to the sensation of happiness.

The grand characteristic of Happiness, as distinguished from the mere sensations of pleasure, is seated in its being capable of Perpetuity. Pleasures are in their nature transient; they cannot be permanently enjoyed with an equal degree of intenseness; nor will a diversity of objects, or varied pleasures prevent satiety. But the mind may easily be supposed to exist in a state of permanent well-being; and bliss may be succeeded by blissful sensations, in an unremitted succession.

Happiness in all its stages, may perhaps be aptly discriminated from the other pleasurable sensations, by the following characteristics: *It is a refined sensation, permanently agreeable from causes, in which the mind is peculiarly interested, and of which it uniformly approves.* Whoever feels himself in this situation, feels himself happy in the completest sense of the word. He is placed at a remote distance from every agonizing passion; his mind is occupied by interesting objects; and under the perpetual influence of the most pleasing, approved, and sublime affections. He no longer hesitates whether life be a blessing; his only remaining desire is a *perpetuity of bliss*. A consciousness of Well-being diffuses a pleasing serenity over the soul, at the lowest ebb of his enjoyment; and this can be only interrupted, by the occasional sensation of some exalted and dignified Emotion!

## CHAP. II.

## ON THE SOURCES OF WELL-BEING.

THESE are many and various. They relate to man as endowed with a sensitive, corporeal frame; as susceptible of various affections, either personal, or in his social character, and as possessing intellectual powers. They may also have a reference to his hopes and expectations respecting futurity. We shall, in the present chapter, confine our attention to the various objects with which man is connected, in the present state of existence; and devote the following chapter to the consideration of Religion, as the source of well-being.

### SECT. I.

#### ON THE SOURCES OF WELL-BEING ADAPTED TO THE SENSITIVE NATURE OF MAN.

THERE is a placid state, both of body and mind, which most men experience at times, and some not unfrequently; of which it may be difficult to trace the specific causes. It consists in a perfect exemption from every uneasiness,

corporeal or mental; and in a general undefined perception of *Comfort*. It is derived from the operation of various minuter circumstances; which like the circumambient atmosphere, may be enjoyed by those who are unconscious of their existence, or are ignorant of their component parts. We have had frequent occasion to observe, that through the medium of our bodily organs, we are intimately connected with the objects around us; and by virtue of the exquisite sensibility of our frame, nothing can remain perfectly indifferent to us. We perceive, in every part of nature, powers and properties, which seem adapted to some principle with which we are endowed, and from each of these properties are we able to enjoy some degree of pleasure. It is from such sources that we derive many habitual comforts, which, although they may not be sufficiently potent at all times, to attract our immediate attention, contribute very copiously to an habitual sense of well-being. Thus are we able to enjoy, by turns and in different moods, the exhilarations of light, the soothings of darkness, grateful warmth, refreshing coolness, the pleasures of motion, those of tranquillity and rest. Every object of vision with which the material world is so amply supplied; the diversity of sounds and of odours, with which the correspondent senses are regaled, are rendered capable of placing us in a conscious state of well-being, whether or not we advert to the causes.

Each Organ of sense has its own characteristic power of receiving impressions of a pleasurable nature, correspondent to its conformation and uses; and correspondent to that peculiar construction of the nerves, by which it is specifically adapted to the distinct properties of surrounding bodies. Each organ of sense has also its *diversities* of pleasurable impressions. These are too numerous and too subtile to be traced and fully explained. The various species of bodies, for example, which emit pleasing effluviæ, have their own characteristic odours; by which they are not only distinguished from each other, but they communicate their own distinct gratifications. Numberless are the substances which are grateful to the palate: These are classified according to their own peculiar flavour; and in each class, there is an infinitude of bodies spread over every part of the creation, communicating their peculiar characteristic relish. Similar observations are applicable to the innumerable objects which charm the eye by their colours, their configurations, their arrangements, their magnitude, their minuteness, their organization, and obvious adaptations to a diversity of purposes. They are, in like manner, applicable to the melodious or harmonic sounds which delight the ear. How pleasing are the diversities observable in the human voice! What a variety do we not observe among the feathered

warblers of the woods and groves! How great is the diversity of musical instruments, from which sounds are emitted in a boundless variety; and although these sounds be devoid of articulation or thought, they are able to refresh and exhilarate the frame; to soothe the animal spirits, draw forth the tenderest emotions, or elevate the mind to something dignified and noble, as if some specific object were immediately before us!

In every instance of organic impulse, the sensation felt, appears to be seated in the part which receives the impression, yet the Mind is obviously participant, by the power of its consciousness: and the general effects are a vivacity and exhilaration, which common phraseology ascribes to the animal spirits. The intenseness of gratification may depend upon various causes; such as the nature of the gratification itself, the sensibility of the nerves, and the strength of the preceding desire. For when this desire arises to an ungovernable passion, it is in itself a sensation of the disagreeable kind; but the sudden removal of pain is always a source of positive pleasure; a glow of satisfaction accompanies the sudden relief, and this circumstance, superadded to the pleasure peculiar to the nature of the gratification, augments its effects.

The following appear to be the leading characteristics of organic pleasures.

Those which arise from the gratification of the sensual appetites, are in their own nature temporary and transient. They were manifestly ordained to answer a *physical* purpose. They relate to the growth, support, and invigoration of the corporeal frame: and also to the reproduction of the species, that animal life may continue to exist, under a constitution of things which has destined each individual to dissolution. The benignity and importance of a plan, which renders the use of such means as are essential to the existence of the Species, a source of gratification, are most conspicuous. If animal natures were not stimulated by desires, there would be an universal suspension of those pursuits which are so essential to their support. The desires of this class are *impetuous,* that they may become efficient, by surmounting various obstacles which might otherwise be deemed insuperable; and that the important blessings of health, vigour, and existence, might not be exposed to dangerous inattention and neglect. But they are rendered *periodical,* that they may not occupy the whole of our attention and pursuit; and that ample leisure may be enjoyed for various other purposes of existence.

Their final cause being to answer specific purposes, when these are effected, the desire immediately subsides. The gratification ceases, when the *stimulus* of the particular appetite ceases to act:

and if, by any adventitious means, there should be an attempt to enforce the enjoyment, far beyond the natural impulse, the pleasurable sensation is succeeded by apathy and disgust. Those sensual enjoyments which are at the commencement the most vivid, are most prone to disgust. Enjoyed with innocence, and with that moderation which secures from satiety, they leave a pleasurable influence behind them. They have removed the irksome sensations arising from desires ungratified; they relieve the mind from the sameness and insipidity of the more servile offices of life; it is cheered by the perception that there is good adapted to our animal nature, within the reach of every one. The prospect of future gratifications, of a similar kind, is satisfactory and consoling; while it stimulates to a pleasing pursuit of the means. Thus, as we have formerly remarked in our description of general health, a certain vivacity and vigour, not easily described, reign through the system; and we possess a consciousness of good, which we are not solicitous to define.*

It has been hinted already, that the gratifications which have for their final cause, the production or support of animal life, are universally considered as the least respectable in the scale of enjoyments. They are indulgences in which the *Mind* is supposed to have the least share, and therefore they

* See Ph. Treat. Obs. on the seat of the Passions, passim.

are exclusively denominated *sensual.* They are moreover peculiarly exposed to those excesses and irregularities, which nothing excepting a general depravity of manners, can prevent from being peculiarly disgraceful in the public eye.

The gratifications derived from *Odours,* acquire no character either of censure or applause ; they are not so anxiously pursued, nor is indulgence marked with culpable excess.

In many of those gratifications enjoyed through the medium of *Sight* and of *Hearing,* the *Mind* is more immediately considered as being a participant. Refinements in these, are contemplated with pleasure; as being the product of *art* and *science,* and the rewards of *genius.* They manifest various degrees of skill, which call forth our admiration ; and they are enjoyed with peculiar satisfaction, from their obvious adaptation to a refined and cultivated taste. Such gratifications are placed in the medium between the enjoyments supposed to be purely corporeal, and those which have been exclusively ascribed to the mind. But although they aspire after a more exalted character, they are still placed, by common consent, in the regions of Pleasure; and are viewed as transient amusements, rather than as a permanent Good.

## SECT. II.

### ON THE AFFECTIONS WHICH ARE IN THEMSELVES PRODUCTIVE OF WELL-BEING.

IT has been remarked, that the sensations enumerated above communicate a perception of well-being, as long as we are under the immediate influence of their specific causes; but that this influence is of a transitory nature. No one expects to enjoy incessant pleasure, gratification, or delight from a particular object, or a particular idea, however vivid the first impression may have been. These sensations do not therefore denote an habitual state of mind, but merely its occasional feelings. Its habitual state of Well-being, is alone to be found in the habitual exercise of its best affections; the influence and permanency of which are productive of various degrees of *Happiness*, and constitute the important distinction between Happiness, and the Pleasures of Sense.

In our introductory treatise it was observed, that the habitual dispositions of our minds, respecting well-being and happiness, are the origins of those two cardinal affections *Love* and *Hatred*, with their satellites, *Desire* and *Aversion:* that Love invariably respects whatever appears to possess *Good*, or the power of communicating it; whatever has a ten-

dency towards actual enjoyment; or towards the possession of some desirable object, capable of producing enjoyment: that it is excited by the perception or supposition of particular properties or qualities, congenial to our nature, and adapted to render existence desirable: and that Hatred is excited by qualities of an opposite nature and tendency. It was also remarked that all those passions and affections which are immediately excited by the idea of Good, are in themselves of a pleasant nature; and those in which the idea of Evil is predominant, are in themselves painful; and that this law is uniformly operative, whether the ideas of good and evil have a reference to the Selfish or Social principle; whether the object of our love relate to our own personal welfare, or whether it have a reference to the state, conduct, or character of others.* It was farther observed, that the permanency of well-being or of unhappiness, is alone to be found in the *Affections*; that the *Passions* are, strictly speaking, momentary agitations, produced by the sudden influence of their exciting causes, which upon their subsiding, leave the mind under some more permanent sensation, of a pleasant or unpleasant nature, as often as the object appears to possess a considerable degree of importance: †

* See Phil. Treatise, Chap. 1, § 3, 4, 5. Class I. Order I. Part II. Chap. III. § 4. † See Part II. Obs. II.

and in our Section on the influence of the passions on Happiness, we gave a general sketch of those passions and affections, which are immediately productive of pleasant sensations, such as our nature eagerly seeks after; and also of those which are productive of unhappiness.*

Having thus amply considered this subject in various connections and for different purposes, it will not be necessary to enlarge upon every minute particular at present; and we shall confine ourselves to the resumption of those ideas, which are peculiarly calculated to elucidate the subject immediately under consideration; subjoining such remarks as may be requisite, in the present connection.

It appears from what has been already advanced, that *Love* is, in itself, a most pleasing affection. Whatever be the object, and however the mind may be deceived in its choice, or disappointed in its expectations, the affection was indulged because it was a *pleasant* one. For where the delusion has been the greatest, and disappointments the most vexatious, the affection itself could only be excited by the appearance of something *Good, Amiable, Desirable;* some quality or other, which promised to contribute to our welfare. Hence it

* Part II. Ch. III. § 4.

is that the sole contemplation of a beloved object communicates pleasure. The whole attention is directed towards something estimated as a good; than which nothing can be more interesting to the mind. Love contemplates good in the object, good in the means, good in the end. In every pursuit of personal welfare, Self-love is the centre to which every beloved quality is expected to gravitate; and as it respects the Social principle, Love is the centre, from whence every emanation of the social and benevolent affections is sent forth. It is by the possession of what we love, that we are animated with joy; that we experience contentment, satisfaction, and complacency. Esteem, respect, gratitude, admiration, and every instance of complacent regard, are no other than modifications of this divine principle! In a word, the proper direction, and due indulgence of the affection of Love, constitute the whole of well-being, from its humblest to its most exalted state. In every source of well-being, which has already passed under consideration, it is this delightful leaven which invigorates the whole mass. It is observable in the gratifications, which are termed sensual, in the pleasures of a cultivated taste, in those pleasant emotions and affections which are more immediately excited by the contemplation, or possession of specific objects; in the pursuit of knowledge, and in the pleasing exercise of every one of our intellectual faculties.

But as all have their characteristics, as they all contribute in various ways, and in different degrees, to our enjoyment, the affection of Love appears in different forms, if I may thus express myself, and acquires different appellations, correspondent with these peculiarities.

The Appetite for those gratifications which commence and terminate in sense, acquires the distinguishing character of Sensuality, which is chiefly expressed by the terms *appetite, passion, desire, lust.* But an attempt is sometimes made to alleviate the grossness of the ideas, which are now conveyed by these terms, by substituting that of *Love,* as the *Love* of wine, the *Love* of women, the *Love* of good cheer, &c. A relish for those more refined enjoyments, of which the senses are the immediate instruments, is distinguished by the appropriate term Taste; which, though borrowed from a sensual gratification, is elevated into a *mental* relish, in consequence of a mental participation. Slight and transient pleasures, the mere *ephemera* of enjoyment, are termed Amusements; and dispositions of the mind towards them are expressed by *liking, fancying, being pleased with:* the former expressions denoting an affection of the slightest kind, the other the momentary amusement the object bestows.

When we express a prevalent affection, or strong attachment to scientific pursuits in general,

by the *Love of Science*, it is alone in an aggregate sense. We consider science as *one* object, possessing the most attractive qualities; but when this aggregate idea cannot be retained, that mode of expression is generally relinquished. It is very seldom applied to any particular branch of science. The predilection is marked, in more common phraseology, by being *fond of, delighting in.* Nor are these terms applied to any immediate object, but to the state and disposition of the mind. They refer to the ardour of pursuit, and not to any single object: as he is *fond* of hunting, of music, dancing, painting, &c.

It appears from these examples, that *Love*, in its appropriate use, is preferred to denote a strong attachment to some particular object. It is here used with invariable propriety; and in this case it indicates a permanent affection towards an object, which seems to possess amiable qualities; something which is immediately calculated to constitute well-being, for a continuance.

Such objects may, as we have already noted, have a primary reference to ourselves or to others. When they relate to Ourselves, they respect the powers, properties, and qualities, which seem to contribute immediately and essentially, to our own good, by extricating or protecting us from evil, or by rendering us progressive in the possession of Well-being; and they exert an influence upon this

well-being, in various degrees and manners, ac-according to their degrees of importance, according as they are present with us, appear attainable by due exertions, or as they are more immediately in prospect. Thus are they productive of joy, contentment, satisfaction, complacency, desire and hope.

The state or qualities which respect Others, may relate to peculiarities in their situations, which, from our intimate connection with them, or the interest we take in their welfare, are capable of inspiring us with the same affections, in a secondary manner, and as it were by the reflection of sympathy; or they regard certain mental qualities, dispositions, and character, which appear peculiarly amiable in our eyes, and which are calculated to kindle love and personal attachment, to an eminent degree; or to inspire us with esteem, respect, veneration, gratitude, and admiration.

As all these affections, not only contribute to our well-being in their immediate indulgence, but constitute the essential ingredients of happiness, they merit every attention; and this will authorize us to resume a general survey of their peculiar characteristics.

*Joy*, from the suddenness and violence of its nature, is universally denominated a *Passion*. But it merits reconsideration in this place, as the plea-

sure it communicates is mental, whatever may be the cause of its immediate excitement; and as it is frequently introductory of the most kindly and permanent affections. Joy is the only passion which contains pure unmixed delight; and this renders it the most grateful of all our emotions. It is the vivid and animating pleasure, inspired by the sudden perception of something peculiarly interesting, or of something which is immediately productive of good; or which promises to contribute to our future well-being. It is a pleasing delirium, arising from a brisk and lively flow of spirits, diffusing a pleasurable sensation over the whole frame; and attuning the mind to every thing agreeable. It is a *social* pleasure which loves a witness, and is augmented to extacies by the obvious participation of those around us, disposing to gladness, mirth, and hilarity. At the first impulse of joy, the imagination runs wild; a thousand pleasing thoughts are suggested, and expectations innumerable play about the fancy. Where such expectations have not totally failed, some obvious good remains, for the mind to contemplate in its calmer hours; and the acquisition may be sufficient to place it in a state of Contentment, Satisfaction, and Complacency.

The lowest state of a pleasing permanency in well-being, of which we are conscious upon reflection, is expressed by the term *Contentment*.

We have described Contentment to be an acquiescence of mind in the portion of good possessed. It implies a perception that our lot might, to external appearance, have been better, or that it may not have answered our expectations; yet it confesses that we possess a sufficiency of the means of comfort, and that we should be unreasonable and imprudent to depreciate them.

This inferior state of well-being requires, either that we should be totally exempt from pain, and all corporeal or mental sufferings; or that we continue in the possession of some good that is more than an equivalent; and is capable, in some way or other, of indemnifying us for all that we suffer, or may have suffered. It supposes that we are supplied with whatever may be necessary for our existence and support, and with whatever may be tolerably well adapted to the situation in which we are placed. It implies that we are free from predominant uneasiness of mind, from any cause whatever; whether it be from losses, vexations, disappointments, self-reproach, or such inordinate desires as might render our present state irksome to us. It implies an exemption from corroding cares, and tormenting apprehensions about futurity.

Contentment prefers a comparison of the good we possess, with that inferiority of state and condition which might have been our lot, rather than

with the abundance which extravagant desires had painted to the imagination. It also compares our portion of good with that of others, whose expectations and claims were better founded; and thus it checks a propensity to murmuring. It learns to contemplate the splendid advantages of the more fortunate, without envy; and thus it acquires a placid state of mind to which they may be strangers; and for which the most exalted stations, and most valuable possessions, can afford no equivalent. Contentment values our comforts at the time they are with us, and does not leave it to a painful privation, to appreciate their worth when they cannot be enjoyed. Consequently it secures us from the folly of neglecting a certain for an imaginary or precarious good; and from omitting to avail ourselves of those qualities in objects which might have been beneficial, through an extravagant, monopolizing impatience, of obtaining other apparent means of happiness; means of whose adaptation to that purpose we may be ignorant, or may have formed the most erroneous notions. Contentment therefore derives every possible advantage from the present stock of good; and can only be induced to seek for something farther, when the superior advantages are most obvious, and the means of acquirement are sanctioned by reason and prudence. Thus is Contentment not only a pleasant state of mind in itself, but it is a security

against all the pains and torments to which immoderate desires are exposed, against the vexations and disappointments arising from premature pursuits, and that fretful, peevish, anxious, habit of mind, which blights and mildews the whole stock in our possession.

*Satisfaction* expresses a higher degree of Well-being. It may be inspired by the general state and situation of things around us, being advantageous to the extent of our wishes; or by the full accomplishment of some particular desire. In the first case, Satisfaction indicates its superiority to contentment, by being more exempt from those alloys of evil, or deductions from good, to which contentment may be obliged to submit. It is, as it were, the Completion of contentment; such a fulness of good, as to leave no place for any painful desires. It constitutes, accordingly, *permanent* Well-being, and is a disposition of mind which contemplates the pursuits of the restless and the ambitious, with triumph; looks upon pomp and splendor with a steady undazzled eye; and is convinced that the most enlarged possessions, are seldom able to purchase the blessings it has secured.

The Satisfaction we feel, in the accomplishment of some ardent wish, that reason has allowed, is an immediate refreshment, and a delightful repose to the mind, between the intervals of our pursuits. Where the object has been important, and the de-

sire innocent, this satisfaction has also a degree of permanency in its nature. We perceive a manifest advancement in the scale of well-being. We derive a lasting pleasure, from the comparison made between our present and our former state. We are inspired with courage respecting our future plans; and perhaps feel ourselves justified in the enlargement of our future prospects, and in the indulgence of sanguine hopes concerning them. All of which are the occasions of present comfort.

That the affection of *Complacency* is peculiarly rich in enjoyment, every one must be convinced that adverts to the observations already made concerning it. Complacency is the acme of *satisfaction*, rendered peculiarly grateful by the *approbation of our reason*. It can alone be inspired by the perception, that some mental faculty has been exerted, *intentionally* exerted, in the production or communication of *Good:* that our knowledge, our observation from experience, our judgment, our imagination and inventive Powers, have been employed in discoveries, determinations, decisions, plans, and executions, that may prove of *Utility* to ourselves and others. It is the Satisfaction which arises, not from the accomplishment of a favorite desire simply, but by the addition of *Worth* to the design, or execution. After taking a survey, or a retrospect of conduct,

with its motives, and issues, it pronounces with a firm tone, *This is Good.* *

When Complacency respects the conduct or state of others, it derives happiness from their merits, and the success of their meritorious exertions; in which it is a perfect contrast to the selfish and irritating passions of hatred, envy, and jealousy. It is the strongest cement also of every natural and social affection. When the instinctive fondness of parents, habitual attachments of associates, the attractions of personal charms, are manifestly connected with intrinsic merit in the objects, this justifies, elevates, and ennobles the predilection, and renders it most permanent, and most delightful. The mind fully approves of the strength of the affection, without being at variance with itself, without struggling to subdue an attachment, which ought not to be indulged; and without censuring an excess which the character of the object cannot authorize or palliate.

Complacency, alone possesses the secret of deriving consolation from various states and circumstances, which are in themselves sources of discomfort, vexation, and sorrow. It can pass through briars and thorns with chearful alacrity, when they conduct to paths of happiness. In the deepest gloom, it alleviates the mind, by the per-

* See Phil. Treat. Page 66.

ception of bright scenes beyond it. Complacency will acquiesce in present labours, pains, and troubles, by viewing them as the necessary means of obtaining some future, permanent good, which will more than indemnify for the present distress. Its exciting causes are designed exertions for some beneficial purpose, planned and conducted with wisdom; and when these characteristics are obvious, it can always acquiesce, and sometimes rejoice.

The benefits of an affection which is able to discover Good, while it lies immersed in surrounding Evils, and to rejoice in nominal evil as the instrument of good, are too numerous and extensive to permit enlargement, and are too interesting to be fully appreciated.

Although *Desire* has nothing pleasing in itself, its characteristic being that restless sensation, which is excited by the perception of something unpleasant and imperfect in our state; and although extravagant desires and fruitless wishes, constitute much of the misery of human life; yet when desires are rational and moderate, when they are directed towards proper objects, and when stimulated to proper pursuits, the pleasure attending either mental or corporeal exertions, united with the hope of success, more than counterbalances the uneasiness they occasion. *Desire* is distinguished from an inactive and impotent wish, by the supposition that the object desired is in itself attainable;

that it is within the reach of due exertions; and thus is it necessarily associated with some degree of *hope;* deriving the larger portion of the pleasurable sensations which may accompany it, from this source.

*Hope* is obviously one of the most pleasing of our affections; although it be not totally exempt from doubtful apprehensions. From its animating and invigorating nature, it has justly been considered as the *cordial of life.* Wherever it can be indulged, it administers consolation. It alleviates present distress; enables us both to wait with patience, and to make vigorous exertions for a release. It stimulates to fresh acquisitions, and an enlargement of our sphere of happiness. It is perpetually occupied in the contemplation of Good; and thus it enters, by anticipation, into those feelings, which the desired Good is expected to produce. When these are greatly predominant, hope quickens into joy, and partakes of all its exhilarating effects, in proportion as expectation rises superior to doubt.

The kindly influence of Hope is perpetual. We cannot suppose ourselves placed in a situation, where it can be rendered incapable of administering to our happiness. When we enjoy Good, the hope of its continuance, inexpressibly enhances its value: and large indeed must be our stock of blessings, which shall totally exclude the hope of something more. It is universally operative; extend-

ing itself to every possible object of desire and pursuit, whether for inferior gratifications or mental pleasures. Joy itself is transient; the affections of *contentment, satisfaction, complacency,* respect particular states or specific objects merely; it is by the means of *Hope,* that we arrive to these pleasant sensations, that we anticipate permanency, or seek accumulation.

Although Well-being or Happiness relate to something permanent, by which it is distinguished from the transient gratifications of sense; yet this permanency, like that of health and vigour in the corporeal frame, can only be perpetuated by a succession of means. The mind would stagnate, would become listless and inactive, were every desire accomplished so completely, that it should be precluded from extending its expectations towards something farther. That which first pleased by its novelty, would lose this cause or addition to our pleasures, when it became no longer novel. The contentment of the present period, would degenerate into indolence, did it preclude farther desires and exertions: That which may have communicated the most lively satisfaction, by removing the causes, or the feeling, of distress, at the commencement of its influence, must produce more feeble and languid sensations, as the more aggravating circumstances of that distress, begin to be effaced from the memory: That which gave the greatest

satisfaction, by promising protracted advantages, must gradually diminish in its value, as the bounds of their duration are approached: The satisfactory accomplishment of one wish, cannot annihilate many others equally pertinent: The more the subjects of complacency are multiplied, the more is our felicity augmented: Active minds alone can be happy; these must have occupations; these occupations to communicate satisfaction and complacency, must appear interesting; that is, they must have some *Good* for their object: A pleasing energy of soul is not to be enfeebled by present possessions and acquisitions: It is not to be bribed into supineness, by the largest portion of the means and occasions of Good that can be obtained; for when the mind ceases to experience the repeated stimulus of Good, either in new acquisitions, or in communications to others, all that it possesses cannot prevent the gradual diminution of enjoyment: Nor can any possessions, however ample, compensate for the vigour of fresh pursuits, the exhilarating pleasures of hope, and the occasional transports of joy from new sources of apparent Good; or communicate, to a perpetuity, sensations equally productive of happiness: That which promised a perpetuity of bliss, or promised to be the perfection of happiness, would finally deceive us, were it to annihilate *Hope!*

Such are the pleasurable sensations we love to experience; and although we expect something more from the object than the excitement of these passions and affections; although we be stimulated by the hopes of some positive pleasure, yet these are the choicest rewards of our exertions. Positive pleasures are alone valuable in themselves, when they leave these beneficial effects, after their more vigorous exertions shall have subsided.

## SECT. III.

### ON THE WELL-BEING DERIVED FROM PARTICULAR ATTACHMENTS.

IT is obvious from the preceding remarks, that neither pleasure nor happiness, can originate from a mere act of the will, independent of every exterior cause. The pleasures of sense must be awakened and gratified by things external. The pleasures of the mind must arise from the perception of a fitness or adaptation of certain known powers, properties, situations, and circumstances, to some principles and propensities characteristic of human nature. All enjoyment implies that there is something to be enjoyed. The whole doctrine of the passions and affections evinces, that the intimate connection of man with the universe, renders it impossible for him to enjoy a solitary existence. Of himself he is impotent and joyless. The hu-

man affections, like the tendrils of the vine, must lay hold of surrounding objects, or human happiness, like the vine, would lie prostrate, never to rise. But they lay hold of nothing that does not promise support, protection, consolation, and enjoyment. This propensity in our nature is happily expressed by the term *attachment*.

We have frequently remarked that, whatever is deemed capable of promoting well-being, or a grateful state of existence, is contemplated by us as a *Good;* and although it may, at first, be viewed simply as a mean productive of an end, yet it does not remain an object upon which our rational and discriminating powers solely are engaged, it attracts also the *affections* of the heart. It is valued as containing Good in reserve; as a treasure over which we delight to have a command, that we may enjoy it when convenience, disposition, or opportunity shall occur. In consequence of its possessing these latent powers, the pleasing ideas of safety, or of addition to our stock of enjoyment are excited. Thus whatever contributes to render our present well-being permanent, or is considered as possessing the means of some future good, becomes of itself a good. It is the immediate cause of well-being by the affections attached to it, and by a confidence in the future, which it inspires.

These pleasing qualities, and these means of good, are as numerous as the objects or circum-

stances surrounding us. We can scarcely conceive of a situation, scene, or event, which may not, in some connection or other, possess some kindly adaptation, and become the occasion or the instrument either of pleasure or of utility.

The investigations already made, will evince that these qualities and adaptations may relate to our animal nature, to our state and connections as social beings, to the various powers and employments of our minds, and to the opinions entertained respecting our relation to a Superior Being, and a future state of existence. In all of which are contained numberless sources of individual attachments.*

The qualities in objects which immediately relate to animal gratification, have already been made conspicuous. It has been shewn that, from the transient nature of our animal appetites, likings, dislikings, ardent cravings, and disgusts may become alternate, according to the physical state of our frames; and consequently, the qualities correspondent with these animal desires and propensities are never entitled to the term *affection*. We may at times *like, relish,* or *be pleased* with *sweet,* or *sour,* or *pungent,* or *cold,* or *warm,* but we cannot *have an affection for them.*

The powers and properties which give us delight in the exercise of our intellectual faculties, are not

* See Phil. T. Chap. I. § v. *Objects of Love and Hatred.*

to be particularized. They furnish a *whole*, as it were. We love a particular study in the *aggregate*, without being able to analyze its parts, in such a manner as to place our affections upon an individual quality. The general influence, or the general beneficial result, uniformly strikes the mind, and we love the whole, as being in some way or other the means of Good.

Those which are most obvious to our perceptions, are so numerous and diversified, that it is impossible to enter into a minute detail. We shall therefore specify some of the most common and influential.

Of the causes which have been mentioned, as creating a diversity in our affections, it is observable that, some are simply operative in directing our affections towards particular objects, or in creating a diversity in them at different periods; such as sex, temperament, experience, education, &c. &c. but there are others which excite such specific ideas of a pleasant nature, that they may of themselves, become the objects of attachment, of a longer or a shorter duration.

Of this position we may adduce national customs, and the force of habit as striking examples.

It has been remarked that national customs, not only reconcile the numerous inhabitants of an extensive district, to states, situations, and prac-

* See Phil. Treat. Part II. Chap. II.

tices, which inspire horror in the minds of strangers, but this principle forms a very large portion of the comfort and happiness of the natives. Every thing about them seems perfectly natural to them. Every object, in the least desirable, was the object of their first love. The attachment grows up with them, and a separation is felt and resented as an act of violence. It is this principle which spreads a charm over the place of our birth, and the familiar scenes of our childhood. Nor can the absence of many years, or being placed in a superior situation, or being conversant with much superior objects, totally efface the pleasing impression.

In like manner is the force of Habit not only the cause of our being reconciled, or bearing with a degree of patience, many circumstances in our lot, which cannot be said to possess any pleasing qualities; but we enjoy a degree of pleasure in the performance of many things rendered familiar by habit, which would be displeasing, painful, or repugnant to the Inexperienced. Thus we acquire a powerful Attachment, an unweaned Affection for peculiarities which have no other claim upon us, but from the force of habit. These we contemplate as belonging so intimately to ourselves, that we feel an irksome vacuity in their absence, and enjoy a great degree of satisfaction in their being replaced. The man who has an

attachment to a favorite room, to a particular pipe, &c. feels daily the force of these assertions.

The love of Novelty and a fondness for Fashion, though they are very strong attachments for the instant, the one impelling to pursue the novel object with a degree of impatience, and the other disposing to every extravagance and absurdity, yet they are compelled to fly away by the evanescent nature of their objects. Where novelty is the only recommendation, it must cease to charm when the object is no longer novel; and the fondness for imitation in dress and manners, becomes as versatile as the dress and manners which appear, at the instant, to be so enchanting.

The love of Singularity is a pleasure communicated to a vain mind, from an opposite principle. Instead of confounding itself with the multitude, it aims at standing at a certain distance, in order to become the sole object of attention. It affects some species of superiority, by which to attract the admiration of those very persons over which it seeks to triumph, and whom it professes to despise while it seeks their applause. But so long as the impressions last, they communicate a species of gratification, until it is perceived that this singularity has attracted contempt.

Popular Prejudices exert, in a smaller circle, all the force of national customs, which are mostly

popular prejudices upon a much larger scale: and like them they reconcile us to various absurdities and extravagancies in sentiment and conduct; they become the most inviolate bonds of union, and constitute the charm of many social and personal attachments.

It has been observed of the associated affections, that they have the power of changing the complexion of every thing around us. Our strong affections for a particular object, confer, in our estimation, a degree of merit upon every object, and every circumstance connected with it. These seem to have imbibed some of its amiable qualities. Hence it is that the smallest token of affection inspires delight, and is preserved as a treasure; every thing that reminds us of past scenes of pleasure and enjoyment, is itself cherished as an object worthy of our attachments, and thus communicates no inconsiderable degree of pleasure.*

In the chapter on the causes which create a diversity in our affections, † it was remarked that the principle of *Self-love,* has an immediate tendency to magnify the good or evil which relates to ourselves. We attempted to vindicate this disposition from the charge of censurable pride and vanity; and to show, that a strong attachment to whatever is *our own,* because it is our own, is one of the

* See Phil. Treat. Part II. Ch. 11. § 13.

† See Part II. Chap. II. § 7.

happiest propensities of our nature ; as it enables trifles themselves to administer to our comfort, and satisfaction. We shall therefore adduce this as an instance of the earliest attachment of the human mind, and as being universal in its influence. However insignificant the object, the moment I can pronounce it to be *my own*, a value is stamped upon it. The pleasing idea of *personal right* and *property* suggests itself, and we no longer feel, as if we were shut out from the creation. This interesting perception commences with the *Child* and his *play thing*, and it extends to the *Man* who aims at monopolizing the whole creation, and who shows, by the extravagance of his desires, to what an unbounded extent this principle may become operative. It commences with the possession of the smallest piece of coin that circulates, and spreads to the accumulation of millions. It communicates to the most moderate, and the most exorbitant, a similar pleasure; though in the former, it is the most satisfactory. Every man is fond of what he can call *his own;* and the *poorest* possess a something which they *can* call their own; and which as such, is capable of affording them a considerable share of gratification. The labourer has as strong an attachment to his lowly cottage, and all its humble furniture, as the prince to his palace, and its costly ornaments. He also says

"this is *mine*; and it equally administers, in my inferior state, to my comfort and convenience."

The attachment to Wealth, exclusively considered, is an attachment to the means which communicate the power to purchase many gratifications, and sources of delight. The force of this attachment, when it is not directed by reason, is exemplified in the avaricious man, whose whole enjoyment is confined to the sole idea of personal property. His affections strike such deep root into the means themselves, that he cannot suffer a separation, though it were to purchase the most extensive good, by which these very means can alone be rendered valuable.

The love of *Power* consists in a predilection for that station in which the ambitious man seeks to gratify his pride, by triumphantly exerting his own volition in every direction, and vainly insulting that of others.

The love of Titles and Distinctions rises from their being *honorary* distinctions. They are the gratifications of Self-love, from that propensity in the social principle, which induces to value the opinions of others. These distinctions of titles or offices, place *Self* upon a pedestal to be admired, or gazed at by surrounding spectators. When this love of applause is associated with the love of that community whose applause is courted; when it is sought as the meed of some popular virtue,

or beneficent exertion, self-complacency is doubtless enriched and confirmed by the approbation of a grateful Public. It is otherwise the exhibition of vanity; but still it communicates a degree of pleasure to the man, who seeks pre-eminence, notwithstanding it may expose him to many causes of infelicity.

Again, we are not only attached to those things which promise essential good, by fostering some predominant desire, or flattering our hopes of some extensive advantage, we are peculiarly fond also of all the sources of our *Amusements*. Numberless are the trifles with which the human mind is capable of being delighted; if trifles they can be termed which administer to our enjoyment. We frequently consider indulgences of this kind as soothers of our cares; and we cherish such objects both as the rewards and the repose of our labours. That man will not deem himself unhappy, who has the means and the leisure, to follow some particular predilection in the intervals of his toils and cares. Cultivators of flowers, collectors of prints, of paintings, of various curiosities, natural or artificial, the ingenious mechanic, &c. exemplify and expe rience the force of these remarks. It might perhaps be asserted, that few persons feel themselves happy, without this attachment to some favourite object or employment, to which they may have recourse in the moments of leisure. These are

fortunately so numerous and so various, that they do not all demand either wealth or station: many of them are within the reach of the humblest.

Animated beings of the domesticated class, create attachments still more universal. They are the favorite companions of the most abject, and become the sources both of amusement and affection. The shepherd is fond of his dog, not only as an useful assistant, but as a faithful companion; the huntsman of his horses and his hounds; the husbandman acquires an attachment to his team, his herds of cattle, and his flocks of sheep, which rises to an Affection. The housewife loves her poultry: They are viewed with fondness, and she administers to their wants with affectionate assiduity. These few instances may suffice. The causes of pleasure from this source, are so various that they cannot be enumerated; and although some of them may appear too minute and trifling to be particularized, yet they possess the great merit of contributing considerably to the well-being of multitudes.

## SECT. IV.

### ON WELL-BEING DERIVED FROM SOCIAL ATTACHMENTS.

AS every animated being gives the preference to its species, this is pre-eminently the character of man. This principle is so operative that

we love to congregate, without having any particular object in view; and we can enjoy considerable pleasure, without the interchange of benefits or the intercommunication of ideas. Man lights up the countenance of man; nor can we greet an acquaintance without a smile. Absolute solitude is relieved by the *sight* alone of an individual of our species. We experience a disappointment and a gloom, in the perception of vacant seats, where the absent could have contributed nothing to the primary object of our assembling, whether it be in the temple, at the theatre, or at a concert. Every one who has not forfeited a title to humanity, eagerly attaches himself to his species. This disposition can only be checked in individual instances, by prejudice, animosities, rivalships, or some peculiar cause of dissatisfaction. We are also eager to catch at the slightest circumstances, as incitements to the indulgence of our social affections. Hence the facility with which we are disposed to give the preference of good-will, and become interested in the situation and welfare of any one, upon the slightest acquaintance with him. We may feel a general regret at the report of evils which have befallen a perfect stranger, of whom we know nothing but his misfortunes; or we may resent, to a certain degree, any atrocities which he shall have committed. But if his *Person* be somewhat known to us, though unconnected with any particular in-

tercourse, these painful sensations will be greatly increased: and should he have been in the number of our acquaintances, they arise to a degree of agony. We naturally interest ourselves in the welfare of any one, to whom we have been introduced by a mutual acquaintance, or in whose company we may have passed a social hour, much more strongly than in that of others, whose talents or characters, may stand much higher in real worth, or in the public estimation. Hence it is also that we eagerly catch at those smaller circumstances of similarity and intercommunity formerly mentioned; such as similarities in pursuits or professions, in religious or political opinions, proximity of our dwellings, being inhabitants of the same district, subjects to the same authority, &c. The native of a particular country rejoices at the sight of a fellow citizen, or a fellow subject, when in a distant region; and if this region be very remote, the sphere of attraction is proportionably increased. An European, banished to the deserts of Siberia, or wandering in the wilds of Africa, would embrace an European, though of a different nation, as a friend and companion.

These examples fully indicate that the social principle is a very extensive source of pleasing affections. Although in our general commerce with the world, individual impressions from this cause, may be almost imperceptible, yet to be

destitute of them would create a painful vacuity. As they are in their own nature grateful and exhilarating, and as they are incessantly returning, they add essentially to the aggregate of human enjoyments. In the world of insects, infinite numbers compensate for the diminutive size of each individual.

If these more distant relations, manifest the attractive influence of the social principle, how much stronger is the exemplification, at periods professedly devoted to social intercourse. When the motives of assembling, mould the attendants into a sameness of disposition, for a season; when countenance brightening countenance, exhilarates the spirits, gives an unusual flow to instructive, pleasing or lively ideas, which would never have been suggested by the most intense thought in the hour of solitude. It is this species of pleasure which constitutes the charms and the dangers of conviviality; where the bond of union is confessedly enjoyment; When each member comes predisposed to be in good humour with his associates; is determined to suspend his own cares, and promote a suspension in the breasts of others; when an extraordinary indulgence of the palate in good cheer, unites the gratifications of sense with the luxuries of mental intercourse.

But the social principle does not merely produce these general effects; it is the immediate source of permanent, and exalted enjoyment. Here some of the *best affections* are to be found; those which afford the most refined gratification in the indulgence; and the most solid comfort in the retrospect. Personal attachments, or the pleasures of love, and friendship, introduce us into a state worthy of the title of Happiness. In the harmony of relations and friends, we perceive something like a multiplication of ourselves. In the reciprocation of kind actions, and kind wishes, *Self* loses the irksomeness of solitude, and is delightfully invigorated by being rendered sociable.

This subject has been so amply considered, when we were attending to the social affections in our elementary treatise, * that it will be the less necessary to enlarge upon it on the present occasion. It was there remarked that the benevolence which respects our most intimate connections, may be viewed as a species of Self-love; as constituting one common interest: that the *conjugal, parental, filial, fraternal* relations, and particular *friendships,* claim to themselves the title of *affections,* by way of pre-eminence; that these *dwell* with the well disposed mind, and are perpetually operative; consequently they are perpetual sources of well-being

* See Phil. Treatise, pages 126. 318.

to ourselves, as well as to those upon whom our kindly affections are placed.

It will also be easy to collect from what has already been advanced, that general Benevolence is an inexhaustible source of personal enjoyment. A benevolent disposition is the silken cord which attaches us to every branch of sensitive nature, to every being susceptible of Good; and it always enjoys, in some degree, a portion of that Good it is so ready to impart. In its mildest influence it induces a pleasing, and placid state of mind, placing it at the remotest distance from the irritations of hatred, envy, malice, rage; those self-tormenting passions! In its successful exertions it largely participates of the Good which it has communicated; and in its greatest disappointments it still retains the gratifications of Self-complacency.*

Another source of Well-being is centered in the amiable and excellent qualities of those with whom we are conversant; or from those affections which are inspired by Good *Opinion*, distinguished by the title of *Complacential* Affections. † It has been observed that, "When we contemplate particular marks of mental or moral excellence in others; our *approbation* is accompanied with various degrees

* See Phil. Tr. pages 125. 317. passim. † Ph. T. page 142.

of *affection* for them, although they may not be within the sphere of our intimacy." This wise and benevolent constitution of human nature, promotes our felicity by means whence it could have been least expected ; and renders it of a species the most refined, and the most satisfactory to ourselves, from its being the most remote from *Self*. By virtue of this propensity to be charmed and delighted with the mental and moral qualities of others, their acknowledged Superiority, instead of being the constant excitement to envy, jealousy, or even tormenting regret, which might have been expected from creatures in whom the love of Self is predominant, inspires the pleasant sensations of Love, Complacency, Esteem, Veneration, Admiration, and Gratitude. These voluntary tributes to worth, while they confess the triumphs of goodness, dispose us to *rejoice* in these triumphs. We are so deeply penetrated with the great excellency of wise, virtuous, benevolent conduct, character, and dispositions, that the extravagances of self-love are checked and suspended ; and the arrogant claims of pride, completely silenced. We esteem in others the mild virtues of integrity, patience, kindness, gentleness, in the midst of our own conscious defects. We respect the man in whom the union of talents and dispositions are operative of Good. We willingly bow before the Wisdom we acknowledge to be superior to our own. Appre-

hensions which would naturally arise from the idea of an authority irresistible, in a being known to be wise and just, are qualified into the sublime sensations of Awe: a pre-eminence in moral excellencies inspires a dignified *Humility,* and an Astonishment which elevates in proportion to the impressive sense of our own deficiencies! Admiration delights the mind even to transports, while it is in the act of contemplating superior excellencies! We acknowledge, with pleasure, the ascendency of others in great and striking accomplishments! We are not only surprised at their superiority, but we *love* them for excelling ourselves. Under the impressions of *Gratitude;* though we acknowledge our own inferiority, in the particular instance, and confess obligation, yet the dispositions of the benefactor, and the Good received, are capable of infusing a pleasure unequalled by any other affection. The love of justice is never so ardent as in a grateful heart. It feels itself *bound* to acknowledge a debt it is not able to cancel; and it feels it to be a *willing* bondage; nor does it ever wish to cancel it, in such a manner as to destroy the pleasing sensation.

As the affections inspired by a personal attachment to those around us, and as the contemplation of excellencies centered in others, are sources of refined pleasure to ourselves, thus it is natural to

suppose that the Returns of friendly attachments and favorable opinions, must also be productive of the most satisfactory pleasure. If there be a pleasure in the indulgence of the affection of Love towards those possessing amiable qualities, the principle of Self-love in every man, will whisper that there is a pleasure in being beloved. We are naturally solicitous to stand well in the opinion of others. We are eager to possess those qualities which attract their favorable notice; and we are disposed highly to value whatever is calculated to produce this effect, should it possess no other merit. It is for this that some are solicitous to accumulate wealth; that the vain are fond of splendor, that the ambitious grasp at power; that the warrior rushes on to danger with invincible ardour; that some are so fond of titles and honorary distinctions, that others employ every artifice to obtain popular applause, and that both these characters are too frequently disposed to sacrifice genuine merit to the shrine of public opinion. In the more private and sequestered walks of life, the delights of friendship consist in its being *reciprocal*. We should not rest satisfied in our social intercourse, with the esteem we entertain for the deserving, were they to evince a cold indifference with respect to us: We might possibly doubt their title to the exalted opinion we had formed of them. Consciousness of right conduct and right motives,

will always inspire a degree of self-approbation; nor will the upright man exchange this consolation for undeserved applause, or the loudest acclamations surreptitiously obtained; but he will confess his disappointment, where he has failed in securing the approbation of the Worthy, and will be deeply chagrined at their censure.

As no one can live independent of others, as Man would be wretchedly impoverished, were he to be stripped of every comfort which did not immediately originate from himself, so he values, above every other blessing derived from the social intercourse, the esteem of that society upon which he so incessantly depends.

These are facts too obvious to require farther enlargement, but they lead us to another source of well-being of a very extensive influence.

As the social nature of man induces him to seek the society of his kindred species; as he perceives that the majority of his wants are best supplied by mutual aid, thus he quickly discerns that the many frailties and imperfections which surround us, the diversity of characters and passions, and the clashings of similar pursuits and opposite interests, render it necessary for the human species to congregate according to certain rules, and under certain restraints. When these are wisely devised and

faithfully observed, they not only protect the welfare of each individual, but augment it by an augmentation of the general welfare. They direct social intercourse into various channels, productive of the most extensive benefits. They secure the good and orderly members of a community, from those irregularities and mischiefs which might arise from the ignorance, impetuosity, or iniquitous designs of others. They inform the ignorant, give power to the feeble, screen the oppressed, encourage the upright, restrain the depraved. They render a large community one compact family; in which not a single member is overlooked or trodden upon by the multitude; in which every individual is instructed and encouraged to connect his own interest, with that of others; in which harmony, strength, activity, prosperity, and contentment, become common property; and the social principle in man is thus rendered universally operative of *good*, in the midst of the various impediments that endanger it. Whether this state of society have ever been realized to the extent imagination may easily conceive, or whether the human character will ever arise to the requisite degrees of disinterestedness, and sagacity, it is not easy to determine. Such a state contains within it, benefits incalculable; and these benefits will always be enjoyed, in proportion as they become the grand or sole objects of wise men, who are entrusted with the general welfare.

## SECT. IV.

### ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS AS A SOURCE OF WELL-BEING.

THE very exercise of our powers, corporeal or mental, when they are in a vigorous state, is itself a pleasure. Motion, as such, is an amusement to the young and healthy; by its means they exchange listlessness and languor for an agreeable degree of exhilaration. The employment of an active mind is equally amusing. An observing spirit can thus derive pleasure from the most trivial circumstance. When inactive it feels itself in a state of depression; nay it sometimes seeks amusement by encountering difficulties. Hence the pleasure derived to ingenious youth by learning feats of dexterity, and by attempting to solve the difficulties, and conquer the ambiguities contained in riddles, charades, &c. for although these occupations may appear trifling to philosophers, yet to delight in them is, in the young, a presage of future vigor; and while they amuse, they prepare the Intellects for more important researches.

We are so constituted as to have a desire after Knowledge. An active mind feels powerfully the influence of curiosity, which may be considered as a mental appetite for knowlege. There is a pleas-

ing satisfaction resulting from the pursuit and acquirement of every branch of knowledge, abstractedly considered. The desire once implanted, becomes the occasional cause of much enjoyment, in common with the gratification of every other desire excited, while it is accompanied with the approbation of the mind, from a consciousness of its being *rational.* Hence it is, that rational beings are capable of enjoying pleasure from mental exertions. As facts are in their own nature the basis of every thing which occupies the mind; as it is these which become the objects of our perceptions, engage our attention, are the subjects of our observations and remarks, are the objects of our discriminations, inferences, and the decisions of our judgment; as these constitute the treasures of memory, and are the materials which the imagination *diversifies;* as they relate to dispositions and actions, about which a pleasing or painful consciousness is constantly occupied, a due collection of facts is of primary importance. We are made, by the constitution of our nature, to rejoice in the acquisition; we feel ourselves unwearied in the pursuit; and we deem the increase of these treasures as one unequivocal characteristic of progressive improvement. In some persons, a thirst for general knowledge is observable; and they enjoy pleasure from whatever communicates information; Nothing can present itself as insignificant; the

mind eagerly seizes upon every property, and feels that it communicates delight. In others, particular objects are pursued with no small degree of preference. Some peculiarities in education, the force of habit, constitutional dispositions, singular incidents or coincidents, create this preference, and decide the choice; until, like plants of superior vigor, some particular objects gain the ascendency, and by their exuberance check the growth of every other.

The sources of pleasure, in this department, are literally inexhaustible. Knowledge and mental improvement, may be derived from every quarter of the creation. There is no article in nature beneath the attention of the human mind, or incapable of affording some satisfaction, as the reward of its exertions. The knowledge of existences, properties, relations, causes, effects, &c. in subjects which to some persons may appear trifling, or even repugnant, may become a source of rational pleasure to the investigator. All nature is the theme, and every part of nature affords information that is amusing, interesting and instructive. Inanimate, animate, and rational, administer to the well-being of an inquisitive mind.

The pleasure derived from the acquisition of knowledge, although it may be of a more placid nature, is most satisfactory. It is placed, in our estimation, in a higher rank than the eager pur-

suits of less cultivated minds. We feel advancement in knowledge, to be an exaltation of the Species. This inspires such an idea of superior dignity that an *intelligent Mendicant*, would disdain to change his situation for opulent and splendid Ignorance. Although the application of this knowledge to any useful purpose, may not always be the immediate object in view, yet there is a latent satisfaction in the increase of those stores, which so eminently contain the latent powers of Utility; and whenever these powers become operative, in the most incidental manner, or to the smallest degree, the pleasing emotions of joy and triumph, are immediately produced.

Some branches of knowledge furnish materials upon which the mind can engage its choicest faculties, either in new acquisitions, inventions, or improvements; and we enjoy a lively perception of pleasure, from the discovery of properties, relations, influence, powers of utility which were before unknown: Some subjects, by alternately exciting and gratifying our curiosity, become perpetual sources of delight: Some constitute the basis of art, ingenuity and invention, which diffuse utility or amusement, or suggest various phantoms of the imagination, possessing charms to which realities may be strangers: In some, a considerable degree of enjoyment is derived from the perception of certain qualities, which according

to the happy constitution of the human species, are capable of communicating pleasure, and exciting agreeable ideas in our minds,where Utility may not be immediately obvious. Of this kind are the the objects in nature or in art, we term *pretty, handsome, beautiful, elegant, picturesque, romantic, grand, sublime:* In which we behold such peculiarities in size, colour, conformation, proportions, contexture, magnitude, extent, elevation, connection, as forcibly attract the attention, and excite various pleasing and elevated emotions. This species of adaptation of qualities, in external objects, to our nature, seems to have for its final causes, both the augmentation of our pleasures, through the medium of our senses, and the refinement of our tastes, as preparatory to more exalted pleasures of a mental nature. It is also deemed a refined employment, in cultivated minds, to attempt to analyze the pleasure enjoyed from these various qualities; to examine in what manner, and in conformity to what principles, we are so agreeably affected by them; and to discover such laws and rules, as may enable imitators, whether Artists or Poets, to refine upon their imitations and descriptions of nature; to select its choicest beauties in one assemblage, and inspire others with a pleasing surprize at the happy arrangement; and with admiration, at the taste, ingenuity and elevated genius of its author.

There are many subjects of knowledge, which are peculiarly interesting by the power they exert over the affections, calling forth some of the warmer passions, to the degree which is within the limits of grateful sensation; as the interesting events described, and the various characters delineated, in the faithful pages of history: so that personal attachments shall be formed, for a private character, warm admiration be inspired at his exalted virtues, and no unpleasant sympathy at his unmerited sufferings. The pages of history carry us back to the remotest ages, and thus we seem to antedate and extend, as it were, the boundaries of our own existence. By tracing the results of particular modes of conduct, by observing certain events produced by certain acts and determinations of the will, which became in their turn the causes of various other effects, we are enabled in some degree, to penetrate into futurity, and conjecture, from what *has* taken place, the *future* result of similar circumstances. Other branches of knowledge, while they withdraw the attention from human pursuits, and the busy scenes of life, are calculated to occupy the closest attention; to become sources of endless delight, by their infinite variety, to charm by their beauties, elevate by their grandeur, and call forth the sublime emotions of admiration and astonishment. These are eminently the characteristics of the works of nature, and of every

part of the universal system with which we are acquainted. Nor are the abstruser sciences devoid of pleasure. On the contrary, they are peculiarly calculated to arrest the attention, and occupy all the powers of the soul. The more they are pursued, the more are they confessed to become interesting and attractive. It is here that the mind is rendered the most conscious of the extent of its powers, in the midst of a conviction that they bear no proportion to the nature of their subject! It feels a satisfaction, and even a degree of triumph, in its being able to explore, in its imperfect manner, regions, from which more common minds are totally excluded. Lost as it were in a boundless ocean, it is yet delighted with the immensity of its objects; and the sense of self-abasement is relieved by the elevating and transporting astonishment with which it is accompanied!

We have remarked of sensual gratifications, that they are in their own nature transitory; and of the more elegant gratifications derived from the organs of sense, that they can only be enjoyed with genuine relish as occasional pursuits, and temporary relaxations. The love of knowledge is permanent. The mind may be fatigued in its pursuits, but it cannot be satiated. Nor can it be divested of the stores thus acquired, but by the loss of the faculties.

Another singular security to enjoyment from this source is, that the objects to which a scientific

mind is attached, are permanently engaging: the pleasing qualities they possess are possessed for ever. They are strangers to caprice, or to that versatility of character which might justify a change of disposition towards them, nor are they subject to the least decay from the lapse of years.

If it be true, what philosophy asserts, that we measure time by the succession of our ideas, it is also obvious that the man, whose mind is the most enriched with knowledge of various kinds, virtually protracts his days beyond the most extended period of ignorant longevity.

The exercise of the *Memory*, or of the recollective powers, is in many cases, a pleasing employment. By the exercise of these powers, the former treasures deposited in the mind pass in review; by which the pleasures of the first impression, are in some respects renewed. The subjects recollected not only serve some immediate purpose, by the information they bring with them, by their being placed in comparison with more recent subjects, by becoming the foundations of new investigations, but they retouch some favorite affection. We recall former sensations; trace over the scenes which once communicated enjoyment; and although these recollections may sometimes be accompanied with sorrow, at the idea of pleasurable scenes being irrecoverably past, yet the

melancholy they inspire is *pleasing*. Sometimes events which were, at the instant, of a very distressing or alarming nature, communicate joy and satisfaction upon the retrospect; either by a comparison of our present safety with former dangers, and of brighter scenes with the former gloom; or by some important lessons of wisdom and prudence, learned by our former experience, and by the power communicated of admonishing others of their danger, and instructing in the methods of relief. Even the erroneous conduct, or crude ideas of more early days, by being contrasted with the more rational pursuits, and more accurate knowledge of a better informed mind, may be reviewed with triumph and self-congratulation.

The pleasures of the *Imagination* are proverbial. This wonderful faculty dignifies man with a *Plastic* or *Creative* power, and new forms are made to arise at will. The Imagination may be made to imitate every thing that is real; and also to suggest ideas which have no prototype in nature. It may thus produce those pleasing effects which we experience from striking and interesting realities, while it superadds agreeable visions of its own, and the pleasures derived from self-complacency, in the consciousness of being the authors of our own enjoyments. It delights in the imitation of forms, figures, scenes, persons, characters, and events; for all

imitations, judiciously managed, and happily executed, are fruitful sources of pleasure. The images which it creates, sometimes amuse by their ludicrous or picturesque forms, charm by their elegance, elevate the mind by their apparent dignity and grandeur, or call forth its best affections by a fictitious delineation of the choicest qualities. Thus may it elevate by its sublimities, inspire an idea of grandeur, unmixed with terror, and communicate the luxury of sympathy, without any of its pangs.

With whatsatisfaction does the creative genius of an Artist, behold his canvass transformed into the semblance of the human countenance! does he by the aid of linesand colours, lights and shades, represent heroic deeds, and the various passions of the human breast! With what a consciousness of sovereign power does he command mountains to rise, cascades to fall, plant groves and forests, give an enlarged perspective, and a numerous population, to the most circumscribed surface! and deceive the spectator into a belief that he is contemplating extensive districts and splendid cities! How is the sculptor animated, when by a kind of plastic power, he extracts groups of beauteous or manly forms, from a block of marble! and the poet, whose ideas create imaginary worlds, give them laws, principles, manners, and actions, as he pleases, and direct every event according to the sovereign dic-

tates of his fancy! A sublime and elevated imagination mounts, like the aeronaut above the common scenes of life, and inspires the beholder with surprise and admiration; while with apparent calmness, it secretly enjoys the feelings of satisfaction, in thus contributing to the enjoyment of others, united with that derived from a conscious superiority!

The pleasing effects produced by the works of imagination, are too extensive and important to be enumerated. When enjoyments from this source are indulged within the limits of moderation, without excess or mental seduction, they exhilarate the mind, administer a cordial to the oppressed and wearied spirits; communicate a flow of cheering ideas; and sometimes disperse the gloom of melancholy more effectually than the most cogent reasons. They have also been rendered efficacious in the refinement of our enjoyments. They have improved the taste; by means of powerful associations they have inspired a predilection for mental pleasures, and thus elevated the mind above the grosser pursuits of sense. The lively fancies of the imagination recreate after the fatigues of abstruser studies, relieve the listlessness of solitude, by leading the thoughts into the regions of amusement, and inspire a salutary delusion, without betraying us into fatal errors.

The pleasures which arise from the excitement of the risible emotion, through the medium of ludicrous images, or the enlivening strokes of wit, ought not to be omitted in the present connection. Laughter is a pleasing sensation; and although refined manners forbid the loud laugh as indecorous, yet the ideas which inspire the disposition, communicate the secret pleasure. There is nothing which enlivens the lower classes equal to what they call drollery and fun; one species of public diversion is founded upon coarse humour; and this species is generally the most frequented. The sparkling vivacities of wit, promoting the exhilaration of minds the most informed, refresh and invigorate their powers. Ludicrous ideas of every kind, when they are not intrusive and impertinent, produce a salutary effect, which continues after they may have been forgotten. They often by a kind of physical influence, dispel the noxious vapors of the mind, and, as it is expressed, *put us in good humour* with ourselves and others, beyond the powers of reason or of eloquence.

The imagination is the basis of Hope; and though it may add fictitious charms to the objects pursued, it still quickens the pursuit, by which possession may be secured. It frequently alleviates distress by depicting future scenes of happiness. To this assertion the wretched can bear witness. How frequently have they experienced that live-

ly hope has soothed the anguish of disappointment, consoled for the loss of liberty, and gilded the horrors of a dungeon! These considerations united, powerfully evince that a chaste imagination well deserves to enjoy the pleasures it communicates.

To the advantages and pleasures which may be derived from the free exercise of our own *Volition*, all men are disposed to bear testimony. It is the desire to monopolize these advantages which constitutes the Tyrant. This desire lies at the foundation of all his plans, and stimulates to all his actions. A privation of this power constitutes the horrors of slavery. Nor can the garbs of splendour, and all the external trappings of greatness, be deemed, by the liberal mind, any recompence for the loss of self-determination; for the irksomeness of being perpetually at the beck of another; a servant to his capricious will, without being able, or daring to oppose its dictates.

Freedom of Volition is essential to conscious dignity: it is necessary to give *reality* to every *apparent* virtue; and this alone entitles beneficent deeds to the award of approbation. By the want of this freedom, we are rendered incapable of following our own best ideas, in the pursuit of our own well-being. We are restrained from gratify-

ing our most rational desires, by a foreign power which we know to be ignorant of those peculiar adaptations to our nature, state, and propensities, upon which our sense of well-being may immediately depend. We are obliged to receive what others have catered for us; and we cannot accept their most liberal grants, with the complacency of temper which generally accompanies our own choice. That freedom which enables to act according to the suggestions of reason, and to determine according to the powerful inducements which create a disposition to act, without the arbitrary check or capricious control of others, is deemed of such high importance, as to justify shedding the blood of its bold invader; and to cherish and preserve it, is deemed by the true patriot, preferable to the preservation of his existence. To deprive of *Volition,* is to destroy an intellectual faculty which stamps its chief value upon every other; without which, as the history of subjugated nations amply demonstrates, every other faculty withers and dies. Without the power of *Volition,* many of our choicest enjoyments would be annihilated; many would be incessantly exposed to invasion and robbery; and few of our blessings could properly be called *our own.*

As *Consciousness* respects the immediate perception of every thing which relates to ourselves, it naturally comprehends a perception of all the Good arising from every source, whether it proceed from animal gratifications, the proper and beneficial exertions of every other mental power, or the indulgence of the best affections. It is to possess the treasure of a pleasing consciousness, that we engage in every pursuit, whether it respect our sensual nature, or the more exalted pleasures of the mind. We shall therefore only remark under this particular, that the perception or conscious enjoyment of Good, necessarily admits of various degrees, according to the nature, abundance, and quality of the objects, to which this power of consciousness is directed. Thus it may inspire contentment, satisfaction, joy, complacency, &c. according to the incidental circumstances, by which these passions and affections are capable of being excited.

It is obvious that in all sensual gratifications, in the more refined pleasures enjoyed through the medium of our senses, such as objects of vision, and sounds of harmony, and in all our attachments, the immediate *objects* of our pleasurable sensations are distinctly known. We perceive the efficient cause, at the instant of Enjoyment. But in many of our *mental* pleasures, the efficient causes are no

equally obvious. We cannot in every case, so easily determine whence the refined pleasure is derived. It is the aggregate of the pursuit, or of the science, which seems to delight, rather than any of its component parts. The Mathematician has no particular attachment to lines and angles, but to the *science* of the mathematics, to which they are immediately subservient. The Chymist is interested in the *study* of Chymistry; in the various *experiments* he is making, waits with a pleasing eagerness for the result, and triumphs in his success, without having an individual attachment to acids, alkalis, metals, earths, and gasses. Should it be asked why such studies are so pleasing to intelligent minds, the following particularities may contribute towards a solution.

The love and pursuit of knowledge are gratifying to a propensity of our mental nature. When we perceive that subjects contain something in them worthy of being known, we naturally entertain a desire to become more intimately acquainted with them; particularly if our attention be not pre-engaged by other objects. When the pleasure derived from this source has been once enjoyed, our desires become restless and increase to a degree of appetite; and the pursuit of the subject becomes a mental gratification, of itself, unconnected with any immediate use to which our knowledge may be applied, and by the means of which

an additional pleasure may be enjoyed from the prospect of advantage. We now begin to feed as it were upon the different objects of knowledge, without experiencing satiety. By diversifying our pursuits, we are always enabled to give a temporary repose to some of our faculties, while we are exercising others. Much pleasure may thus be derived from the alternate excitement of desires which are not impetuous and troublesome, nor subject to disappointments, and such gratifications as are rendered peculiarly satisfactory by the approbation of our own minds.

Again. Every subject of knowledge possesses a certain *power* of *Utility*. There is no one property in nature, which has not its useful adaptations. There is no one principle which may not become the basis of something good; no one speculation but it may lead to important discoveries; no one fact, in the whole system of nature, or in the various pursuits, propensities, and characters of men, but something beneficial may be deduced from it; and which may not in some connection or other, be applied to salutary purposes. Of these truths we are convinced, as soon as we reflect upon any individual fact, in its various relations and consequences; and these different articles of knowledge, seem to exert a general undefined influence, when we do not im-

mediately advert to any particular advantage. They all conspire to stamp a value upon science in general, and deeply to impress the mind with a sense of its importance, although we may not form clear conceptions of its immediate value, in every particular instance, and altho' we should not intend to apply any one branch of science to its appropriate uses, while we are engaged in the acquisition of it.

These principles being admitted, they will indicate the sense in which we may understand the assertions of Cicero, Reid, and others, that "we love some things for their own sakes"; and confirm the ideas already suggested, that by the phrase *for their own sakes,* we are not to understand an implication that they are entirely useless and insignificant; but on the contrary, that they contain peculiar powers of utility, of which at the time of our pursuit, we may have very imperfect and inadequate conceptions. It has been remarked of those introductory emotions, surprise and wonder, that although the specific nature of the exciting cause may be unknown, yet they are most intimately connected with the idea of something peculiarly important. The same idea impresses the mind with equal force in the cultivation of knowledge; and it is this which dignifies the pursuit. In the various concerns of life, where the promised advantage may not be equally great, we are disposed to rejoice in the means of good; in treasures to

which we may have access upon future exigencies, or whenever we may be inclined to indulge in some additional gratifications. A similar perception accompanying the acquisitions of knowledge, induces an habitual satisfaction of mind, although a very small portion of this mental treasure should be applied to purposes of obvious importance.

However, in the exercise of most of our intellectual faculties, *Utility* is not only most obvious, but it is the professed object of our researches. Such as the exercise of the powers of investigation, discernment, reasoning, and of judging. In all these acts we are professedly searching after some good; some particular and important fact, which is latent, obscured, embarrassed, or blended with things heterogeneous, erroneous, or pernicious. In every exertion of the inventive faculty, some object which appears interesting or important, is immediately in our view, and becomes the immediate *stimulant* to our exertion. Every act of volition also, and the exercise of a pleasing consciousness, have a reference to a determinate object, and that object appears important at the instant.

Another source of pleasure, in the pursuit of knowledge, consists in the agreeable *Emotions* occasionally excited, and often in the most unexpected manner. In many branches of science we discover striking properties, congenial to some principle in our nature, and suggesting pleasant

ideas to the mind. Others surprise and charm by their novelty, variety, specific nature. Some lay open new and unexpected scenes to our Wonder and Astonishment, or inspire Admiration by their exquisite arrangements, and beautiful adaptations to certain beneficial purposes. Others elevate by their grandeur and sublimity; open a boundless expanse; and while they swell the mind with the ideas of Vastness, promise an inexhaustible source of speculation, defying satiety or limits. Others are enjoyed as the basis of calculations and inferences, which submit the fundamental laws of nature to our inspection, and enable the astonished Philosopher to measure the planets, their size, their distances, and trace their revolutions! In the history of human nature, and the perception of its various characters, propensities, exertions, and states, we approve, esteem, respect, venerate, admire, sympathize with, according to the different situations in which rational agents are placed, and the gradations of character and excellencies they may display. When we are compelled to censure their follies, or feel indignation at their vices, the degree of pain which is excited in these emotions naturally unpleasant, is generally diminished by the love of order, propriety, and virtue, of which we become conscious at the time, and without which, these disagreeable sensations could not have been excited.

Thus have we attempted to describe the state, and enumerate the various means, productive of that state which appears desirable in itself, and which is consonant with our ideas of well-being. The state, in its lowest stage, possesses something that is agreeable to us: It is such as inspires Contentment with our lot: It is frequently enlivened by Satisfactions which diffuse a charm over existence; and sometimes by Complacencies, which pronounce Existence to be a most valuable blessing. This agreeable state, and these desirable stages are maintained, and kept in perpetual vigor by the repetition of certain pleasures, gratifications, amusements, which are conformable to the cravings of nature, and afford the mind pleasing occupation at due intervals. They acquire a permanency, or may be rendered progressive, by a variety of innocent attachments, and by cherishing all the social affections; and they become still more progressive by the judicious exercise of our intellectual powers, and the acquirement of useful knowledge; by investigating, developing, and inventing whatever is interesting to the mind, useful and delightful in the application, or beautiful and grand in its nature; whether such discoveries relate to the works of human ingenuity, the excellence and sublimity of human actions, or to the wonders in the vast and boundless creation! Such subjects are calculated to inspire the pleasing af-

fections of esteem, respect, veneration; occasionally to excite the more delightful emotions of love, gratitude, admiration; and to elevate and dignify the soul in proportion as they become the subjects of contemplation!

## CHAP. III.

### ON RELIGION AS A SOURCE OF WELL-BEING.

OF all the articles enumerated in the preceding Sections, every person ackowledges the influence, in the production of some species of good to man. That sensual pursuits, and sensible objects, are capable of affording certain gratifications, that the cultivation of taste, particular attachments, social affections and mental occupations, are the frequent and usual sources of well-being as we pass through life, has never been denied. But concerning *Religion,* men have entertained very different opinions. Some have openly pronounced it to be inimical to human felicity. Others admit its high importance, respecting another state of existence, but they consider it to be so restrictive and burdensome respecting the present, that they regard it rather as a prudential duty, than as a source of immediate enjoyment.

Before any estimate can be made concerning Religion as a source of present well-being, or the contrary, it will be proper to enquire, what are the precise ideas which individuals entertain of Re-

ligion? The term itself comprehends such a diversity, and even contrariety of opinions, that what is predicated of one species, will be very inapplicable to another. It was upon this account that an attempt was made upon a former occasion, to give such a statement of Religion as should comprehend every sentiment that has been entertained concerning it, by considering Religion as "an impressive sense of the irresistable influence of one or more Superior Beings over the concerns of mortals, which may become beneficial or inimical to their welfare." This comprehensive view was necessary, because the professed adversaries to Religion in general, include every species under the general name; and after having imbibed their prejudices from the *worst*, triumphantly suppose, that their objections are equally applicable to every species of Religion indiscriminately. The above definition includes a great diversity of opinions concerning the number, nature, and characters, of these Superior Beings, and the kinds and degrees of their influence over the affairs of mortals. Strong desires will also be excited in the mind of every considerate mortal, that this influence should always be conducive to Good; and the desire will naturally implant such dispositions and affections, will dispose to such modes of conduct and acts of homage, as shall be deemed most acceptable to the Divinities revered. Hence it is not to be expect-

ed that every Religion should equally prove a source of immediate consolation and enjoyment; for their characters and effects may be directly opposite to each other. It is an indubitable fact, that some ideas formed of Religion have proved very inimical to human happiness. They have oppressed the mind with incessant fears—the most painful of all our sensations. They have compelled the devotee to conform to irksome and painful rites; and not unfrequently, to acts most repugnant to the best principles and finest feelings of our social nature, and most destructive to social enjoyments. If *hope* be one of the most pleasing and salutary passions of the mind, and habitual *fear* the most painful, those Religions which enfeeble Hope and render Dread the predominant sensation, must be productive of predominant wretchedness. If the ideas formed of the Powers above us exclude every amiable quality, they necessarily exclude the affection of Love. Every act of homage degenerates into a species of bribe; it is a something offered in order to purchase exemption from punishment, or to possess some desired blessing. The most solemn adorations are indications of a servile flattery, more applicable to the worst, than to the best of Characters; and every supposed duty performed, can have no other origin than the painful impulse of terror. Religions of this complexion can never become the ingredients of human felicity. The

greatest extent of good to be expected from them is limited and partial. If, by extraordinary assiduities, by more costly sacrifices, or more servile acts of self-abasement, the votary should finally triumph over his fears and indulge his hopes; they are hopes which inflate his pride, and inspire presumption. He now considers himself in the elevated character of a Partizan with his Divinity, against some supposed enemies. A fondness for his own opinions he now entitles an ardent *Love* of *Truth;* and his lust of Power, manifested in its most cruel and oppressive exertions, is consecrated into *religious Zeal.* To cherish implacable hatred against every opponent of his tenets, or the forms of his worship, becomes with him an indispensible duty; and the extermination of blasphemers and infidels, must, in his opinion, be an acceptable service to the Beings whom they neglect, or deny; or of whose nice preferences respecting the mode of Worship, they may unfortunately be ignorant.

With the ideas entertained, that the human race is under the inspection and control of superior Beings, are universally, and almost necessarily, connected some ideas concerning a future state of existence. It is this which gives to religions of every species, their principal influence, to which the hopes and fears of mankind are principally directed; and these incite to the practice of auste-

rities that would be deemed insupportable, did they not promise an exemption from greater evils, or an ample indemnification for the sacrifices that are made. From this source are derived apprehensions, which have spread a gloom over the human mind, and occasioned it to devise the most extravagant means of escaping the dreaded punishment; and it has also induced bigots and enthusiasts, of every age, to inflict torments upon others, that they may hereafter essentially benefit themselves.

The prevalence of sentiments like these, so injurious to the present interests of mankind, has animated some Philosophers, both in the ancient and modern world, to declare war against all religions, or every species of religion without exception. They ascribe their origin to the crafty designs of one class of men, and the ignorant credulity of another; they profess themselves to be the benefactors of the human race, by a total abnegation of every other Being superior to man; and by framing systems to explain the existence of universal nature, without the aid of an intelligent cause. What these systems are, and by what arguments they are supported, it is not our present business to inquire. But the subject immediately before us renders it proper to examine, whether this principle of benevolence, by which they are professedly actuated, be well directed; whether,

if their attempts had proved successful, to the extent of their wishes, the state of mankind would have been meliorated; and whether the rational faculties, which some of these philosophers possess to an eminent degree, could not have been employed, in a manner more consistent with their rationality, than in attempting to destroy every religion indiscriminately, because some have proved injurious to the peace of mankind.

In order to do all the justice in our power to so important a subject, we shall consider it in three points of view. First we shall examine the objections which have been alleged, against the admission of any religious principle whatever: secondly inquire what would be the situation of mankind, respecting present enjoyments, were the ideas of religion completely effaced from their minds; and thirdly propose such sentiments of religion, which, if they be not merely imaginary, must have a beneficial influence on human welfare, and become a permanent source of well-being.

## SECT. I.

### ON THE OBJECTIONS TO RELIGION MADE BY PHILOSOPHICAL ATHEISTS.

THE pernicious effects attributed to religion, and which are asserted to be so enormous, as to render its subversion necessary for the public

tranquillity, are of two kinds. It has been charged with implanting such an habitual dread in the mind of man, as to destroy all those comforts which might otherwise have been enjoyed; and also with inspiring erroneous sentiments of duty, which have sanctioned rites degrading to human nature, burdensome and distressing to the worshipper, and destructive to the peace and harmony of society.

In answer to such charges, we shall first observe, that to render their allegations formidable, these philosophers should have proved that there is something essentially baneful in religion itself, and equally applicable to all religions; that a belief of our dependence upon some superior Being, is of itself destructive to personal well-being, and necessarily renders man an enemy to his species. If these positions cannot be proved, the principle upon which the whole accusation depends may be erroneous; it may be an assumption, as extravagant as the most extravagant conceptions, that were ever formed of Religion; for it is founded upon a mode of reasoning, of all others the most fallacious, "that a general abuse of any principle is a satisfactory evidence that the principle ought not to exist." If this mode of reasoning be valid in one case, it becomes a maxim which is applicable to every case that is similar, and it completely annihilates every principle in nature; for the ignorance and per-

verseness of man have abused every principle by turns. It would annihilate every species of government; for ignorance, prejudice, and passion, have grossly abused each; and therefore as no system of government has hitherto been perfect, let every system be destroyed! It would annihilate every idea of liberty; for liberty is incessantly confounded with the most dreadful licentiousness! even our Intellectual powers themselves; for they have been eagerly employed to subvert every good principle, and establish the most absurd, and destructive! The grand principle common to all Religions, manifests, even by the diversities of abuse with which it is chargeable, the greatness and extent of its Power. But where is the evidence that this power cannot possibly be directed to useful purposes? When Mr. Hume insinuates "that Religion is the only fulcrum on which the designing priesthood could place their lever, and move the minds of men to their own purposes," he acknowledges its power, stability and permanence, to exceed every other principle that has been essayed. But he does not tell us by what law of Nature it is that the Priesthood alone should have monopolized this power, and that it would necessarily become inert in the hands of sound philosophy. Nor does he tell us by what other principle it can be destroyed. Upon what fulcrum equally potent, can these philosophers place their argumentations so as to produce the contrary effect? What levers

can they use of sufficient purchase to eradicate a sentiment from the human breast, which has either been planted there by the hand of Nature, or been eagerly received from its apparent rationality and importance? How superlative the benevolence, which animates to an undertaking that must, according to their own statement, be as arduous and extravagant as the projects of the Knight of Salamanca!

But let us attend to the objections themselves, and learn whether they be so tremendous as to authorize such amazing efforts.

2. Allowing it to be the kind intention of these philosophers, to liberate the human mind from servile fears, is it absolutely impossible to calm and modify these fears, by inculcating other ideas of the characters and requisitions of the Powers above us, instead of totally effacing the impression? If we examine into the nature of these fears, and on what they are founded, we shall discover, that they are dreadful apprehensions of greater degrees of misery, than have ever been experienced in this life, and to an unknown duration: and that to this misery feeble and resistless beings are exposed, by conduct which renders Beings of a superior nature, angry and implacable. It is therefore obvious that, whatever opinions the votaries of such Deities may entertain concerning Virtue and Vice, however extravagant their ideas of acceptable conduct

they still act upon the grand principles of DUTY, OBLIGATION; they associate PUNISHMENT with *Crime*, and RECOMPENCE with a Spirit of *Obedience*. Although absurd ideas of both these articles of faith, and expectancy, may have been entertained, they are intimately connected with genuine prudence, self-command, and salutary subordination. They are consequently preparative to well-being; and, under proper direction they may become productive of personal and social advantages, to an inconceivable extent.

The expectations of reward or of punishment according to different modes of conduct, must have an existence, and must be operative, or every moral tie would be relaxed, and a total want of subordination would introduce universal confusion. Which leads to another remark.

3. This philosophic argument is founded upon the assumption, "that the fear of the Gods is never productive of Good." Which is contrary to fact. It has, in many instances, proved, even in the Pagan world, a powerful motive to right conduct. In particular cases, where mortals plunged in ignorance and vice, entertained the most depraved conceptions of the Deities they worshipped, and the duties required, the dread of offending might induce to actions injurious and disgraceful to the individual, and prejudicial to social order; but numerous are the instances in which this fear was the

guardian of virtue. It has operated as a restraint upon the inordinate passions, and given vigour to principles highly beneficial to Society. The moral precepts strenuously and frequently enforced by their wisest philosophers, through a fear of the Gods, demonstrate this truth!

Hence an attempt to eradicate religious fears, may be destructive to a principle of action, which is not only natural in itself, but has proved highly beneficial. We admit that when ideas have been formed contrary to reason, they have proved the sources of misery; but it must be allowed in return, that in exact proportion as ideas become rational, they will become salutary. What is the proper inference? That it is the province of true philosophy to give these principles a *right* direction, and a *due* influence, and it will then rejoice that a total eradication has not been accomplished.

4. But another inconvenience attending this benevolent plan, is the impossibility of making a proper selection of the subjects, whom philosophy attempts to relieve from their occasional panicks. The scheme proposed would eradicate fearful apprehensions from every breast alike. Those who might have been restrained from injustice and oppression, through fear of the Gods, would also feel themselves free to become the scourges of mankind. They would follow no other law than their own

will, and indulge the most impetuous and destructive passions, without the possibility of control. It is truly desirable to release well-disposed minds from groundless apprehensions, but would it promote *their* felicity, to assure the Wicked and Unprincipled that they are free to invade, molest, and destroy whom they please, without being accountable to any one for their conduct? Notwithstanding the numerous horrors which fill the pages of history, we must still suppose that the mild and peaceable inhabitants of the world are more numerous than the sons of violence, or the desolation would be universal; but would these peaceful inhabitants be essentially benefited, by a doctrine which would completely leave them at the mercy of every ambitious, and cruel oppressor?

5. Again. To annihilate every religion, would be destructive to the most pleasing and consoling affection of the human breast, as well as of the most painful; by annihilating hopes of superior aid, in the most distressing situations.

This principle is as natural to man as the other, although it may not, at all times, administer pleasure to counteract the torments of dread. When ideas of a future state are confused, and the evidence uncertain, hope respecting futurity will be uncertain, and the desire of escaping misery be more ardent than the expectations of bliss. But a confidence of superior aid, at periods of imminent

danger; of relief in deep distress; of advice and direction in seasons of uncertainty and embarrassment; an appeal to superior intelligences for the purity of intention, and integrity of conduct, in the midst of suspicion and calumny, have in every age, among every class of people, and under every species of religion, been such a source of consolation to the invaded and insulted, to the oppressed, calumniated, afflicted, and to men of conscious integrity, that it would be most cruel to reduce them to a state of absolute despair; by the assurance that they are destined to combat every danger without an ally, support every distress without succour, and bear every insult without protection.

6. We may farther remind the abettors of atheism, that their principles do not contain in themselves an infallible antidote against the dread of future wretchedness. By annihilating, in the imagination, every being superior to man, they have not annihilated this world and its miseries. They must still acknowledge the existence of animated natures, and of beings they call human and rational, tossed by a thousand passions, and subjected to a thousand fears. In whatever manner they account for this state of things; whether by the wild vagaries of unconscious chance, or by the obstinacy of blind, irresistible, and inexorable fate, what security can be given that the power which has operated so much, may not continue its ope-

rations to another state? As it has thrown or systematically introduced myriads of Beings into this wretched world, may it not compel them to exist in another infinitely worse? Since vitality has, somehow or other, commenced without a designing cause, why may not the same cause produce a reviviscency? and although this undesigning cause has happened to blend a certain portion of good with the evils of this life, can any one assure us that things will turn out so fortunately in another? or that the portion of misery will not be infinitely greater? That beings possessing a conscious existence will not sit down in despair, surrounded with miseries, which, as no one has inflicted, no one can relieve? Surely to deny the possibility of a wise and good ordination, and to confide in the whimsies of chance, or the immutable agency of fate, can afford no consolation to a thinking mind!

7. Once more; these sentiments, which are to bless mankind, pre-suppose that religion is the chief, if not the only source of human misery: that the passions of men would have been comparatively calm and regular, had they not been agitated by religious contests: that mankind would be uniformly disposed to love one another did not that enemy, religion, intervene, sow tares, and disseminate hatred. But what foundation is there for this assumption? Does not our daily commerce with the world demonstrate its fallacy?

Does it not manifest, that serious quarrels incessantly arise, from the trifles of the moment? If we advert to the causes of irregular and disorderly passions already stated, we shall perceive that these would not be abolished by the destruction of religion. Would a disbelief in superior powers, and in a future state of retribution, annihilate human ignorance? produce the blessed effects which the serpent ascribed to eating the forbidden fruit, shall their eyes then be opened, and they be as Gods knowing good and evil? Would a complete renunciation of futurity weaken our attachment to things present, or soften impetuous and inordinate self-love into justice and benevolence? If not, the efficient causes of contentions would still exist, and produce their baneful effects. If one occasional cause were removed, others would occupy its place. Ambition, pride, *egotism,* would find other fuel to nourish the flames of discord. Have not scenes of horror been committed, both in ancient and modern times, in which Religion had no concern? Have not the unbridled ambition of some men, the frivolous claims of others, and a contracted selfish spirit in all, excited unsocial passions, and rendered man an enemy to man? Do savage nations frequently wage religious wars? Do not hordes and clans entertain mutual rancour and hatred, from a supposed contrariety of interests? and the little party spirit of lesser communities fo-

ment deadly quarrels about modes, customs, trifling pre-eminences, or political opinions?

The scenes which have been lately acted in a neighbouring nation, are a complete refutation of these hypothetical and visionary ideas. The triumphs of atheism were productive of universal horror. The violent and malignant passions of men, released from the restraints which Religion, even in its worst estate imposes, wantoned in every species of disorder, and committed every species of cruelty. The problem of Bayle was satisfactorily solved; and had Religion not been restored, social order could not have subsisted. These facts testify that by destroying that one occasional cause of contest and animosities, an increased vigour is communicated to those which remain; and upon which that very cause, in some degree, operated as a restraint. Could we therefore admit the mode of reasoning adopted, and infer, that whatever has been abused ought to be annihilated, the principles of Atheism themselves must be the first to fall in the general ruin.

## SECT. II.

### ON THE STATE OF HUMAN NATURE, DESTITUTE OF RELIGION.

AS Atheism professes to benefit mankind, by correcting vulgar errors, by liberating from unnecessary restraints, and by giving free play to human pursuits, without the depression of religious principles, we will take a cursory view of the state in which we should be placed, supposing the plan to succeed to the utmost extent of the advantages expected; and supposing none of the evils to follow which we have proved to be inevitable.

Were every idea of Religion effaced from the human mind; did every Individual believe that no intelligent Agency was concerned in the creation of the human race; that we depend upon no one, are under obligations to no one, are responsible to no one, and are totally devoid of hope or fear relative to a future state, it is obvious that we should, in respect to continuance of existence, be reduced to a level with every other animal in nature. The whole of well-being would necessarily be confined to this life; and every expectation would be terminated at the hour of death. But man is still to be considered in a different point of view from every other animal; for although his enjoyments be at best limited to a contracted period, and objects

of a transient nature, be the only ones which merit his attention, yet he is manifestly superior to all other animals in the powers and faculties of his mind. These must either be useless or troublesome appendages to animal life, or they must empower man to enjoy greater good than he could possibly enjoy without the possession of them; although the utmost extent of good must still relate to the present state of things. As in every other part of nature, we perceive numerous traces of order, and adaptations, productive of much utility, atheism itself may be permitted to argue from analogy, and apprehend that undesigning nature, has applied these powers to purposes correspondent to their superiority. We must therefore suppose, that some important end is to be answered, by the obvious distinction conferred upon the human species; and as the well-being of man is necessarily limited in point of duration, his superior powers ought to compensate for the misfortune of a short duration, by the intenseness of his enjoyment while he does exist; otherwise his copious ideas and perceptions, his keenest attentions, and assiduous enquiries, his investigations, abstractions, conceptions, nice discriminations, rational inductions, and the profound decisions of his judgment, would be of very little use to him.

From the Summary View which has been taken of the nature and occasions of well-being, it ap-

pears that they originate from two distinct sources; the one respects our sensual or animal nature, and the other is primarily seated in the mind. We perceive that the enjoyments deemed carnal and sensual, are merely occasional and transient; that mental pleasures, are in general calmer and more durable: and that the stronger agitations of mind are chiefly excited by those things which are most gratifying to the senses. Impetuous desires, animating hopes, dreadful apprehensions, excessive sorrows, vexations and disappointments, anger, rancour, animosities, envyings, and implacable hatreds; that is, some of the pleasing, and many of the tormenting passions, own sensitive objects to be the principal occasions of their excitement. The calmer pleasures are chiefly to be found in the improvements of taste, pursuit of knowledge, particular attachments, and in the exercise of the social affections.

Let us therefore attempt to appreciate each species, examine their respective merits to a rational being totally destitute of religion, and thus compare the enjoyments destined for the human race, with those that fall to the share of inferior animals.

Sensual gratifications must inevitably be the only source of good to the majority of mankind, because the ignorant and uncultivated, are by far the most numerous; and if such gratifications should be in-

ferior to those enjoyed by the brute creation, then is mankind at large a loser by the superiority of its powers: for we have learned by experience, that the enjoyment of every object depends upon its adaptation to our nature, connected with the strength of our desires towards it. In the animal gratification of hunger, we may suppose the relish of enjoyment to be in proportion to the strength of the appetite, and the peculiar suitableness of the species of food to the nature and instinct of the animal; therefore, as far as sensuality is concerned, we may lawfully suppose, that the animals which are the most voracious, which have the largest stomachs, and the keenest appetites, and occupy the longest space of time in the gratification of their appetites, must excel in the possession of the good to be derived from this source. The same argument is applicable to sexual gratifications. For notwithstanding the boasts of the libertine, it is highly probable that the goat and many other animals, may still exceed him in the strength of these carnal propensities, and in the gratifications they afford. There is a pleasure in indolence. This pleasure seems to be the peculiar lot of the illiterate savage, in the intervals of great exertions. But it is enjoyed in consequence of the paucity of his ideas, and his insensibility to the objects around him. Being a stranger to mental pleasures, he seeks to get rid of himself, by augmenting the tor-

por of his mental faculties. This is a pleasure of the negative kind, and can be envied by those alone whose painful reflections keep them awake. But whatever may be the pleasure derived from this source, it is most probably exceeded in the animal which, from the superlative indolence of its disposition, has acquired the name of *Sloth;* and many others that have obtained an instinctive sluggishness from the hand of Nature, adapted to their spheres in the creation, and consequently more perfect in its kind. Every passion that is excited has its gratifications, excepting the passion of Fear; and when these passions constitute the particular characteristics in various species of animals, we may suppose them to constitute the chief good those animals are destined to enjoy. Thus if the Proud and Revengeful enjoy a pleasure from the indulgence of their angry passions, and triumph in the rights of the strongest, they may still envy the beasts of the forest. The Lion, the Tiger, the Hyena, which no one can tame, waging perpetual war against every species of animal, but *their own,* must possess a source of well-being, greatly superior to that enjoyed by the most powerful, and most passionate man in the destruction of *his own* species: not to mention their total exemption from the painful sensations of sorrow and remorse, through the reflection that the strength of their

rage was unjustly directed, or greatly exceeded the bounds of propriety.

Thus, respecting sensual gratification, that grand source of animal good, it is probably enjoyed to a much greater degree by the *animal creation,* and consequently the intellectual powers of man are of no use to enhance this species of enjoyment.

The attachments of animals to their offspring, is the strongest and most universal of all attachments. We cannot speak of the *wisdom* of this institution in the present argument with our opponents, because they deny the existence of wisdom in the agency of nature; they must however acknowledge that it is a most fortunate propensity, for the offspring themselves, as they enjoy in consequence of it, support and protection, during the short period of their being impotent and defenceless. As long as the maternal fondness is required, it is indulged with a degree of pleasure which, to judge from every appearance, equals at least, the parental affection of the human species.

Numberless are the instances, which might be adduced from natural history, of the astonishing affection of animals, of the most opposite characters and propensities, towards their helpless young. How fondly placid are the most ferocious? What privations will they not suffer for their offspring, though the appeasing of their hungry appetites by the destruction of animal life, seems to be the

primary end of their existence! What hardships will not the most tender and delicate endure, to cherish and protect their feeble race? This instinctive fondness gives strength and energy to the weakest, and inspires the most timid with invincible courage, under the apprehensions of approaching danger. The attachment is much more limited in its duration, because the offspring is soon qualified to support itself, by the ample provision which nature has spread around, and thus it liberates its parents from those years of assiduous attention and anxieties, which characterize the human species.

The instinctive socialness of animals of the same species, appears to be a source of comfort and tranquil pleasure equal, if not superior to the sociability of those among us, who are not united together by any other bond of union, than that which proceeds from the instinctive love of the species; and they enjoy the grand prerogative of being less inimical to each other, in the common habits of life, than those who are termed rational. Their wants and desires being few, the occasions of contests, are proportionably diminished. Graminivorous animals are naturally placid; they are almost strangers to enmity excepting from the impetuous rivalships of lust. The carnivorous, notwithstanding the superior ferocity of their natures, have no other incitements to their rage than

the urgent wants of nature; and however great their animosities may be against animals of a different species, they are not so prompt to spread destruction among their own.

The pleasures of Taste, which we have considered as the second source of enjoyment with which the human species is provided, are probably peculiar to the species, and may be considered as a mark of its pre-eminence; but this pre-eminence can be enjoyed by comparatively a few. The pleasures of this class demand leisure, opportunities, and a peculiar turn of mind, which cannot be possessed by the multitude. It has also been observed that at the best, they are but transient amusements. They may agreeably employ the mind for a short time, and constitute a pleasing relaxation from more arduous employments; but when they are the principal occupation, they at length become insipid, and the mind sinks into a comfortless vacuity. Whoever excels in a particular art, unless he be a professional artist, whose interesting and important object it is, to support himself and family by the exertions of his genius, is deemed a trifling character, should this constitute his chief employ, or characteristic excellence. The intellectual faculties are therefore too dignified to be solely adapted to objects of this nature.

The pursuit of knowledge is a more exalted, and extensive source of well-being; and as it is so frequently attended with utility, as knowledge constitutes a power which, in numberless instances, administers to the conveniencies, comforts, and enjoyments of life, it is at all times to be highly appreciated. Where it becomes useful, it brings with it its own passport; the universal love, and ardent desire of good, stamps a value upon it. But in the opinion of every man, where the individual has neither an opportunity nor inclination to apply knowledge to some useful purpose, it is no other than a more exalted amusement. Should he excel in any particular branch of knowledge, it may, perhaps, augment his pleasure, from the reputation or extensive fame he may have acquired; but these advantages are in their own nature confined to a few, because to *excel* implies an unusual superiority.

The subjects of knowledge may be considered in two points of view. Knowledge may consist in rendering ourselves so far acquainted with the existence, nature, and properties of things, as may enable us to turn them to some valuable account, in promoting the comforts, conveniencies, and elegancies of life; or it may relate to subjects elevated above the practical concerns of life, in discoveries and speculations, which may communicate delight

to the contemplative mind, and contribute little or nothing to the temporal, or worldly prosperity of mankind in general. The first species must be valued according to its influence in promoting some temporary good; either by diminishing the evils and inconveniencies to which we are exposed, or by superadding some kind of gratification, which could not be otherwise enjoyed. But all these advantages may still be considered as imperfect compensations, for those superior advantages which every other animal enjoys, without the painful exertions, imminent dangers, corroding cares, mistakes, vexations, and disappointments, which so frequently accompany the pursuit of them. The bear, the ermine, the beaver, the sheep, enjoy, as their natural clothing, those very materials which demand all the exertions of art, ingenuity and industry, to be worked up into garments, in order to cover the nakedness of man. Birds chaunt their melodious notes, without labouring through the gamut, or squandering years by the side of an expensive music-master. The ape in the woods greatly exceeds, in agility, the most agile feats of the human species. We admire in the structure of the honeycomb, a style of building which we cannot imitate; and we may borrow many useful hints from the skill and ingenuity of various animals, in the structure of their habitations. The keenest sportsman cannot emulate the fox in the pursuit

of his game, nor a fisherman form a net equal to that of the spider. It is true the human species enjoys the singular advantage, of being able to imitate, in a greater or less degree, the instinctive operations of other animals. This is a clear indication of the superiority of our mental powers, but it as clearly shows that the exertions of all our ingenuity are required, to gain some compensation for those natural advantages which many other animals enjoy, and of which we are naturally destitute.

Thus, supposing the final lot of all animated natures to be the same, it may justly be doubted whether the instinctive powers and propensities of the irrational creation, be not a complete remuneration for the rationality which is denied them. They almost *unerringly* answer the circumscribed offices which their station in the scale of existence requires. Although their sphere of action be much more contracted than our own, yet they always *appear* contented with their lot, which is not the case with us. The whole surface of the globe is one magazine of food. Animal and vegetable substances, in every region, furnish ample provision for generations in perpetual succession. This food is diversified according to the climate, or element they inhabit. We observe a correspondent diversity in form, powers, and propensities of each species, by which each selects the food adapted to

its nature, to which it is invariably attached, without being distracted by the love of novelty, or seeking to invigorate a palled appetite by studied variety. In consequence of these arrangements in the constitution of things, one species does not encroach upon the allotments of another. The two sole objects of existence, the support of animal life, and the reproduction of the species, are obtained, by animal gratifications, without cares, anxieties, discontents, or satiety; and these beings pass through the different periods of their existence without regret and without anticipating any of the evils of futurity. They are not apprehensive of the pains, and dangers to which they may be subjected; they foresee not the infirmities of age, nor the horrors of dissolution. The greatest misfortunes they would have to lament, were they capable of lamentation, are the needless severities they so frequently endure from man, whose abused superiority, renders him *their* tormentor as well as his own.

But this is not the whole. There are yet more important obstacles to the felicity of the human species, by the annihilation of every religious principle.

We have had frequent occasion to remark, that the most violent, unjust, oppressive, and distressing passions of man, are excited by objects and circumstances that immediately relate to the supposed *means* of well-being; about that which is

to communicate some species, or degree of temporal good. Around these it is that rivalships, and envyings, hatreds, animosities, and terrible conflicts are assembled. The loss of these inflicts sorrow, unjust privation provokes anger and resentments, and apprehensions of losing these, create the painful sensations of fear. By the power of recollection enjoyed by man, he is enabled to destroy every present comfort, in his deep regret for the past: his past experience enables him to foresee future calamities, and thus he may embitter the present. These are real distresses and miseries which man brings upon himself in consequence of the superiority of his faculties; they constitute the majority of his evil passions and his sufferings, and from these, every other animal is exempt!

Man is rendered capable of the highest cultivation of his mind, by a proficiency, to an unlimited extent, in the sublimer sciences; which if they do not administer to the wants and conveniencies of life, render his soul superior to them. He can penetrate into the nature, causes, relations of things. He can cultivate those various branches of science, which the inexhaustible volumes of nature unfold to him,—study its laws,—for laws it certainly has, should there be no intelligent ordination, in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms,

He can discover powers, properties, relations, singular adaptations, and wonderful results, in every thing he beholds, and in every thing he contemplates! He can discern our connection with other worlds; the principles by which the whole solar system is governed, and can form probable conjectures concerning worlds, and systems innumerable in the immensity of space! He can investigate the nature of man, physical, metaphysical, and moral; and discover stupendous facts at every step he takes! He can analyze the air we breathe, the fluids we drink, and the food we eat; trace the growth of vegetables, from the seed which is planted, to its production of a tree bearing fruit, and the semina of future productions! He can read the history of human nature, from the helpless babe, or ignorant peasant to the sublimest philosopher; and trace the workings of the human mind, and developement of the rational and moral powers at every period! He can perceive an infinity in every science which attracts his attention, and with the beauties of which he is captivated in proportion to the progress he has made!

This seems to be the acme of human powers, human pursuits, and, without religion, of human enjoyment. It is however the sole privilege of a few contemplative minds, with which the world in general cannot interfere. This, it is true, may augment the pleasures of Self-love by gratifying

the mind with a sense of superiority; which is a personal advantage, not to be enjoyed without obvious deductions from others. But in what does the chief pleasure derived to the mind from this source consist? Is it not from the perception of immense productions, inconceivably grand and sublime, and in the discovery of the minutiæ of adaptations in every part of this whole, to some particular purpose? of means conducive to ends? of uniformity in the midst of a boundless variety? of exquisite beauty in particular parts? and of perfect harmony in the aggregate? Is it not in the conscious exercise of our own intellectual powers? and in the pleasing astonishment we experience, that the frame and constitution of man, should be rendered capable of such an enlarged and comprehensive view of things, which leaves every other animal at an immense distance behind him? But can the Atheist who is thus engaged, *triumph* in the annihilation of an intelligent cause of all? and in the prospect of his own dissolution? Must he not be confounded at the idea, that the powers of his own mind manifested in their short efforts before a total extinction, powers by which he contemplates the stupendous works of nature, are infinitely greater than the immense system itself? Will he not deeply lament that the emotions of his heart, may not rise higher than to vague Wonder and Astonishment! He is

forbidden by the laws of his system, to *admire* and *adore;* for these delightful emotions are inspired by the perception of something great, or wise, or good, in a designing Agent. He is forbidden the happy affections of Love and Gratitude; for notwithstanding the plenitude of blessings, there is no Being to love, none to whom we are under the smallest obligation! If he possess any portion of that sensibility which is a constituent part of human nature, he must, at times, detect the effusions of his heart ascending towards a wise and beneficent cause; but he is compelled to check the generous impulse! His frigid system congeals his warm emotions, and they are changed into isicles! He is obliged to remain in the embarrassments of Wonder; and his only elevation consists in the proud resolution, that the slight objections, upon which his comfortless sentiments are founded, shall overpower a world of evidence!

Farther, it has been remarked, that the perfection of well-being is the expectation of its Permanency: and in proportion as our enjoyments multiply, and our capacities increase, does the idea of Perpetuity become an indispensible requisite. But since mortality is the inevitable lot of every sublunary being, those who do not believe in a future state of existence, must necessarily have their views terminate with the present life. Although

the busy scenes of the world may intervene, and conceal for a time the prospect of a final dissolution, and inexperienced youth, may calculate upon many years of uninterrupted enjoyment; although the impressions made by the prospect of an inevitable event, the most dreadful in its nature, may be enfeebled by the imagined distance at which the period is placed, yet advancing days must produce a diminution of enjoyment; and ideas of a total extinction will at last force themselves upon the mind. Every mortal, as he advances towards the term, must perceive that he is rapidly expending large portions of his capital; and he will foresee, with a sigh, that he must speedily be deprived of every thing he has fondly called his own; and of what is still more painful, he will be deprived of all the consolations of *Hope!* According to these positions, the more the powers of the mind have been exercised and improved, the more will it be chagrined and disappointed. The extensive knowledge it has acquired, opens new scenes and subjects for delightful investigation; and it feels itself most disposed and best prepared for a series of rational enjoyment, at the instant it sinks into eternal oblivion! As no other animal is conscious of similar grandeur and elevation, as no other animal has the foresight of final dissolution, it cannot be thus humbled or disappointed!

This statement is no bold assumption; it naturally and necessarily arises from the laws of cause and effect. If the present world constitute our whole portion of good, this good ought not to have been impaired, by the prospect of its termination. Those alone ought to have been blessed with foresight, to whom life is become perfectly insipid, or an intolerable burden: and every thinking mind will be induced to wish that his latter days may be *wretched*, that he may be reconciled to the horrors of dissolution. If he be not impatient of existence from this cause, nothing remains but the most abject submission to necessity! He can only call up fortitude from despair; assume an air of composure, because he cannot resist! However exalted his station, or amiable his character, or splendid his talents, he is reduced, in his exit, to the sentiments and sensations which are sometimes manifested by those obdurate malefactors, who fall victims to the violated laws of their country, and who assume courage from the last exertions of pride!

Thus it is most evident that, although false religions may be productive of much misery, yet it is not in the power of atheism to administer a remedy; that the principles of atheism are more pernicious in their effects, than those absurdities which it attempts to eradicate. They apparently place *rational* beings below the *irrational* in the

scale of enjoyment. They certainly deprive intellectual pursuits of their chief dignity and importance, and the best affections of the heart of their sublimest objects, and of their most exalted pleasures! They demand that life should become unhappy, that consolation may be derived from the prospect of not existence; and that Death may act as a *Coup de Grace, to mortals on the rack of misery!*

## SECT. III.

### ON THE IDEAS OF RELIGION WHICH ARE MOST CONDUCIVE TO WELL-BEING.

SINCE there have been so many Religions in the world, of very different characters, and producing very different effects; since the majority of them are inimical to the best principles and feelings of the human mind, it is proper to inquire if there be no other ideas of Religion which are calculated to promote human felicity, and totally exempt from those injurious consequences with which *they* have been chargeable? Whether we cannot entertain such conceptions of Religion and its duties, as are perfectly correspondent with the state, exigencies, powers, capacities of man, and above all, most consonant with that felicity to which his soul so ardently aspires?

A Religion of this description demands the following characteristics.

It must be such as is consonant with the reason of all rational beings, or it cannot meet with the approbation of their judgment, or be distinguished from the vagaries of the imagination. It must have a tendency to exert an universal influence of a similar nature; not being adapted to the temper and genius of one particular class of people exclusively, nor demanding that mental culture which can alone be the acquisition of a few; for such a religion cannot be productive of universal well-being. It must be such as encourages the grateful affections of love, gratitude, admiration, awe, reverence, and hope, and renders them predominant over habitual dread, and servile fear, or it cannot confer happiness. It must be such as shall administer consolation and support to every sincere worshipper, in every state and situation of life. It must be perfectly consonant with the social nature of man, or it may prove fatal to all the blessings of society: Such as will authorize the expectation of more exalted happiness, in a future state; otherwise the pleasures of Hope cannot be perpetual.

It being my present object to state the possibility of entertaining such sentiments of religion, as shall be most conducive to human happiness, I will not attempt to prove that such a religion is founded on truth. Should it be as visionary as every

ther idea formed of religion, it has the advantage of being infinitely more desirable; for without submitting to its powerful influence, it will be impossible for us to enjoy the many other blessings of life, in the highest degree of perfection.

A Religion of this description must of necessity renounce a plurality of Gods. The confusion that has arisen from this belief, indicates that its abolition is essential to the repose of the world. As these supposed Deities have been invested with not only a diversity but an opposition of characters, the most conscientious worshipper must have been embarrassed with the number; and the most ignorant, that is the majority, would naturally select the worst. We know from history, that a contrariety in rituals, in creeds, and in notions concerning the injunctions of these Deities, has sown perpetual discord among the different worshippers, baneful to the social affections, and injurious to the peace of society.

We shall also be obliged to renounce some of the tenets of *Monotheists* themselves. We must for example, reject the sentiments of those who ascribe human passions, partialities, and weaknesses to the Divine Mind, which are inconsistent with the character of perfection, and destructive of universal confidence:—of those who sacrifice every amiable and attractive principle to the claims of sovereignty:

who represent their God as quick to anger, and slow to mercy; for such sentiments must render the painful sensations of *dread* most predominant. Nor are we to imagine that the Deity, whose nature it is to confer bliss, will be more attentive to the speculative opinions of his votaries, concerning abstruser points in theology, than to rectitude of disposition, and goodness of heart. For truth itself, were we sure of our possessing it, abstractedly considered, and independent of its influence, is useful to no one, while right dispositions and right conduct are useful to every one. Nor can those sentiments be productive of human felicity which place such an importance upon forms, ceremonies, and modes of worship, as may foster a bigoted, persecuting spirit, against persons who have preferences of a different kind; for to dream that a wise Being can place a value upon such peculiarities as are necessarily destructive of the social affections, and of all the happiness they communicate, is to imagine that he loves discord and animosities, and that he beholds acts of cruelty with peculiar complacency.

The sentiments of a Deity conducive to human happiness, naturally imply that He is the permanent source of all that is great, and good, and amiable, and excellent; that he possesses a power completely adequate to the wants and necessities of all

his creatures; that he possesses the wisdom competent to direct this power aright, and that the benignity of his disposition is correspondent to both. Without these persuasions, there can be no foundation for confidence, no rational motive to serve him. We shall be compelled also to believe that every injunction proceeding from him must be wise, that is, must be calculated to answer some beneficial purpose; for it will otherwise not be obeyed with that chearfulness which is of itself productive of well-being. As we are frail and imperfect creatures, the idea of divine *Commiseration* must be soothing: and under a consciousness of *Guilt*, the hopes of *Mercy* are requisite to prevent the horrors of Despair.

That sentiments like these are conducive to happiness cannot admit of a doubt. It is equally obvious that human felicity must be imperfect without them; because such sentiments alone can be productive of extensive and permanent well-being. It is here alone that the human mind can experience that *Felicity* which arises from the contemplation of the noblest Object, the indulgence of the best Affections, and in which it can enjoy the permanency of Hope.

We attempt not to prove the truth of such a religion, but to prove that permanent and exalted happiness cannot be derived from any other source;

that without it our most rational pursuits will finally become insipid and unsatisfactory, and our choicest affections are destitute of a proper object. Admitting, for a moment, these exalted ideas of a First Cause of infinite perfection, with whom we are intimately connected by the constitution of our nature, to be the mere fictions of the brain, we assert that they are fictions absolutely necessary for the completion of well-being.

In order to render this assertion valid, we will simply suppose a case. We will suppose a person to be fully under the influence of a Religion worthy of his acceptance, and of his firmest belief; and examine the natural effects of such a religion, upon his well-being, even in the present state.

If an individual exist who considers the universe as formed by an infinitely good and omnipotent Being, under the direction of infinite wisdom, for the diffusion of the greatest possible good to every other being; if he ascribe to this great First Cause the creation of an infinite variety of beings endowed with instinctive and corporeal powers, perfectly adapted to their respective states and destinations; if he contemplate this Deity as the peculiar Friend of the human race, and the Source of all those powers and means of enjoyment which have passed under our review; if he believe in the superintendence of an unerring Providence, ordaining or directing every event, even of the most afflictive

nature, to the most beneficial purposes; if he conceive of his own existence in this world as being preparatory to a more exalted state, where he shall enjoy a perpetuity of bliss in the perfection of his nature, and in its becoming adapted to more exalted scenes; *That Man* possesses a source of felicity, the most permanent and sublime, peculiar to himself, which can neither be imitated not equalled. The impressive sense of religion, with him, consists of an impressive sense of infinite and inexhaustible goodness in the Source of all being and energy, inspiring the delightful affections of Love, Gratitude, Hope, which are chastened and elevated into Awe and Reverence, by the idea of the irresistible power and transcendent dignity of the Object. A contemplation of the Vastness of nature, in its aggregate, of the infinitude of Wisdom in the plan, and immensity of Power in its formation and support; of exquisite Skill, wherever the laws of adaptation are conspicuous, and the Benignity which prompted to these adaptations, and which incessantly presides over the whole, unite the sublime emotions of Admiration and Astonishment to the affections of Love, Gratitude and Hope! The most consoling ideas are cherished by those of universal protection! Patience is inspired, and afflictions are rendered supportable, by the expectation that these afflictions will produce some future good; and Com-

placency *smiles* in the midst of *Distress*. Hope stands upon a Rock and diffuses its beneficial influence over the whole of existence, where there is an unshaken belief in a wise and beneficent arrangement of cause and effect, and the assurance that these are winding their way through intricacies too complex for us to trace. Hope invigorates every state and every action, diffusing perpetual consolation! When a religious man of this description extends his views beyond the boundaries of human life, into a state of future existence, and contemplates that state as more noble and more permanent than the present, as most worthy of infinite beneficence to bestow, and wisely adapted to the most exalted capacities of improved natures; he feels a principle within himself, able to elevate him above all the troubles and vexations of humanity, to subdue the fears of dissolution, and capacitate him for some degree of enjoyment by anticipating the bliss to which he aspires! Nor is this altogether a statement of mere possibilities. There are instances in which such principles of religion have had their effect; have irradiated the darkest scenes of adversity; have infused joy in the midst of corporeal sufferings; inspired the soul with dignified serenity, in the midst of the most hostile and aggravating distress, that has been inflicted by the hands of injustice and violence, and have changed the horrors of nature's dissolution into transports!

Such conceptions of Deity, strongly impressed upon the mind, must produce perfect resignation to all the plans of Providence, and consequently subdue the painful sensations of fretfulness, discontent, impatience, and anxiety, and substitute in their place chearful contentment in every situation of life. Perfect love of the Deity, from a knowledge of his perfection, would destroy all the horrors of groundless and servile fear, render the mind insensible to every other dread than the dread of offending. It would foster the love of all his creatures, and particularly of Man, the companion, fellow-traveller, and fellow-expectant of immortality! The influential conviction that we are all of one family, the children of one common Parent, would inspire brotherly love and universal philanthrophy, and produce the copious fruits of benevolence; would effectually eradicate envy, rancor, malice; and prevent all the evils of injustice, tyranny, and oppression. A belief in the universal presence of Deity would consecrate every part of the universe into his temple. A conviction that all our pleasures, and comforts, and joys, proceed from one benevolent and intelligent Source, who has adapted properties in exciting causes, to the powers of enjoying pleasurable sensations, with a wisdom and skill which can only be equalled by ineffable benignity in the design, would render the

very amusements of life the occasions of exalted and devout gratitude, which would augment the enjoyment, and protect from excess.

The firm expectation of happiness in reserve, of felicity hereafter, protracted to an unbounded extent of duration, would enable the devout mind to contemplate the swift passage of delightful days without regret. Ardent hopes would be kindled and shine with a brighter lustre, in proportion as the approach to brighter scenes became more apparent!

A religious man of this description, would enjoy through life that treasure we are all solicitous to possess; an accumulation of "the most refined sensations, permanently delightful, in which the mind is peculiarly interested, and of which it most cordially approves." He would possess a serene consciousness of the integrity and benevolence of his dispositions. His mind would be enriched with knowledge of the most elevated and elevating kind. He would rejoice in every opportunity of diffusing good, and contemplate his success with transport. By comparing the unpleasant incidents of humanity with its blessings and its prospects, he would scarcely feel the necessity of Patience, or Resignation; for in the midst of the greatest distress, he would contemplate all the attributes of Deity as the immutable guarantees of permanent well-being!

Can that philosophy bring forth the fruits of benevolence which, in its attempts to benefit mankind, must annihilate principles like these? Shall we completely destroy this nutritious wheat, because some noxious tares are unfortunately intermixed?

### *GENERAL SUMMARY.*

FROM the general View which we have taken of the pleasurable sensations, constituting the well-being of man; we perceive that although they are so numerous and diversified, they may be comprised under the following classes:

1. Those enjoyments which are deemed merely sensual, and consist in satisfying our natural wants, and in the gratification of our animal appetites;—2. those which administer to our amusement, and although they are pleasing to some of our organic sensations, are yet of a more refined and delicate nature, are honoured with the attention of the mental powers, and have the denomination of taste.—3. The pleasant state of mind under the habitual influence of Contentment, Satisfaction, and Complacency; which demonstrates that the objects pursued, have eventually produced the desired effects;—4. the attachments, or affections inspired by individual objects, in which we perceive something adapted to our wishes, or con-

genial to our nature; or that possess peculiar qualities and excellencies, which call forth our best and warmest affections;—5. those which immediately refer to the love of knowledge, and the pleasing exertions of our intellectual faculties, according to the diversity of their powers; and which, both from the more exalted and dignified nature of the employment, have acquired the title of Intellectual Enjoyments; and—6. the sublime consolations of Religion. It is remarkable that the pleasing sensation of Joy is common to them all, in a greater or less degree: Joy being a delightful sensation excited by the sudden presentation of good, whatever may be its specific nature.

We perceive farther, that as our corporeal wants, when most urgent are temporary and transient, the gratifications peculiar to them, though vivid, are of very short duration; and they leave upon the memory no grateful impressions worthy of being cherished. These gratifications are, generally speaking, the keenest in persons whose minds are least cultivated; or in those who are most ignorant of every other pleasure. More exalted and refined enjoyments, abate the ardor for the inferior; the mind by forming a comparison, perceives this inferiority, and is less eager in its pursuit. The enjoyments derived from the *mental* occupation of the senses, if I may thus express myself, are of a more refined nature, afford greater pleasure upon

the recollection, and have a greater permanency in their character, yet they cloy upon too frequent a repetition; the same object cannot communicate the same delight; the mind calls for a diversity; nor is diversity able to communicate perpetual gratification. The mind not only becomes tired with similarities, but it begins to be dissatisfied with itself, in the conviction that its awakened and refined powers are totally occupied by subordinate objects; and that occupations which are simply desirable as amusements, or recreations, are become the sole objects of attention.

In contentment, satisfaction, and complacency, the mind is truly at home. Whatever blessings it hath in its power, it feels to be the sources of well-being. It feeds upon the good which surrounds it, and perceives that it is nutritive and invigorating. It knows that there are comforts worthy of being possessed; for it has learned the secret of *enjoying* them. Proper attachments and right affections, placed upon the most deserving objects, are rich sources of permanent felicity. Here the mind immediately perceives what it is that infuses delightful sensations. It dwells upon the qualities that are amiable, as long as they are able to excite the ideas of their being amiable. In consequence of these qualities, it enjoys the pleasures of love with sensations of gratitude, for the exertions of their kindly and soothing influence. When the

affections are placed upon valuable qualities and permanent excellencies, nothing can destroy the permanency of enjoyment but a fickleness of disposition. Where the judgment approves of the affection, it is possible for habit to strengthen and perpetuate the attachment, until we perceive the beloved object a constituent part of our bliss, as essential to our welfare.

The pursuit of knowledge and exercise of the intellectual powers, are permament and inexhaustible sources of gratification. Though the objects may be infinitely diversified, the gratification is perpetual. The mind enjoys an increased satisfaction from this diversity, in the conscious increase of its stores, in the enlargement of its comprehensive powers, in the discernment of the mutual relation of various branches of knowledge with each other, and their extensive influence upon public welfare.

But without suitable ideas of religion, human felicity must be partial and imperfect. At best it is limited in its degrees, and of a short duration. Hope must finally be extinguished; and every one who has the power of reflecting, will as he approaches the term of his days, be tormented by the perception that after a contracted existence, every source of enjoyment must be exhausted. Without the mind be deeply impressed with the conceptions and belief of a being infinitely per-

fect and infinitely beneficent, there is not an object in nature to swell the emotions of Love, Admiration, and Gratitude, to the most elevated and most delightful extent. Human excellencies are too contracted for this purpose; they are intermixed with too many imperfections; and being the attributes of those who are naturally our equals, they may frequently excite the unpleasant sensations of envy and jealousy. The most exalted of human excellencies must also remain unknown to the multitude. But in the belief of a God, possessing transcendent excellencies, admiration is devoid of envy, as it is without alloy. The knowledge of such a Being may be spread over the whole rational creation, and the union of praise and thanksgiving may augment the bliss they communicate.

When the animal appetites shall fail; when the eyes shall become too dim to behold the scenes which once communicated delight; when the ears shall grow insensible to the charms of music, and to the still greater charms of conversation; when the object of our most delightful attachments shall be removed and leave a vacuity, which no subsequent attachment can supply; when the intellectual faculties themselves shall become unequal to the pursuit of knowledge;—without the hopes of a renewed existence, and of admission to future scenes and sources of enjoyment, nothing will

remain but to expect the extinction of our being with a mournful gloom. This is the utmost which infidelity would afford, were it more successful than it has ever proved, in chasing away those doubts and anxious apprehensions, which are so apt to disturb the minds of those who retain the power of thinking, when they approach the borders of the grave! (See Note Q.)

## CHAP. IV.

### THE PROGRESSIVE NATURE OF WELL-BEING.

IT was maintained in our fifth axiom, that it is the destination of the human species to pursue good incessantly.

This assertion was founded upon our preceding Investigations of the nature and objects of the human passions. It has been strengthened and confirmed by every subsequent remark on the uses of the Passions, the abuses to which they are exposed; and on the rich provision observable in the constitution of our intellectual powers, that we may avoid the road which leads to disappointment and misery, and discover that which conducts to well-being. Our observations concerning the nature and sources of well-being, confirm also the preceding remarks, by manifesting that the attainment of the most exalted degrees of felicity is the result of slow and progressive advances. It is obvious from the laws and constitution of human nature, that our earlier enjoyments must be few and circumscribed; that long experience, and considerable

enlargement of intellect are required, to advance us in the scale of well-being; and that a high degree of mental culture, which is no hasty production, is absolutely necessary for an exalted state of felicity. A few cursory remarks will place this important subject in an interesting point of view.

In the Infancy of human existence, ideas, wants, and desires, are extremely few. Numberless objects which, at a maturer period, attract our notice, and excite correspondent desires, are at first unknown. Our earliest ideas of positive good, commence with the gratification of the animal appetites, hunger and thirst. These being satisfied, the infant sinks into a placid indolence, somewhat resembling the contentment of reflecting minds. As soon as we become capable of some degree of observation and experience, we perceive new objects, or we discover peculiar and interesting qualities in those around us, and as often as these are in our power, preferences naturally arise. By comparing the various capabilities of these objects to communicate pleasure, while they administer to our wants, a choice is made; which may either be founded upon some established principle in nature, or some peculiarity in the individual. This is exemplified in the different kinds of food or beverage, which are variously preferred. Although every one enjoys a certain pleasure in appeasing his hunger or thirst, yet the agreeable stimulants of taste and

relish are diversified, either according to the intrinsic nature of the substances used, or to some peculiarity of taste inducted by necessity, the force of habit, singularity of temperament, constitution, &c. In sexual attachments, form, features, complexion, youth, disposition, character, intimacies, &c. happily create a great diversity in preferences, to the dimunition of competitorships, and the diffusion of satisfaction and complacency.

As the powers of discernment increase, man perceives that his situation may be improved; and that he is surrounded by objects adapted to the promotion of this improvement. Although at first his keen desires, and perhaps the whole of his attention, be directed towards the absolute necessities of nature; and all the mental happiness he knows, may consist in the occasional joy and satisfaction, inspired by the accomplishment of his wishes; yet when the means of these natural gratifications become attainable, without anxious cares and perpetual solicitude, he turns his thoughts to other deficiencies, and to those objects and situations which appear calculated to render existence still more comfortable. Lesser inconveniences now begin to render him uneasy, and he attempts to remove them. The means of removal being at his command, he looks forward towards higher

degrees of accommodation. He at length attracts the attention and excites the emulation of others. The example of a few finally exerts its influence over the many. Upon the perception of the advancements made in the scale of comfort, accommodation, and enjoyment, by the more Industrious, or the more Ingenious, new desires are awakened in the minds of those who had otherwise remained indolent; and they are finally rouzed to make efforts in order to equal, if not to excel their precursors. To the acquisitions and advantages thus obtained, succeed those refinements, and higher delicacies, which are the immediate province of elegance and taste.

At an early period of society, the desire of knowledge is mostly confined to the slender portion, which is absolutely necessary for the exercise of the particular employment of individuals, in a manner that shall barely answer the immediate design. Should any one, by virtue of a greater activity of mind, or of much attention, acquire a superior degree of dexterity, he will probably awaken the admiration of spectators, and the envy of rivals, long before he will inspire them with an ambition to imitate or to equal. It is also probable that much time will elapse before the observer will derive mental improvements from the facts he may have noticed. Whoever is in the

least conversant with rustic ideas, will suspect that the illiterate peasant thinks it his duty to be practically ignorant of whatever does not immediately concern himself; and he seems more disposed to sneer than to applaud, when he observes an Equal aspiring after knowledge, out of the sphere of his own occupation, or beyond the peculiar customs of the place.

The sports and pastimes, and even the compulsive occupations of children, left to the teachings of nature, may be considered as important inlets to general knowledge. Many of their amusements are such as give a degree of activity to the mind, as well as to the body. In some amusements they delight to imitate the actions of men and women; in others they are animated with the desire of conquest, and they are compelled to aim at superior dexterity, that they may enjoy the pleasures of triumph. Every one conversant with rustic life, will frequently remark the ingenuity of children in their hours of solitude when in the fields, destined to watch the flock, or protect the rising corn from the depredations of birds. The employments they invent to pass away the tedious hours; their contrivances to protect themselves from the inclemency of the weather; the general knowledge they acquire of the nature of different grains, the season for sowing, weeding, &c. Their

fondness for the herds and flocks committed to their care, is soon accompanied with no small degree of judgment, concerning their peculiar properties and comparative value. It is also observable that the children of peasants are no small proficients in the rudiments of natural history, and acquire to a certain degree accurate knowledge of plants, birds, and insects.

The natural activity of some minds, manifests itself, at the earlier periods of society, by the extravagances of a wild imagination. Reason not being improved either by observation or experience, totally unacquainted with natures and powers, and being unable to explain even the smallest deviations from customary incidents, by natural causes, ignorant minds are extremely prone to refer every thing to superior agency; and as they are not versed in calculations respecting either probabilities or possibilities, the greatest absurdities of the brain are readily admitted and propagated as indubitable facts. Beings innumerable are created by a fertile imagination, in order to effect every purpose which appears to exceed the limited powers of man: and as narratives of this kind are congenial with the curiosity natural to our species, as surprise, wonder, astonishment, are blended with admiration and awe, whatever is *marvellous* becomes a source of delight; and that

not unfrequently in proportion to its extravagance. Hence the hosts of demons and sprites, either good or evil, with their subaltern sylphs, elfs, witches, wizards, &c. that peopled the ancient world, are spread over savage nations, and are not as yet expelled from the villages of modern and better informed countries. They are not perhaps more retained by credulity, than by the interesting impressions they make upon the mind. They feed a curiosity that cannot be restrained. They please while they terrify; and delight while they fill the soul with horror. However these fears and pleasures of the imagination may be despised or ridiculed, by those who are better informed, they are excited by principles which contain the ingredients of the true sublime; principles which being controled by reason and modified by art, afford delight to the most rational and the most elevated minds.

The vivacity of disposition common to the young, the thoughtless, and to minds at ease, induces the children of simple Nature to indulge a playfulness of action and jocularity of language, which promote hilarity, excite laughter, and produce the effects, as they lay the foundation, of those grateful sensations which active minds experience in their progress towards the calmer pleasures of reason and philosophy; such as rhyme, satire, wit and humour, &c.

Ears that are in the least degree attuned to music, are at first gratified with its rudest sounds, issued from instruments of limited powers, and from voices which are strangers to the rules of modulation; and the first attempts to attract the eye by visual objects, are manifested by a profusion of showy colours, by rude imitations, massive forms, minute and unmeaning ornaments, and elaborate workmanship.

But although the cultivation of the intellectual faculties, and the pleasures derived from this source be necessarily progressive, yet the Affections are frequently stronger in a more simple state of nature, than in cultivated life. The parental affections of the peasant or the savage, by no means yield to the professed sensibility of refined life; although they may not be able to assume such a *sentimental* cast, and although the parent may not always have it in his power to give such decisive indications of it. As the children of the laborious poor, frequently contribute, even from their childhood, to the support of their parents, and always answer the purposes of domestic servants, the affection of the parent cannot manifest itself to be so disinterested as among the rich, whose children are frequently a certain expence to them, without the expectation of any future return. The native roughness of their manners also, prompts unculti-

vated minds to be harsh and boisterous in their reproofs, and shockingly evtravagant in their expressions; but they lament the misfortunes or death of their offspring, with a depth of sorrow which their superiors cannot exceed. Nor are the children deficient in filial affection, in spite of their occasional fits of obstinacy, or of those severe restraints and tedious occupations to which they are sometimes obliged reluctantly to submit. The historians of savage manners and characters uniformly assert, that family affections are both ardent and permanent, and constitute the principal solace of their lives.

Among the inferior orders of the civilized world, sexual attachments are much more frequently the result of personal predilections and disinterested affection, than among their superiors; with whom ambition or pecuniary interest, gains the ascendency over personal accomplishments: and although quarrels may occasionally arise from improper conduct, or ungovernable passions, yet these affronts are but momentary; and the defect of delicacy in their manners, induces them mutually to overlook that rudeness of behavior which would be deemed unpardonable in polished life.

Among the savage tribes, the ramifications from one stock, constitute societies which, as they have

the same origin, so are their interests considered as one and the same. In the rustic life of more civilized nations, consanguinity, vicinity of dwellings, similarity of occupations, or incidental causes of the like nature, promote a similar contracted attachment. The inhabitants of the same village, feel a kind of relationship, where their interests do not interfere; and those who are nearest neighbours, if no cause of quarrel intervene, are most disposed to be friends. It is too obvious, that in these ruder states of society, extensive benevolence is a disposition little known. Good wishes are mostly confined to self, relatives, and neighbours, or to those who are closely connected by some bond of interest. Something worse than *indifference*, a degree of *repugnance* is cherished against those who are not within the sphere of social intercourse. Inhabitants of particular districts have their own particular interests and habits, of which they are very tenacious. These render them suspicious of strangers, whom, from the ideas of their own safety, they are induced to treat as enemies. Hence it is that different clans and hordes, and tribes and parties are formed, whose interests are deemed so inseparable and so sacred, that an offence or injury committed against an individual is resented and revenged by the whole, as a common injury committed by the whole of the adverse party, which nothing but extirpation or slavery can expiate.

It is acknowledged that history has furnished us with some instances of deviation from this general principle. Strangers have been received by a benevolent and unsuspecting people, with hospitality and friendship. But this seems to have been a peculiarity of character; and in several instances, a dangerous and destructive one. The violation of every law of hospitality and of humanity, indicated that the strangers caressed had themselves not learned the great lesson of benevolence. They indicate that this unlimited confidence was premature and indiscreet; and that benevolence itself, has proved a source of misery, when it has ignorantly transgressed the rules of caution, which are, in most instances, inscribed upon the human mind.

The Benevolence which is extensively operative and extensively beneficial, seems to result from dispositions naturally amiable, connected with the frequency of mutual intercourse, and greatly strengthened by the advantages of mutual interests. The predisposition to believe and to act as the laws of benevolence shall dictate, removes those prejudices which are fostered by ignorance and enmity. Mutual intercourse furnishes men with opportunities of discovering a thousand excellencies and attractive qualities, where they were not known to exist. Reciprocal advantages are calculated to inspire the affections of brethren, and teach us to abhor that promiscuous hatred which marks the

savage and the tyrant; and those personal animosities which characterize the religious bigot. (See Note R.)

### RELIGION.

Religion having assumed such various shapes, and produced such various effects on the welfare of mankind, it would be very difficult to state accurately the nature or degrees of its influence at different periods. When human weakness and passions have been ascribed to the divinities worshipped; when these have been deemed partial, capricious, arbitrary, revengeful, sanguinary, or the patrons of every vice that disgraces human nature; when these divinities have been considered as more tenacious of certain peculiarities, and modes of worship, or of personal homage, than of the laws of moral obligation; when it has been thought a most acceptable service to sacrifice as victims those who could not be converted into proselytes, the influence of such principles must have been most pernicious to welfare, both personal and social. Every evil and destructive passion thus became consecrated; the best dispositions of the heart were suppressed or eradicated by a sense of duty; and every depraved propensity was indulged as an acceptable service. In this deplorable state of things, bigotry, superstition, cruelty, persecution, terror, hatred, and animosities, every corrupt and depraved lust, became triumphant, and distracted

mankind. Yet these seem to be the natural and inevitable effects of extreme ignorance, united with extreme depravity of morals; and although we may deeply lament, and be astonished in this more enlightened period of the world, at the extent of ancient depravity, yet we must admit that such ideas of religion as are most consonant with reason, and with the truest interests of mankind, are too refined, sublime, and abstracted from every thing sensual, to be expected in the infancy of human nature, or in the ruder and less cultivated state of the world. It is long before the human faculties can be exalted above sensible objects. The powers of abstraction can alone be exercised, in the more advanced stages of intellectual improvement. To form ideas of the existence of an incorporeal agent, at a period when every idea is alone impressed upon the mind by sensible objects; to ascribe to this agent every moral perfection, when perceptions of moral conduct are confused and imperfect; to believe him to be infinitely wise, in the midst of numberless apparent disorders which are totally inexplicable; and to be infinitely good, notwithstanding the miseries with which the most worthy subjects were frequently afflicted; to be convinced of future existence, though mortality be the obvious lot of all created beings; and to place the expectations of happiness in the perfection of human nature, when

it was unknown in what this perfection must consist, demand an elevation of mind far exceeding the infancy of the world! These are principles founded upon arguments far beyond the penetration of the ignorant! Unless they were communicated to every individual by immediate inspiration, or made generally known by some particular revelation, they could only be the result of slow inductions of contemplative minds, enjoying the most vigorous powers, extensive knowledge of universal nature, united with competent leisure. So that we might expect ages to follow ages, before the unassisted exertions of human intellect could acquire just and sublime ideas of Deity, the nature of acceptable service, and the happy result of obedience.

We may farther remark that, were such truths to be discovered by a few superior minds, their influence would necessarily be confined to a narrow and contracted sphere. The ignorance, passions, prejudices, customs, and pre-occupations of the multitude still subsisting, would prove insuperable impediments to their speedy and general diffusion. We may also allege that unless inspiration itself were communicated to every individual, in the most ample and irresistible manner, the reception of revealed truths must, from the operation of the above causes, be extremely slow in its progress. For although it be much easier to admit discoveries

already made, than to go through the tedious process of the requisite inquiry, yet the exertions of all the rational powers would still be necessary, in order to be convinced of the truth of such a revelation, and distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit. It would require the firmest resolutions to sacrifice and subdue those propensities and prejudices, which are not consonant with its dictates; or to preserve it pure and unsullied from any intermixture of pre-conceived notions and practices, that had taken such a firm hold on the mind, and which it is always so reluctant to dismiss.

Whatever sentiments we may espouse concerning the *Origin* of religion in the human breast, we shall be equally compelled to acknowledge, that in a state of ignorance, prejudice and pre-occupation, the ideas concerning its *nature* must at least be crude and imperfect, if not absurd and pernicious. Those who assert that the ideas of a first cause are innate, must confess that *absurd* ideas are not innate; and these have been so numerous, as to overpower, like evil weeds, the single grain, originally sown. If we say that *Fear* made the Gods, it must be acknowledged that this fear, united with unfavourable impressions concerning their characters, has led to superstitions and cruelties, which destroyed a portion of human welfare that might otherways have been enjoyed. Even *Gratitude* towards eminent benefactors, which contri-

buted also to increase the number of divinities among the heathen nations, however amiable the principle, it was not only the parent of credulity, but of impure and sanguinary rites. The Gods of the *Poets*, possessing the passions of the most depraved among mortals, became the patrons of every immorality. If we suppose that the idea of powers above us, proceeds from the conscious feebleness of our own nature, the alarming phænomena which occasionally awaken the attention of the most stupid, united with the quick inference formed in the human mind, that no effect can be without a cause, and the nature of the cause is manifested by the nature of effect; even this most rational source, is no preservative against the most pernicious credulity; since an ignorance of the power and extent of natural laws, disqualifies the mind from distinguishing with precision, that which is preternatural, from the more occult laws of nature. As there is an universal propensity, in ignorant minds, to ascribe to supernatural beings, events which are beyond the reach of their limited comprehension; and as every terrific appearance is not always an evidence of wrath, or an act of punishment, the character and purposes of a superior Being are not always to be collected from phænomina, which are the most tremendous in their appearance.

Thus it is obvious, however difficult it may be to reconcile the fact with our preconceived opinions, that elevated ideas of religion cannot be the portion of mankind, in the infancy of their existence, without an immediate communication from above; and if lost, cannot be recovered by the light of reason, at a period, when the rational powers themselves are obscured and embarrassed by general ignorance: and, enigmatical as it may seem, altho' they are the first in importance, they must be the last which will present themselves to the human mind, without superior aid; and this superior aid must be continued, until the reason of man shall be prepared to assume the office. We are farther compelled to acknowledge that, notwithstanding there have been such rapid advances in mental improvement, and in the extent and accuracy of human discernment, yet the veil is not completely removed from this important subject. Christianity has certainly done much; but it has not yet accomplished its work; as the diversity of theological opinions concerning the nature, mode of existence, attributes, and requisitions of Deity, too plainly indicate.

The above cursory view of the subject under consideration, will sufficiently elucidate the propositions which have been advanced, that man enters into life destitute of every thing but the *power* of converting the surrounding means to his use;

that he is destined to *pursue* incessantly the well-being he so ardently desires; but that his acquisitions must be *slow* and *progressive;* as numberless things must be known before they can be pursued, and much experience and observation are requisite, before they can be properly *enjoyed.*

It is no less obvious that those which are the most elevated and refined in themselves, and the most beneficial in their influence, are the last in the scale of our acquisitions: I mean the blessings of an enlarged benevolence; and the beneficent consolatory, and dignified enjoyments of rational piety.

But although the progress towards considerable improvements must be gradual, and may appear tedious, yet it is obvious that human nature does not continue in a total suspension of enjoyments, until ample means be provided, and correspondent dispositions ripened. It experiences a certain portion of good, from its earliest perceptions; and the means and dispositions fortunately increase together. That very ignorance which would be a perpetual obstacle to every improvement, were it permanent, is at first of considerable benefit. While the means are few, and of an inferior quality, an extensive acquaintance with the treasures of nature, would excite such discontent as to disqualify for the enjoyment of the good things in possession. We have already hinted that the *better* is most injurious to the *good;* detects its imper-

fections, and brings it into disgrace! The assumption that nothing can exceed that which we already possess, will secure the most unreasonable of beings from the feelings of discontent: but when that *better* is discovered; when our own accidental experience, or the experience of others, evinces the error in our opinions, it inspires the wish to obtain. Its ostensible advantages, the love of novelty, the spirit of imitation, or of emulation, create a temporary restlessness, until that species of good be in some measure realized; and after a glow of satisfaction or of joy, at our perceived advancement, the mind returns to its tranquil contentment, until it be rouzed by other apparent advantages. The oaten reed of the Mantuan shepherd was deemed melodious beyond description, the inventor admired for his ingenuity, and the performer for his execution, while more perfect performances upon more perfect instruments remained unknown. The child may perhaps be as highly delighted with the sounds emitted from a cannister and hempen cords, and from brass wires distended upon a board by means of broken tobacco pipes, as the greatest proficients upon the violin or the dulcimer. The rude sketches of the rustic painter may be viewed with astonishment by strangers to more graceful performances. In the awkward but unrestrained dance on the green, hilarity has been

known to prevail more than at the most polished assemblies; and a coarse joke, has excited a cheerfulness and vivacity, which have not been exceeded by the delicate strokes of refined wit. It is probable that the crouds of wondering spectators who thronged to the shore, at the first launching of a canoe, were as numerous as those who, in modern days, press to see the launching of a stately man of war; and the first builder of a cot, was deemed as ingenious an architect, as any who are now engaged in the building palaces! Hence the gratifications arising from unexpected novelties; surprise and admiration, at address and ingenuity; the satisfaction of curiosity; the perception of improvement; joy and triumph over former imperfections, became successively the sources of much good: and gradual progress necessarily produced repeated accessions of pleasure from similar causes. As these observations are applicable to every improvement in nature, every discovery of art, and every advancement in science, they demonstrate that, independent of the permanent advantages promised by these acquisitions, the progress itself from the most absolute ignorance, to the highest cultivation of the mental powers, has, at every stage, produced such a *quantum* of good to the world, as amply compensates for the imperfections of the early state of human existence.

But in the midst of those pleasing sensations arising from the repeated percussions of joyful surprise and admiration, and of triumph over imperfections, the good of the whole marches with a slow and steady pace. Inconveniences are removed, dangers lessened, enjoyments diversified, rendered more chaste and refined, till they enter the regions of mental pleasure, and soften the savage ferocity of uncultivated nature. Social intercourse is extended and improved; mutual accomodations promoted, strengthening mutual affection and good-will, and laying the foundation of that amity which constitutes the chief ingredient in sublunary enjoyments: Which must gradually increase, in proportion as ignorance is dissipated and prejudices are removed; and will be complete, as soon as there is an universal conviction, that the grand interests of every man are effectually promoted by his loving his neighbour as himself; not in continual strifes and contentions concerning the means of good, not in promoting the misery or the destruction of his fellow creatures, from the sordid motives of his own private advantage!

## CHAP. V.

### ON THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF UNHAPPINESS.

THE extensive view we have been taking of the Nature, Means, and Powers of enjoyment, may convince the most discontented, that there is a *possibility* at least, for the human race to enjoy much good. When we consider the number and variety of objects which are capable of producing, in one connection or other, some agreeable sensation, it becomes a subject of surprise that so much misery should exist in the world; and that the voice of lamentation should so perpetually be heard. But that it does exist we all experience; many are the evils to which humanity is exposed, and some have ventured to assert that they more than counterbalance the comforts enjoyed.

We shall not expatiate upon these evils with a minuteness, similar to that observed in the contemplation of *good*. The subject itself is unpleasant, and we are reluctant to excite unpleasant sensations, by dwelling too largely upon it. Nor will this be necessary. The contrast between evil

and good, between well-being and unhappiness, will, in most instances, indicate itself. A dark shade naturally accompanies the brighter surface of bodies, though in an opposite direction.

Unhappiness is not merely the negative of a good, it is experienced as an absolute evil. Unpleasant and painful sensations of a positive nature, are frequently the consequences of privation. This has already been remarked under the article of Sorrow; where we have endeavoured to show that most of our painful sensations are of this kind; although there may be others to which the assertion cannot so obviously be applied.*

Our unpleasant sensations, like their opposites, may be considered as having their primary seat in the body, or in the mind; although in every case the connection is intimate, and the communication immediate. The first and lowest stage, refers to the corporeal system, and consists in the unpleasant sensations which are natural and periodical, as the cravings of the appetites; in repugnances which primarily affect the different organs of sense, as harsh and discordant sounds, offensive odours, disgust in the sense of taste, horror at particular

* See Chap. II. Cl. I. P. 96.

objects of sight; in disagreeable undefined sensations in various parts of the body; and in absolute pain. The former, serve as stimulants to search for the food requisite to promote the growth of the human frame, or invigorate its strength; and whenever these cravings can be appeased, they are considered as blessings, rather than as misfortunes; as indications of the healthy state of animal nature, and not as its infirmities. Total want, as in the cases of extreme hunger or thirst, are justly placed among the heaviest afflictions; but these are calamities which do not frequently occur; since the simplest food of nature's providing, and the copious element of water, are sufficient to alleviate extreme distress; and of these there is seldom a deficiency, in the ordinary state of things. The various species of repugnances and disgust, are occasional and transient. Their causes do not often occur, and they may generally be avoided.

The *painful* sensations of a corporeal nature are incidental and adventitious. They are the occasional consequences of that law of susceptibility, with which every part of the animal frame is endowed; in order that it may be duly excited, by the proper stimulants, to the discharge of those functions on which the well-being of the animal economy depends. Irregular stimulants, excess in their action, or increased sensibility in the part, occasionally produce very painful and distressing

sensations, which, in some cases are admonitions that the diseased part, or vitality itself is in danger; in others, they are the result of a salutary process by which greater evils are prevented, and the parts restored to their pristine functions; and sometimes they are the harbingers of nature's dissolution.

The first uneasy sensation which is primarily excited in the *Mind*, consists in ardent desires after some apparent good, where various difficulties occur respecting its attainment. Desire is in itself an uneasy sensation. It is a restless state of mind, prompting us to attempt a release from some circumstances in our present situation, which are unpleasant; or to possess some additional good that has been suggested to the imagination. When the good appears attainable, when it promises amply to reward our endeavours to possess it, so large a portion of Hope, is interwoven with desire, that it seems to be in itself a pleasing, as it is an invigorating passion. But in proportion as hope is enfeebled, desire becomes painful, and this painful sensation is angmented by the preponderancy of Fear; and when Hope is totally extinguished, it gives place to the pangs of Vexation, Disappointment, and Despair. After the failure of success, it is with much difficulty that the mind can

be restored to that state of tranquillity and self-possession, enjoyed before the desire was indulged. Its ideas of things are now changed; it has been contemplating advantages or enjoyments, of which it had formerly entertained no conceptions, or concerning which it had never indulged a hope. The imagination has created a paradise which the soul was solicitous to enjoy; and from which it feels itself *ejected* by disappointment. Anticipation fondly made the blessing our own; we felt the most pleasurable sensations in the prospect, and we resent the failure, not only as a painful privation, but as a positive evil.

It is obvious that the degree of pain from this source, will greatly depend on the conceptions which had been formed of the blessings desired, united with the degree of hope that had been indulged concerning it. In persons of great sensibility, whose imaginations were ardent, and the disposition sanguine, a disappointment respecting one particular object, has been experienced to cast a gloom over every other blessing of life. It has rendered the subject a prey to melancholy, and a stranger to every consolation; and in cases not a few, it has rendered life itself too great a burden to be endured. The unhappy subject has either fallen a victim to his grief, or sought a release from misery, by seeking the extinction of his being.

It is observable that a disappointment in not possessing the object so ardently desired, produces an effect upon the mind much more violent and durable, than the disappointment occasioned by the perception, that we had formed too exalted ideas of its qualities; or than the experience that the desired object when obtained, does not answer our expectations. The reasons are obvious: Possession necessarily extinguishes desire; which must either terminate in indifference, or be exchanged for some other passion or affection: and the painful restlessness of desire, will cease of course. We frequently derive some consolation from the very discovery, that although we have been deceived, we are no longer the dupes of an extravagant imagination; which had, perhaps, ascribed such perfection to states, situations, and characters, as humanity never possessed nor enjoyed; and we submit, with a degree of patience, to the discoveries of experience, and the dictates of reason. We may also be convinced, that what we pursued was not totally destitute of worth or of advantages; although these were exaggerated in our ideas, we may still perceive some advancement in the scale of enjoyment, if not to the extent we had expected. Such circumstances place us in a more favourable state than can be experienced in the total disappointment of our wishes. Some degree of satisfaction is thus obtained, which is a kind of

compromise with our expectations. But when great sacrifices have been made, in order to possess the object; when we discover that we have exchanged for the worse, by bartering away advantages greatly superior, then will repentance and self-accusation, add a permanent sting to that disappointment which possession itself may have produced.

While we were analyzing the Passions of Sorrow, Fear, and Anger, the reader will have remarked the wretchedness which every one experiences who is subjected to their influence. Anger has been considered as a painful sensation of a heating and irritating nature; and as a most comfortless and violent agitation of the animal spirits. Although it inspire a degree of courage, and animate to resent the supposed offence, yet the various causes of anger inevitably excite sensations of a very painful nature; as these consist in a sense of injury recived or intended, or to which we have been unnecessarily exposed. In the first instance, anger is combined with sorrow and vexation at the injury actually endured; in the other, it is united with painful alarms.

Sorrow either respects the immediate loss of some good, or it has relation to some act, or situation, in consequence of which the privation of good is fully expected. In the former case, the privation itself principally arrests our attention; and we augment our grief by, I had almost said, the

perverse contemplation of those valuable qualities to which, as we now perceive, we were too indifferent while they were in our possession; we feel some deduction from the comforts we were enjoying, and a disappointment respecting our future prospects. When the agonies of sorrow have given way to permanent Grief and Melancholy: their dreadful influence over the soul is indicated by the emaciating and debilitating effects produced upon the body. Like a slow poison they consume in secret. They annihilate every disposition to participate in the pleasures or joys of others, even of our nearest associates; and they obstinately refuse all social intercourse. Deep Melancholy is such a painful sedative to the animal spirits, that they apparently cease to flow. It loves to dwell upon its own misery: it feeds itself, as it were, by the consumption both of body and mind: it peremptorily refuses every consolation; and becomes strangely enamoured of misery.

The wretched state both of body and mind under the influence of Fear, Consternation, Despair, has been so amply displayed upon a former occasion, that I shall not attempt to add to the description.* These passions may be said to chain the soul down to misery. In their excess they contemplate misery unmixed, unalleviated by a single

* See Phil. Tr. p. 103.

particle of hope. The subject of such sensations expects the privation of good to be succeeded by an accumulation of misery; he apprehends that all is lost for which he came into existence, or that rendered existence a blessing!

We have remarked † that a sense of Shame may arise from two different causes: either from a modest diffidence of the young and inexperienced, connected with an imagined superiority in those, to whose observation they are particularly exposed: or from the detection of improper conduct, or disreputable motives; in which case a consciousness of Culpability, assures the offender that the disapprobation and censures of his judges, are too well founded. They are both very painful sensations. But in the first instance the subjects are consoled, by some degree of conscious merit, in the midst of a supposed inferiority; and by a confidence in the favourable dispositions of those by whom they are about to be adjudged. In the other, they have no consolation. They feel themselves stripped of every claim to the social intercourse which they once enjoyed; as outcasts from society: and as not being able any longer to maintain a level with those whom they formerly considered as their inferiors. They sink under the pressure of observation; seek

† Phil. Tr. p. 105.

to hide their heads in obscurity; or by self-destruction to leave a world, in which they would be doomed to perpetual contempt!

Unfortunately such painful sensations are felt the most by those possessing the largest share of sensibility, and who have not been rendered obdurate by repeated acts of a criminal nature. The sensation is also the keenest in the minds of those whose conduct had been exemplary; and whose reputation had commanded respect. The force of the fall becomes proportionate to the degree of elevation, from which they may have fallen.

As each of these passions inflicts its own characteristic evil, it is easy to conceive, to what a degree painful sensations may be augmented, by the exertion of their combined influences, at the same instant! When deep Sorrow for privations, is united with vehement Anger against the culpable agent, the wretched subject feels the torments peculiar to each passion. When Consternation, occasioned by some sudden and tremendous calamity, is the precursor of still greater calamities, Grief for the affliction already endured, is blended with agonizing Fears respecting the future; and the distress becomes insufferably great. Should Fear have for its exciting cause, the punishment of Delinquencies; a punishment of which the degree and duration are totally unknown; from which there

is no possibility of escape; and of which self-conviction assures the delinquent, that he is deserving; (and such have been the sensations of vicious men) all the force of imagination, respecting future sufferings, cannot exceed the horrors of his present feelings.

The irritating, corroding, and tormenting nature of Impatience, Envy, Malice, Hatred, Jealousy, &c. has been rendered sufficiently apparent by our former remarks concerning them.† They disseminate discomfort and wretchedness, wherever they manifest themselves. The man who is habitually under their influence, indulges his humours at the expence of his peace; aims at tormenting others, and he succeeds; but he torments himself still more; loses every title to respect, by his manner of seeking it; and while he covets the largest portion of the good things of this life, he clearly demonstrates that he *deserves* and *possesses* the least of its real comforts.

The Displacencies which consist in the disapprobation of conduct, produce various degrees of unpleasant sensations. Of these *horror* is the most painful and repugnant to our nature. It turns from the object, with astonishment and disgust.

† See Phil. Tr. on malevolent desires, dispositions and passions.

Although Indignation, Contempt, and Disdain, strongly mark an irritated state of mind; although they are frequently intermixed with severe disappointments, and deep vexation of soul, yet they are connected with a certain elevation, arising from conscious superiority. We feel our anger and resentment to be dignified, by our detestation of the crimes that have excited the emotion; and thus by a kind of consecration of our irritating passions, we experience a manly firmness in the principles of the opposite virtues; which affords some degree of consolation. Irrision, having for its object the foibles of our species, is also accompanied with a conscious superiority; and by placing the faults animadverted upon, in some ludicrous point of view, pleasant ideas are excited, which more than counterbalance the pain which would naturally arise from an offence against custom, decency, or even rationality of conduct.

It appears from the above epitome given of human sufferings, that by far the greater portion of them, as well as of our enjoyments, is to be ascribed to the particular State of our own Minds. In the periodical cravings of nature, however unpleasant they may be at the moment, we are more than indemnified by the pleasures of gratification; and where they are impetuous, the simplest viands are relished as dainties. Corporeal pains are sel-

dom endured, for a perpetuity, to such an extreme as to render life completely miserable. The subject still acknowledges that there are many comforts in life, which his pains have suspended, not destroyed. But most of our *mental* sufferings, in their excess, not only destroy particular comforts, but all relish for life itself. They spread such a gloom over the soul as to darken the whole creation. Every expectation of joy and comfort is extinguished. The world appears to be replete with woes, which the sufferers often seek to escape, by taking refuge in the grave.

Again, we are more frequently exposed to *mental* sufferings, than to such as are simply corporeal. For notwithstanding the universal sensibility of the corporeal frame, notwithstanding that there is not an individual point which may not become the seat of painful or disagreeable sensations, yet bodily pain is merely incidental; sometimes proceeding from causes of an extraordinary nature; at others, from causes which it was in our power to avoid; and not unfrequently they are the natural consequences of our own imprudent conduct. But every object deemed worthy of being possessed, and such objects are infinitely more numerous, may become a source of mental inquietudes, or of mental wretchedness, either by the disappointment in the gratification expected, or by some pernicious consequences proceeding from it. Every thing

we possess and value may be lost or invaded; by which we are exposed to the corroding sensations of Sorrow, or the violent irritations of Anger: and the numerous indiscretions we are liable to commit, the various temptations by which we may be seduced, hourly expose us to the dangers of Repentance or Contrition.

Another melancholy truth, no less obvious, is, that the dangers of our suffering from these mental causes, multiply in exact proportion to the increase of our knowledge, respecting the objects of desire, or aversion. As desires towards any of the supposed means of happiness, can only be excited in consequence of some information obtained, concerning the existence and powers of whatever we may deem sources of enjoyment; as complete ignorance of a better situation, must prevent our repining at not being advanced to it; and as Envy could not exist, did we not imagine that others possessed beyond their deserts, or beyond their portion; thus, unless some other principle intervene to prevent the mischief, the increase of our knowledge may, in various circumstances, multiply the causes of our unhappiness. In like manner, will a more minute and extensive knowledge of Evils to which we may deem ourselves exposed, and from which we perceive no means of escape, become occasions of alarm from which the

totally Ignorant are exempt: and thus where our fearful apprehensions cannot direct to caution, they will augment our wretchedness, by tormenting us before the time.

This leads us to another fact, in confirmation of our position, that an exposure to misery proceeds much more frequently from mental, than from corporeal causes.

Mental sufferings of the most tremendous nature, are frequently induced by the Imagination alone. By imputing to various objects more perfect and more extensive powers of promoting happiness, than could possibly be possessed; by forming to ourselves the most flattering ideas of success, where no success could have been rationally expected, we accumulate a large store for vexation and disappointment; by the apprehension of evils which do not exist, and tormenting ourselves with the phantoms of our own brain, we possess the dreadful power of creating a Hell within our own bosoms. For the painful sensations of disappointment, dread, and horror, are the same, whether our opinions were imaginary or founded on reality; and whether the dreaded evil had an existence or not.

This then is the prerogative of mind, to which there is no parallel in our corporeal sufferings. The imagination seldom operates so powerfully as to produce an acute sense of local pain, or any

of those diseases and infirmities to which the corporeal frame is exposed from other causes. Diseases of the body are also felt as painful realities, which we are solicitous to remove as expeditiously as possible. This is not universally the case with mental diseases; in these the mind is too apt resolutely to dwell upon its miseries. When the pains and diseases of the body are removed, we return to perfect health, and all its salutary functions are restored; while in many of those evils which afflict the mind, we feel a diminution of happiness, after the severer pangs may have subsided.

When the *means* of happiness engaged our consideration, it was remarked, that much actual enjoyment was possessed while in the pursuit of them, in consequence of the pleasing affections and emotions which so frequently accompanied these pursuits. The chearing influence of hope, and the exhilarations of joy and satisfaction, promote our present enjoyment, though they solely respect the expectation or the recent possession of something, by which our state of well-being is to be farther advanced. Thus does no small portion of the miseries of life, exist in the very state of our minds, concerning the means of good, or concerning some pending evil, and in those vivid sensa-

tions which are excited respecting these. The Sorrows and Vexations, for example, which constitute so large a portion of human misery, often proceed from the disappointment of our Expectations; and thus we render ourselves *wretched,* because we have not acquired a certain *addition* to our welfare. Solicitude concerning the success of some favorite plan; Apprehensions concerning some evil we imagine to be approaching, become themselves an *evil* by the painful sensations they create. Malice, Envy, Jealousy, respect not the state of mind of another by which he enjoys contentment, satisfaction and complacency, but they respect the adventitious circumstances that are to produce happiness. In numberless instances are the *painful* energies of the mind called forth, by the manner in which we pursue good: and the agonies which are thus excited, constitute a very large portion of our *wretchedness,* in our passage through the various scenes of life.

We shall conclude this disquisition with one observation:

From the general survey that has been taken of the sensations we deem pleasant, and happy, or comfortless and miserable, with the means and causes of each, it appears most evident, that the

occasions and sources of well-being are, according to the constitution of nature, much more numerous than those of discomfort and misery. This must be the case, when every thing around us is habitually contributing a something towards the enjoyment of our existence. When we are capable of experiencing the refreshments of the circum-ambient atmosphere, and protection from its violence, the genial warmth of the sun, the coolness of the shade, the chearful rays of light, the majestic solemnity of darkness, the pleasures of activity, and of rest. How great is the diversity of food agreeable to the palate, and of beverage adapted to our thirst, compared with the substances unpleasant, and disgusting, which are reserved by nature and by science, as remedies in incidental diseases. Unpleasant odours, harsh discordant sounds, and objects which it is painful to behold, are in the usual current of life, few, compared with the occasions of amusement and delight. They present themselves in a casual manner alone, and it is seldom that we are deprived of the power of avoiding them, or ameliorating their effects. We also perceive that some of our painful sensations, as hunger, thirst, weariness, or particular desires, are smaller inconveniences to which we chearfully submit, in order to augment the luxury of enjoyment. The seasons of pain and disease, however

afflictive, bear no proportion to the exhilarations of health, in the usual tenor of protracted life; and health restored is enjoyed with a double relish. How rich the resources of men of taste, who possess the secret of extracting numerous mental gratifications from those qualities in nature, and accomplishments of art, concerning which the vulgar are totally ignorant; and who have thus created to themselves a new world of elegant delights! The subjects of knowledge being infinite, they become infinite and inexhaustible sources of pleasure to the studious and contemplative mind. These are valued acquisitions of which indolent ignorance can form no conceptions: but this ignorance, fortunately prevents painful regret at the deficiency, while it holds the mind in a state of joyless languor. Some things must be known, before we can perceive that there is infinitely more to know, and that a progress in knowledge is an augmentation of pleasure. As soon as we become displeased or ashamed of our own ignorance, we have the remedy at our command. The exercise of the memory is always pleasant, when it refers to articles of knowledge that have been assiduously treasured up; or when it recalls facts, incidents, anecdotes, &c. which are instructive or amusing. It may sometimes be painful to recollect "joys once past never to return," because we may over-value them now they are no more, or neglect to draw a

faithful comparison with those which are still in our power. When they were of the most refined nature, or superior in actual enjoyment to our present comforts, the melancholy they inspire is rendered pleasing, by the reminiscence of what was good, and this pleasure may possibly be enhanced by a grateful sense of what we have enjoyed. Where reminiscence is wholly painful, it is mostly from the recollection of past follies, of a very injurious magnitude; for lesser follies, as well as dangers and difficulties, and disappointments, not unfrequently communicate a pleasure in the recollection and recital. Where the imagination is tormented by terrific scenes, it is alone in extraordinary cases; and the frequency of this is considered as an evidence of a disordered mind.

The lively, the playful, the romantic, the sublime, and inventive imagination, affords incontestible marks either of a mind perfectly at ease, or occupied with unusual satisfaction and delight. Nothing, but a state of the most abject slavery, can totally annihilate the freedom of the will, or the pleasures derived from it: and when consciousness becomes painful, it is the punishment of some misdemeanour. Every man enjoys pleasure from customs and habits. This pleasure renders it so difficult to relinquish them; and it is always with great reluctance, unless he be stimulated by the

prospect of enjoying something much superior to the objects of attachment, promising to advance him in the scale of well-being. It is scarcely possible for the worst of minds to become a prey to aversions, which shall equal in number, frequency, or duration, the indulgences arising from our kindly affections. Although fear and conscious inferiority, be in themselves painful sensations, yet even these, by the wise and benevolent constitution of our nature, are frequently modified into sources of delight. From states and objects naturally terrific and alarming, we are rendered capable of enjoying the most sublime sensations: and the acknowledged superiority of others in various excellencies, are able to inspire our choicest affections. Where Fear and Dread are excited in the contemplation of a First Cause, it is either by mistaking his nature, or from a consciousness of demerit.

Thus we see according to the laws and constitution of humanity, that extensive good is at our command. It appears copious as the ocean, from whence we may derive inexhaustible supplies, as often as we please; while the natural sources of pain, uneasiness, and distress, are comparatively few in number, incidental in their operation, and transient in their effects.

THE author has thus, with all the perseverance and discriminating patience in his power, minutely examined the most material subjects which relate to the first part of his plan; and he has endeavoured to elucidate and establish the following facts:

Human nature is destined to *pursue*, that Well-being it so incessantly desires.

Its various wants, the diversity of circumstances with which it is surrounded, and events to which it is exposed, are the exciting causes of the different passions and affections, with which human nature is endowed.

Some of these Passions and Affections, are essentially necessary, in the destitute, uncertain and precarious state of man; for by them he may be enabled to obtain good, and avoid evil: some respect the past, the present, the future: some are stimulants to action: some are useful monitors and guardians: some are the rewards of right conduct, and dispositions; and some the punishment of their opposites.

Every Emotion has its final cause in the characteristic marks rendered conspicuous to others.

The diversity in our Predilections, arising from different natural causes, are, in various respects, highly advantageous, and best correspond with the peculiarities of our situations.

Inordinate passions and affections proceed from the excess of those which are natural, or from the

gross abuse of some principle in our nature, which is useful in itself.

The grand causes of these irregularities and perversions are Ignorance, the Influence of present objects, and inordinate Self-love.

It is not the office of the passions and affections, to investigate, discriminate, or judge, concerning the nature, tendency, or influence of objects, circumstances, and situations; but to influence conduct, according to appearances, or to opinions formed of these. It is *opinions* formed of qualities and tendencies, which attract the affections, or excite the passions; and these may be influential, though erroneous.

It is the office of the Intellectual powers to ascertain facts, discern qualities, draw inferences, and acquire such precision in knowledge, as may be requisite to the forming of right dispositions, placing the affections upon right objects, correcting the turbulent and irregular passions, exciting those which are legitimate and beneficial; and thus they become agents in the production of good, and the diminution of evil.

Preparatory to right affections and right conduct, it is of importance that we form just ideas, of the nature of that Well-being we are rendered capable of enjoying, and its various Sources; and also of the Miseries to which we are exposed, and their efficient Causes.

In the Good of which our nature is susceptible, are various kinds and gradations; one or other of which is the constant object of our pursuit: such as the gratifications and accommodations of our animal nature; certain pleasures and amusements; cultivation of the social affections; the acquirement of knowledge; and the hopes indulged of a perpetuity of refined and exalted enjoyment in a future state. The Miseries we are to shun, consist of bodily pains and uneasiness; restless desires; and various inquietudes of mind, arising from the passions and affections of anger, hatred, envy, sorrow, fear, regret, remorse, &c.

As Felicity is not forced upon us by any physical law; as Well-being, in all its branches, is destined to be the object of pursuit; and as so large a portion both of Well-being or of Unhappiness depends upon the peculiar state of our own minds, it is a subject of momentous enquiry, *in what manner is this Well-being to be pursued, so as to ensure to ourselves, and to others, the greatest* quantum *of Good possible?* What is that line of conduct, and what are those dispositions of mind, which will best secure to Humanity at large, the blessings that present themselves to our attention? With these inquiries are intimately connected, the various principles by which creatures formed and situated as we are, ought to direct their conduct? and

which they ought to consider as the true principles of action? and finally, in what manner can these principles be most beneficially applied, either to secure personal Well-being, or to promote the public welfare in all our social relations?

These Inquiries will constitute the subject of our subsequent Disquisitions.

*END OF PART THE FIRST.*

# NOTES

TO THE

# PRECEDING TREATISE.

# NOTES

TO THE

# *PRECEDING TREATISE.*

## Note A.

After, "Become powerful Promoters of it."
Page 91.

THE following interesting fact, which has made an indelible impression upon the Author's mind, will fully illustrate the importance of this species of predilection.

Upon returning from Holland, many years ago, two young Germans were among the numerous passengers on board the packet, who were received on board, *pro deo*, or as paupers. Upon our retiring from the deck, towards

the close of the day, these young men went into the Steward's room with many others. In the morning, as we approached the shore, the captain of the vessel, in collecting the money from his passengers, demanded of these youths *half-a-guinea* each, for the use of the steward's room. They were stupified with surprise and anxiety! At length they applied to a passenger, who understood both German and English, desiring him to explain that being admitted *pro deo*, they claimed a title to a free passage. The captain alleged, that he was obliged to receive them upon the deck, but not to give them a place below; and after much altercation he seized their little packet. They burst into tears, exclaiming that they should be ruined; as *five ducats* were the whole of their joint treasure, which they had saved with great economy, that they might have a sum competent to support them in London, until they could obtain employment. The obdurate captain was deaf to their petitions and remonstrances. In the height of this dispute, a German Officer made his appearance upon deck, and learning of them their history, he generously paid the captain's demand.

When the company arrived at Harwich, while the other passengers were refreshing themselves at the inn, and waiting till the Custom-house officers were examining their baggage, these young men found it unnecessary to wait for either of these purposes. Their bundle was soon dismissed; they had their black bread and slices of bacon to support them on the road; and they immediately went forwards towards London. They were advanced within a mile of *Colchester* before our coach overtook them. We gave them the name of our inn, and upon our arrival, we announced the future guests to the landlady, desiring

lier to give them a comfortable supper and bed, and to place the expence to our account.

After supper they joined our company, and an interesting conversation took place, as they spoke the French language with great fluency. We learned that these two apparent paupers, were a *Physician* and a *Surgeon*. The Physician had studied five years at *Halle*, where he took his degrees, as he shewed by his diploma; the other had been an apprentice to an apothecary, and had spent some time at *Halle*, in order to learn the principles of surgery; and he produced a certificate of his abilities and good conduct. They had heard that England was the seat of wealth; and that many of their countrymen were making rapid fortunes, who had left their homes, poorer than themselves. They had thought that they were rich, and that their *five ducats* would support them comfortably for a considerable time, until they were alarmed at the demand of the Captain: and when they saw the large sums which the company paid for their suppers and beds, their alarm was considerably increased. We inquired what was their plan, as they acknowledged that they had neither acquaintances in London, nor letters of credit, or of introduction. The Physician, confiding in the principle advanced in our text, said he hoped to find out some of his countrymen, who would recommend him as a journeyman to an apothecary. The Surgeon boasted that he could not only shave, which on the Continent is a surgical operation,—but that he could dress hair neatly and expeditiously; nor had he any objection to cleaning of shoes, or acting as a menial servant, till some opportunity should offer of improving his condition. They neither of them doubted, if they could gain a mode of subsistence before their trea-

sures were exhausted, that by good conduct and good fortune, they should make their way as well as thousands of their countrymen; and that in the line of their profession.

The company agreed to keep the number of their ducats entire till they should arrive in town: They were permitted to sit on the outside of the coach, and every expence on the road was defrayed. Upon our arrival in London, most fortunately for these young adventurers, a Gentleman's footman, who was waiting at the bar of the inn for a fellow-servant, happened to speak English with the German accent: we immediately introduced the young men to him, desiring his advice and assistance; which he gave most cordially. He informed them of an institution established by a large number of Germans resident in the metropolis, for the sole purpose of supporting their countrymen, of whom they entertained a good opinion, until they could find suitable employment; to procure which the members of the society were very assiduous: and we took our leave of our fellow travellers, under the full assurance given us by the footman, that he would himself conduct them to the place, after he had executed his master's orders.

From the good sense, discretion, and interesting manners of these young men, there could be little doubt of their final success. Their names have escaped my memory; which I much regret, as it has prevented me from tracing their progress in life. It is more than possible, that through the benignant influence of this national predilection, the chariot of the Physician may have rolled through the streets of the city, where he must, without it, have inevitably been a beggar; and that the diploma, which had

been packed up with his shoes, black bread, and Westphalia bacon, would still make a decent appearance, and place him in his proper line with the Literati. He may also have raised his younger brother from the humble station, to which he wisely determined to accommodate himself, and have placed him in a situation more suitable to his education and abilities.

## Note B.

After "and every principle of humanity." Page 135.

The instances of savage cruelty, which are occasioned by inordinate self-love, where interest, ambition, a spirit of revenge, or the infernal zeal of making proselytes to political or religious tenets, so perpetually present themselves to view, that they no longer excite our astonishment; but the inhabitants of a free country, cannot so easily suppose that habitual despotism is capable of extinguishing every spark of humanity, and of rendering the heart completely callous to misery, in cases where neither of the above causes are powerfully operative. The following facts therefore, while they are illustrative of our subject, may create no small degree of surprise in the breasts of some of our readers.

Many years ago, when the author was first in Holland, an Envoy from the *Emperor of Morocco*, was resident in the city of Amsterdam. The magistrates having complained to him of some irregularities committed by one

of his domestics, that he might be restrained in future, the Envoy gravely told them, that he would put it out of the man's power to offend the laws a second time, and gave immediate orders for his execution; which was with difficulty prevented. This event being the subject of general conversation at the time, it recalled to the memory of several of the inhabitants, an anecdote of a similar nature, respecting the conduct of the *Czar Peter*, which has not been mentioned, I believe, in any accounts of his life. After this great reforming Savage had minutely attended to every thing which appeared worthy of his notice, during his residence in the United Provinces, he expressed his regret, that he had neither seen the mode of *torturing*, nor of *breaking upon the wheel;* and desired the magistrates of Amsterdam to indulge him with a sight of both. They answered that there were not any criminals deserving of these punishments. "If that is the only objection, says he, you may take one of my attendants for the purpose;" and he was much displeased at their refusal.

## Note C.

After "our own operations." Page 150.

Philosophers have given us various divisions of the intellectual powers, conformable to the particular object they had in view. The one proposed in the text, presented itself to the author as being peculiarly adapted to the nature and design of this Disquisition; or to the developement of the intellectual powers which are necessary

to the pursuit of well-being. The ancient and most usual division of the intellectual powers, as Dr. Reid observes, was into simple *apprehension*, *judgment*, and *reasoning*. But to this the Doctor has made very powerful objections. He remarks that "neither of these branches comprehends *Consciousness*, nor the perception of an object by the Senses or Memory." We may add that they exclude likewise the *inventive* Powers, and *Volition*. The term *Apprehension* is also pressed, from its more general and obvious connections into the service of philosophy, although the most scrupulous attention ought to be invariably paid to the common acceptation of words, when applied to philosophical subjects. Apprehension, in its most literal sense, expresses simply laying hold of a thing, and that in an imperfect and unsatisfactory manner; and it is chiefly used in an unfavourable connection, conveying the idea of terror, or some unpleasant expectation. We speak of *fearful*, not of *joyful* apprehensions. We apprehend *danger*, not *safety*. To *apprehend* a person is to *seize him as an offender*, not *secure* him as a *friend*. That these ideas are not peculiar to the English language, is obvious from the witty remark of the *Mareschal De Turenne*, concerning an officer to whom cowardice was imputed, as recorded by *Charpentier*: "Des trois operations de l'Esprit, il n'avoit que *l'apprehension*." Of the three operations of the mind, he had only *apprehension*.

Dr. Hartley arranges the mental faculties under *memory*, *imagination or fancy*, *understanding*, *affection*, *and will*. See *introduction to the Observations on Man*.

This arrangement excludes the specific character of Consciousness; and although the affections are *mental* fa-

culties, they cannot be properly placed in a disquisition, whose object it is to examine into those intellectual powers, by which the affections are to be directed. The Dr. defines the *Understanding* to be, "that faculty, by which we contemplate mere sensations and ideas, pursue truth, assent to, or dissent from, propositions." This definition may *comprehend*, but it does not sufficiently *express* all those offices of the understanding, which relate to the acquirement of knowledge.

The general Division of Dr. Reid, is into the powers of the *Understanding* and those of the *Will*. Under the last, "all our active powers are comprehended, and all that lead to action, or influence the mind to act, such as the appetites, passions, and affections. The Understanding comprehends our contemplative powers; by which we perceive, by which we conceive, or remember them; by which we analyze and compound them, and by which we judge and reason about them."

Although the above arrangements may be most adapted to the Doctor's mode of pursuing his philosophical Inquiries, yet he admits that they are not perfectly accurate. In a subsequent chapter he speaks of *social Intellectual Powers*, as distinct from the others. He says, "the Author of our being intended us for *social beings*, and has for that end given us *social intellectual powers*, as well as social affections. As the Professor has arranged the appetites, passions, and *affections*, under the division of the Will, they must either be very improperly placed, or there is no necessity for this subsequent distinction. Nor does the position appear either to be necessary or to be founded on fact. There is no reason to suppose, that we are furnished with a class of intellectual powers, solely appro-

priated to these objects. The same powers will enable us to discover the differences between the beings of our own species and other beings; intelligent agents and unintelligent and inanimate. They will enable us to distinguish beings, that possess passions and affections, and personal and social interests, from those beings or substances which are destitute of either; whether inferior beings make a beneficial or a pernicious use of their passions and affections, and what is the tenor of our own conduct in this respect, are circumstances as obvious to our common powers of perception, as the difference between the beneficial uses of the elements of water and fire, and the deluges and conflagrations they sometimes occasion.

## Note D.

After, "introduces a different species." Page 154.

It is not the object of the author to advance, support, or oppose any hypothesis, relative to the thinking principle in man, or the *physical* manner in which he receives, retains, recollects and arranges what are termed *ideas*. He has no desire to enter the lists in a controversy where such philosophers as Locke, Hume, Priestley, Reid, and Stewart are at variance. His sole object is to discover and arrange in a perspicuous manner, the diversities subsisting in the intellectual powers of man, and point out their specific uses. If the diversities, as he has stated them, do not ex-

ist, he has fallen into an error, which it is equally the province of the advocates of the different systems to correct. The diversities which *do* exist must be noted by particular terms. If the manner in which these terms are used, should sufficiently mark the acknowledged distinctions, the grand purpose is answered. To accomplish this end, pains have been taken to state the precise meaning annexed to each word, in its particular connection; and preference has been invariably given to that mode of expression which appeared to be the least ambiguous : for as Professor Reid justly observes, " there is no greater impediment to the advancement of knowledge than the ambiguity of words. To this it is chiefly owing that we find sects and parties in most branches of Science, and disputes which are carried on from age to age without being brought to an issue."

Mr. Locke, in the introductory chapter to his essay on the Human Understanding says, in apologizing for the frequent use of the word *Idea*, "it being that term which I think serves best to stand for whatsoever is the object of the understanding, when a man thinks. I have used it to express whatever is meant by phantasms, notions, species, or whatever it is which the mind is employed about in thinking."

Thus it chiefly refers to the object of thought in the sense used by Mr. Locke. Dr. Reid observes that there is another, and more popular meaning attached to the word, expressive of *Conception*, *Apprehension*, *Notion;* but this sense is manifestly comprehended under Mr. Locke's general description. These various acceptations are also comprehended in the description given of an Idea, in the text, and every other of which the mind may, at

any time, be conscious when it thinks. This term being upon the whole, the most eligible of any, both from perspicuity and usage, to express thought, the impression made upon the mind by every object or subject productive of thought, the result of thinking, or the train of thoughts suggested to the mind by any of its operations, or in any mode whatever; and that which is deposited in the mind, and becomes the subject of recollection.

Mr. Hume attempted to substitute *Impression* for *Idea;* but Professor Reid has opposed insuperable objections to its adoption; proving that it is only applicable to the influence of foreign or external objects, and not to thoughts suggested by the act of thinking. The Professor has a manifest predilection for the term *Conception;* Professor Stewart prefers the word *Notion* for *Idea*, in the sense in which it is used by Mr. Locke. The substitution of either of these terms would certainly be a farther remove from the hypothesis whence that word originated, and for which Mr. Locke is supposed to have had too great an attachment, but it could answer no other purpose; nor can it be universally admitted, until the peculiar sentiments of these philosophers shall be universally received. When a word, or a mode of expression, has been so long in use as to become *technical*, and is perpetually applied, without the most distant reference to the theory which introduced it, a change is an unnecessary and a prejudicial act of violence. It augments the embarrassment and confusion of which philosophers so justly complain, and which so much retards the progress of knowledge. It is their duty to submit, not to dictate; to make the best possible use of language as they find it, and not attempt to eradicate expressions of long and similar usage, which appear to mili-

tate against their peculiar conceptions. Such changes can only be introduced by the admission of a new hypothesis; and without this be demonstrated to universal satisfaction, so as not to be exposed to the danger of becoming a transient theory in its turn, it will be superseded by some other hypothesis, which shall gain an ascendency at some future period, and thus will the mutability of language be augmented. The term *Idea* was adopted by Mr. Locke, without any design to support the theory which gave it birth; and he introduces it with an apology which manifests that it was adopted from necessity, and not from choice. It has been in constant use from the period in which he wrote to the present day; our conceptions of its general and particular applications, are clear and determinate, and it is completely interwoven with all our forms of speech; to attempt a change therefore is totally unnecessary, and it would be found totally impracticable. Surely our modern philosophers do not wish to excite such a general abhorrence of the doctrines of Mr. Locke, as *Brissot* endeavoured to excite in the minds of the Americans against the English nation, when he exclaimed, "Les Americains doivent *detester* les Anglois!" and when he seriously proposed to them that they should change the whole of their language, from no other motive, than that they might forget their origin? It is not deemed necessary to reject the words *splenetic*, *choleric*, *melancholy*, lest we should be suspected of retaining the theories which gave them existence. Were we to be governed by these principles, we should be compelled to eradicate the greater part of our language. The common and popular use of words being prior to the speculations of philosophy, it has created terms which speculation is

obliged to adopt. Many of our mental operations are necessarily described by expressions originally metaphorical, and which may be traced to a mechanical or physical import. By the frequency of its usage the metaphor becomes evanescent, and the term itself assumes a technical appearance. The most strenuous opposers of the doctrine of materialism scruple not to use the words, *perception*, *reflection*, *conception*, *apprehension*, *comprehension*, *understanding*, *imagination*, notwithstanding they are all borrowed from physical agency. We cannot read a *passage* in any Author without being *struck* with its *peculiarity*. We say of his very *style* itself, that it is *smooth*, *flowing*, *elevated*, *low*, *acrimonious;* he *expresses* his ideas in *current* language, but he uses a *superfluity* of words, &c. But according to the spirit of the objection assigned to the use of the term Idea, in metaphysical subjects, an advocate for the spirituality of our minds, must renounce every expression of this kind, because of the materialism of its origin. It may be farther asked with what propriety can *Imagination* be retained after the dismission of *Idea?* That word stamps the very *image* of an object upon the seat of thought, and consequently is much more formidable in its appearance, than *Idea*, which in its most dangerous acceptation, is scarcely more than an image of an image.

Mr. Locke has cautiously prefaced the frequent use of the term, by a plea of necessity; by which he has tacitly renounced every theoretical design; and this necessity still remains in its full force. The word *Conception* cannot be applied to an equal extent; and it has for years been pre-engaged to express what the disciples of Mr. Locke understand by *clear ideas;* it refers to a complete perception of some other thought which had a prior exist-

ence, and cannot be applied to the *subject* of thought itself. Nor does *Notion* duly express what is meant by a simple idea. It denotes something farther; it denotes the idea which is formed of some preceding idea or ideas. Hence it is mostly applied to a *conjecture*, to an *opinion*, to the commencement of an hypothesis; and even in these senses it is falling into disrepute, being more frequently used to signify erroneous and extravagant opinions, than such as merit attention. The word *thought* taken in a generic sense, approaches the nearest. This will express the act of thinking and the result of thinking, but not that unknown something deposited in the memory, and which we are capable of recollecting; that wonderful treasure which an active mind turns into real thoughts, every time it recollects.

Mr. Belsham says, that "an idea is a revived impression in the absence of the object." But is this definition perfect? Is it not too nearly related to reminiscence? Or does it sufficiently denote those suggested by the imagination? See El. of the Phil. of the H. Mind. Part. I.

Professor Scott, in an excellent chapter on association,* wishes to reject the usual phrase, *Association of ideas*, a term he says, which is objectionable, both on account of its redundancy, and of its allusion to the visionary ideal theory." He recommends *Association* alone to express the faculty; or which he thinks "still more precisely, and unexceptionably expresses its nature; *combination*."

There can be no redundancy in the expression, for there must be an association or combination of more things than one, and philosophers have a right to demand what things are they? It cannot be of *thoughts* strictly

*See Elements of Intellectnal Philosophy, page 170.

speaking, this is not applicable to those latent somethings, of which we were previously unconscious, and which incidental circumstances have roused into thought. Nor can it be an association or combination of *conceptions* or *notions;* which might denote an assemblage of thoughts which have a *pertinent* relation to a subject, and not the inexplicable excentricities so observable in the recollection of our ideas; so that this mode of expression would be much more applicable to extreme fecundity of thoughts, or an accumulation of opinions, than to what is understood by *association of ideas*.

## Note E.

After "much pleasure at the performance." Page 156.

Mr. Locke observes concerning perception that, "as it is the first faculty of the mind exercised about our ideas, so it is the first, and simplest idea that we have from reflection, and it is by some called thinking in general; though *thinking*, in the propriety of the English tongue, signifies that sort of operation in the mind, about its ideas where the mind is *active;* where it, with some degree of voluntary attention considers any thing; for in bare naked perception, the mind is for the most part *passive*, and what it perceives it cannot avoid perceiving."

Again, Mr. Locke says, "Perception itself does not exist, until the objects presented to any of the senses produce an actual sensation. While the mind is intently employed in the contemplation of some subject, and curi-

ously surveying some ideas that are there, it takes no notice of the impressions sounding bodies made upon the organs of hearing, with the same attention that uses to be for producing the idea of sound. A sufficient impulse there may be on the organ, but if not reaching the observation of the mind, there follows no perception; and though the motion that uses to produce the idea of sound be made in the ear, yet no sound is heard." This is a statement which relates to a fact known to every one by his own experience, and is not the result of theory or speculation. Dr. Reid strenuously opposes the notion that the mind is at any time *passive;* but he must allow that in cases of a similar nature it is not a *voluntary* agent. It is *impelled* to notice tremendous sounds, insufferable light, and very offensive odours, while smaller degrees of their influence are imperceptible, where the attention is deeply engaged upon interesting subjects. Notwithstanding these Philosophers express themselves differently, they both maintain that there must be a degree of sensation in the organ before the mind can perceive; and they will both acknowledge that there are different kinds and degrees of activity; the lowest to which Mr. Locke refers is that which is not sufficient to rouse the mind to an act of immediate or exclusive attention to the impression made. Hence, according to the position of Professor Stewart, *impression*, and *sensation* are necessary to *perception.*

## Note F.

After " to no valuable purpose." Page 158.

Dr. Reid in his statement of the distinguishing characteristics of Perception, confines the term entirely to *external* objects. He says, Perception is applied only to *external* objects, not to those which are in the mind itself, and thus it is distinguished from remembrance." But this limitation is perfectly arbitrary, unsupported by common usage, or by the authority of our best writers. It is also an attempt to deprive our language of the term, in a connection where its presence is absolutely necessary, and for which there is no substitute. Nor can it legitimately be confined to external objects, in its most philosophical acceptation; for as we have stated in the text, when we speak of the *faculty* of discerning external objects we call it Perception; but every *act* of perception has a reference to something not external, to something which passes in the mind; when the mind adverts to its own occupations, it *perceives* the individual thought; that is, it knows what it is thinking about; it *perceives* the peculiarity of that thought which distinguishes it from every other; it *perceives* the relation it has to the subject which is occupying the mind. We might support the above explanation by the most respectable authorities: for in the proper use of language, authorities are arguments. Mr. Belsham observes that "Perception is the faculty by which we acquire sensations and ideas. Of perception there are two modes, sensation and reflection. Sensation is the perception of an object by the organs of sense; these are sight,

hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Reflection is the mind's Perception of its own faculties and operations." It might perhaps be added, and the *result* of these operations. In the above distinctions Mr. Belsham simply states what has been uniformly admitted. Nor can this act be expressed so clearly by any other word. *Idea* were it applicable, would be proscribed by our philosopher. *Notion, Conception, Sentiment, Opinion, &c.* are neither explicit nor appropriate. In confirmation of the importance of this mental acceptation we might have produced several passages from the Doctor's work, where it is thus applied.

We cannot forbear remarking an incongruity of expression in the sentence just quoted, manifestly proceeding from the repudiation of *Idea*. This term is rejected, from its being too closely allied to the *phantoms* or *films* of substances, which some ancient philosophers supposed to be lodged in the brain, upon the perception of external objects; but the expression substituted authorizes us to infer that the *object itself*, which has been seen or felt, has taken its seat in the mind! "Perception is applied only to *external objects*, and not to those which are *in the mind* itself;" nor can this absurdity be escaped in any other way than by recurring to the usual mode of expression.

But to return. Dr. Reid distinguishes Perception from Remembrance by the simple circumstance alone, that the former is applied to *external* objects, and the latter to those which are in the *mind* itself. This distinction appears to be both arbitrary and inapplicable. According to the general notion, Perception relates to things actually present at the time they are perceived. Remembrance necessarily supposes their absence. When I see a tree, and when I recollect that I have seen a tree, the recol-

lection is as present to me as the perception was; the difference is, not that the one was external, and the other internal, but that in the latter case the object itself is *absent*, and the remembrance alone is present. In this sense it may also be asserted, that the existence of a tree placed before our eyes, and the truth of a proposition which has been submitted to our consideration, are both objects of present perception and not of memory, although the former has an existence out of the mind, which the other has not.

Nor will it be easily admitted that perception is a compound of Conception and Belief, according to the doctrine advanced in the following sentence: "This conception of external objects is the work of nature, the belief of their existence which our senses give, is the work of nature; so likewise is the sensation that accompanies it. *This conception and belief which Nature produces by means of the senses, we call perception.*" Hence, the union of conception and belief constitutes *perception!* They must consequently, according to our ideas of cause and effect, have a prior existence; thus we must conceive, and believe before we perceive! This extravagance could only arise from a misapplication of the terms Conception and Belief. Conception has hitherto been considered as that state of the mind, by which a man feels a conviction that he has a distinct and accurate knowledge of the subject. It is a re-action, as it were, of his thoughts, about something which he knows to exist, from the testimony of his senses, or which is stated to exist, by the declaration of some other person. In the first case, it refers to some property, state, relation, influence, of the object known to exist. I cannot con-

ceive a tree, but I can conceive *of* a tree, though I should not see it; and I can conceive of its being in a flourishing or decayed state; of its being of a species bearing choice fruit or the contrary, of its being properly or improperly placed in a garden, &c. &c.

Thus Conception presupposes Perception, and cannot be a component part of it. Nor is the term *Belief* applicable to that full assurance, that indubitable certainty, which the doctrine advanced absolutely requires; and which in fact amounts to intuition or inspiration.

*Belief*, even when it rises to the height of full conviction, is invariably the result of some process which has taken place in the reasoning powers, but this the Professor has expressly precluded, by asserting that conception and belief are instantaneous, and not the result of ratiocination. No one ought to believe without being able to allege some reason for his belief; but according to the position no reason can be given: consequently the state of mind respecting an object of the senses, must be above or below this act of faith. If the term Belief be applicable to this subject, it must be from a very different cause. When I see a tree, or smell the odour of a rose, I believe, because I have the evidence of my senses for the reality of their existence. If I reflect upon the subject, I infer that no effect can be without a cause, and a cause must exist adequate to the effect produced. When in the perfect state of my organs, and of my senses, I have the sight of a tree before me, I conclude it must exist, or it could not be seen: and from the odour of the rose, I infer that it possesses some latent cause of an agreeable sensation being excited. Belief cannot, therefore, be one of the com-

pounds constituting perception, for it is manifestly the *result* of perception.

## Note G.

After "essential to the production of the works of art." Page 172.

When professor *Stewart* remarks of conception, that it is that power of the mind which enables it to form a notion of an absent object of perception, or of a sensation which it has formerly felt, he manifestly makes it synonimous with reminiscence; and excludes that species of conception which forms an entire and distinct object from the materials presented to the mind by the imagination. He acknowledges indeed that this statement is not exclusively the meaning of the word; but how shall we have a full and complete idea of any subject, unless every circumstance which constitutes a part of its nature, be placed before the mind? That idea is admitted by Dr. Reid, and enlarged upon in a very satisfactory manner. But the representation which he gives of the nature of conception, in the chapter written professedly upon the subject, renders it still more difficult to admit the hypothesis, that *conception* and *belief*, constitute *perception*. For numerous are the instances in which we may have the clearest conception of an asserted fact, and the strongest belief of its existence, and yet discover that we have been totally deceived respecting it. In what sense therefore can a case of this kind be classed under *perception*, to which the professor ascribes infallibility?

## Note H.

After "diversities in our predilections." Page 178.

The doctrine of the association of ideas, as it is most important in itself, thus has it been the subject of much attention among philosophers. Mr. Locke has given us a concise view of its history: Dr. Hartley has endeavoured to explain its laws upon physical principles; and notwithstanding the many and potent objections, which may be made to his doctrine concerning the association of ideas being produced by vibrations, excited in the medullary substance of the brain, the philosophical world is much indebted to this profound investigator for the information he has communicated; which may be considered as containing the substance of what has been since advanced. Those who reject his particular theory will admit, that it has enabled him to arrange important facts in a lucid order; and as professor Stewart justly observes, "one of the most important uses of theory is to give the memory a permanent hold, and a prompt command, of the particular facts which we were previously acquainted with." The Doctor's theory has enabled him to trace the influence of association from its most simple, to its most complex operations, in a very instructive manner. Whether the ultimate *cause* be through the medium of vibrations, or any other, as yet unknown, it is highly interesting to trace *facts;* and to note in what cases ideas are introduced into the mind in a connected train, by which they seem to converge towards some particular object, with the greatest regularity; and when

they are made to appear arbitrary and capricious, and to fly off from the subject in every direction. These operations he has traced with great perspicuity. Professor *Stewart* has also expatiated upon the general laws, influence, and uses of the associating principle, with a pleasing perspicuity; and he has demonstrated its importance by interesting examples of its various modes of application. The elegant and philosophical pen of Miss *Hamilton* has happily applied the doctrine of association, as elucidated by the professor, to the important object of education. See also the excellent observations of Mr. Belsham upon this interesting subject. Elements &c. Ch. III. and I.

Several attempts have been made to reduce the laws of association to certain indubitable principles, under which every instance of the associating powers may be arranged. Mr. Hume proposes *resemblance, contiguity of time and place, and cause and effect.* Professor Scott adds to these the *contrarieties* of Aristotle; and he enlarges upon these efficient causes of association with much propriety.

Professor Gerard, in his Treatise on Genius, is the first I believe who has minutely attended to the passions, as productive of numerous associations. Although his ideas of the passions do not appear to be perfectly accurate, their influence upon thought is well illustrated. But observations on this species of association may be carried still farther. The particular mood or frame of the mind, without its being under the power of passion of a strong emotion, will frequently introduce a train of thoughts most congenial with itself. The season of the year, the time of the day, gloomy or chearful weather, &c. have their influence. Whoever pays attention to

minute circumstances of this kind, will perceive a correspondence between these, and the thoughts which suggest themselves to the mind, not only unsolicitated, but completely unexpected, and totally foreign from the particular subject which may be engaging our attention.

A few instances of this species of association were given in our philosophical treatise, so far as was necessary to illustrate the subject under consideration. See Part II. Obs. III. Chap. II. Sect. 13 and Sect. 18. *Predisposing Causes.*

## Note I.

After "where truth is wisdom, propriety, equity."
Page 185.

Those who approve of the vague and indeterminate manner in which professor *Reid* speaks of this faculty, may be disposed to censure the author in attempting to give it a circumscribed place in the arrangement of the intellectual powers. The professor asserts that "judgment is an operation of the mind so familiar to every man who hath understanding, and its name is so common and so well understood, that it needs no definition." But the professor has not informed us why the judgment, which is one of the most exalted faculties of the human mind, and so seldom possessed in comparison with many others, should be in this very singular predicament, or why it should be more unnecessary or impracticable to give a definition of judgment than of the preceding powers; for familiarity is equally applicable to every other faculty which has passed in review; and the natural inferrence would be, that they are all equally intelligible, and require no particular investigation. But according to

the principles which the Dr. himself has advanced, nothing can be more important to a philosopher than to know precisely the meaning of every word he employs. This knowledge cannot be too accurate. A general idea is not sufficient. The smallest distinction must be noticed, for, in some connection or other, it will have its specific influence, and this may induce important consequences. It is not only necessary for the mechanic to distinguish one instrument from another which is adapted to different purposes, he must know the particular *size* and *momentum* of each tool. All *saws* cannot answer his purpose alike; the nature of his work may require one of a particular size and fineness of edge: nor will every *hammer* be applicable to every purpose indiscriminately, though the essential properties of a hammer be common to them all. If the judgment be distinct from every other act of the mind, it is proper for the investigator to point out in what this distinction consists; or he mixes with the vulgar in their arbitrary and conjectural use of terms, and can never arrive at that precision which is the professed aim of philosophy.

Under the article *discrimination* it was hinted, that *judgment* is a higher species of discernment; that it discovers relations and differences which are not obvious to the senses; and that when it is exercised upon the nature or effects of particular plans or modes of conduct, it refers to some particular law or rule of propriety, utility, obligation, &c. and thus decides according to an indispensible test, of what ought to be, or ought not to be. In this sense it is that Mr. Locke considers judgment as supplying the wants of knowledge, that is of

facts acquired by perception, attention, &c. and hence the necessity of a sound and piercing judgment as professor Gerard observes, in regulating the imagination in the works of genius and taste; and to this power do professors Stewart and Scott refer, when they treat of the influence of association on our various judgments, or the various exercises of our judgment. Mr. Belsham also observes that "the immediate perception of the concurrence and coincidence, or the want of concurrence, and coincidence is called judgment."

## Note K.

After "Name of naivité." Page 198.

Xenophon in his Cyropædia, presents us with a pleasing illustration of this kind of simplicity, in the remarks of young Cyrus at the Court of his grandfather *Astyages*. Cyrus, having been educated in an abstemious manner, according to the customs of the Persians, was astonished at the unnecessary profusion of strange dishes at a banquet of the Medes; and at the trouble they took in handing them to one another, in order to satisfy the cravings of nature, compared with the ease and expedition with which the Persians accomplished the same end. When he perceived that the guests wiped their fingers after touching sweetmeats, and not after they had handled bread, he concluded that they apprehended some noxious quality in the former, by which they should be infected. In presenting the cup to Astyages, as he was imitating the manner of his cupbearer Saca, he omitted tasting the wine, as

was usual, being fully convinced that *poison* had been infused into it; for, says he to Astyages, "I perceive that after liberally drinking of it, you are all wonderfully affected both in body and mind. In the first place you yourselves commit what is forbidden to us children. You exclaim all together; but no one regards what is said. You sing most ridiculously, no attention is paid, and then you loudly applaud the singer. You boast of your own exploits. You attempt to dance, and instead of keeping time with the music, you cannot stand upright. You, Sire, forget that you are a sovereign; and your guests forget that they are your subjects. I perceived for the first time, that they had all of them the full liberty of speech, for they all talked together, &c.*

## Note L.

After "Evince the truth of the above remark." Page 205.

Under the influence of hope and fear, the imagination is necessarily active. For when the particulars of an event, deemed to be of the utmost importance, are unknown or contingent, they can only be the subjects of conjecture; and the vigorous nature of both these passions suggests numberless ideas to the mind, correspondent to the interesting subject. But as fear is the stronger passion of the two, as anxiety to avoid impending misery, generally operates more forcibly upon the mind, than even sanguine hope in the prospect of success, thus is fear peculiarly active in the forebodings of wretchedness;

* See *Amelburn's* Edition, βιβλ. α. 11.

and it frequently induces much greater distress than could be inflicted by the evils most apprehended. Hence it is that individuals, placed in the same situation, conversant with the same scenes, and exposed to the same contingencies, shall form the most different opinions of their states. In the one, we shall perceive the predominance of Hope, with all that chearfulness it is calculated to inspire; while the prospects of another shall be *gloomy*, and his spirits habitually dejected. It is also a consoling fact that our fears deceive us, as well as our hopes; perhaps more frequently. They exaggerate those evils which will arrive, and create forebodings which are never realized. As we often experience that "our very wishes give us not our wish," thus are we struck with astonishment that the events we had most dreaded, have arrived without the attendant evils.

The creative power of the imagination in producing extreme wretchedness, without a real external cause of misery, is exemplified in a striking manner, by the celebrated Kotzebue, in the narrative of his banishment into *Siberia*, under the Emperor *Paul*. Not a single event took place which had presented itself to his terrified mind, during every stage of his journey. The cloud was in great measure dissipated as soon as he arrived at the place of his destination. He experienced comforts and accommodations, which no man could have expected in regions destined to the punishment of supposed offenders. His fame, as a dramatic Author, preceded his personal appearance; and he was frequently gratified with the public exhibitions of his own theatrical pieces, in Cities where theatrical amusements could not be supposed to have been permitted. He form-

ed agreeable connections in every place; and he quitted those regions with a degree of reluctance, which he had imagined were destined to complete misery. He returned to his native Country, and to the bosom of his family, with transports, enriched with stores of valuable knowledge; pecuniary advantages were derived from rigours of treatment which threatened his total ruin; and his love of fame was gratified by events which had threatened perpetual ignominy.

## Note M.

After "they may relish what they cannot create."
Page 217.

The works of imagination are the most pleasing, and they are much easier to be comprehended than those of deep research. They are consequently the most popular, and excite the admiration of much larger numbers. This has disposed some persons to denominate their authors men of superior genius, almost to the exclusion of others, who have been the greatest ornaments of their species. But if a competent portion of that judgment for which the most eminent philosophers are celebrated, were not united with the imagination so conspicuous in the sublimest flights of genius, these would degenerate into the rhapsodies of insanity. The boldest efforts unsanctioned by reason, cannot be acceptable to reasonable beings: They degenerate into extravagances that displease and disgust. Even the vivacities of wit, in which the greatest excentricities of thought are permitted, totally devoid of

judgment, would be deemed vapid impertinences; and the satire which now pleases, would become insufferably acrimonious. True *attick salt*, is a compound as much as the *culinary;* and its poignancy, unqualified by judgment and discretion, would become as noxious and offensive as the muriate vapors of the latter, detached from their basis.

The sole object of the author being to give a concise epitome of the intellectual faculties, indicative of the powers they possess to improve human nature and advance Well-being, it would be foreign from his purpose to enter into those minutiæ which have engaged the attention of many philosophers. Upon the subject of the imagination as immediately connected with the productions of genius and of taste, he shall content himself with referring to others.

Professor Gerard has, with much assiduity and success, investigated the principles of each. Mr. Burke, in an introductory essay to his treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful, has demonstrated the necessity of accurate knowledge of the particular subject, to a refinement in taste. Lord Kaimes has made many excellent observations concerning the standard of taste; and professor Stewart has expatiated with much elegance on the connection and uses of the imagination applied to the fine arts.

## Note N.

After "our conduct had been different." Page 235.

On metaphysical subjects, accuracy of expression is absolutely necessary to convey accurate ideas; and where these are important, a deference to the most respectable authority, ought not to influence our judgment, or deter from investigation. A passage in Mr. Locke's essay on the understanding is rendered obscure, by what appears to be an improper use of the terms volition, and to *will;* and as these terms are used in the text, in a sense very different from that expatiated upon in the following passage, it is necessary to justify the deviation by indicating that it is productive of greater perspicuity.

Mr. Locke says,† "according to the preference or direction of his own mind, so far is a Man free." His idea of liberty is, that of "a power to do, or to forbear doing any particular action, according to the determination of a man's own mind."—"Liberty (he says), cannot be, where there is no *thought*, *volition*, or *will;* though there may be both *thought* and *volition* without liberty; for a man may be *compelled to act against his will.*" Again, "mere *volition* does not constitute power, but the *capacity to act* according to it.—Liberty is as little applicable to the Will as swiftness of motion is to sleep, or squareness to virtue; for liberty is a power belonging to an agent, and cannot be an attribute or modification of will, which is also but a power.—Will is not simply *preference;* we

† See Book II. Chap. 24.

may prefer to fly, but we do not *will* to fly. Thus Will includes the Power to do the thing willed: but Liberty consists in following my will. Thus the will is one power, and freedom another. Man is not at liberty to will or not to will, because he cannot forbear willing. It is in our power to suspend, or change our determination; this constitutes liberty; this is called *free will.*"

There is much embarrassment and obvious contrariety in this passage, in consequence of *Volition's* being considered as totally distinct from the *determination* of the mind, and of Mr. Locke's attaching to it the meaning we generally ascribe to desire. Thus he makes the essence of liberty to consist in being able to act according to this determination, though he asserts that liberty is as inapplicable to the *Will*, as swiftness of motion to sleep, or squareness to virtue; which is certainly the case, when by will we understand *desire;* for to desire, and to be able to accomplish, we all know are very distinct. Again, when he says "will is not simply preference; we may *prefer* to fly, but we do not *will* to fly;" we are obviously to understand by Will a *determination* of the mind, and by Preference a *desire.* When he asserts that the will includes a power to do the thing willed, he makes it synonimous with a determination of the mind, without which the power would not be exerted; but when he says that man is not at liberty to will or not to will, he cannot mean a determination of the mind, because he makes liberty to consist in following the will. He must here intend *desire*, as we cannot sometimes forbear desiring what no exertions of the mind will obtain.

This embarrassment would have been avoided, had Mr. Locke uniformly maintained that distinction between

to will and to desire, proposed in the text, and which common phraseology fully authorises; or in other words, had he considered Will as uniformly expressive of a *determination* of the mind to act according to some motive; which necessarily includes in it the *Power* of acting; for as he says, we may *desire* or *prefer* to fly, but we cannot, *will* to fly, excepting we have the power. We may *desire* where we cannot will, though we cannot *will*, where some previous desire has not been excited. For to will or to resolve, is to follow the desire excited. Desires are inseparable from our ideas of good and evil to be obtained or escaped; and they are founded upon the solicitude for well-being which is inseparable from our nature. We *desire* to be relieved from something which makes us unhappy, and we *will* to make use of the means, if they be in our power; if not, the idea of an impossibility, may inspire patience, resignation, or despair.

Thus by considering it as characteristic of the Will, in a philosophical sense, that it expresses the final determination of the mind to use certain means in order to obtain an end, or the object of our desire, we gain a precision correspondent with the distinctions which actually exist in the subject. We *desire* the end, and *will* to use the means if we *can*. That this is the most accurate mode of expression is manifest from our not being able to invert the phrase. We shall not say I *will* the end, and *desire* to use the means of obtaining it; for if these be in our possession they are no longer the objects of desire. In this discriminating sense the word *Will* cannot be applied to things *impossible*, for here no means can be used. No one, before the invention of balloons, ever *willed* to ascend above the clouds, with whatever ardour he may have *de-*

*sired* it; but he may now *will* to ascend with the aeronaut, as often as he *desires*.

When Mr. Locke says a man may be compelled to act against his *will* he can only mean against his *inclinations*; because, as the man himself acts, this act of his own must proceed from the determining motive. No one can be compelled to act against his will, in any other manner than by using his member as a mechanic instrument, such as compelling the arm of a child to strike his school-fellow. If I be induced to commit an act by threats, as by the fear of death or some dreadful punishment, and should perpetrate the deed, however revolting to my nature, the motive is still my own, for if I had *willed* to suffer, it would not be committed. Two opposite desires may forcibly present themselves to the mind, but two opposite *wills* cannot; and each desire may be supported by very powerful inducements. Let us suppose, for example, that a soldier is commanded by an authority he dares not resist, to become the executioner of his comrade. He may earnestly *desire* the life of his comrade; he would have lamented the event as a spectator; and his soul abhors the thought of being himself the agent: But his own life depends upon his perpetrating the deed. This is doubtless a powerful consideration; yet, perhaps, he would rather sacrifice his life, if he could thus preserve his associate; but he knows this will not avail; another would be commanded to execute the office, should he refuse. In this agitation of the mind he finally submits. The last consideration prevails. He preceives that the loss of his own life, would not preserve that of his friend; that horrors would augment by his refusal, and he finally *wills* to obey the dire command.

Thus we perceive that the confusion and embarrassment, arise from very different significations being affixed to the term will, and from not expressing each distinct idea by an appropriate term. These accurate distinctions may not always be necessary; if they were, they would have been always observed. In numberless cases, we are so free to act, that the will or determinations of the mind immediately succeed to desire; and as in such instances no confusion arises, we are habituated to substitute one expression for the other, till the distinguishing differences are confounded and lost.

## Note O.

After, "Or consoled by an approving one." Page 244.

Our Ancestors, who were not restrained by those sentiments of delicacy, which preside over modern compositions, and who expressed every thought as it arose, in the terms which first suggested themselves, have been most profuse in their metaphorical allusions, respecting a good and an evil conscience. In those times of negligent simplicity, expressions were used in the gravest compositions, and upon the most solemn occasions, which in the present day, would appear too ludicrous for common conversation. It must however be confessed, that the moderns have lost considerably in *force* of language, although they may have gained in precision and polish; and that we are not permitted to express many truths, in the terms

they deserve, because to do justice to the sentiment, would be to offend against taste. The Divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, tell us, in their sermons and pious admonitions, that "Conscience is God's spy, and man's overseer: God's deputy judge, holding its court in the whole soul, bearing witness of all a man's doing and desires." "Conscience is a great register, or recorder of the world. It is to every man his private notary, keeping record of all his acts and deeds. It hath the pen of a ready writer, and takes from thy mouth all that thou speakest, yea from thy heart all that thou contrivest; and though its writing may be for the present, like to the writing with the juice of an onion or lemon, illegible; yet when thou comest to the fire of distress, it will then appear, and in the day of judgment it will discover all!" "There is nothing so much fastened in the memory as that which conscience writes." "Conscience is a most bribeless worker. It never knows how to make a false report." "One small drop of an evil conscience will trouble a whole sea of outward comforts and contentments, a confluence whereof, would no more ease a wounded conscience, than a silken stocking will do a broken leg." "Conscience is God's greatest officer and vicegerent in man; set by him to be as it were thy angel, keeper, monitor, remembrancer, king, prophet, witness, examiner, judge, yea thy lower heaven. If thou slightest it, it will be an adversary, informer, accuser, witness, judge, jailor, tormentor, a worm, wrack, dungeon unto thee, yea thy upper hell." Conscience (saith St. Austin) is like a wife; the best of comforts if good, the worst of naughts, if bad."

"As the clearest blood makes the best spirits, so doth a good life, the quietest conscience. The purest air

breeds the greatest agility, and the purest life the fairest hopes." "A good conscience appears in the countenance and looks merrily out of the windows of the eye." "Other friends go and come, and stand afar off, now at hand, now I know not where; but conscience is no starter. It is never from our side out of our bosoms." "What comforts those which will make a man sing under the whip, in the stocks, at the stake in despite of the fire!" *Cum multis aliis.* What a pity that such indubitable truths should excite a smile which destroys their proper influence!

## Note P.

After "A subject for declamation." Page 261.

J. J. Rousseau is the professed champion of principles so degrading to the human intellects. But whoever pays due attention to what he has advanced, in his celebrated discourse *on the Inequality of man*, will be greatly amused at the artful and extravagant manner in which this whimsical sophist attempts to support his hypothesis. He seems to be burlesquing humanity and its choicest blessing; to be making an experiment upon the patience of some readers, by the number of his absurdities, and upon the credulity of others, by trying the force of partial statements, supported by bold assertions, and ornamented with eloquence of diction, against the common opinions, and common sense of mankind. The best representation

of man, in the state which he affects to admire as the perfection of his being, is truly revolting. The whole of the boasted superiority of uncultivated man, consists in the agility and address with which he can attack his prey, and defend himself from the assaults of stronger animals (*a*); in his being able to despise telescopes through the strength of his vision; forego the use of a sling or an axe by the strength of his arm; enjoy a keenness of scent equal to a hound (*b*); save burthensome expences in food and clothing, bed and bedding, by satisfying his hunger under an oak tree, his thirst at the next rivulet, and reposing after his repast upon the very identical spot where he had enjoyed it (*c*). To reside among lions and tigers, is the true destination of man, and this is stated to be tolerably safe, provided his companions be satiated with other food (*d*). But at all events the savage Man can escape from the savage beast, by running away or by climbing a tree, and laughing at his antagonist, should he not prove the conqueror by the prowess of his arm, aided by a stout branch or an enormous stone (*e*). Our philosopher asserts that the grand superiority of the human species consists in a freedom of choice; for by the means of this high prerogative, Man is able to nourish himself with food which neither a cat nor a pigeon would touch, although they were dying of hunger (*f*). This liberty of choice is deemed an indubitable proof of the Spirituality of Man, but to what uses spirituality can be applied, does not appear; for that power of progressive improvement which he admits to result from it, is the most pernicious boon that could be conferred; it is more replete with miseries than Pandora's box, and the inexhaustible source of all the evils which torment mankind (*g*). It destroys that moderation which

would have made him contented with cold and nakedness, reconciled him to his companions of the forest, and so gradually prepared him for death in advanced age, that his dissolution would not be perceived by others, and scarcely by himself (*h*). Thus would Man terminate a life full of health and vigor, and effectually escape all the diseases which spring up from reflection. For "if it was the design of Nature that Man should possess health," our sublime Reasoner is "tempted to believe that to *think* is a sin against nature; and that the man who *studies* is a *depraved* animal"(*i*). This last declaration inevitably brings both the philosopher and his sytem into extreme danger.

Could a man of so superior an understanding, believe these positions? Was he not trifling with the public in attempting to defend them? He certainly was. Marmontel, in the memoirs of his own life, recently published, presents us with an anecdote which explains the mystery. When the Academy of Dijon proposed the question, *what is the origin of the Inequality among Men, and if it be authorized by the law of Nature?* Rousseau declared, in a letter to Malesherbe, that he was absolutely in extacies, at the importance and sublimity of the subject; and that he was resolved to exercise all his powers in the cause of civilization. But, as Diderot assured Marmontel, our philosopher changed his purpose in consequence of a conversation that passed between them. When Rousseau announced his design, Diderot observed, that other candidates would doubtless maintain the advantages derived from social improvements; and of consequence it was a path in which he could not ensure success. *C'est un pont aux anês;* was his expression;—*a bridge that every*

*animal may pass.* The vanity of our philosopher gained the ascendency over every other consideration, and he resolved, rather than take the vulgar road, to plead the cause of nakedness, inclement seasons, ignorance the most profound, privations of all the comforts to be derived from social intercourse, and the society of animals scarcely inferior to his favourite savage, accompanied with incessant dread, lest they should not have satiated their appetites, at every interview! Surely the man who thus uses his intellectual faculties *deserves* the epithet of *un animal depravé!*

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(*a*) Le corps de l'homme sauvage étant le seul instrument qu'il connoisse, il l'employe á divers usages, dont, par le defaut d'exercise, les notres sont incapables. S'il avoit eu une hache, son poignet romproit-il de si fortes branches? S'il avoit eu une fronde, lanceroit-il de la main une pierre avec tant de roideur? &c. &c.

(*b*) Il ne faut pas s'étonner, que les Hottentots du Cap de Bonne Esperance decouvrent, a la simple vue des vaisseaux en haute mer, d'aussi loin que les Hollandois, avec des lunettes, ni que les sauvages de l'Amerique sentissent les Espagnols, a la piste, comme auroient pu faire les meilleurs chiens.

(*c*) Je le vois se rassasiant sous un chêne, se desalterant au premier ruisseau, trouvant son lit au pied du même arbre qui lui a fourni son repas, et voila ses besoins satisfaits.

(*d*) Il ne paroit pas qu'aucun animal fasse naturellement la guerre à l'homme, hors le cas de sa propre defense, ou d'une extrême faim, &c.

(*e*) Mettez un ours, ou un loup aux prises avec un sauvage robuste, agile, courageux comme ils sont tous, armé de pierres, et d'un bon bâton; et vous verrez que le peril sera tout au moins réciproque, et qu'après plusieurs experiences pareilles, les bêtes feroces qui n'aiment point à s'attaquer l'une à l'autre, s'attaqueront peu volontiers à l'homme, *qu'elles auront trouvé tout aussi féroce qu'elles.* A l'egard des animaux qui ont réellement plus de force qu'il n'a d'adresse, il est vis à vis d'eux dans le cas des autres espèces plus foibles, qui ne laissent pas de subsister; avec cet avantage pour l'homme, que non moins dispos qu'eux à la course, et trouvant sur les arbres un refuge presque assuré, il a le choix de la fuite ou du combat!

(*f*) Je ne vois dans tout animal qu'une machine ingenieuse, a qui la nature a donné des sens pour se remonter elle même, et pour se garantir, jusqu'à un certain point, de tout ce qui tend à la detruire, ou de la deranger. J'appercois précisement les mêmes choses dans la machine humaine, avec cette difference que la Nature seule fait tous dans les operations de la bête, au lieu que l'homme concourt aux siennes, en qualité d'agent libre. L'un choisit ou rejette par instinct, et l'autre par un acte de liberté.—C'est ainsi qu'un pigeon mourroit de faim, près d'un basin rempli des meilleures viandes, et un chat sur des tas de fruits, ou de grain, &c. &c.

(*g*) Ce n'est donc pas tant l'entendement qui fait parmi les animaux la distinction specifique de l'homme que sa qualité d'agent libre:—et c'est surtout dans la conscience de cette liberté que se montre la spiritualité de son ame; dans la puissance de vouloir, ou plûtôt de choisir, et dans le sentiment de cette puissance, on ne trouve que des actes purement spirituels, &c.

Mais il y a une autre qualité très specifique qui les distingue, et sur laquelle il ne peut y avoir de la contestation, c'est la faculté de se perfectionner, &c.

Il seroit triste pour nous d'être forcés de convenir, que cette faculté distinctive et presque illimitée est la source de tous les malheurs de l'homme; que c'est elle qui la tire à force de tems, de cette condition originaire, dans laquelle il couleroit des jours tranquilles et innocens, &c.

(*h*) Est comme la vie sauvage éloigne d'eux la goute et les rhumatismes, et que la vieillesse est de tous les maux celui que les secours humains peuvent le moin soulager, ils s'eteignent enfin, sans qu'on s'apperçoive qu'ils cessent d'être, et presque sans s'en appercevoir eux mêmes.

(*i*) Si la nature nous a destinés à être sains, J'ose presque assurer, que l'etat de reflexion est un êtat contre nature, et que l'homme qui medite est un animal depravé.

The above extracts are made to prove that there has not been exaggeration in our statement; and that our readers may not hastily give the preference to civilization, ignorant of the advantages of the savage state.

## Note Q.

After "when they approach the borders of the grave." Page 398.

What has been urged respecting the disconsolate state of the mind, upon the expectancy of annihilation, at the approach of death, is founded upon the principle that whatever we deem to be capable of communicating Good is

worthy of being retained; or if it be of a perishable nature, as long as we continue to desire happiness, we must desire a substitute. It is also natural to suppose, that persons whose minds have been most enlarged and dignified by cultivation; whose numerous thoughts have perpetually and pleasantly kept them awake from the drowsiness of mere existence; whose superior acquirements discover to them how little they know, compared with all that remains to be known; whose views are the most extensive, just as they are closing their eyes; and whose celebrity, purchased by the labour of years, begins to expand in every direction, at the period their consciousness is about to terminate; it is natural to suppose that such persons can take no pleasure in the prospect of annihilation! They must upon attentively considering their state, be gloomy and comfortless. This assertion has been verified by facts, where it was practicable to have access to the inward dispositions of the mind; of which we shall mention a few instances.

Monsieur *Sechelles*, a gentleman of literature, who has published some curious particulars in the private life of le *Chevalier de Buffon*, informs us, that as he was reading to him the verses of *Mons. Thomas*, upon the immortality of the soul, the Chevalier smiled saying, "*religion would be a valuable gift, if all this were true!* This philosopher considered it to be the duty of a good citizen to compliment Religion, which he thinks essentially necessary for the common people, by habitual hypocrisy. He regularly attended mass, as often as his health would permit, and he has confessed to his priest, in the same apartment where he had developed the *principles of ma-*

*terialism*, which according to his system, was an abnegation of immortality.†

In the collection of Mr. *Gibbon's* Letters published by Lord Sheffield, we may trace many instances of the high value which this distinguished author placed upon existence; and of the regret with which he perceived his years to be rapidly passing away. His very interesting letter upon the death of Mrs. Posen, bears every mark of the despondent state of his mind at the idea, that "*all is now lost*, finally, irrevocably lost!" He adds, "I will agree with my lady, that *the immortality of the soul is at some times, a very comfortable doctrine.*"*

Mr. Adam Smith, in the account given of *Mr. Hume* in his last illness, seems to triumph in the fortitude which this philosopher manifested in the prospect of his dissolution, and he adduces a playfulness of expression as an evidence of it. But a moment of vivacity, upon the visit of a friend, will not conduct us to the recesses of the heart, or discover its feelings in the hours of solitude. He has confessed, in the most explicit terms, that his principles were not calculated to administer consolation to a thinking mind. This appears from the following passage in his treatise on human nature. "I am affrighted and confounded with that forlorn solitude in which I am placed by my philosophy. When I look abroad, I foresee, on every side, dispute, contradiction and distraction. When I turn my eye inward, I find nothing but

† See a very interesting account of this celebrated character, translated from a foreign journal, and inserted in the monthly magazine for July, 1797.

* See Letter 184.

doubt and ignorance. Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? I am confounded with these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, environed with the deepest darkness."‡

The trifler *Voltaire* has no claim to be placed in a line with the above Philosophers. They appeared to follow the dictates of their judgments; they did not in their conduct, give indications of a depraved heart; they employed their excellent talents in the enlargement of human knowledge assiduously and successfully. They regretted that they were not immortal. This man exerted the whole strength of his genius, to the acquirement of fame, and of wealth, without paying the least attention to any moral principle. Instead of employing his wit to give force and brilliancy to important truths, he uniformly made every power of his mind, and all his acquisitions in knowledge, subservient to his Wit. It was in vain that he attempted to be an Atheist; he never could completely dismiss his creed; and while he was ridiculing the most sacred subjects, horrors of conscience hovered over the passages. The consequences were, that he looked back upon protracted years with remorse, and forward with dismay. He wished for annihilation, through the dread of something worse. He attempted to unburden his troubled mind, by confession to a Priest; and he placed his hopes of peace with heaven in an eager conformity to those rituals, which he had incessantly treated with contempt.

The author would not have expressed himself so confidently upon this unhappy character, had he not received

‡ See his treatise on human nature. vol. I. p. 458. passim.

the fullest assurance, from a gentleman highly respectable in the philosophical world, who was personally acquainted with Voltaire, that his last moments, were, as described. In a previous indisposition, he insisted upon sending for a priest, contrary to the warmest remonstrances of his friends and attendants. Upon recovery, he was ashamed of his conduct, and ridiculed his own pusillanimity. This pusillanimity returned, however, upon a relapse; and he had again recourse to the miserable remedy. He acknowledged to *Dr. Tronchin*, his physician, the agonies of his mind, and earnestly entreated him to procure for his perusal, a treatise written *against the eternity of future punishment*. These facts were communicated to the gentleman mentioned above by *Dr. Tronchin*. See also several instances of a frivolous disposition in this Octogenarian, recorded in the Memoirs of Marmontel. Vol. II.

Reason and facts thus unite to manifest the impossibility of enjoying felicity, elevated and permanent, without the hopes and consolations of religion. Notwithstanding those rational gratifications and delights enjoyed in mental pursuits; although they may be the sources of well earned celebrity to the indefatigable philosopher, yet he must perceive with a sigh the term of all his pleasures; and he will finally acknowledge that he has not, by all his labours, purchased an equivalent to those hopes which are frequently entertained by the obscure and illiterate, who have been known to look forward with *transports*, at that hour when the Philosopher is compelled to exclaim, "all is now lost; finally, irrecoverably lost!"

## Note R.

After "which characterize the religious bigot." Page 410.

It is acknowledged that several historical facts seem to oppose the above statement. The cordial reception given by the Peruvians to their cruel and treacherous conquerors, in former days; the hospitable conduct of the inhabitants of Otaheite and of the Friendly Islands, in more recent times; the instances adduced by *Mungo Park*, *Valliant*, and other travellers, of the amicable dispositions manifested, upon many occasions, by the savages of Africa and America, appear to militate strongly against the position advanced. But although these be admitted, they cannot invalidate facts to which every attentive observer must have been a witness. It cannot be denied that a natural jealousy and estrangedness prevail among the inhabitants of sequestered districts and villages, against their adjacent neighbours, should no motive for social intercourse subsist between them. Even in towns and cities, there is a propensity to ridicule the neighbouring inhabitants for some supposed inferiority in mental acquirement, for a diversity in dress or manners, or singularities in dialect, or pronunciation, &c. to convert disputes among leading individuals into a common cause, and sometimes to entertain prejudices, long and inveterate. It is also observable in infants and young children, that they are alarmed at the approach of persons to whom they have not been accustomed, or they are ashamed to appear before them. Nor is this species of precaution confined to

the human race. It is observable in the mildest animals. Domestic poultry will not immediately admit a stranger among them. Even doves will claim their domestic rights, and will unite to chace away the doves of a different district. The flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, which are used to a particular pasture, where they feel themselves at home, manifest violent animosities against intruders of their own species; and it is a considerable length of time before they will harmonize into one family. This seems therefore to be a cautionary instinct universally implanted in animal nature. In the human species, where caution appears to be totally unnecessary, or the principle is absorbed in wonder and admiration at a striking superiority, indications of it have occasionally been suppressed; as in those instances mentioned above. But the animosities, and bloody contentions which so frequently arise among *Equals*, afford melancholy proofs that the same principle subsists among them. We may remark further, that in those countries where the inhabitants are civilized to a certain degree, and enjoy an abundance of the necessaries and conveniencies of life, ideas of competitorship cannot be entertained simply by the arrival of a few strangers: Yet as soon as these ideas suggest themselves, the most hospitable nations degenerate into invetcrate foes.

In a word, the benevolence which is extensively influential, steady and uniform in its operations, notwithstanding contrarieties of character, and oppositions of interest; the benevolence which embraces the whole of the human species, and comprehends all animated beings; which hates misery as such, and delights to see every sensient

and rational being happy, is to be found alone in that union of disposition and principle, for which it will be in vain to search among individuals or in communities, where mental culture is partial and imperfect.

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## *ERRATA.*

The following Errors obscure the sense.

Page 20 l. 11 from bottom, *for* as, *read* and.
35 l. 9 *for* perceptible, *read* percipient.
46 l. 7 *for* or, *read* at.
135 l. 3 from bottom, *for* cause, *read* causes.
155 l. 8 - - - - *for* their, *read* this.
169 l. 5 - - - - *for* mutual, *read* mental.
350 l. 9 *for* irresistabie, *read* irresistible.
389 l. 8 *for* not, *read* nor.
397 l. 7 from bottom, *for* object, *read* objects.

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