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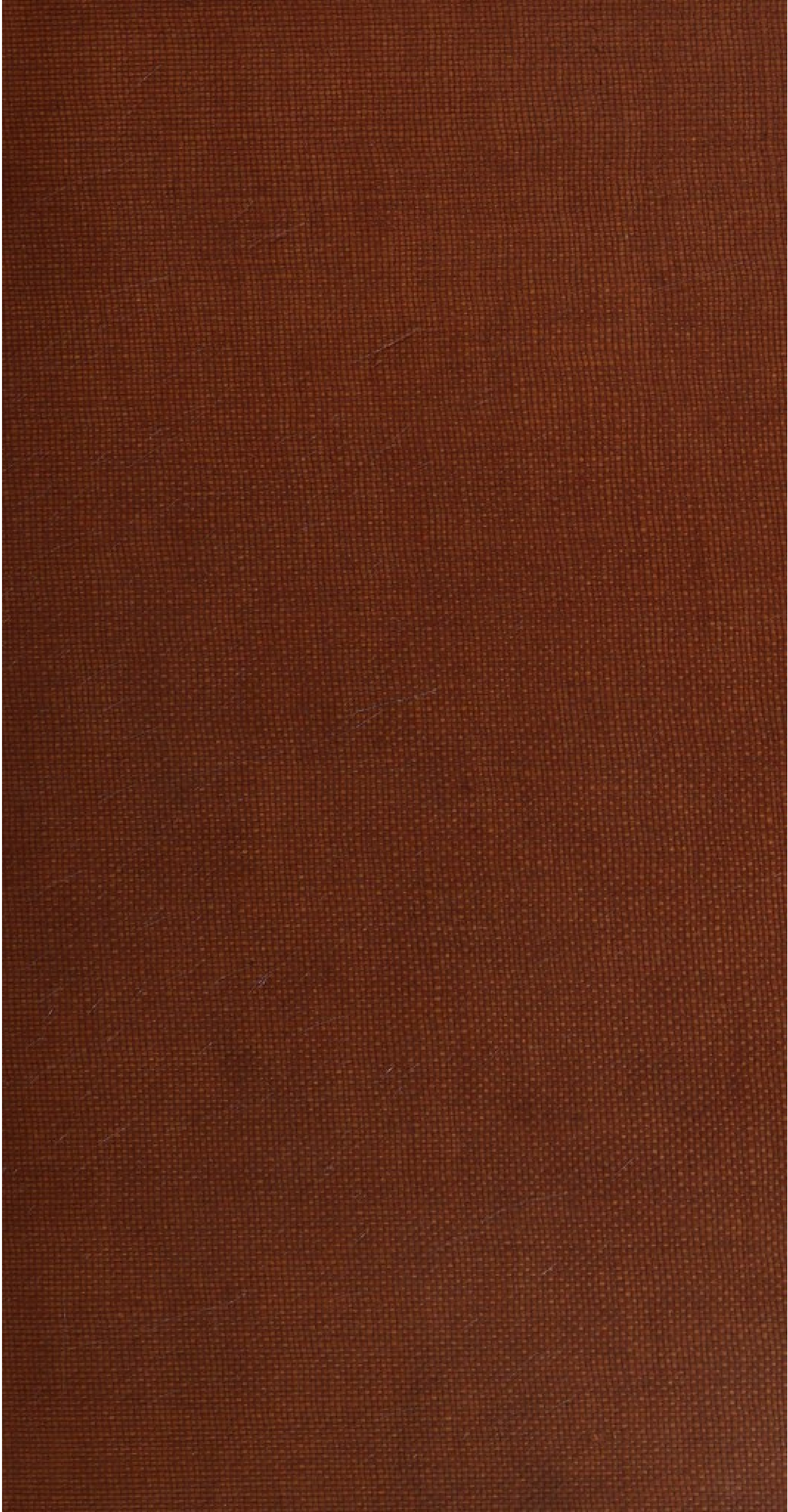

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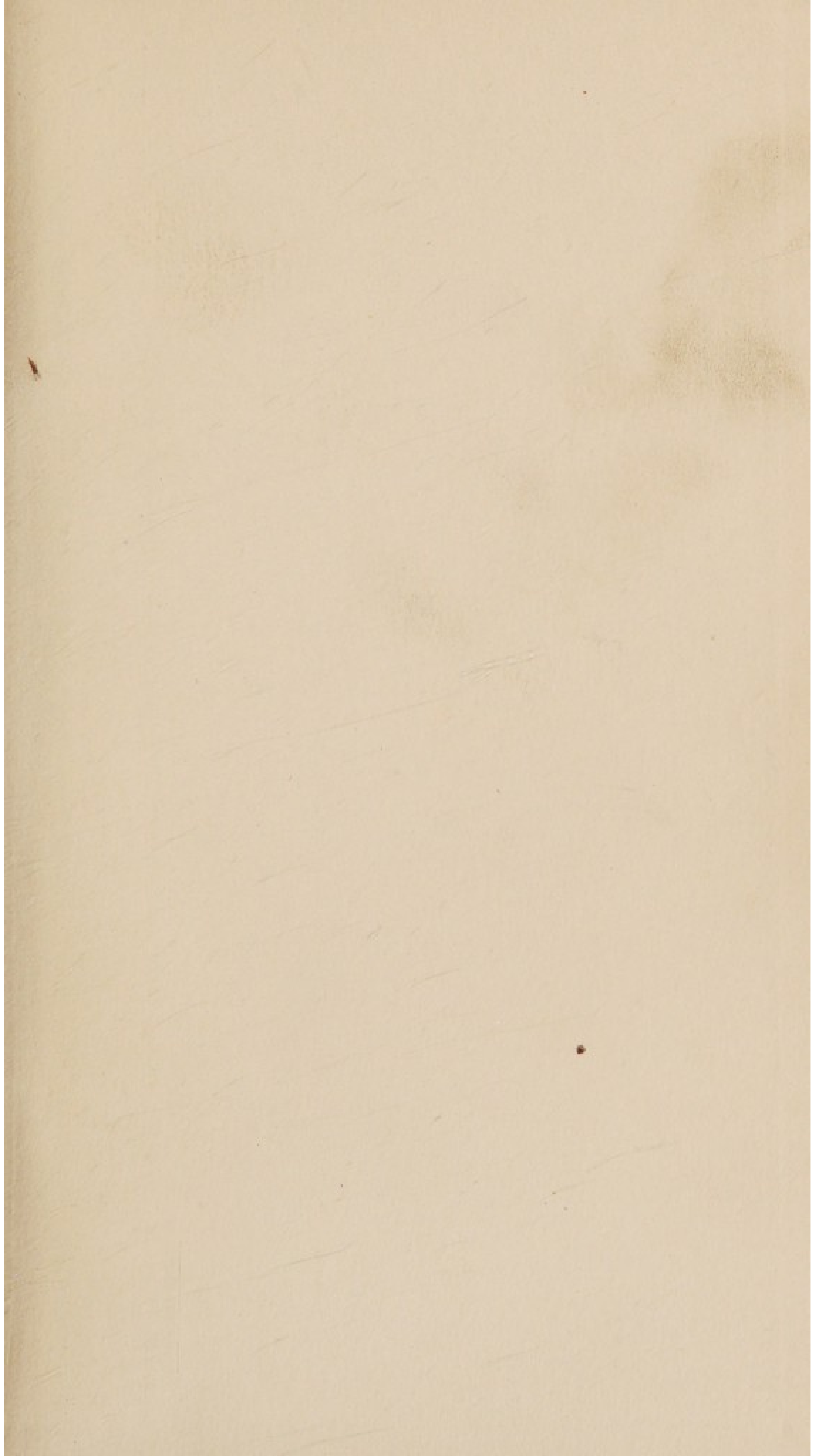

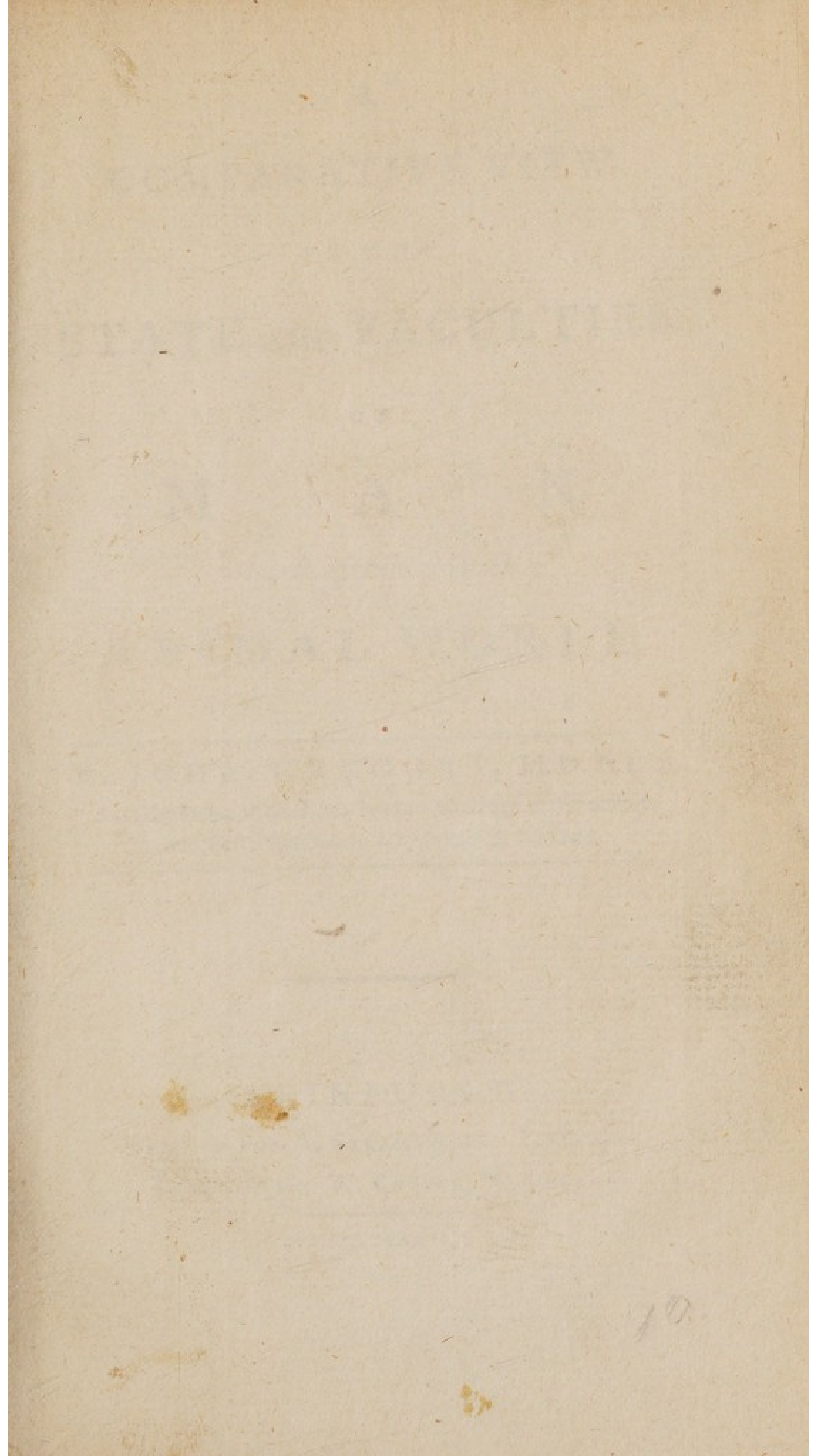

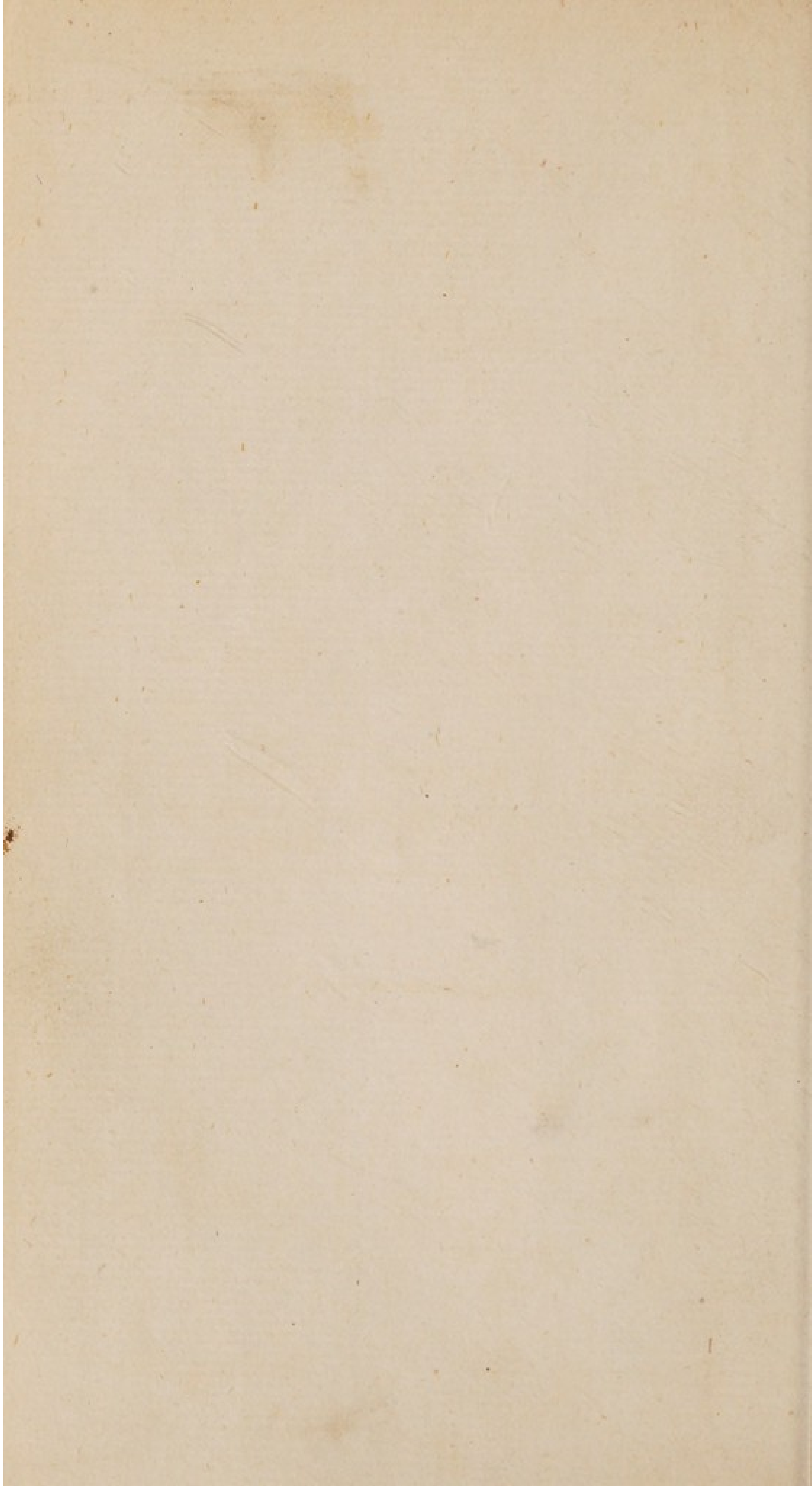

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A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE STATE AND FACULTIES OF MAN WITH THOSE OF THE ANIMAL WORLD.

By JOHN GREGORY, M.D. F.R.S.
Late Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh,
and First Physician to his Majesty in Scotland.

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PREFACE.

BY an advertifement prefixed to the firft edition of this book, the public was informed that it confifted of fome difcourfes originally read in a private literary fociety, without the moft diftant view to their publication. The loofe and carelefs manner in which they are written, is too ftrong an internal evidence that they never were intended for the public infpection. But, for what purpofe they were originally compofed,

and

and how they came into the world, are queſtions which a reader will never aſk: he has an undoubted right to cenſure them with all the ſeverity which their faults deſerve, and to cenſure likewiſe the author of them, unleſs he could pretend they were publiſhed without his knowlege. The unexpected favour he has met with from the public has encouraged him to correct and enlarge this edition; but, when he attempted to treat his ſubject with that fulneſs and accuracy which its importance required, he found it run into ſo great an extent, that he was obliged to abandon it, being neceſſarily engaged in buſineſs and ſtudies of a very different nature. He would gladly have ſuppreſſed ſome ſentiments careleſsly thrown out in the confidence of private friendſhip, which may be liable to miſconſtruction; but he was afraid that, by too

too anxious an attention to guard againſt every objection, he ſhould deprive the book of that appearance of eaſe and freedom in which its only merit conſiſted. When we unboſom ourſelves to our friends on a ſubject that intereſts us, there is ſometimes a glow of ſentiment and warmth of expreſſion that pleaſes, though it conveys nothing particularly ingenious or original.

The title of the book does not well expreſs its contents. The public is too well accuſtomed to books that have not much correſpondence with their titles, to be ſurpriſed at this. But it would have been an impoſition of a worſe kind to have changed the title in this new edition. The truth is, the ſubjects here treated are ſo different, that it was impoſſible to find any title that could fully comprehend them. Yet, unconnected as they

they ſeem to be, there was a certain train of ideas that led to them, which it may not be improper to explain.

When we attend to the many advantages which mankind poſſeſs above the inferior animals, it is natural to inquire into the uſe we make of thoſe advantages. This leads to the conſideration of man in his ſavage ſtate, and through the progreſſive ſtages of human ſociety.

Man, in his ſavage ſtate, is, in ſome reſpects, in a worſe condition than any other animal. He has, indeed, ſuperior faculties; but, as he does not poſſeſs, in ſo great a degree as other animals, the internal principle of inſtinct to direct theſe faculties to his greateſt good, they are often perverted in ſuch a manner as to render him more unhappy. He poſſeſſes bodily ſtrength, agility, health, and what are

are called the animal faculties, in greater perfection, than men in the more advanced ſtates of ſociety ; but the nobler and more diſtinguiſhing principles of human nature lie in a great meaſure dormant. Like a beaſt of prey, he paſſes his time generally in queſt of food, or in ſupine ſloth. He often diſplays the inſtinctive courage of a tyger, or the cunning of a fox, though ſeldom tempered with that ſpirit of equity, generoſity, and forgiveneſs, which alone renders courage a virtue.

There is a certain period in the progreſs of ſociety, in which mankind appear to the greateſt advantage. In this period, they poſſeſs the bodily powers, and all the animal functions, in their full vigour. They are bold, active, ſteady, ardent in the love of liberty, and their native country. Their manners are ſimple,

their ſocial affections warm ; and, though they are much influenced by the ties of blood, yet they are generous and hoſpitable to ſtrangers. Religion is univerſally regarded among them, though diſguiſed by a variety of ſuperſtitions. This ſtate of ſociety *, in which nature ſhoots wild and free, encourages the high exertions of fancy and paſſion, and is therefore peculiarly favourable to the arts depending on theſe ; but, for the ſame cauſe, it checks the progreſs of the rational powers, which require coolneſs, accuracy, and an imagination perfectly ſubdued, and under the controul of reaſon. The wants of nature, likewiſe, being few, and eaſily ſupplied, require but little of the aſſiſtance of ingenuity ; though what moſt effectually retards the progreſs of knowledge among ſuch a people, is the difficulty

* Dr Blair.

difficulty of communicating and trasmitting it from one person to another.

A very beautiful picture of this state of society is exhibited in the works of Ossian. There we meet with men possessing that high spirit of independence, that elevation and dignity of soul, that contempt of death, that attachment to their friends and to their country, which has rendered the memory of the Greek and Roman heroes immortal. But where shall we find their equals in ancient or modern story, among the most savage or the most polished nations, in those gentler virtues of the heart, that accompanied and tempered their heroism? There we see displayed the highest martial spirit, exerted only in the defence of their friends and of their country. We see there dignity without ostentation, courage without ferocity, and sensibility with-

without weaknefs. Poffeffed of every fentiment of juftice and humanity, this fingular people never took thofe advantages, which their fuperior valour, or the fortune of war, gave them over their enemies. Inftead of maffacring their prifoners in cold blood, they treated them with kindnefs and hofpitality; they gave them the feaft of fhells; and, with a delicacy that would do honour to any age, endeavoured, by every art, to footh the fenfe of their misfortunes, and generoufly reftored them to their freedom. If an enemy fell in battle, his body was not infulted, nor dragged at the chariot-wheels of the conqueror. He received the laft honours of the warrior. The fong of bards arofe. Thefe fons of liberty were too juft to encroach on the rights of their neighbours, and had magnanimity enough to protect the feeble and defencelefs, in-

ſtead of oppreſſing and enſlaving them. As they required no ſlaves to do the laborious and ſervile offices of life, they were ſtill leſs diſpoſed to degrade their women to ſo mean and ſo wretched a ſituation. How humane, how noble does this conduct appear, when compared with the ungenerous treatment which women meet with among all barbarous nations, and which they ſometimes have met with among people who have been always diſplayed to the world as patterns of wiſdom and virtue! There they have been condemned to the moſt miſerable ſlavery, in offices unſuitable to the delicacy of their conſtitutions, diſproportionate to their ſtrength, and which muſt have totally extinguiſhed the native chearfulneſs of their ſpirits. Thus have men inverted the order of nature, and taken a mean and illiberal advantage of

that weaknefs, of which they were the natural guardians, in order to indulge the moft defpicable floth, or to feed a ftupid pride, which difdained thofe employments that nature has made neceffary for the fubfiftence and comfort of human life; and by thefe means have defervedly cut themfelves off from the principal pleafures of focial and domeftic life. The women defcribed by Offian have a character as fingular as that of his heroes. They poffefs the high fpirit and dignity of Roman matrons, united to all the softnefs and delicacy ever painted in modern romance. The hiftory of thefe people feems to be juftly referred to a period, much farther diftant than that of chivalry; and, though we make the largeft allowance for the painting of a fublime poetic genius, yet we muft fuppofe, that the manners and fentiments he defcribes

had

had their foundation in real life, as much as thofe defcribed by Homer. A poet may heighten the features and colouring of his fubject, but, if he deferts nature, if he defcribes fentiments and manners unknown to his readers, and which their hearts do not recognize, it is certain he can neither be admired nor underftood. The exiftence of fuch a people, in fuch an age and country, and of fuch a poet to defcribe them, is one of the moft extraordinary events in the hiftory of mankind, and well deferving the attention of both philofophers and critics, efpecially fince this is perhaps the only period where it is not only poffible but eafy to afcertain or difprove the reality of the fact, of which fome people pretend ftill to doubt.——But I return to our fubject.

Such

Such a ſtate of ſociety as I was before deſcribing, ſeldom laſts long. The power neceſſarily lodged in the hands of a few, for the purpoſes of public ſafety and utility, is ſoon abuſed. Ambition, and all its direful conſequences, ſucceed. As the human faculties expand themſelves, new inlets of gratification are diſcovered. The intercourſe, in particular, with other nations, brings an acceſſion of new pleaſures, and conſequently of new wants. The advantages attending an intercourſe and commerce with foreign nations are, at firſt view, very ſpecious and attracting. By theſe means the peculiar advantages of one climate are, in ſome degree, communicated to another; a free and ſocial intercourſe is promoted among mankind; knowledge is enlarged, and prejudices are removed. On the other hand, it may be ſaid, that every country, by the help of induſtry,

induſtry, produces whatever is neceſſary to its own inhabitants; that the neceſſities of nature are eaſily gratified, but the cravings of falſe appetite, and a deluded imagination, are endleſs and inſatiable; that, when men leave the plain road of nature, ſuperior knowledge and ingenuity, inſtead of combating a vitiated taſte, and inflamed paſſions, are employed to juſtify and indulge them; that the purſuits of commerce are deſtructive of the health and lives of the human ſpecies, and that this deſtruction falls principally upon thoſe who are moſt diſtinguiſhed for their activity, ſpirit, and capacity.

But one of the moſt certain conſequences of a very extended commerce, and of what is called the moſt advanced and poliſhed ſtate of ſociety, is an univerſal paſſion for riches, which corrupts every ſentiment of taſte, nature, and virtue.

This at length reduces human nature to the moſt unhappy ſtate in which it can ever be beheld. The conſtitution both of body and mind becomes ſickly and feeble, unable to ſuſtain the common viciſſitudes of life without ſinking under them, and equally unable to enjoy its natural pleaſures, becauſe the ſources of them are cut off or perverted. In this ſtate money becomes the univerſal idol to which every knee bows, to which every principle of virtue and religion yields, and to which the health and lives of the greater part of the ſpecies are every day ſacrificed. So totally does this paſſion pervert the human heart, that it extinguiſhes or conquers the natural attachment between the ſexes, and, in defiance of every ſentiment of nature and ſound policy, makes people look even upon their own children as an incumbrance and oppreſſion. Neither does money,

money, in exchange for all this, procure happineſs, or even pleaſure, in the limited ſenſe of the word; it yields only food for a reſtleſs, anxious, inſatiable vanity, and abandons men to diſſipation, languor, diſguſt, and miſery. In this ſituation, patriotiſm is not only extinguiſhed, but the very pretenſion to it is treated with ridicule: What are called public views, do not regard the encouragement of population, the promoting of virtue, or the ſecurity of liberty; they regard only the enlargement of commerce, and the extenſion of conqueſt. When a nation arrives at this pitch of depravity, its duration as a free ſtate muſt be very ſhort, and can only be protracted by the accidental circumſtances of the neighbouring nations being equally corrupted, or of different diſeaſes in the ſtate balancing and counteracting one another. But, when once

a free, an opulent, and luxurious people, loſe their liberty, they become, of all ſlaves, the vileſt and moſt miſerable.

We ſhall readily acknowledge, at the ſame time, that, in a very advanced and poliſhed ſtate of ſociety, human nature appears in many reſpects to great advantage. The numerous wants which luxury creates, give exerciſe to the powers of invention, in order to ſatisfy them. This encourages many of the elegant arts, and, in the progreſs of theſe, ſome natural principles of taſte, which, in more ſimple ages, lay latent in the human mind, are awakened, and become proper and innocent ſources of pleaſure. The underſtanding, likewiſe, when it begins to feel its own powers, expands itſelf, and puſhes its inquiries into nature with a ſucceſs incredible to more ignorant nations. This ſtate of ſociety is equally favourable to

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the external appearance of manners, which it renders humane, gentle, and polite. It is true, that theſe improvements are often ſo perverted, that they bring no acceſſion of happineſs to mankind. In matters of taſte, the great, the ſublime, the pathetic, are firſt brought to yield to regularity and elegance ; and, at length, are ſacrificed to the moſt childiſh paſſion for novelty, and the moſt extravagant caprice. The enlarged powers of underſtanding, inſtead of being applied to the uſeful arts of life, are diſſipated upon trifles, or waſted upon impotent attempts to graſp at ſubjects above their reach; and politeneſs of manners comes to be the cloak of diſſimulation. Yet ſtill thoſe abuſes ſeem in ſome meaſure to be only accidental.

It was this conſideration of mankind, in the progreſſive ſtages of ſociety, that led

led to the idea, perhaps a very romantic one, of uniting together the peculiar advantages of thefe feveral ftages, and cultivating them in fuch a manner, as to render human life more comfortable and happy. However impoffible it may be to realize this idea in large focieties of men, it is furely practical among individuals. A perfon without lofing any one fubftantial pleafure that is to be found in the moft advanced ftate of fociety, but, on the contrary, in a greater capacity, to relifh them all, may enjoy perfect vigour of health and fpirits ; he may have the moft enlarged underftanding, and apply it to the moft ufeful purpofes ; he may poffefs all the principles of genuine tafte, and preferve them in their proper fubordination ; he may poffefs delicacy of fentiment, and fenfibility of heart, without

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being a ſlave to falſe refinement or caprice. Simplicity may be united with elegance of manners; a humane and gentle temper may be found conſiſtent with the moſt ſteady and reſolute ſpirit, and religion may be revered without bigotry or enthuſiaſm.

Such was the general train of ſentiments that gave riſe to the following treatiſe. But the reader will find it proſecuted in a very imperfect and deſultory manner. When it was firſt compoſed, the author thought himſelf at liberty to throw out his ideas without much regard to method or arrangement, and to enlarge more or leſs on particular parts of his ſubject, not in proportion to their importance, but as fancy at the time dictated. He would with pleaſure have attempted to rectify theſe imperfections, which he

has

has reafon to be afhamed of, in a work offered to the public; but the circumftances which he formerly mentioned put that entirely out of his power.

SECTION

SECTION I.

HUMAN Nature has been conſidered in very different and oppoſite lights. Some have painted it in a moſt amiable form, and carefully ſhaded every weakneſs and deformity. They have repreſented vice as foreign and unnatural to the Human Mind, and have maintained that what paſſes under that name is, in general, only an exuberance of virtuous diſpoſitions, or good affections improperly directed, but never proceeds from any inherent malignity or depravity of the heart itſelf.—The Human Underſtanding has been thought capable of penetrating into the deepeſt receſſes of nature, of

imitating her works, and in ſome caſes, of acquiring a ſuperiority over them.

Such views are generally embraced by thoſe who have good hearts and happy tempers, who are beginning the world, and are not yet hackney'd in the ways of Men, by thoſe who love ſcience and have an ambition to excel in it; and they have an obvious tendency to raiſe the genius and mend the heart, but are the ſource of frequent and cruel diſappointments.—

Others have repreſented Human Nature as a ſink of depravity and wretchedneſs, have ſuppoſed this its natural ſtate, and the unavoidable lot of humanity: They have repreſented the Human Underſtanding as weak and ſhort-ſighted, the Human Power as extremely feeble and limited, and have treated all attempts

to

to enlarge them as vain and chimerical.— Such reprefentations are greedily adopted by Men of narrow and contracted hearts, and of very limited genius, who feel within themfelves the juftnefs of the defcription. It muft be owned however, that they are often agreeable and foothing to Men of excellent and warm affections, but of too great fenfibility of fpirit, whofe tempers have been hurt by frequent and unmerited difappointments.

A bad opinion of Human Nature readily produces a felfifh difpofition, and renders the temper cheerlefs and unfociable; a mean opinion of our intellectual faculties depreffes the genius, as it cuts off all profpect of attaining a much greater degree of knowledge than is poffeffed at prefent, and of carrying into execution any grand and extenfive plans of improvement.

It is not propoſed to inſiſt further on the ſeveral advantages and diſadvantages of theſe oppoſite views of Human Nature, and on their influence in forming a character.—Perhaps that View may be the ſafeſt which conſiders it as formed for every thing that is good and great, which ſets no bounds to its capacities and powers, but looks on its preſent attainments as trifling and inconſiderable.

Inquiries into Human Nature, though of the laſt importance, have been proſecuted with little care and leſs ſucceſs. This has been owing partly to the general cauſes which have obſtructed the progreſs of the other branches of knowledge, and partly to the peculiar difficulties of the ſubject. Inquiries into the ſtructure of the Human Body have indeed been proſecuted with great diligence and accuracy. But this was a matter

of no great difficulty. It required only labour and a ſteady hand. The ſubject was permanent; the Anatomiſt could fix it in any poſition, and make what experim ents on it he pleaſed.

The Human Mind, on the other hand, is an object extremely fleeting, not the ſame in any two individuals, and ever varying even in the ſame perſon. To trace it thro' its almoſt endleſs varieties, requires the moſt profound and extenſive knowledge, and the moſt piercing and collected genius. But tho' it be a matter of great difficulty to inveſtigate and aſcertain the laws of the mental conſtitution, yet there is no reaſon to doubt, however fluctuating it may ſeem, of its being governed by laws as fixt and invariable as thoſe of the Material Syſtem.

It has been the misfortune of moſt of thoſe who have ſtudied the philoſophy of the

the Human Mind, that they have been little acquainted with the ſtructure of the Human Body, and with the laws of the Animal Oeconomy; and yet the Mind and Body are ſo intimately connected, and have ſuch a mutual influence on one another, that the conſtitution of either, examined apart, can never be thoroughly underſtood. For the ſame reaſon it has been an unſpeakable loſs to Phyſicians, that they have been ſo generally inattentive to the peculiar laws of the Mind, and to their influence on the Body. A late celebrated profeſſor of Medicine in a neighbouring nation, who perhaps had rather a clear and methodical head, than an extenſive genius or enlarged views of Nature, wrote a Syſtem of Phyſic, wherein he ſeems to have conſidered Man entirely as a Machine, and makes a feeble and vain attempt to explain all the Phae-

nomena

nomena of the Animal Oeconomy, by mechanical and chymical principles alone. Stahl, his cotemporary and rival, who had a more enlarged genius, and penetrated more deeply into Nature, added the confideration of the fentient principle, and united the philofophy of the Human Mind with that of the Human Body: but the luxuriancy of his imagination often bewildered him, and the perplexity and obfcurity of his ftyle occafion his writings to be little read and lefs underftood.

Befides thefe, there is another caufe which renders the knowledge of Human Nature very lame and imperfect, which we propofe more particularly to inquire into.

Man has been ufually confidered as a Being that had no analogy to the reft of the Animal Creation. The comparative anatomy

anatomy of brute Animals hath indeed been cultivated with ſome attention ; and hath been the ſource of the moſt uſeful diſcoveries in the anatomy of the Human Body : But the comparative Animal Oeconomy of Mankind and other Animals, and comparative Views of their ſtates and manner of life, have been little regarded. The pride of Man is alarmed, in this caſe, with too cloſe a compariſon, and the dignity of philoſophy will not eaſily ſtoop to receive a leſſon from the the inſtinct of Brutes. But this conduct is very weak and fooliſh. Nature is a whole, made up of parts, which though diſtinct, are yet intimately connected with one another. This connection is ſo cloſe, that one ſpecies often runs into another ſo imperceptibly, that it is difficult to ſay where the one begins and the other ends. This is particularly the caſe with the

lowest

loweſt of one ſpecies, and the higheſt of that immediately below it. On this account no one link of the great chain can be perfectly underſtood, without the knowledge, at leaſt, of the links that are neareſt to it.

In comparing the different ſpecies of Animals, we find each of them poſſeſſed of powers and faculties peculiar to themſelves, and admirably adapted to the particular ſphere of action which Providence has allotted them. But, amidſt that infinite variety which diſtinguiſhes each ſpecies, we find many qualities in which they are all ſimilar, and ſome which they have in common.

Man is evidently at the head of the Animal Creation. He ſeems not only to be poſſeſſed of every ſource of pleaſure, in common with them, but of many others, to which they are altogether ſtran-

gers. If he is not the only Animal possessed of reason, he has it in a degree so greatly superior, as admits of no comparison.

* That insensible gradation so conspicuous in all the works of Nature, fails, in comparing Mankind with other Animals. There is an infinite distance between the faculties of a Man, and those of the most perfect Animal; between intellectual power, and mechanic force; between order and design, and blind impulse; between reflection, and appetite.

One Animal governs another only by superior force or cunning, nor can it by any address or train of reasoning secure to itself the protection and good offices of

* Buffon.

of another. There is no ſenſe of ſuperiority or ſubordination among them *.

Their want of language ſeems owing to their having no regular train or order in their ideas, and not to any deficiency in their organs of ſpeech. Many Animals may be taught to ſpeak, but none of them can be taught to connect any ideas to the words they pronounce. The reaſon therefore, why they do not expreſs themſelves by combined and regulated ſigns, is, becauſe they have no regular combination in their ideas.

There is a remarkable uniformity in the works of Animals. Each individual of a ſpecies does the ſame things, and in the ſame manner as every other of the ſame ſpecies. They ſeem all to be actua-

ted

* Inſtances from bees, birds of paſſage, and ſuch like, do not contradict this obſervation, if rightly underſtood.

ted by one ſoul. On the contrary, among Mankind, every individual thinks and acts in a way almoſt peculiar to himſelf. The only exception to this uniformity of character in the different ſpecies of Animals, ſeems to be among thoſe who are moſt connected with Mankind, particularly dogs and horſes.

All Animals expreſs pain and pleaſure by cries and various motions of the body; but laughter and ſhedding of tears are peculiar to Mankind. They ſeem to be expreſſions of certain emotions of the ſoul unknown to other Animals, and are ſcarcely ever obſerved in infants till they are about ſix weeks old. The pleaſures of the imagination, the pleaſure ariſing from ſcience, from the fine arts, and from the principle of curioſity, are peculiar to the Human Species. But, above all, they are diſtinguiſhed by the

the Moral Senſe, and the happineſs flowing from religion, and from the various intercourſes of ſocial life.

We propoſe now to make ſome obſervations on certain advantages which the lower Animals ſeem to poſſeſs above us, and afterwards to inquire how far the advantages poſſeſſed by Mankind are cultivated by them in ſuch a manner as to render them happier, as well as wiſer, and more diſtinguiſhed.

There are many Animals who have ſome of the external ſenſes more acute than We have; ſome are ſtronger, ſome ſwifter; but theſe and ſuch other qualities, however advantageous to them in their reſpective ſpheres of life, would be uſeleſs and often very prejudicial to us. But it is a very ſerious and intereſting queſtion, whether they poſſeſs not certain advantages over us, which are not the

the refult of their particular ftate of life, but are advantages in thofe points, where we ought at leaft to be on a level with them.

Is it not notorious that all Animals, except ourfelves, enjoy every pleafure their Natures are capable of, that they are ftrangers to pain and ficknefs, and, abftracting from external accidents, arrive at the natural period of their Being? We fpeak of wild Animals only. Thofe that are tame and under our direction partake of all our miferies.—Is it a neceffary confequence of our fuperior faculties, that not one of ten thoufand of our fpecies dies a natural death, that we ftruggle through a *frail and feverifh being* *, in continual danger of ficknefs, of pain, of dotage, and the thoufand namelefs ills that experience fhews to be the portion of human life?—If this is found

to

* Milton.

to be the designed order of Nature, it becomes us cheerfully to submit to it; but if these evils appear to be adventitious and unnatural to our constitution, it is an inquiry of the last importance, whence they arise and how they may be remedied.

There is one principle which prevails universally in the Brute Creation, and is the immediate source of all their actions. This principle, which is called Instinct, determines them by the shortest and most effectual means to pursue what their several constitutions render necessary.

It seems to have been the general opinion that this principle of Instinct was peculiar to the Brute Creation; and that Mankind were designed by Providence, to be governed by the superior principle of Reason, entirely independent of it.

But

But a little attention will ſhew, that Inſtinct is a principle common to us and the whole Animal world, and that, as far as it extends, it is a ſure and infallible guide; though the depraved and unnatural ſtate, into which Mankind are plunged, often ſtifles its voice, or renders it impoſſible to diſtinguiſh it from other impulſes which are accidental and foreign to our Nature.

Reaſon indeed is but a weak principle in Man, in reſpect of Inſtinct, and is generally a more unſafe guide.—The proper province of Reaſon is to inveſtigate the cauſes of things, to ſhew us what conſequences will follow from our acting in any particular way, to point out the beſt means of attaining an end, and, in conſequence of this, to be a check upon our Inſtincts, our tempers, our paſſions, and our taſtes: But theſe muſt

ſtill

ſtill be the immediately impelling principles of action. In truth, life, without them, would not only be joyleſs and inſipid, but quickly ſtagnate and be at an end.

Some of the advantages, which the Brute Animals have over us, are poſſeſſed in a conſiderable degree by thoſe of our own ſpecies, who being but juſt above them, and guided in a manner entirely by Inſtinct, are equally ſtrangers to the noble attainments of which their Natures are capable, and to the many miſeries attendant on their more enlightened brethren of Mankind.

It is therefore of the greateſt conſequence, to inquire into the Inſtincts that are natural to Mankind, to ſeparate them from thoſe cravings which bad habits have occaſioned, and, where any doubt remains on this ſubject, to inquire

into the analogous Inſtincts of other Animals, particularly into thoſe of the ſavage part of our own ſpecies.

But a great difficulty attends this inquiry. There has never yet been found any claſs of Men who were entirely governed by Inſtinct, by Nature, or by common ſenſe. The moſt barbarous nations differ widely in their manners from one another, and deviate as much from Nature in many particulars, as the moſt poliſhed and moſt luxurious. They are equally guided by reaſon, variouſly perverted by prejudice, cuſtom, and ſuperſtition. Yet a diſcerning eye will often be able to trace the hand of Nature where her deſigns are moſt oppoſed, and will ſometimes be ſurpriſed with marks of ſuch juſt and acute reaſoning among ſavage Nations, as might do honour to the moſt enlightened. In this

view the civil and natural hiſtory of Mankind becomes a ſtudy not merely fitted to amuſe, and gratify curioſity, but a ſtudy ſubſervient to the nobleſt views, to the cultivation and improvement of the Human Species.

It is evident that in comparing Men with other Animals, the Analogy muſt fail in ſeveral reſpects, becauſe they are governed ſolely by the unerring principle of Inſtinct; whereas Men are directed by other principles of action along with this, particularly by the feeble and fluctuating principle of Reaſon. But altho' in many particular inſtances it may be impoſſible to aſcertain what is the natural and what is the artificial State of Man, to diſtinguiſh between the voice of Nature and the dictates Caprice, and to fix the preciſe boundary between the provinces of Inſtinct and Reaſon; yet all

Mankind

Mankind agree to admit, in general, ſuch diſtinctions, and to condemn certain actions as treſpaſſes againſt Nature, as well as deviations from Reaſon. Men may diſpute whether it be proper to let their beards and their nails grow, on the principle of its being natural; but every Human Creature would be ſhocked with the impropriety of feeding an infant with Brandy inſtead of its Mother's Milk, from an inſtant feeling of its being an outrage done to Nature. In order, however, to avoid all altercation and ambiguity on this ſubject, we ſhall readily allow that it is our buſineſs, in the conduct of life, to follow whatever guide will lead us to the moſt perfect and laſting happineſs. We apprehend that where the voice of Nature and Inſtinct is clear and explicit, it will be found the ſureſt guide, and where it is ſilent or doubtful, we imagine

it would be proper to attend to the analogy of Nature among other Animals, not to be an abſolute rule for our conduct, but as a means of furniſhing light to direct it; and we admit, that, in order to determine what truly is moſt proper for us, the ultimate Appeal muſt be made to cool and impartial Experience.

We ſhould likewiſe avail ourſelves of the obſervations made on tame Animals in thoſe particulars where Art has in ſome meaſure improved upon Nature. Thus by a proper attention, we can preſerve and improve the breed of Horſes, Dogs, Cattle, and indeed of all other Animals. Yet it is amazing that this Obſervation was never transferred to the Human Species, where it would be equally applicable. It is certain, that notwithſtanding our promiſcuous Marriages, many families are diſtinguiſhed by peculiar

circumſtances

circumſtances in their character. This Family Character, like a Family Face, will often be loſt in one generation and appear again in the ſucceeding. Without doubt, Education, Habit, and Emulation, may contribute greatly in many caſes to preſerve it, but it will be generally found, that, independent of theſe, Nature has ſtamped an original impreſſion on certain Minds, which Education may greatly alter or efface, but ſeldom ſo entirely as to prevent its traces from being ſeen by an accurate obſerver. How a certain character or conſtitution of Mind can be tranſmitted from a Parent to a Child, is a queſtion of more difficulty than importance. It is indeed equally difficult to account for the external reſemblance of features, or for bodily diſeaſes being tranſmitted from a Parent to a Child. But we never dream of a difficulty in explaining

plaining any appearance of Nature, which is exhibited to us every day.—A proper attention to this ſubject would enable us to improve not only the conſtitutions, but the characters of our poſterity. Yet we every day ſee very ſenſible people, who are anxiouſly attentive to preſerve or improve the breed of their Horſes, tainting the blood of their Children, and entailing on them, not only the moſt loathſome diſeaſes of the Body, but madneſs, folly, and the moſt unworthy diſpoſitions, and this too when they cannot plead being ſtimulated by neceſſity, or impelled by paſſion.

We ſhall now proceed to inquire more particularly into the comparative ſtate of Mankind and the inferior Animals.

By the moſt accurate calculation, one half of Mankind die under eight years of age. As this mortality is greateſt among

the moſt luxurious part of Mankind, and gradually decreaſes in proportion as the diet becomes ſimpler, the exerciſe more frequent, and the general method of living more hardy, and as it doth not take place among wild Animals, the general foundations of it are ſufficiently pointed out. The extraordinary havock made by diſeaſes among Children, is owing to the unnatural treatment they meet with, which is ill ſuited to the ſingular delicacy of their tender frames. Their own Inſtincts, and the conduct of Nature in rearing other animals, are never attended to, and they are incapable of helping themſelves. When they are farther advanced in life, the voice of Nature becomes too loud to be ſtifled, and then, in ſpite of the influence of corrupted and adventitious taſte, will be obeyed.

Though it is a maxim univerſally allowed, that a multitude of inhabitants is

the firmeſt ſupport of a ſtate, yet the extraordinary mortality among Children has been little attended to by Men of public ſpirit. It is thought a natural evil, and therefore is ſubmitted to without examination *. But the importance of the

 queſtion

* Thus the loſs of a thouſand men in an engagement arouzes the public attention, and the ſevereſt ſcrutiny is made into the cauſe of it, while the loſs of thrice that number by ſickneſs paſſes unregarded: Yet the latter calamity is by far the moſt grievous, whether we regard the State, or the melancholy fate of the unhappy ſufferers; and therefore calls more loudly for a public Inquiry. Perhaps in the one caſe the loſs was inevitable, and might lead to victory; the men faced danger with intrepidity, full of the hopes of conqueſt, if they ſurvived, or of dying honourably in the cauſe of their country. Perhaps, in the other caſe, the evil, by proper management, might have been prevented: The men periſhed without being able to

queſtion will juſtify a more particular inquiry, whether the evil be really natural and unavoidable.

It is an unpopular attempt to attack prejudices eſtabliſhed by time and habit, and ſecured by the corruptions of luxurious life. It is equally unpleaſant to attempt the reformation of abuſes, without the leaſt proſpect of ſucceſs. Yet there is a ſecret pleaſure in pleading the cauſe of humanity and helpleſs innocence.

Many reaſons have been aſſigned, why the ſtate of Infancy is the moſt ſickly; and why ſo great a proportion of the human Species is cut off at that early period.

to make any effort for their preſervation; they ſaw the gradual approaches of death in all its terrors, and fell unlamented, and unſupported by that military ardor and thirſt of glory which enable men to deſpiſe it in the field.

riod. Phyſicians have inſiſted largely on the unavoidable dangers ariſing from the ſudden and total change of the animal Œconomy of Infants, that commences immediately upon the Birth; and on the dangers ariſing from the free admiſſion of the external air to their bodies at that time. They have expatiated on the high degree of irritability of their Nervous Syſtem, the delicacy of their whole frame, and the aceſcency of their food. A little reflection, however, may ſhew us, that this account of the matter, though plauſible at firſt view, is not ſatisfactory. This ſingle conſideration refutes it, That all theſe alledged cauſes of the ſicklineſs of Infants are not peculiar to the Human Species, but are found among many other Animals, without being attended with ſuch effects; that the diſeaſes, moſt fatal to Children, are not found among the Savage

vage part of Mankind; and that they prevail, in exact proportion to the progreſs of Effeminacy and Luxury; and in proportion as people forſake the plain dictates of Inſtinct and Nature, to follow the Light of what they are pleaſed to call Reaſon.

There is, in truth, a greater luxuriancy of Life and Health in Infancy, than in any other period of Life. Infants, we acknowledge, are more delicately ſenſible to Injury, than thoſe advanced in Life; but, to compenſate this, their Fibres and Veſſels are more capable of Diſtenſion, their whole Syſtem is more flexible, their Fluids are leſs acrid, and leſs diſpoſed to Putreſcence; they bear all Evacuations more eaſily, except that of blood; and, which is an important circumſtance in their favour, they never ſuffer from the terrors of a diſtracted Imagination. Their

Spirits

Spirits are lively and equal ; they quickly forget their paſt Sufferings, and never anticipate the future. In conſequence of theſe advantages, Children recover from diſeaſes, under ſuch unfavourable ſymptoms as are never ſurvived by Adults. If they waſte more quickly under ſickneſs, their recovery from it is quick in proportion ; and generally more complete than in older people ; as diſeaſes ſeldom leave thoſe baneful effects on their Conſtitutions, ſo frequent in thoſe of Adults. In ſhort, a Phyſician ought ſcarce ever to deſpair of a Child's Life, while it continues to breathe.

Every other Animal brings forth its young without any aſſiſtance ; but We judge Nature inſufficient for that work ; and think a Midwife underſtands it better.—What numbers of Infants as well as of Mothers are deſtroyed by the pre-

poſterous

poſterous management of theſe Artiſts, is well known to all who have inquired into this matter. The moſt knowing and ſucceſsful practitioners, if they are candid, will own, that in common and natural caſes, Nature is entirely ſufficient, and that their buſineſs is only to aſſiſt her efforts, in caſe of weakneſs of the Mother, or an unatural poſition of the Child.

As ſoon as an Infant comes into the world, our firſt care is to cram it with phyſic.—There is a glareous liquor contained in the bowels of Infants and many other Animals when they are born, which it is neceſſary to carry off. The medicine which Nature has prepared for this purpoſe is the Mother's firſt milk. This indeed anſwers the end very effectually; but we think ſome drug forced down the Child's throat will do it much better. The compoſition of this varies

according

according to the fancy of the good Woman who prefides at the birth.—It deferves to be remarked, when we are on this fubject, that calves, which are the only Animals generally taken under our peculiar care in thefe circumftances, are treated in the fame manner. They have the fame fort of phyfic adminiftered to them, and often with the fame fuccefs; many of them dying under the operation, or of its confequences: and we have the greateft reafon to think that more of this fpecies of Animals die at this period, than of all the other fpecies of Animals we fee in thefe circumftances, put together, our own only excepted.

Notwithftanding the many moving calls of natural Inftinct in the Child to fuck the Mother's breaft, yet the ufual practice has been, obftinately to deny that indulgence till the third day after the birth.

By

By this time the ſuppreſſion of the natu-
ral evacuation of the milk, uſually bring-
ing on a fever, the conſequence proves
often fatal to the Mother, or puts it out
of her power to ſuckle her Child at that
time. The ſudden ſwelling of the
breaſts, which commonly happens about
the third day, is another bad conſequence
of this delay. When the breaſts become
thus ſuddenly and greatly diſtended, a
child is not only utterly unable to ſuck,
but, by its cries and ſtruggling, fatigues
and heats both itſelf and the Mother.
This is another frequent cauſe, which
prevents nurſing.—We muſt obſerve
here, to the honour of the gentlemen
who had the care of the lying-in hoſpital
in London, that they were the firſt, who,
in this inſtance, brought us back to Na-
ture and common ſenſe; and by this
means have preſerved the lives of thou-

ſands

ſands of their fellow creatures. They ordered the Children to be put to the Mother's breaſt as ſoon as they ſhewed a deſire for it, which was generally within ten or twelve hours after the birth. This rendered the uſual doſe of phyſic unneceſſary, the milk-fever was prevented, the milk flowed gradually and eaſily into the breaſts, which before were apparently empty, and things went ſmoothly on in the natural way. We are ſorry however to obſerve, that this practice is not likely to become ſoon general. Phyſicians do not concern themſelves with ſubjects of this kind, nor with the regimen of Mankind, unleſs their advice is particularly aſked. Theſe matters are founded on eſtabliſhed cuſtoms and prejudices, which it is difficult to conquer, and dangerous to attack; nor will it ever be attempted by Men who depend on the favour and

caprice of the world for their fubfiftence, and who find it their intereft rather to footh prejudices than to oppofe them. If a Mother therefore is determined not to nurfe her own Infant, fhe fhould, for her own fake, fuckle it at leaft three or four weeks, and then wean it by degrees from her own breaft. In this way the more immediate danger arifing from repelling the milk, is prevented.

When a Mother does not nurfe her own Infant, fhe does open violence to Nature; a violence unknown among all the inferior Animals, whom Nature intended to fuckle their young: unknown among the moft barbarous nations; and equally unknown among the moft polifhed in the pureft ages of Greece and Rome. The fudden check given to the great natural evacuation of Milk, at a time when her weakly ftate renders her

unable

unable to ſuſtain ſo violent a ſhock, is often of the worſt conſequence to herſelf; and the loſs to the Child is much greater than is commonly apprehended. A Woman in this caſe runs an immediate riſk of her life by a milk-fever, beſides the danger of ſwelling and impoſtumes of the breaſts, and ſuch obſtructions in them as often lay the foundation of a future cancer.—Of 4,400 Women in the lying-in hoſpital, only four had milk ſores, and theſe had either no nipples, or former ſore breaſts *.

Some Women indeed have it not in their power to nurſe their Children, for want of milk; and ſometimes it is equally improper for the Mother and the Child, on account of ſome particular diſorder which the Mother labours under. But this

* Nelſon.

this is very ſeldom the caſe. On the contrary, there are many diſorders incident to Women, of which nurſing is the moſt effectual cure; and delicate conſtitutions are generally ſtrengthened by it. In proof of this we may obſerve, that while a Mother nurſes her Child, her complexion becomes clearer and more blooming, her ſpirits are more uniformly chearful, her appetite is better, and her general habit of body fuller and ſtronger. And it is particularly worthy of obſervation, that fewer Women die while they are nurſing than at any equal period of their lives, if we except the time of pregnancy, during which it is unuſual for a Woman to die of any diſeaſe, unleſs occaſioned by ſome violent external injury.

Another

Another great inconveniency attending the neglect of nursing, is the depriving Women of that interval of respite and ease which Nature intended for them between Child-bearings. A Woman who does not nurse, has naturally a Child every year; this quickly exhausts the constitution, and brings on the infirmities of old-age before their time; and as this neglect is most frequent among Women of fashion, the delicacy of their constitutions is particularly unable to sustain such a violence to Nature. A woman who nurses her Child, has an interval of a year and a half or two years betwixt her Children, in which the constitution has time to recover its vigour *.

We

* When the natural evacuation of milk from the breasts is suppressed, it renders the discharge of the Lochia more copious, and of longer duration than Nature intended, which is a frequent source of the Fluor Albus.

We may reckon, among the disadvantages consequent on the neglect of nursing, the Mother's being deprived of a very high pleasure, of the most tender and endearing kind, which remarkably strengthens her attachment to the Infant. It is not necessary here to inquire into the cause of this particular affection which a Mother feels for the Child she has suckled, superior to that which she feels for a Child suckled by a stranger; but the fact itself is indisputable.

It is not easy to estimate the injury Children sustain by being deprived of their natural nourishment, and, instead of it, being suckled by the milk of Women of different ages and constitutions from their Mothers. Thus far is certain, that a greater number of those Children die who are nursed by strangers, than of those who are suckled by their own Mothers.

thers. This is partly owing however to the want of that care and attention which the helpleſs ſtate of Infancy ſo much requires, and which the anxious affection of a Mother can alone ſupply. Indeed, if it was not that Nurſes naturally contract a large portion of the Inſtinctive fondneſs of a Mother, for the Infants they ſuckle, many more of them would periſh by want of care. But it ſhould be obſerved, that this acquired attachment cannot reaſonably be expected among Nurſes, in large cities. The ſame perverſion of nature and manners which prevails there among Women of faſhion, and makes them decline this duty, extends equally to thoſe of lower rank: and it cannot be ſuppoſed that what the call of Nature, not to ſpeak of love for the huſband, is unable to effectuate in the Mother, will be found in a hireling, who for a little money turns

her

her own Infant out of doors. But tho' it is true that a Nurſe may acquire by degrees the ſollicitude and tenderneſs of a Mother, yet as this takes place ſlowly, and only in proportion as habit takes the place of Nature, the neglected Child may periſh in the mean time. There reſults even from this poſſible advantage, an inconvenience which is itſelf ſufficient to deter a Woman of any ſenſibility from permitting her Infant to be ſuckled by another: and this is, to have a ſtranger partaking with, or rather alienating from her the rights of a Mother; to ſee her Child love another Woman as well, or better than herſelf; to perceive the affection it retains for its natural parent a matter of favour, and that of its adopted one a duty: for is not the attachment of the Child the reward due to the tender

cares

cares of a Mother *? The many loathsome diseases to which the lower class of Women in large cities are subjected, is another reason against their being intrusted with such an office; diseases which are often fatal to their little charges, or which taint their blood in a manner that they and their succeeding families may feel very severely.

Children should be suckled from nine to twelve months. There are several circumstances that may point out the propriety of weaning them about that time; in many parts of Europe, and in all the Levant, Children taste nothing but their Mother's milk till they are a year old, which in general is a good rule. The call of Nature should be waited for to feed them with any thing more substan-

* Rousseau.

tial. Many diſorders are incident to Infants, by forcing other food upon them beſides their Nurſes milk. When we neglect the plain dictates of Inſtinct in this caſe, we cannot move a ſtep without danger of erring, in regard to the quantity or quality of their food, or the proper times of giving it. New-born Infants are particularly apt to ſuffer from being ſtuffed with water-gruel, milk and water, weak wine whey, and other things of the like kind, which are thought perfectly mild and innocent. But the caſe is, Nature at this time requires very little food, but a great deal of reſt, as Infants ſleep almoſt their whole time, for ſeveral weeks after they are born. When therefore ſomething or other is continually pouring down their throats, their natural repoſe is interrupted, and the effects are flatulency, gripes, and all the other conſequences of indigeſ-

tion.

tion. It is proper to wean Children by degrees, and to make this and every subsequent alteration in their diet as gradual as poſſible, becauſe too ſudden tranſitions in this reſpect are often attended with the worſt conſequences.

While an Infant is fed by the Mother's milk alone, it may be allowed to ſuck as often as it pleaſes. It is then under the peculiar protection of Nature, who will not neglect her charge; and in this caſe has wiſely provided againſt any inconvenience that may ariſe from the ſtomach being overcharged with too much milk, by making the Child throw up the ſuperfluous quantity; which it does without ſickneſs or ſtraining.

If a Mother cannot or will not ſuckle her own Child, it ſhould be given to a Nurſe newly delivered, whoſe conſtitution both of body and of mind reſembles the

Mother's

Mother's as nearly as poſſible, provided that conſtitution be a good one. The Nurſe ſhould continue to live in every reſpect as ſhe had been accuſtomed to do. A tranſition from a plain diet conſiſting moſtly of vegetables, from a pure air and daily exerciſe, if not hard labour, to a full diet of Animal food and fermented liquor, the cloſe air of a town, and a total want of exerciſe, cannot fail to affect the health both of the Nurſe and the Child.

The attempt to bring up an Infant entirely by the ſpoon is offering ſuch a violence to Nature, as nothing but the moſt extreme neceſſity can juſtify. If a Child was to be nouriſhed in this way, even by its Mother's milk alone, it would not anſwer. The action of ſucking, like that of chewing, occaſions the ſecretion of a liquor in the Child's mouth, which being intimately mixed with the milk, makes

it

it ſit eaſy upon, and properly digeſt in the ſtomach.

Beſides theſe, there are other circumſtances in the rearing of Children, in which, we apprehend, neither Inſtinct nor the Analogy of Nature is properly regarded.

All young Animals naturally delight in the open air, and in perpetual motion: But we ſignify our diſapprobation of this intention of Nature, by confining our Infants moſtly within doors, and ſwathing them from the time they are born as tightly as poſſible.—This natural Inſtinct appears very ſtrong when we ſee a Child releaſed from its confinement, in the ſhort interval between pulling off its day cloaths, and ſwathing it again before it is put to ſleep. The evident tokens of delight which the little creature ſhews in recovering the free uſe of its limbs, and the

ſtrong

ſtrong reluctance it diſcovers to be again remitted to its bondage, one ſhould imagine would ſtrike a conviction of the cruelty and abſurdity of this practice, into the moſt ſtupid of Mankind. This confinement, Boys, in general, are ſooner releaſed from; but the fairer part of the Species ſuffer it, in ſome degree, during life.

Some nations have fancied that Nature did not give a good ſhape to the head, and thought it would be better to mould it into the form of a ſugar-loaf. The Chineſe think a Woman's foot much handſomer if ſqueezed into a third part of its natural ſize. Some African nations have a like quarrel with the ſhape of the noſe, which they think ought to be laid as flat as poſſible with the face. We laugh at the folly and are ſhocked with the cruelty of theſe barbarians; but think, with

with equal abſurdity, that the natural ſhape of a Woman's cheſt is not ſo elegant, as we can make it by the confinement of Stays.—The common effects of this practice are diſorders in the ſtomach and obſtructions in the lungs, from their not having ſufficient room to play, which, beſides tainting the breath, cuts off numbers of young Women by conſumptions in the very bloom of life.—But Nature has ſhewn her reſentment of this practice in the moſt ſtriking manner, by rendering above half the Women of faſhion deformed in ſome degree or other. Deformity is peculiar to the civilized part of Mankind, and is almoſt always the work of our own hands. The Turkiſh and Aſiatic Women, who are diſtinguiſhed for the elegance of their form, and the gracefulneſs of their carriage, are accuſtomed from their Infancy to wear no dreſs but

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what is perfectly loose.—The superior strength, just proportions, and agility of Savages are entirely the effects of their hardy education, of their living mostly abroad in the open air, and of their limbs never having suffered any confinement. —The Siamese, Japonese, Indians, Negroes, Savages of Canada, Virginia, Brazil, and most of the inhabitants of South America, do not swathe their Children, but lay them in a kind of large cradle lined and covered with skins and furs. Here they have the free use of their limbs; which they improve so well, that in two or three months they crawl about on their hands and knees, and in less than a year walk without any assistance. Where Children are swathed, or so closely pinioned down in their cradles, that they cannot move, the * impulsive force of the internal

* Rousseau.

internal parts of the body difpofed to in-
creafe, find an unfurmountable obftacle
to the movements required to accelerate
their growth. The Infant is continually
making fruitlefs efforts, which wafte its
powers or retard their progrefs. It is
fcarcely poffible to fwathe Children in
fuch a manner as not to give them fome
pain; and the conftant endeavour to re-
lieve themfelves from an uneafy pofture,
is a frequent caufe of deformity. When
the fwathing is tight, it impedes the
breathing, and the free circulation of the
blood, difturbs the natural fecretions,
and diforders the conftitution in a varie-
ty of ways. If an Infant is pinioned
down in its cradle in fuch a manner as
to prevent the fuperfluous humour fecre-
ted in the mouth from being freely dif-
charged, it muft fall down into the fto-
mach; where it occafions various difor-

ders, eſpecially in time of teething, when there is always a very great ſecretion of this fluid. Another inconvenience which attends this unnatural confinement of Children, is the keeping them from their natural action and exerciſe, which both retards their growth, and diminiſhes the ſtrength of their bodies. It is pretended that Children left thus at liberty, would often throw themſelves into poſtures deſtructive of the perfect conformation of their body. But if a Child ever gets into a wrong ſituation, the uneaſineſs it feels ſoon induces it to change its poſture. Beſides, in thoſe countries where no ſuch precautions are taken, the Children are all robuſt and all well proportioned. It is likewiſe ſaid, that, if Children were left to the free uſe of their limbs, their reſtleſſneſs would ſubject them to many external injuries; but

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though they are* heavy, they are proportionably feeble, and cannot move with ſufficient force to hurt themſelves. The true ſource, however, of that wretched ſlavery to which they are condemned is this; an Infant whoſe limbs are at liberty muſt be conſtantly watched; but when it is faſt bound, it requires little attendance from its Nurſe, and may be thrown into any corner.

It is of the utmoſt conſequence to the health of Infants, to keep them perfectly clean and ſweet. The inhabitants of the † Eaſtern countries, particularly Turkey, and the natives of America, are extremely attentive to this article. The confined dreſs of our Infants renders a great degree of attention to cleanlineſs peculiarly neceſſary. The cloſe application of any thing acrid to the delicate and

* Buffon. † Rouſſeau.

and ſenſible ſkin of an Infant, gives a very ſpeedy irritation, and is one of the moſt frequent cauſes of Children's crying.

Children when very young never cry but from pain or ſickneſs, and therefore the cauſe of their diſtreſs ſhould be accurately inquired into. If it is allowed to continue, it diſturbs all the animal functions, eſpecially the digeſtive powers; and from the diſorders of theſe moſt of the diſeaſes incident to Children proceed. The cries of an Infant are the voice of Nature ſupplicating relief. It can expreſs its wants by no other language. Inſtead of hearkening to this voice, we often ſtifle it, by putting the little wretch into a cradle, where the noiſe and violent motion confound all its ſenſes, and extinguiſh all feelings of pain in a forced and unnatural ſleep. Sometimes they are allowed

to cry till their ſtrength is exhauſted. But their violent ſtruggles to get relief, and the agitations of their paſſions, equally diſorder their conſtitutions ; and when a Child's firſt ſenſations partake ſo much of pain and diſtreſs, and when the turbulent paſſions are ſo early awakened and exerciſed, there is ſome reaſon to ſuſpect they may have an influence on the future temper.

Children require a great deal of ſleep, particularly in early infancy, nor ſhould it ever be denied them. If they are allowed to be in conſtant motion when they are awake, which they always chooſe to be, there will be no occaſion for rocking them in a cradle: but the ſleep which is forced, by exhauſted Nature ſinking to reſt after ſevere fits of crying, is often too long and too profound. Rocking in cradles is improper in every reſpect, from the

the confinement which it occaſions, from its over-heating Infants, from its diſordering the digeſtion of their food, and from its procuring an unnatural and forced ſleep.

As Children naturally turn their eyes to the light, their beds or cradles ſhould be lighted from the feet, in ſuch a way as that both eyes may be equally expoſed to it. If the light is on one ſide, the eye that is moſt frequently directed to it will become ſtrongeſt. This is likewiſe a frequent cauſe of ſquinting *.

The miſmanagement of Children is principally owing to over-feeding, over-clothing, want of exerciſe, and of freſh air †. Though, as was before obſerved,

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* Buffon.

† See a very ſpirited and judicious eſſay on Nurſing, by Dr. Cadogan.

a young Child never cries but from pain or ſickneſs, yet the univerſal remedy abſurdly applied for all its diſtreſſes, is giving it ſomething to eat or to drink, or rocking it in a cradle. If the wants and motions of a Child are attended to, it will be found to ſhew ſeveral ſigns of deſiring food before it cries for it; the firſt ſenſations of hunger never being attended with pain. Indeed theſe ſigns are ſeldom obſerved, becauſe Children are ſeldom ſuffered to be hungry. If they were regularly fed only thrice a day, at ſtated intervals, after they are weaned, the ſignals of returning hunger would be as intelligible as if they ſpoke; but, while they are crammed with ſome traſh every hour, the calls of natural appetite can never be heard. Their food ſhould be ſimple, and of eaſy digeſtion, and ſhould never be taken hot: after they are weaned, till they

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are three years old, it ſhould conſiſt of plain milk, panada, well-fermented bread, barley-meal porridge; and at dinner plain light broth with barley or rice. All kinds of paſtry, puddings, cuſtards, &c. where the chief ingredients are unfermented flour, eggs, and butter, though generally thought to be light, lie much heavier on the ſtomach than many kinds of animal food. Fermented liquors of every kind, and all ſorts of ſpiceries, are improper. They give a ſtimulus to the digeſtive powers, which they do not require, and, by exciting a falſe appetite, are often the cauſe of their being overcharged. Their drink ſhould be pure water. The quantity of Children's food ſhould be regulated by their appetite; and as they always eat with ſome eagerneſs full as much as they ought, whenever

ever that eagerneſs ceaſes, their food ſhould be immediately withdrawn.

The practice of putting many clothes on Children, indulging them in ſitting near the fire, ſleeping in ſmall and warm rooms, and preſerving them from being expoſed to the various inclemencies of the weather, relaxes their bodies, and enervates their minds. If Children, together with ſuch an effeminate education, are pampered with animal food, rich ſauces, and ſuch other diet as over-charges their digeſtive powers, they become ſickly as well as weak.

It is a general error, that a new-born Infant cannot be kept too warm. From this unfortunate prejudice, a healthy Child is ſoon made ſo tender, that it cannot bear the freſh air without catching cold. A Child can neither be kept too cool, nor too looſe in its dreſs. It wants

lefs clothing, in proportion, than a grown perfon, becaufe it is naturally warmer; at leaft more uniformly and equally warm. This is univerfal among all animals. There are numberlefs inftances of Infants, expofed and deferted, that have lived feveral days, in fuch fevere weather as would have killed moft adults. Many of the difeafes incident to new-born Infants, and to lying-in Women, arife from the hot regimen to which they are fubjected. It is generally thought neceffary to keep lying-in Women in a conftant extorted fweat, by confining them for feveral days clofely to bed, in warm rooms, where great care is taken to exclude the frefh air; by giving them all their drink warm, and obliging them to take down a larger quantity of it than their thirft demands. If all thefe methods prove infufficient to force out the defired

fweat,

ſweat, the aſſiſtance of ſudorific medicines, ſometimes of the heating kind, is called in. There is the greateſt reaſon to believe, that the whole of this artificial Syſtem of management is highly pernicious. It is contrary to the Analogy of Nature among all other Animals and the uncultivated part of the human ſpecies, who, unleſs in ſome very extraordinary caſes, recover eaſily and ſpeedily, after bringing forth their young, without requiring to be kept warmer than uſual. The frequent deaths, and the ſlow and difficult recoveries of Women after Child-birth, ſhew plainly that there is an error ſomewhere. It is the refuge of ignorance, or the blindneſs of prejudice, to ſay, that theſe evils are natural and unavoidable. The Conſtitution of a lying-in Woman is indeed naturally more irritable than uſual, but this irritability is much increaſed by a hot

hot regimen, and by keeping her conſtantly diſſolved in ſweats : the effect of which is, to weaken her ſo much, that the leaſt application of external cold often produces the moſt dangerous conſequences. This is conſidered as an additional reaſon for keeping the unhappy Woman ſtill warmer. It generally happens, that a Woman, for ſome days after her delivery, has a conſtant moiſture on her ſkin ; this natural moiſture is moſt effectually promoted by keeping her as cool as in her uſual health. If the heat is increaſed, inſtead of this ſalutary perſpiration, a fever is probably produced, which either ſuppreſſes it entirely, or is attended with a profuſe colliquative ſweat ; and often, in conſequence of ſuch ſweat, with a miliary eruption. By another fatal error, in miſtaking an effect for a cauſe, this miliarly eruption is conſidered as a

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critical and highly ſalutary tranſlation of ſome imaginary morbid matter to the ſkin; which ought to be promoted, by a warm regimen and ſudorific medicines. Thus, by leaving the plain road of Nature and common ſenſe, people involve themſelves in a labyrinth of errors, and fancy they are curing Diſeaſes, when, in truth, they are creating them. It is a certain fact, however ſtrange it may appear, that in a well-regulated lying-in hoſpital, Women recover ſooner, and are ſubjected to fewer accidents, after Childbirth, notwithſtanding the unavoidable expoſure to more light and noiſe, than Ladies of faſhion, who are thought to poſſeſs every poſſible conveniency, in their own houſes. The reaſon is obvious: In ſuch an hoſpital, the Women lie in a large ward, kept cool and well ventilated, and under the direction and abſolute go-

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vernment of a Phyſician, who is not fettered by other people's prejudices, but feels himſelf at full liberty to act according to the dictates of his own Underſtanding and Experience.

But we return to our Subject.—Children ſhould have no ſhoes or ſtockings, at leaſt till they are able to run abroad. They would ſtand firmer, learn to walk ſooner, and have their limbs better proportioned, if they were never cramped with ligatures of any kind. Beſides, ſtockings are a very uncleanly piece of dreſs, and always keep an infant's legs cold and wet, if they are not ſhifted almoſt every hour.

The active principle is ſo vigorous and overflowing in a Child, that it loves to be in perpetual motion itſelf, and to have every object around it in motion. This exuberant activity is given it for the

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wifeſt purpoſes; as it has more to do, and more to learn, in the firſt three years of its life, than it has in thirty years of any future period of it. But that lively and reſtleſs ſpirit, which in infancy ſeemed to animate every thing around it, gradually contracts itſelf, as the Child advances in Life, nature requiring no more motion than is neceſſary for its preſervation, and ſinks at laſt into that calm and ſtillneſs which cloſe the latter days of human life.

We ſhould freely indulge this active ſpirit, and the reſtleſs curioſity of Children, by allowing them to move about at their pleaſure. This exerciſe gives ſtrength and agility to their limbs, and vigour to their conſtitutions. They ſhould be allowed and even encouraged to handle objects from their earlieſt infancy, and be ſuffered to approach them as ſoon as they

are able to move on their hands and knees. It is only by touch that we acquire juſt ideas of the figure and ſituation of bodies, and therefore we cannot be too early accuſtomed to examine by this ſenſe every viſible body within our reach. All theſe purpoſes, however, are fruſtrated by Infants being confined in their Nurſes arms till they are able to walk alone. This confinement is likewiſe very apt to give a twiſt to their ſhape, if the Nurſe is not particularly careful to carry them alternately in both arms, though this twiſt may not appear for many years after. But a ſtill more important injury may be done to them by this practice, ſo univerſal among thoſe of better rank; the injury ariſing from their having too much or too little exerciſe, or from its being given them at an improper time. If a Child is ſuffered to

move

move about at its pleaſure, like any other young animal, from the time it is two or three months old, unerring Inſtinct will direct it to take preciſely the quantity of exerciſe, and to take it at the preciſe times which are moſt proper. But, if it is carried always in a Nurſe's arms, theſe important circumſtances muſt be regulated by her peculiar temper or caprice. It is eaſy to foreſee ſome of the numerous inconveniencies that muſt ariſe from this.

Neither ought Children to be aſſiſted, in their learning to walk, by leading-ſtrings. The only uſe of theſe is to ſave trouble to Nurſes, who, by allowing the Children to ſwing in them, often hurt their ſhape, and retard their progreſs in walking. They are leſs ſubject to fall when they have no ſuch artificial aſſiſtance to depend on; and they cannot too early be made ſenſible that they are never

to expect a ſupport or aſſiſtance in doing any thing which they are able to do for themſelves. When Infants have eſcaped from the hands of their Nurſes, and are able to run about and ſhift for themſelves, they generally do well. It is commonly thought that weakly Children ſhould not be put on their legs, eſpecially if they are the leaſt bent or crooked: but experience ſhews that crooked legs will grow in time ſtrong and ſtrait by frequent walking, while diſuſe makes them worſe and worſe every day. *

Cities are the graves of the human ſpecies †. They would periſh in a few generations, if they were not conſtantly recruited from the country. The confined, putrid air which moſt of their inhabitants breathe, their foul feeding, their want

* Cadogan. † Rouſſeau.

want of natural exercife, but, above all, their debauchery, fhorten their lives, ruin their conftitutions, and produce a puny and difeafed race of Children.

Every circumftance points out the country as the proper place for the education of Children; the purity of the air, the variety of ruftic fports, the plainnefs of diet, the fimplicity and innocence of manners, all concur to recommend it. Crowding Children together in hofpitals is extremely pernicious to their health, both from the confinement they are fubjected to, and from the unwholefome air occafioned by a number of people living in the fame houfe. But it is ftill more pernicious to confine them, before they have attained their full growth and ftrength, to fedentary employments, where they breathe a putrid air, and are reftrained from the free ufe of their limbs.

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The uſual effect of this confinement is, either to cut them off early in life, or to render their conſtitutions weak and ſickly. The inſatiable thirſt for money, not only hardens the heart againſt every ſentiment of humanity, but makes Men blind to that very intereſt which they ſo anxiouſly purſue. The ſame principles of ſound policy, which induces them to ſpare their horſes and cattle, till they arrive at their full ſize and vigour, ſhould naturally lead them to grant a like reſpite to their Children.

Though diet demands the greateſt attention, in puny conſtitutions, yet it admits of a very great latitude in Children hardened by exerciſe and daily expoſed to the viciſſitudes of the weather. It is impoſſible to aſcertain what the human body may be brought to bear, if it is gradually inured to the intemperance of ſeaſons

feaſons and elements, to hunger, thirſt, and fatigue. Before it hath acquired ſettled habits, we may induce almoſt any we pleaſe without danger; when it is once arrived at its full growth and conſiſtence, every material alteration is dangerous. But the delicacy and luxury of modern education deſtroy the foundation of this native vigour and flexibility. Notwithſtanding the variety of abſurd and unnatural cuſtoms that prevail among barbarous nations, they are not ſickly as we are; becauſe the hardineſs of their conſtitutions enables them to bear all exceſſes. The women who inhabit the iſthmus of America are plunged in cold water, along with their Infants, immediately after their delivery, without any bad conſequence. All thoſe diſeaſes which ariſe from catching of cold, or a ſudden check given to the perſpiration, are found

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only among the civilized part of Mankind. An old Roman or an Indian, in the purſuits of war or hunting, would plunge into a river whilſt in a profuſe ſweat, without fear and without danger. A ſimilar hardy education would make us all equally proof againſt the bad effects of ſuch accidents.—The greater care we take to prevent catching cold, by the various contrivances of modern luxury, the more we become ſubjected to it.—We can guard againſt cold only by rendering ourſelves ſuperior to its influence.—There is a ſtriking proof of this in the vigorous conſtitutions of Children braced by the daily uſe of the cold bath; and ſtill a ſtronger proof, in thoſe Children who are thinly clad, and ſuffered to be without ſtockings or ſhoes in all ſeaſons and weathers.

Nature never made any country too cold for its own inhabitants.—In cold climates, ſhe has made exerciſe and even fatigue habitual to them, not only from the neceſſity of their ſituation, but from choice, their natural diverſions being all of the athletic and violent kind. But the ſoftneſs and effeminacy of modern manners has both deprived us of our natural defence againſt the diſeaſes moſt incident to our own climate, and ſubjected us to all the inconveniencies of a warm one, particularly to that debility and morbid ſenſibility of the nervous ſyſtem, which lays the foundation of moſt of our diſeaſes, and deprives us at the ſame time of the ſpirit and reſolution to ſupport them.

Moſt of thoſe Children who die under two years of age, are cut off by the conſequences of teething. This is reckoned a natural and inevitable evil; but as all other

other animals, and the uncultivated part of Mankind, get their teeth without danger, there is reaſon to ſuſpect that this is not a natural evil. The proceſs of Nature in breeding teeth is different from her uſual method of operating in the human body, which is without pain, and commonly without exciting any particular ſenſation. But though cutting of the teeth may be naturally attended with ſome pain, and even a ſmall degree of fever, yet, if a Child's conſtitution be perfectly ſound and vigorous, probably neither of theſe would be followed by any bad conſequences. The irritability of the nervous ſyſtem, and the inflammatory diſpoſition of the habit, at this period, are probably owing in a great meaſure to too full living, to the conſtitution being debilitated by the want of proper exerciſe, by the want of free expoſure to the open

air, and the numberleſs other effeminacies of modern education. Other animals facilitate the cutting of their teeth by gnawing ſuch bodies as their gums can make ſome impreſſion on. An Infant, by the ſame mechanical Inſtinct, begins very early to carry every thing to its mouth. As ſoon as this indication of Nature is obſerved, it ſhould be diligently followed, by giving the Child ſomething to gnaw, which is inoffenſive, which is cooling, and which yields a little to the preſſure of its gums, as liquorice-root, hard biſcuit, wax candle, and ſuch like. A perfectly hard body, ſuch as coral, does not anſwer the purpoſe, nor will a Child uſe it, when its gums are in the leaſt pained.

We cannot help obſerving here the very great prejudice which Children of better rank often ſuſtain, by a too early ap-

plication to different branches of education. The moſt important poſſeſſion that can be ſecured to a Child, is a healthy and vigorous conſtitution, a chearful temper, and a good heart. Moſt ſickly Children either die very ſoon, or drag out an unhappy life, burdenſome to themſelves, and uſeleſs to the public. There is nothing indeed to hinder a Child from acquiring every uſeful branch of knowledge, and every elegant accompliſhment ſuited to his age, without impairing his conſtitution; but then the greateſt attention muſt be had to the powers of his body and mind, that they neither be allowed to languiſh for want of exerciſe, nor be exerted beyond what they can bear. Nature brings all her works to perfection by a gradual proceſs. Man, the laſt and moſt perfect of her works below, arrives at his by a very ſlow proceſs. In the early

ly period of life, Nature feems particularly follicitous to increafe and invigorate the bodily powers. One of the principal inftruments fhe ufes for this purpofe is, that reftlefs activity which makes a Child delight to be in perpetual motion. The faculties of the mind difclofe themfelves in a certain regular fucceffion. The powers of imagination firft begin to appear by an unbounded curiofity, a love of what is great, furprifing, and marvellous, and, in many cafes, of what is ridiculous. The perception of what is beautiful in Nature does not come fo early. The progrefs of the affections is flower: at firft they are moftly of the felfifh kind; but, by degrees, the heart dilates, and the focial and public affections make their appearance. The progrefs of reafon is extremely flow. In childhood, the mind can attend to nothing but what keeps its

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active powers in conſtant agitation, nor can it take in all the little diſcriminating circumſtances which are neceſſary to the forming a true judgment either of perſons or things. For this cauſe, it is very little capable of entering into abſtract reaſoning of any kind, till towards the age of manhood. It is even long after this period before any juſtneſs of taſte can be acquired; becauſe that requires the moſt improved uſe of the affections, of the reaſoning faculty, and of the powers of imagination. If this is the order and plan of Nature in bringing Man to the perfection of his kind, it ſhould be the buſineſs of education religiouſly to follow it, to aſſiſt the ſucceſſive openings of the human powers, to give them their proper exerciſe, but to take care that they never be over-charged. If no regard is had to this rule, we may indeed accelerate the ſeeming

ing maturity of our faculties, as we can rear a plant in a hot-bed; but we ſhall never be able to bring them to that full maturity, which a more ſtrict attention to Nature would have brought them to. This is, however, ſo little obſerved in the education of Children of better faſhion, that Nature is, almoſt from the beginning, thwarted in all her motions. Many hours are ſpent every day in ſtudies painfully diſagreeable, that give exerciſe to no faculty but the memory, and only load it with what will probably never turn to either future pleaſure or utility. Some of the faculties are over-ſtrained, by putting them upon exertions diſproportioned to their ſtrength; others languiſh for want of being exerciſed at all. No knowledge or improvement is here acquired by the free and ſpontaneous exertion of the natural powers: it is all artificial and forced.

forced. Thus health is often ſacrificed, by the body being deprived of its requiſite exerciſe, the temper hurt by frequent contradiction, and the vigour of the mind impaired by unnatural and overſtrained exertions. The happieſt period of Human Life, the days of health, chearfulneſs, and innocence, on which we always reflect with pleaſure, not without ſome mixture of regret, are ſpent in the midſt of tears, puniſhments, and ſlavery; and this is to anſwer no other end but to make a Child a Man ſome years before Nature intended he ſhould be one. It is not meant here to inſinuate, that Children ſhould be left to form themſelves, without any direction or aſſiſtance. On the contrary, they need the moſt watchful attention from their earlieſt infancy, and often contract ſuch bad health, ſuch bad tempers, and ſuch bad habits, before they are thought

though. proper ſubjects of education, as will remain with them, in ſpite of all future care, as long as they live. We only intended to point out the impropriety of precipitating education, by forſaking the order in which Nature unfolds the human powers, and by ſacrificing preſent happineſs to uncertain futurity. There is a kind of culture that will produce a Man at fifteen, with his character and manners perfectly formed: but then he is a little Man; his faculties are cramped, and he is incapable of further improvement. By a different culture he might not perhaps arrive at full maturity till five-and-twenty; but then he would be by far the ſuperior man, bold, active, and vigorous, with all his powers capable of ſtill further enlargement. The buſineſs of education is indeed, in every view, a very difficult taſk. It requires an intimate

knowledge

knowledge of Nature, as well as great addrefs, to direct a Child, before he is able to direct himfelf, to lead him without his being confcious of it, and to fecure the moft implicit obedience, without his feeling himfelf to be a flave. It requires befides fuch a conftant watchfulnefs, fuch inflexible fteadinefs, and, at the fame time, fo much patience, tendernefs, and affection, as can fcarcely be expected but from the heart of a parent.

These few obfervations are felected from a great number that might be mentioned, to prove that many of the calamities complained of as peculiarly affecting the Human Species, are not neceffary confequences of our conftitution, but are entirely the refult of our own caprice and folly, in paying greater regard to vague and fhallow reafonings, than to the plain dictates of Nature, and the analogous

conftitutions

conſtitutions of other Animals.—They are taken from that period of life, where Inſtinct is the only active principle of our Nature, and conſequently where the analogy between us and other Animals will be found moſt complete.—When our ſuperior and more diſtinguiſhing faculties begin to expand themſelves, the analogy becomes indeed leſs perfect. But, if we would inquire into the cauſe of our weak and ſickly habits, we muſt go back to the ſtate of Infancy. The foundation of the evil is laid there. Habit ſoon ſucceeds in the place of Nature, and, however unworthy a ſucceſſor, requires almoſt equal attention. As years advance, additional cauſes of theſe evils are continually taking place, and diſorders of the body and mind mutually inflame each other.—But this opens a field too extenſive for this place. We ſhall only obſerve,

that the decline of Human Life exhibits generally a ſcene quite ſingular in Nature. —The gradual decay of the more humane and generous feelings of the heart, as well as of all our boaſted ſuperior powers of imagination and underſtanding, till at laſt they are utterly obliterated, and leave us in a more helpleſs and wretched ſituation than that of any animal whatever, is ſurely of all others the moſt humbling conſideration to the pride of man.—Yet there is great reaſon to believe that this melancholy exit is not our natural fate, but that it is owing to cauſes foreign and adventitious to our nature.—There is the higheſt probability, at leaſt, that, if we led natural lives, we ſhould retain to the laſt the full exerciſe of all our ſenſes, and the full poſſeſſion of thoſe ſuperior faculties, which we hope we ſhall retain in a future and more perfect ſtate of exiſtence.

—There

—There is no reaſon to doubt but it is in the power of art to protract life even beyond the period which nature has aſſigned to it. But this inquiry, however important, is trifling, when compared to that which leads us to the means of enjoying it, whilſt we do live.

SEC.

SECTION II.

THE advantages which mankind poſ-ſeſs above the reſt of the animal creation are principally derived from rea-ſon, from the ſocial principle, from taſte, and from religion. We ſhall proceed to inquire how much each of theſe contri-butes to make life more happy and com-fortable.

Reaſon of itſelf cannot, any more than riches, be reckoned an immediate bleſ-ſing to mankind. It is only the proper application of it, to render them more happy, that can entitle it to that name. Nature has furniſhed us with a variety of internal

internal ſenſes and taſtes, unknown to o-
ther animals. All theſe, if properly cul-
tivated, are ſources of pleaſure; but with-
out culture, moſt of them are ſo faint and
languid, that they convey no gratification
to the mind. This culture is the peculiar
province of reaſon. It belongs to reaſon
to analyſe our taſtes and pleaſures, and,
after a proper arrangement of them accor-
ding to their different degrees of excel-
lence, to aſſign to each that degree of
cultivation and indulgence which its rank
deſerves, and no more. But if reaſon,
inſtead of thus doing juſtice to the vari-
ous gifts of Providence, be inattentive to
her charge, or beſtow her whole atten-
tion on one, neglecting the reſt, and if,
in conſequence of this, little happineſs be
enjoyed in life, in ſuch a caſe reaſon can
with no great propriety be called a bleſ-
ſing. Let us then examine its effects

among

among thofe who poffefs it in the moft eminent degree.

The natural advantages of genius, and a fuperior underftanding, are extremely obvious. One unacquainted with the real ftate of human affairs, would never doubt of their fecuring to their poffeffors the moft honourable and important ftations among mankind, nor fufpect that they could ever fail to place them at the head of all the ufeful arts and profeffions. If he were told this was not the cafe, he would conclude it muft be owing to the folly or wickednefs of mankind, or to fome unhappy concurrence of accidents, that fuch men were deprived of their natural ftations and rank in life. But in fact it is owing to none of thefe caufes. A fuperior degree of reafon and underftanding does not ufually form a man either for being a more ufeful member of fociety,

ſociety, or more happy in himſelf. Theſe talents are uſually diſſipated in ſuch a way, as renders them of little account, either to the public or to the poſſeſſor.— This waſte of genius exhibits a moſt aſtoniſhing and melancholy proſpect. A large library gives a full view of it. Among the multitude of books of which it is compoſed, how few engage any one's attention? Such as are addreſſed to the heart and imagination, ſuch as paint life and manners in juſt colours and intereſting ſituations, and the very few that give genuine deſcriptions of Nature in any of her forms, or of the uſeful and elegant arts, are read and admired. But the far more numerous volumes, productions of the intellectual powers, profound ſyſtems, and diſquiſitions of philoſophy and theology, are neglected and deſpiſed, and remain only as monuments of the pride,

ingenuity,

ingenuity, and impotency of human understanding. Yet many of the inventors of these systems discover the greatest acuteness and depth of genius; half of which, exerted on any of the useful or elegant arts of life, would have rendered their names immortal.—But it has ever been the misfortune of philosophical genius to grasp at objects which Providence has placed beyond its reach, and to ascend to general principles and to build systems, without that previous large collection and proper arrangement of facts, which alone can give them a solid foundation.—Notwithstanding this was pointed out by Lord Bacon, in the fullest and clearest manner, yet no attempts have been made to cultivate any one branch of useful philosophy upon his excellent plan, except by Sir Isaac Newton, Mr Boyle, and a very few others.—Genius is

naturally

naturally impatient of reſtraint, keen and impetuous in its purſuits; it delights therefore in building with materials which the mind contains within itſelf, or ſuch as the imagination can create at pleaſure. But the materials, requiſite for the improvement of any uſeful art or ſcience, muſt all be collected from without, by ſuch ſlow and patient obſervation, as little ſuits the vivacity of genius, and generally requires more bodily activity, than is uſually found among philoſophers.

Almoſt the only pure productions of the underſtanding, that have continued to command reſpect, are thoſe of abſtract mathematics. Theſe will always be valuable, independently of their application to the uſeful arts. The exerciſe they give to the invention, and the agreeable ſurpriſe they excite in the mind, by exhibiting unexpected relations of figures and quan-

tity, are of themfelves natural fources of pleafure. This is the only fcience, the principles of which the philofopher carries in his own mind; infallible principles to which he can fafely truft.

Though men of genius cannot bear the fetters of method and fyftem, yet they are the only proper people to plan them out. The genius to lead and direct in philofophy is diftinct from, and almoft incompatible with the genius to execute. Lord Bacon was a remarkable inftance of this. He brought the fyftematic method of the fchoolmen, which was founded on metaphyfical and often nominal fubtilties, into deferved contempt, and laid down a method of inveftigation founded on the jufteft and moft enlarged views of Nature, but which neither himfelf nor fucceeding philofophers have had patience to put in ftrict execution.

For

For the reaſons above mentioned, it will be found that ſcarcely any of the uſeful arts of life owe their improvements to philoſophers. They have been principally obliged to accidental diſcoveries, or to the happy natural ſagacity of Men, who exerciſed thoſe arts in private, and who were unacquainted with and undebauched by philoſophy.—This has in a particular manner been the fate of Medicine, the moſt uſeful of all thoſe arts. If by medicine be meant the art of preſerving health, and reſtoring it when loſt, any Man of ſenſe and candour, who has been regularly bred to it, will own that his time has been moſtly taken up with inquiries into branches of learning, which upon trial he finds utterly unprofitable to the main ends of his profeſſion, or waſted in reading uſeleſs theories and voluminous explanations and commentaries on

theſe theories; and will ingenuouſly acknowledge, that every thing uſeful, which he ever learned from books in the courſe of many years ſtudy, might be taught to any Man of common ſenſe and attention in almoſt as many months, and that a few years experience is worth all his library.—Medicine in reality owes more to that illiterate enthuſiaſt, Paracelſus, for introducing ſome of the moſt uſeful remedies, than to any phyſician who has written ſince the days of Hippocrates, if we except Dr. Sydenham; who owes his reputation entirely to a great natural ſagacity in making obſervations, and to a ſtill more uncommon candour in relating them. What little medical philoſophy he had, which was as good as his time afforded, ſerved only to warp his genius, and render his writings more perplexed and tireſome.

But what ſhews in the ſtrongeſt light at what an awful diſtance philoſophers have uſually kept from inquiries of general utility to mankind, is, that agriculture, as a ſcience, is yet only in its infancy.—A mathematician or philoſopher, if he happens to poſſeſs a farm, does not underſtand the conſtruction of his cart or plough ſo well as the fellow who drives them, nor is he ſo well acquainted with the method of cultivating his ground to the greateſt advantage. We have indeed many ſyſtems of agriculture, that is, we have large compilations of general maxims and principles, along with a profuſion of what is called philoſophical reaſoning on the ſubject. But the capital deficiency in huſbandry is, a copious collection of particular obſervations and experiments, fully and clearly related, well atteſted, and properly arranged. Theſe alone can give

any

any authority to general maxims. Without these, we ought to distrust all such maxims, as we know many of them are founded on facts, either totally false or very imperfectly related, and that others are established on very erroneous reasoning from facts that are indeed unquestionable.

It is with pleasure, however, that we observe the genius of a more enlarged philosophy arising, a philosophy subservient to life and public utility. Since knowledge has come to be more generally diffused, that spirit of free inquiry, which formerly employed itself in theology and politics, begins now to pierce into other sciences. The authority of antiquity and great names, in subjects of opinion, is less regarded. Men begin to be weary of theories which lead to no useful consequences, and have no foundation but

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in the imagination of ingenious men. The load of learned rubbiſh, under which ſcience has lain ſo long concealed, partly for the meaneſt and vileſt purpoſes, begins to be taken off; and there ſeems to be a general diſpoſition in mankind to expoſe to their deſerved contempt thoſe quackiſh and unworthy arts, which have ſo often diſgraced literature and gentlemen of a liberal profeſſion. The true and only method of promoting ſcience, is to communicate it with clearneſs and preciſion, and in a language as much diveſted of technical terms as the nature of the ſubject will admit. What renders this particularly neceſſary is, that ſpeculative men, who have a genius for arrangement, and for planning uſeful inquiries, are very often, for reaſons before given, deficient in the executive part. The principles therefore of every ſcience ſhould be explained

by them with all poſſible perſpicuity, in order to render them more generally underſtood, and to make their application to the uſeful arts more eaſy. We have a ſtriking inſtance of the good effects of this, in Chymiſtry. This ſcience lay for many ages involved in the deepeſt obſcurity, concealed under a jargon intelligible to none but a few adepts, and, by a ſtrange aſſociation, frequently interwoven with the wildeſt religious enthuſiaſm. Boerhaave had the very high merit of reſcuing it from this obſcurity, and of explaining it in a language intelligible to every man of common ſenſe. Since that time Chymiſtry has made very quick advances. The French philoſophers, in particular, have deſerved well of mankind for their endeavours to render this ſcience, as well as every branch of natural philoſophy, ſubſervient to the uſeful and elegant

ant arts ; and have the additional merit of communicating their knowledge in the easiest and most agreeable manner. Mr Buffon has not only given us the best natural history, but, by the beauty of his composition and elegance of his stile, has rendered a subject, which, in most hands, has proved a very dry one, both pleasing and interesting.

The same liberal and manly spirit of inquiry which has discovered itself in other branches of knowledge, begins to find its way into medicine. Greater attention is now given to experiment and observation ; the insufficiency of any idle theory is more quickly detected, and the pedantry of the profession meets with its deserved ridicule. We cannot avoid mentioning here, for the honour of our own country, that pharmacy has been lately rescued from a state that was a scandal

to phyfic and common fenfe, and is now brought into a judicious, concife, and tolerably elegant fyftem. Even agriculture, the moft natural, the moft ufeful, and, amongft the moft honourable becaufe moft independent employments, which many years ago began to engage the attention of gentlemen, is now thought a fubject not unworthy the attention of philofophers. Mr du Hamel, who is the Dr Hales of France, has fet a noble example in this way, as he does in promoting every other branch of knowledge connected with public utility *.

Nothing

* His example has been followed by fome others in his own country and in Switzerland; but in Britain the genuine fpirit of experimental agriculture begins to diffufe itfelf with a zeal and rapidity that promifes foon to eftablifh this fcience on the moft folid foundation: The public lies under particular obligations, on this fubject, to the fpirit, ingenuity, and induftry of Mr Young.

Nothing contributes more to deprive the world of the fruits of great parts, than the paſſion for univerſal knowledge, ſo conſtantly annexed to thoſe who poſ-ſeſs them. By means of this the flame of genius is waſted in the endleſs labour of accumulating promiſcuous or uſeleſs facts, while it might have enlightened the moſt uſeful arts by concentrating its force upon a ſingle object. This diſſipa-tion of genius is moſt effectually checked by the honeſt love of fame, which prompts a man to appear in the world as an au-thor. This neceſſarily circumſcribes his excurſions, and determines the force of his genius to one point. This likewiſe reſcues him from that uſual abuſe and proſtitution of fine parts, the waſting of the greateſt part of his time in reading, which is really the effect of lazineſs. Here the mind, being in a great meaſure

paſſive,

paſſive, becomes ſurfeited with knowledge which it never digeſts: the memory is burdened with a load of nonſenſe and impertinence, while the powers of genius and invention languiſh for want of exerciſe.

Having obſerved of how little conſequence a great underſtanding generally is to the public, let us next conſider the effects it has in promoting the happineſs of the individual.—It is very evident, that thoſe who devote moſt of their time to the exerciſes of the underſtanding, are far from being the happieſt men. They enjoy indeed the pleaſure ariſing from the purſuit and diſcovery of truth. Perhaps too the vanity ariſing from a conſciouſneſs of ſuperior talents adds not a little to their happineſs. But there are many natural ſources of pleaſure from which they are in a great meaſure cut

off.

off.—All the public and ſocial affections, in common with every taſte natural to the human mind, if they are not properly exerciſed, grow languid. People who devote moſt of their time to the cultivation of their underſtandings, muſt of courſe live retired and abſtracted from the world. The ſocial affections (thoſe inexhauſtible ſources of happineſs) have therefore no play, and conſequently loſe their natural warmth and vigour. The private and ſelfiſh affections however are not proportionably reduced. Envy and jealouſy, the moſt ungenerous and moſt tormenting of all paſſions, prevail remarkably among this rank of men.

Hence perhaps there is leſs friendſhip among learned men, and eſpecially among authors, than in any other claſs of mankind. People of independent fortunes, who have no views of intereſt or ambi-

tion to gratify, naturally connect themſelves with ſuch as reſemble them in their taſtes and ſentiments, and as their purſuits do not interfere, their friendſhips may be ſincere and laſting. In thoſe profeſſions likewiſe where intereſt is conſidered as the immediate object, we often find men very cordially attached to one another, if the field be large enough to admit them all. But in the purſuits of fame and vanity, the caſe is very different. There is a jealouſy here that admits no rival, that makes people conſider whatever is given to others as taken away from themſelves. Hence the expreſſive ſilence, or the cold, extorted, meaſured approbation, given by rival authors to thoſe works of genius, which more impartial and diſintereſted judges receive with the warmeſt and moſt unreſerved applauſe. Such a generoſity, ſuch a greatneſs

nefs of foul, as render one fuperior to fo mean a jealoufy, are perhaps the rareft virtues to be found among mankind.

This ftate of war among men of genius and learning, not only prevents each of them in fome meafure from receiving that portion of fame to which he is juftly entitled, but is one of the principal caufes which exclude them from that influence and afcendency in the different profeffions and affairs of life, which their fuperior talents would otherwife readily procure them. Dull people, though they do not comprehend men of genius, are afraid of them, and naturally unite againft them, and the mutual jealoufies and diffentions among fuch men, give the dunces all the advantages they could wifh for. As the focial affections become languid, among thofe who devote their whole time to fpeculative fcience, becaufe they are not

exer-

exercifed, the public affections, the love of liberty and of a native country, become feeble for the fame reafon. There are perhaps no men who embrace fentiments of patriotifm and public liberty with fo much ardor, as thofe who are juft entering upon the world, and who have got a very liberal and claffical education. Youth indeed is the feafon when every generous and elevated fentiment moft eafily finds its way to the heart: At this happy period, that high fpirit of independence, that zeal for the public, which animated the Greek and Roman people, communicate themfelves to the foul with a peculiar warmth and enthufiafm. But this fervor too foon fubfides. If young men engage in public and active life, every manly and difinterefted purpofe is in danger of being loft, amidft the univerfal diffipation and corruption of manners, that furround

them;

them; a depravity of manners now become ſo enormous, that any pretenſion to public virtue is conſidered either as hypocriſy or folly. If, on the other hand, they devote themſelves to a ſpeculative, ſedentary life, abſtracted from ſociety, all the active virtues and active powers of the mind are ſtill more certainly extinguiſhed. A capacity for vigorous and ſteady exertions can only be preſerved by regular habits of activity. Love of a Country and of a public cannot ſubſiſt among men, who neither know nor love the individuals which compoſe that public. If a man has a family and friends, theſe give him an intereſt in the community, and attach him to it; becauſe their honour and happineſs, which he regards as much as his own, are eſſentially connected with its welfare. But if he is a ſingle, ſolitary Being, unconnected

with family or friends, there is little to attach him to one country in preference to another. If any encroachment is threatened againſt his perſonal liberty or property, he may think it more eligible to convey himſelf to another country, where he can live unmoleſted, than to ſtruggle, at the riſk of his life and fortune, againſt ſuch encroachments at home. Beſides, we generally find retired ſpeculative men, who value themſelves on their literary accompliſhments, very much out of humour with the world, if it has not rewarded them according to their own ſenſe of their importance, which it is ſeldom poſſible to do. Swollen with pride and envy, they range all mankind into two claſſes, the Knaves and the Fools. But how can we ſuppoſe one ſhould love a country or a community conſiſting of ſuch worthleſs members?

When abſtraction from company is carried far, it occaſions groſs ignorance of life and manners, and neceſſarily deprives a man of all thoſe little accompliſhments and graces which are eſſential to poliſhed and elegant ſociety, and which can only be acquired by mixing with the world. The want of theſe is often an inſuperable bar to the advancement of perſons of real merit, and proves therefore a frequent ſource of their diſguſt at the world, and conſequently at themſelves; for no man can be happy in himſelf who thinks ill of every one around him.

The general complaint of the neglect of merit does not ſeem to be well founded. It is unreaſonable for any man, who lives detached from ſociety, to complain that his merit is neglected, when he never has made it known. The natural reward of mere genius, is the eſteem of

thoſe

thofe who know and are judges of it. This reward is never with-held. There is a like unreafonable complaint, that little regard is commonly paid to good qualities of the heart. But it fhould be confidered, that the world cannot fee into the heart, and can therefore only judge of its goodnefs by vifible effects. There is a natural and proper expreffion of good affections, which ought always to accompany them, and in which true politenefs principally confifts. This expreffion may be counterfeited, and fo may obtain the reward due to genuine virtue; but where this natural index of a worthy character is wanting, or where there is even an outward expreffion of bad difpofitions, the world cannot be blamed for judging from fuch appearances.

Bad health is another common attendant on great parts, when thefe parts are

exerted, as is ufually the cafe, rather in a fpeculative than active life.—It is obferved that great quicknefs and vivacity of genius is commonly attended with a remarkable delicacy of conftitution, and a peculiar fenfibility of the nervous fyftem, and that thofe, who poffefs it, feldom arrive at old age. A fedentary, ftudious life greatly increafes this natural weaknefs of conftitution, and brings on that train of nervous complaints and low fpirits, which render life a burden to the poffeffor and ufelefs to the public. Nothing can fo effectually prevent this as activity, regular exercife, and frequent relaxations of the mind from thofe keen purfuits it is ufually engaged in.—Too affiduous an exertion of the mind on any particular fubject, not only ruins the health, but impairs the genius itfelf; whereas, if the mind be frequently un-

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bent by amufements, it always returns to its favourite object with double vigour.

But one of the principal misfortunes of a great underftanding, when exerted in a fpeculative rather than in an active fphere, is its tendency to lead the mind into too deep a fenfe of its own weaknefs and limited capacity. It looks into nature with too piercing an eye, difcovers every where difficulties imperceptible to a common underftanding, and finds its progrefs ftopt by obftacles that appear infurmountable. This naturally produces a gloomy and forlorn fcepticifm, which poifons the chearfulnefs of the temper, and, by the hopelefs profpect it gives of improvement, becomes the bane of fcience and activity. This fceptical fpirit, when carried into life, renders even men of the beft underftanding unfit for bufinefs. When they examine with the greateft

greateſt accuracy all the poſſible conſe-
quences of a ſtep they are ready to make
in life, they diſcover ſo many difficulties
and chances againſt them, whichſoever
way they turn, that they become ſlow
and fluctuating in their reſolutions, and
undetermined in their conduct. But, as
the buſineſs of life is in reality only a
conjectural art, in which there is no
guarding againſt all poſſible contingencies,
a man that would be uſeful to the public
or to himſelf, muſt be at once deciſive in
his reſolutions, and ſteady and fearleſs in
carrying them into execution.

We ſhall mention, in the laſt place, a-
mong the inconveniencies attendant on
ſuperior parts, that ſolitude in which they
place a perſon on whom they are beſtow-
ed, even in the midſt of ſociety.

To

Condemned in buſineſs or in arts to drudge,
Without a ſecond and without a judge *.

* Pope.

To the few, who are judges of his abilities, he is an object of jealousy and envy. The bulk of mankind consider him with that awe and distant regard that is incompatible with confidence and friendship. They will never unbosom themseves to one they are afraid of, nor lay open their weaknesses to one they think has none of his own. For this reason we commonly find that even men of genius have the greatest real affection and friendship for such as are very much their inferiors in point of understanding; good-natured, unobserving people, with whom they can indulge all their peculiarities and weaknesses without reserve. Men of great abilities therefore, who prefer the sweets of social life and private friendship to the vanity of being admired, ought carefully to conceal their superiority, and bring themselves down to the level

vel of thoſe they converſe with. Nor muſt this ſeem to be the effect of a deſigned condeſcenſion; for that is peculiarly mortifying to human pride.

Thus we have endeavoured to point out the effects which the faculty of reaſon, that boaſted characteriſtic and privilege of the human ſpecies, produces among thoſe who poſſeſs it in the moſt eminent degree: and, from the little influence it ſeems to have in promoting either public or private good, we are almoſt tempted to ſuſpect, that providence deprives us of thoſe fruits we naturally expect from it, in order to preſerve a certain balance and equality among mankind. Certain it is that virtue, genius, beauty, wealth, power, and every natural advantage one can be poſſeſſed of, are uſually mixed with ſome alloy, which diſappoints the fond hope of their raiſing the

poſſeſſor to any uncommon degree of eminence, and even in ſome meaſure brings him down to the common level of his ſpecies.

The next diſtinguiſhing principle of mankind, which was mentioned, is that which unites them into ſocieties, and attaches them to one another by ſympathy and affection. This principle is the ſource of the moſt heart-felt pleaſure which we ever enjoy.

It does not appear to have any natural connection with the underſtanding.—It was before obſerved, that perſons of the beſt underſtanding poſſeſſed it frequently in a very inferior degree to the reſt of mankind; but it was at the ſame time mentioned, that this did not proceed from leſs natural ſenſibility of heart, but from the ſocial principle languiſhing for want of proper exerciſe. By its being more

exerciſed

exercifed among the idle and diffipated, perfons of this character fometimes derive more pleafure from it; for not only their pleafures but their vices are often of the focial kind; and hence the focial principle is warm and vigorous among them. Even drinking, if not carried to excefs, is found favourable to this principle, efpecially in our northern climates, where the affections are naturally cold; as it produces an artificial warmth of temper, opens and enlarges the heart, and difpels the referve, natural perhaps to wife men, but inconfiftent with connections of fympathy and affection.

All thofe warm and elevated defcriptions of friendfhip, which fo powerfully charm the minds of young people, and reprefent it as the height of human felicity are really romantic among us. When we look round us into life, we meet with

nothing

nothing correſponding to them, except among an happy few in the ſequeſtered ſcenes of life, far removed from the purſuits of intereſt or ambition. Theſe ſentiments of friendſhip are original and genuine productions of warmer and happier climes, and adopted by us merely out of vanity.—The ſame obſervation may be applied to the more delicate and intereſting attachment between the ſexes. —Many of our ſex, who, becauſe poſſeſſed of ſome learning, aſſume the tone of ſuperior wiſdom, treat this attachment with great ridicule, as a weakneſs below the dignity of a man, and allow no kind of it but what we have in common with the whole animal Creation. They acknowledge, that the fair ſex are uſeful to us, and a very few will deign to conſider ſome of them as reaſonable and agreeable companions. But it may be que-

ſtioned,

ſtioned, whether this is not the language of an heart inſenſible to the moſt refined and exquiſite pleaſure human nature is capable of enjoying, or the language of diſappointed pride, rather than of wiſdom and nature. No man ever deſpiſed women who was a favourite with them, nor did any one ever ſpeak contemptuouſly of love, who was conſcious of loving and being beloved by a woman of merit. The attachment between the ſexes is a natural principle, which forms in an eminent degree the happineſs of human life in every part of the world. As the power of beauty in the eaſtern countries is extremely abſolute, no other accompliſhments are thought neceſſary to the women, but ſuch as are merely perſonal. They are cut off therefore, by the moſt cruel exertion of power, from all opportunities of improvement, and paſs their

lives

lives in a lonely ignominious confinement; excluded from all free intercourſe with human ſociety. The caſe is very different in this climate, where the power of beauty is very limited. Love with us is but a feeble paſſion, and generally yields eaſily to intereſt, ambition, or even to vanity, that paſſion of a little mind and a cold heart; as luxury therefore advances among us, love muſt be extinguiſhed among people of better rank altogether. To give it any force or permanency, we muſt connect it with ſentiment and eſteem. But it is not in our power to do this, if we treat women as we do children. If we impreſs their minds with a belief that they were only made to be domeſtic drudges, and the ſlaves of our pleaſures, we debaſe their minds, and deſtroy all generous emulation to excel; whereas, if we uſe them in a more libe-

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ral and generous manner ; a decent pride, a conſcious dignity, and a ſenſe of their own worth, will naturally induce them to exert themſelves to be, what they would wiſh to be thought, and are entitled to be, our companions and friends. This however, they can never accompliſh by leaving their own natural characters and aſſuming ours. As the two ſexes have very different parts to act in life, nature has marked their characters very differently ; in a way that beſt qualifies them to fulfil their reſpective duties in ſociety. Nature intended us to protect the women, to provide for them and their families. Our buſineſs is without doors. All the rougher and more laborious parts in the great ſcene of human affairs fall to our ſhare. In the courſe of theſe, we have occaſion for our greater bodily ſtrength, greater perſonal courage, and more enlarged powers of underſtanding. The

greateſt

greateſt glory of women lies in private and domeſtic life, as friends, wives, and mothers. It belongs to them, to regulate the whole oeconomy of a family. But a much more important charge is committed to them. The education of the youth of both ſexes principally devolves upon the women, not only in their infancy, but during that period, in which the conſtitution both of body and mind, the temper and diſpoſitions of the heart, are in a great meaſure formed. They are deſigned to ſoften our hearts and poliſh our manners. The form of power and authority, to direct the affairs of public ſocieties and private families, remains indeed with us. But they have a natural defence againſt the abuſe of this power, by that ſoft and inſinuating addreſs, which enables them to controul it, and often to transfer it to themſelves.

In

In this view, the part which women have to act in life, is important and respectable; and nature has given them all the necessary requisites to perform it. They possess, in a degree greatly beyond us, sensibility of heart, sweetness of temper, and gentleness of manners. They are more chearful and joyous. They have a quicker discernment of characters. They have a more lively fancy, and a greater delicacy of taste and sentiment; they are better judges of grace, elegance, and propriety, and therefore are our superiors in such works of taste as depend on these. If we do not consider women in this honourable point of view, we must forego in a great measure the pleasure arising from an intercourse between the sexes, and, together with this, the joys and endearments of domestic life. Besides, in point of sound policy, we

ſhould either improve the women or a-bridge their power; if we give them an important truſt, we ſhould qualify them for the proper diſcharge of it; if we give them liberty, we ſhould guard againſt their abuſe of it; and not truſt ſo entire-ly, as many of us do, to their inſenſibili-ty, or to their religion. A woman of a generous ſpirit, if ſhe is treated as a friend and an equal, will feel and grate-fully return the obligation; and a man of a noble mind will be infinitely more gratified with the attachment of a woman of merit, than with the obedience of a dependant and a ſlave.

If we inquire into the other pleaſures we enjoy as ſocial beings, we ſhall find many delicacies and refinements admired by ſome, which others, who never felt them, treat as viſionary and romantic. It is no difficult matter to account for

this. There is certainly an original difference in the conſtitutions both of Men and of Nations; but this is not ſo great as at firſt view it ſeems to be. Human Nature conſiſts of the ſame principles every where. In ſome people one principle is naturally ſtronger than it is in others, but exerciſe and proper culture will do much to ſupply the deficiency. The inhabitants of cold climates, having leſs natural warmth and ſenſibility of heart, enter but very faintly into thoſe refinements of the Social Principle, in which Men of a different temper delight. But if ſuch refinements are capable of affording to the Mind innocent and ſubſtantial pleaſure, it ſhould be the buſineſs of philoſophy to ſearch into the proper methods of cultivating and improving them. This ſtudy, which makes a conſiderable part of the philoſophy of

life

life and manners, has been ſurpriſingly neglected in Great Britain. Whence is it that the Engliſh, with great natural genius and acuteneſs, and ſtill greater goodneſs of heart, bleſſed with riches and liberty, are rather a melancholy and unhappy people? Why is their neighbouring nation, whom they deſpiſe for their ſhallowneſs and levity, yet awkwardly imitate in their moſt frivolous accompliſhments, happy in poverty and ſlavery? We are obliged to own the one poſſeſſes a native chearfulneſs and vivacity beyond any other people upon earth; but ſtill much is owing to their cultivating with the greateſt care all the arts which enliven and captivate the imagination, ſoften the heart, and give ſociety its higheſt poliſh. In Britain we generally find men of ſenſe and learning ſpeaking in a contemptuous manner of

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all writings addreffed to the imagination and the heart, even of fuch as exhibit genuine pictures of life and manners. But, befides the additional vigour which thefe give to the powers of the imagination, and the influence they have in rendering the affections warmer and more lively, they are frequently of the greateft fervice in communicating a knowledge of the world: a knowledge the moft important of all others to one who is to live in it, and who would wifh to act his part with propriety and dignity. Moral painting is undoubtedly the higheft and moft ufeful fpecies of painting. The execution may be, and generally is, very wretched, and fuch as has the worft effects, in mifleading the judgment and debauching the heart: but, if this kind of writing continues to come into the hands

of

of men of genius and worth, little room will be left for this complaint.

There is a remarkable difference between the English and French in their taste of social life. The gentlemen in France, in all periods of life, and even in the most advanced age, never associate with one another, but spend all the hours they can spare from business or study with the ladies; with the young, the gay, and the happy.—It is observed, that the people of this rank in France live longer, and, what is of much greater consequence, live more happily, and enjoy their faculties of body and mind more entire, in old age, than any people in Europe. In Great Britain, we have certain notions of propriety and decorum, which lead us to think the French manner of spending their hours of relaxation from business extremely ridicu-

lous.

lous. But if we examine with due attention into theſe ſentiments of propriety, we ſhall not perhaps find them to be built on a very ſolid foundation. We believe that it is proper for perſons of the ſame age, of the ſame ſex, of ſimilar diſpoſitions and purſuits, to aſſociate together. But here we ſeem to be deceived by words. If we conſult Nature and common ſenſe, we ſhall find that the true propriety and harmony of ſocial life conſiſts in the aſſociation of people of different diſpoſitions and characters judiciouſly blended together. Nature has made no individual, nor any claſs of people, independent of the reſt of their ſpecies, or ſufficient for their own happineſs. Each ſex, each character, each period of life, have their ſeveral advantages and diſadvantages; and that union is the happieſt and moſt proper where wants are

mutually

mutually ſupplied. The fair ſex ſhould naturally expect to gain, from our converſation, knowledge, wiſdom, and ſedateneſs; and they ſhould give us in exchange, humanity, politeneſs, chearfulneſs, taſte, and ſentiment. The levity, the raſhneſs, and the folly of early life, is tempered with the gravity, the caution, and the wiſdom of age; while the timidity, coldneſs of heart, and languor, incident to declining years, are ſupported and aſſiſted by the courage, the warmth, and the vivacity of youth.

Old people would find great advantage in aſſociating rather with the young than with thoſe of their own age.—Many cauſes contribute to deſtroy chearfulneſs in the decline of life, beſides the natural decay of youthful vivacity. The few ſurviving friends and companions are then dropping off apace; the gay proſpects, that

that ſwelled the imagination in more ear-
ly and more happy days, are then vaniſh-
ed, and, together with them, the open,
generous, unſuſpicious temper, and that
warm heart which dilated with benevo-
lence to all mankind. Theſe are ſuc-
ceeded by gloom, diſguſt, ſuſpicion, and
all the ſelfiſh paſſions which ſour the tem-
per and contract the heart. When old peo-
ple aſſociate only with one another, they
mutually increaſe theſe unhappy diſpoſi-
tions, by brooding over their diſappoint-
ments, the degeneracy of the times, and
ſuch like chearleſs and uncomfortable
ſubjects. The converſation of young peo-
ple diſpels this gloom, and communicates
a chearfulneſs, and ſomething elſe per-
haps which we do not fully underſtand,
of great conſequence to health and the
prolongation of life. There is an uni-
verſal principle o imitation among man-

kind, which diſpoſes them to catch in-ſtantaneouſly, and without being conſci-ous of it, the reſemblance of any action or character that preſents itſelf. This diſpoſition we can often check by the force of reaſon, or the aſſiſtance of op-poſite impreſſions: at other times it is inſurmountable. We have numberleſs examples of this in the ſimilitude of cha-racter and manners induced by people living much together, in the ſudden com-munications of terror, of melancholy, of joy, of the military ardor, when no cauſe can be aſſigned for theſe emotions. The communication of nervous diſorders, e-ſpecially of the convulſive kind, is often ſo aſtoniſhing, that it has been referred to faſcination or witchcraft. We ſhall not pretend to explain the nature of this mental infection; but it is a fact well eſtabliſhed, that ſuch a thing exiſts, and that

that there is ſuch a principle in Nature as an healthy ſympathy, as well as a morbid infection.

An old Man, who enters into this philoſophy, is far from envying, or proving a check on the innocent pleaſures of young people, and particularly of his own Children. On the contrary, he attends with delight to the gradual opening of the imagination and the dawn of reaſon; he enters, by a ſecret ſort of ſympathy, into their guiltleſs joys, that recal to his memory the tender images of his youth, which, by length of time, have contracted a ſoftneſs * inexpreſſibly agreeable; and thus the evening of life is protracted to an happy, honourable, and unenvied old age.

* Addiſon.

SECTION III.

THE advantages derived to Mankind from Taſte, by which we underſtand the improved uſe of the powers of the imagination, are confined to a very ſmall number. Taſte implies not only a quickneſs and juſtneſs of intellectual diſcernment, but alſo a delicacy of feeling in regard to pleaſure or pain, conſequent upon a diſcernment of its proper object. The ſervile condition of the bulk of mankind requires conſtant labour for their daily ſubſiſtence. This of neceſſity deprives them of the means of improving the powers either of imagination or of reaſon,

reafon, except fo far as their particular employment renders fuch an improvement neceffary. Yet there is great reafon to think the Men of this clafs the happieft, at leaft fuch of them as are juft above want. If they do not enjoy the pleafures arifing from the proper culture of the higher powers of their nature, they are free from the mifery confequent upon the abufe of thefe powers. They are like-wife in full poffeffion of one great fource of human happinefs, which is good health and good fpirits. Their minds never lan-guifh for want of exercife, or want of a purfuit, and therefore the *taedium vitae*, the infupportable liftleffnefs arifing from the want of fomething to wifh, or fome-thing to fear, is to them unknown.

But even among thofe to whom an eafy fortune gives fufficient leifure and opportunities for the improvement of

tafte,

taſte, we find little attention given to it, and, conſequently, little pleaſure derived from it. Nature gives only the ſeeds of taſte, culture muſt rear them, or they will never become a conſiderable ſource of pleaſure. The only powers of the mind that have been much cultivated in this iſland, are thoſe of the underſtanding. One unhappy conſequence of this has been to diſſolve the natural union between philoſophy and the fine arts; an union extremely neceſſary to their improvement. Hence Muſic, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, have been left in the hands of ignorant artiſts unaſſiſted by philoſophy, and even unacquainted with the works of great maſters.

The productions of purely natural genius are ſometimes great and ſurpriſing, but are generally attended with a wildneſs and luxuriancy inconſiſtent with juſt

taſte.

tafte. It is the bufinefs of philofophy to analyfe and afcertain the principles of every art where tafte is concerned; but this does not require a philofopher to be mafter of the executive part of thefe arts, or to be an inventor in them. His bufinefs is to direct the exertion of genius in fuch a manner that its productions may attain to the utmoft poffible perfection.

It is but lately that any attempt was made among us to analyfe the principles of beauty, or of mufical expreffion. And its having been made was entirely owing to the accident of two eminent artifts, the one in Painting *, the other in Mufic †, having a philofophical fpirit, and applying it to their feveral profeffions. Their being eminent mafters and performers was undoubtedly of fingular advantage to them in writing on thefe fubjects,

* Hogarth. † Avifon.

jects, but was by no means so essential as is generally believed. Mr Webb, who was no painter, has explained the principles of taste in painting with an accuracy and perspicuity which would have done honour to the greatest master. He shews, at the same time, that if we are wholly guided by the prejudice of names, we no longer trust our own senses; that we must acknowledge merit which we do not see, and undervalue that which we do; and that, distressed between authority and conviction, we become disgusted with the difficulty of an art, which is, perhaps, of all others the most easily understood, because it is the most direct and immediate address to the senses.

It is likewise but very lately that modern philosophy has condescended to bestow any attention on poetry or composition of any kind. The genuine spirit of

criticism

criticiſm is but juſt beginning to exert itſelf. The conſequence has been, that all theſe arts have been under the abſolute dominion of faſhion and caprice, and therefore have not given that high and laſting pleaſure to the mind, which they would have done, if they had been exercifed in a way agreeable to Nature and juſt taſte.

Thus, in painting, the ſubject is very ſeldom ſuch as has any grateful influence on the mind. The deſign and execution, as far as the mere painter is concerned, is often admirable, and the taſte of imitation is highly gratified; but the whole piece wants meaning and expreſſion, or what it has is trifling, and often extremely diſagreeable. It is but ſeldom we ſee Nature painted in her moſt amiable or graceful forms, in a way that may captivate the heart and make it better. On

the contrary, we often find her in ſitua-tions the moſt unpleaſing to the mind, in old age, deformity, diſeaſe, and idiotiſm. The Dutch, and many of the Flemiſh, commonly exhibit her in the loweſt and moſt debaſing attitudes; and in Italy, the Genius of painting is frequently proſti-tuted to the purpoſes of the moſt deſpi-cable ſuperſtition.—Thus the mind is diſ-appointed in the pleaſure which this ele-gant art is ſo admirably fitted to convey; the agreeable effect of the imitation being counteracted and deſtroyed by the unhap-py choice of the ſubject.

The influence of Muſic over the mind is perhaps greater than that of any of the fine arts. It is capable of raiſing and ſoothing every paſſion and emotion of the ſoul. Yet the real effects produced by it are inconſiderable. This is in a great meaſure owing to its being left in the

hands

hands of practical muſicians, and not under the direction of taſte and philoſophy: For, in order to give muſic any extenſive influence over the mind, the compoſer and performer muſt underſtand well the human heart, the various aſſociations of the paſſions, and the natural tranſitions from one to another, ſo as they may be able to command them, in conſequence of their ſkill in muſical expreſſion.

No ſcience ever flouriſhed while it was confined to a ſet of men who lived by it as a profeſſion. Such men have purſuits very different from the end and deſign of their art. The intereſted views of a trade are widely different from the enlarged and liberal proſpects of genius and ſcience. When the knowledge of an art is confined in this manner, every private practitioner muſt attend to the general principles of his craft, or ſtarve. If

he

he goes out of the common path, he is in danger of becoming an object of the jealousy and the abuse of his brethren; and among the rest of mankind he can neither find judges nor patrons. This is particularly the case of the delightful art we are speaking of, which has now become a science scarcely understood by any but a few composers and performers. They alone direct the public taste, or rather dictate to the world what they should admire and be moved with; and the vanity of most people makes them acquiesce in this assumed authority, lest otherwise they should be suspected to want taste and knowledge of the subject. In the mean time, men of sense and candour, not finding that pleasure in music which they were made to expect, are above dissembling, and give up all pretensions to the least knowledge of it.—They are

even modeſt enough to aſcribe their in-ſenſibility of the charms of muſic to their want of a good ear, or a natural taſte for it, and own that they find the ſcience ſo complicated, that they do not think it worth the trouble it muſt coſt them to acquire an artificial one. They reſolve to abandon an art in which they deſpair of ever becoming ſuch proficients, as either to derive pleaſure from it themſelves, or to be able to communicate it to others; at leaſt without making that the ſerious buſineſs of life, which ought only to be the amuſement of an idle or the ſolace of a melancholy hour. But, before they entirely forego one of the moſt innocent amuſements in life, not to ſpeak of it in an higher ſtile, it would not be improper to inquire a little more particularly into the ſubject. We ſhall therefore here beg leave to examine ſome of the firſt principles

ples of tafte in mufic with the utmoft freedom.

Mufic is the fcience of founds, fo far as they affect the mind. Nature independently of cuftom has connected certain founds or tones with certain feelings of the mind. Meafure and proportion in founds have likewife their foundation in Nature. Thus certain tones are naturally adapted to folemn, plaintive, and mournful fubjects, and the movement is flow; others are expreffive of the joyous and elevating, and the movement is quick. —Sounds likewife affect the mind, as they are loud or foft, rough or fmooth, diftinct from the confideration of their gravity or acutenefs. Thus in the Æolian harp the tones are pleafant and foothing, though there is no fucceffion of notes varying in acutenefs, but only in loudnefs. The effect of the common drum, in

in rousing and elevating the mind, is very strong; yet it has no variety of notes; though the effect indeed here depends much on the proportion and measure of the notes.

Melody consists in the agreeable succession of single sounds.—The melody that pleases in one country does not equally please in another, though there are certain general principles which universally regulate it, the scale of music being the same in all countries.—Harmony consists in the agreeable effect of sounds differing in acuteness produced together; the general principles of it are likewise fixed.

One end of music is merely to communicate pleasure, by giving a slight and transient gratification to the Ear; but the far nobler and more important is to command the passions and move the heart.

In

In the firſt view it is an innocent amuſe-ment, well fitted to give an agreeable re-laxation to the mind from the fatigue of ſtudy or buſineſs.—In the other it is one of the moſt uſeful arts in life.

Muſic has always been an art of more real importance among uncultivated than among civilized nations. Among the former we always find it intimately con-nected with poetry and dancing; and it appears, by the teſtimony of many an-cient authors *, that muſic, in the origi-nal ſenſe of the word, comprehended me-lody, dance, and ſong. By theſe almoſt all barbarous nations in every age, and in every climate, have expreſſed all ſtrong emotions of the mind. By † theſe attrac-tive and powerful arts they celebrate their public ſolemnities; by theſe they lament

* See Plato and Athenaeus. † Brown.

lament their private and public calamities, the death of friends or the lofs of warriors; by thefe united they exprefs their joy on their marriages, harvefts, huntings, victories; praife the great actions of their gods and heroes; excite each other to war and brave exploits, or to fuffer death and torments with unfhaken conftancy.

In the earlieft periods of the Greek ftates, their moft ancient maxims, exhortations, and laws, and even their hiftory, were written in verfe, their religious rites were accompanied by dance and fong, and their earlieft oracles were delivered in verfe, and fung by the prieft or priefftefs of the fuppofed god. While melody, therefore, conjoined with poetry, continued to be the eftablifhed vehicle of all the leading principles of religion, morals, and polity, they became the natural and

proper objects of public attention and regard, and bore a principal and essential part in the education of children *. Hence we see how music among the ancient Greeks was esteemed a necessary accomplishment, and why an ignorance in this art was regarded as a capital defect. Thus Themistocles came to be reproached with his ignorance in music †; and the many enormous crimes committed in the country of Cynethe were attributed by the neighbouring states to the neglect of music ‡; nor was the reproach thrown, in these days, upon such as were ignorant of the art, without a just foundation; because this ignorance implied a general deficiency in the three great articles

* Plutarchus de Musica.

† Cicero.

‡ Athenaeus, Polybius.

ticles of education; religion, morals, and polity.

Such was the enlarged nature of ancient music * when applied to education, and not a mere proficiency in the playing or singing art, as has been very generally supposed. Most authors have been led into this mistake by Aristotle, who speaks of music as an art distinct from poetry. But the reason of this was, that, in the time of Aristotle, a separation of melody and song had taken place; the first retained the name of music, and the second assumed that of poetry.

In the most ancient times, the character of a bard was of great dignity and importance, being usually united with that of legislator and chief magistrate. Even after the separation was first made, he continued for some time to be the second character

* See Plato de Legibus.

character in the community; as an affiftant to the magiftrate in governing the people *.

Such was the important and honourable ftate of Mufic, not only in ancient Greece, but in the early periods of all civilized nations in every part of the world.

In all the Celtic nations, and particularly in Great Britain, the bards were anciently of the higheft rank and eftimation. The character of general, poet, and mufician, were united in Fingal and Offian †. The progrefs of Edward the firft's

* Suidas on the Lefbian Song. Hefiod.

† Such was the fong of Fingal, in the day of his joy. His thoufand bards leaned forward from their feats to hear the voice of the King. It was like the mufic of the harp on the gale of the fpring. Lovely were thy thoughts, O Fingal! why had not

firſt's arms was ſo much retarded by the influence of the Welſh bards, whoſe ſongs breathed the high ſpirit of liberty and war, that he baſely ordered them to be ſlain: an event that has given riſe to one of the moſt elegant and ſublime odes that any language has produced.

In proportion as the ſimplicity and purity of ancient manners declined in Greece, theſe ſiſter arts, which formerly uſed to be the handmaids of virtue, came by degrees to be proſtituted to the purpoſes of vice or of mere amuſement. A corruption of manners debaſed theſe arts, which, when once corrupted, become principal inſtruments in completing the deſtruction of religion and virtue. Yet the

not Oſſian the ſtrength of thy ſoul? but thou ſtandeſt alone, my Father; and who can equal the king of Morven? Carthon.

the ſame cauſe which turned them aſide from their original uſe, contributed to their improvement as particular arts. When Muſic, Dancing, and Poetry, came to be conſidered as only ſubſervient to pleaſure, a higher degree of proficiency in them became neceſſary, and, conſequently, a more ſevere application to each. This compleated their ſeparation from one another, and occaſioned their falling entirely into the hands of ſuch men as devoted their whole time to their cultivation. Thus the complex character of legiſlator, poet, actor, and muſician, which formerly ſubſiſted in one perſon, came to be ſeparated into diſtinct profeſſions, and the unworthy purpoſes to which Muſic, in particular, came to be applied, made a proficiency * in it unſuitable

* Ariſtot. Politic. Plutar. de Muſica.

fuitable to any man of high rank and character.

Doctor Brown has treated this fubject at full length, in a very learned differtation, where he has fhewn with great ingenuity, and by the cleareft deduction from facts, how melody, dance, and fong, came, in the progrefs of civilized fociety, in different nations, to be cultivated feparately; and by what means, upon their total feparation, the power, the utility, and dignity of mufic, has funk into a general corruption and contempt.

The effect of eloquence depends in a great meafure on mufic. We take mufic here in the large and proper fenfe of the word; the art of varioufly affecting the mind by the power of founds. In this fenfe, all mankind are more or lefs judges of it, without regard to exactnefs of ear. Every man feels the difference between a

fweet

ſweet and melodious voice and a harſh diſſonant one.

Every agreeable ſpeaker, independently of the ſweetneſs of his tones, riſes and falls in his voice in ſtrict muſical intervals, and therefore his diſcourſe is as capable of being ſet in muſical characters as any ſong whatever. But however muſical a voice may be, if the intervals which it uſes are uniformly the ſame, it diſpleaſes, becauſe the ear is fatigued with the conſtant return of the ſame ſounds, however agreeable; and, if we attend to the ſubject, we are diſpleaſed on another account, at hearing the ſame muſical paſſages made uſe of to expreſs and inſpire ſentiments of the moſt different and oppoſite natures; whereas the one ſhould be always varying, and adapted to the other. This has juſtly brought great ridicule on what is called Singing a Diſcourſe, tho'

what really offends is either the badneſs of the ſong, or its being tireſome for want of variety.

If we examine into the effects produced by eloquence in all ages, we muſt aſcribe them in a great degree to the power of ſounds. We allow, at the ſame time, that compoſition, action, the expreſſion of the countenance, and ſome other circumſtances, contribute their ſhare, though a much ſmaller one.—The moſt pathetic compoſition may be pronounced in ſuch a manner as to prevent its having the leaſt influence. Orations which have commanded the minds of the greateſt men, and determined the fate of nations, have been read in the cloſet with languor and diſguſt.

As the proper application of the voice to the purpoſes of eloquence has been little attended to, it has been thought an

art unattainable by any rules, and depending entirely on natural tafte and genius. This is in fome meafure true; yet it is much more reducible to rules, and more capable of being taught, than is commonly imagined. Indeed, before philofophy afcertains and methodizes the ideas and principles on which an art depends, it is no wonder it be difficult of acquifition. The very language in which it is to be communicated is to be formed, and it is a confiderable time before this language comes to be underftood and adopted.— We have a remarkable inftance of this in the fubject of mufical expreffion, or performing a piece of mufic with tafte and propriety. People were fenfible, that the fame mufic performed by different artifts had very different effects. Yet they all played the fame notes, and played equally well in tune and in time. But ftill there

was

was an unknown somewhat, that gave it meaning and expression from one hand, while from another it was lifeless and insipid. People were satisfied with resolving this into performing with or without taste, which was thought the entire gift of Nature.—Geminiani, who was both a composer and performer of the highest class, first thought of reducing the art of playing on the violin with taste to rules; for which purpose he was obliged to make a great addition to the musical language and characters. The scheme was executed with great ingenuity, but has not met with the attention it deserved.

Music, like eloquence, must propose as its end a certain effect to be produced on the hearers. If it produces this effect, it is good music; if it fails, it is bad.—No music can be pronounced good or bad in itself; it can only be relatively so. Every

country

country has a melody peculiar to itſelf, expreſſive of the ſeveral paſſions. A compoſer muſt have a particular regard to this, if he propoſes to affect them.—Thus, in Scotland, there is a chearful muſic perfectly well fitted to inſpire that joyous mirth ſuited to dancing, and a plaintive muſic peculiarly expreſſive of that tenderneſs and pleaſing melancholy attendant on diſtreſs in love; both original in their kind, and different from every other in Europe *. It is of no conſequence whence this

* There is a ſimplicity, a delicacy, and pathetic expreſſion in the Scotch airs, which have always made them admired by people of genuine taſte in muſic. It is a general opinion, that many of them were compoſed by David Rizzio: but this appears very improbable. There is a peculiarity in the ſtile of the Scotch melody, which foreigners, even ſome of great knowledge in muſic, who reſided long in Scotland, have often attempted to imitate,

this muſic derives its origin, whether it be ſimple or complex, agreeable to the rules

imitate, but never with ſucceſs. It is not therefore probable that a ſtranger, in the decline of life, who reſided only three or four years in Scotland, ſhould enter ſo perfectly into the taſte of the national muſic, as to compoſe airs, which the niceſt judges cannot diſtinguiſh from thoſe which are certainly known to be of much greater antiquity than Rizzio's. The tradition on this ſubject is very vague; and there is no ſhadow of authority to aſcribe any one particular Scotch air to Rizzio. If he had compoſed any muſic while he was in Scotland, it is highly probable it would have partaken of the genius of that melody to which he had been accuſtomed; but the ſtile of the Scotch and Italian airs, in Rizzio's time, bear not the leaſt reſemblance to one another. Perhaps he might have moulded ſome of the Scotch airs into a more regular form; but, if he did, it was probably no real improvement; as the wildeſt of them, which bid defiance to all rules of modern compoſition,

rules of regular compoſition, or againſt them; whilſt it produces its intended effect, in a ſuperior degree to any other, it is the preferable muſic; and, while a perſon feels this effect, it is a reflection on his taſte and common ſenſe, if not on his candor, to deſpiſe it. The Scotch will, in all probability, ſoon loſe this native muſic, the ſource of ſo much pleaſure to their anceſtors, without acquiring any other in its place. Moſt muſical people in Scotland either neglect it altogether, or deſtroy that ſimplicity in its performance on which its effects ſo entirely depended, by a fantaſtical and abſurd addition of graces foreign to the genius of its melody. The contempt ſhewn for the Scotch muſic, in its primitive and pathetic ſimplicity, by thoſe who, from a ſuperior ſkill in

compoſition, are generally the moſt powerfully affecting.

in the ſcience, are thought entitled to lead the public taſte, has nearly brought it into univerſal diſcredit. Such is the tyranny of faſhion, and ſuch are the effects of that vanity, which determines us, in obedience to its dictates, to reſign any pleaſure, and to ſubmit to almoſt any pain.

They who apply much of their time to muſic, acquire new taſtes, beſides their national one, and, in the infinite variety which melody and harmony are capable of, diſcover new ſources of pleaſure formerly unknown to them. But the fineſt natural taſte never adopts a new one, till the ear has been long accuſtomed to it; and, after all, ſeldom enters into it with that warmth and feeling which thoſe do to whom it is national.

The general admiration pretended to be given to foreign muſic in Britain, is in general deſpicable affectation. In Italy

taly we ſometimes ſee the natives tranſported, at the opera, with all that variety of delight and paſſion which the compoſer intended to produce. The ſame opera in England, is ſeen with the moſt remarkable liſtleſſneſs and inattention. It can raiſe no paſſion in the audience, becauſe they do not underſtand the language in which it is written. To them it has as little meaning as a piece of inſtrumental muſic. The ear may be tranſiently pleaſed with the air of a ſong; but that is the moſt trifling effect of muſic. Among the very few who underſtand the language, and enter with pleaſure and taſte into the Italian muſic, the conduct of the dramatic part appears ſo ridiculous, that they can feel nothing of that tranſport of paſſion, the united effect of muſic and poetry, which may be gradually raiſed by the artful texture

and

and unfolding of a dramatic ſtory *.— Yet vanity prevails ſo much over the ſenſe of pleaſure itſelf, that the Italian opera is, in England, more frequented by people of rank, than any other public diverſion; and, to avoid the imputation of want of taſte, they condemn themſelves to ſome hours painful attendance on it every week, and pretend to talk of it in raptures, to which their hearts will ever remain ſtrangers.

Nothing can afford ſo convincing a proof of the abſolute incapacity of our modern muſic, to produce any laſting effect on the paſſions of mankind, as the obſervation of the effects produced by an opera on people of the greateſt knowledge and taſte in muſic, as well as on thoſe who are moſt ignorant of the ſcience. An affecting ſtory may be wrought

* Brown.

up, by the genius of a Metaſtaſio, in a manner that ſhall make it be read with the higheſt delight and emotion by every perſon of taſte and ſenſibility. We ſhould naturally ſuppoſe that the addition of muſic ought to communicate greater energy to the compoſition; but, inſtead of this, it totally annihilates it. Many people may return home from an opera with their ears highly gratified by ſome particular ſongs, or paſſages of ſongs; but never one returned affected with the cataſtrophe of the piece, or with the heart-felt emotion produced by Othello or King Lear.

Simplicity in melody is abſolutely neceſſary in all muſic intended to reach the heart, or even greatly to delight the ear. The effect here muſt be produced inſtantaneouſly, or not at all. The ſubject of the muſic muſt therefore be ſimple,

ple, and eaſily traced, and not a ſingle note or grace ſhould be admitted, but what has a tendency to the propoſed end. —If ſimplicity of melody be ſo neceſſary, where the intention is to move the paſſions, ſimplicity of harmony, which ought always to be ſubſervient to it, muſt be ſtill more neceſſary. Some of the moſt delicate touches of pathetic muſic will not allow any accompanyment.

The ancient muſic certainly produced much greater and more general effects than the modern, though we ſhould allow the accounts we have of it to be much exaggerated. Yet the ſcience of muſic was in a very low ſtate among the ancients. They were probably ſtrangers to harmony, at leaſt if they knew it they neglected it, all the voices and inſtruments being uniſons in concert: and the inſtruments they made uſe of

appear to have been much inferior, in reſpect of compaſs, expreſſion, and variety, to thoſe which we are poſſeſſed of. Yet theſe very deficiencies might render their muſic more expreſſive and powerful. The only view of compoſers was to touch the heart and the paſſions. Simple melody was ſufficient for this purpoſe, which might eaſily be comprehended and felt by the whole people. There were not two different ſpecies of muſic among them, as with us, one for the learned in the ſcience, and another for the vulgar.

Although we are ignorant of the particular conſtruction of the ancient muſic *, yet we know it muſt have been altogether ſimple; ſuch as ſtateſmen, warriors, and bards, occupied in other purſuits, could

* Brown.

could compoſe, and ſuch as people of all ranks, children, and men buſied in other concerns of life, could learn and practice. We are likewiſe ſtrangers to the particular ſtructure of their inſtruments, but we have the greateſt reaſon to believe they were extremely ſimple. The chords of the lyre were originally but four *. They were afterwards increaſed to ſeven, at which number they were fixed by the laws of Sparta †, and Timotheus was baniſhed for adding four additional ſtrings; but we are uncertain of the intervals by which the ſtrings of the lyre aſcended. Thoſe who regard only the advancement of muſic as a ſcience, treat the laws of Sparta upon this ſubject with great

* Pauſanias.

† The art of muſic had formerly been fixed and made unalterable in Crete and Egypt. Plato de legibus.

great ridicule; but they who confider it as an art intimately connected with the whole fabric of its religion, morals, and policy, will view them in a very different light, and fee the neceffity of preferving their mufic in the utmoft degree of fimplicity. In fact, when the lyre, in procefs of time, acquired forty ftrings, when mufic came to be a complicated art, and to be feparately cultivated by thofe who gave up their whole time to its improvement, its nobleft end and aim was loft. In Plutarch's * time it was funk into a mere amufement of the theatre. The fame caufes have produced the fame effects in modern times. In proportion as mufic has become more artificial, and more difficult in the execution, it has loft of its power and influence.

It

* Brown.

It was formerly obſerved, that the power of the ancient melody depended much on its union with poetry. There are other circumſtances which might contribute to this power. The different paſſions naturally expreſs themſelves by different ſounds; but this expreſſion ſeems capable of a conſiderable latitude, and may be much altered by early aſſociation and habit. When particular ſounds, and a certain ſtrain of melody, are impreſſed upon young minds, in an uniform connection with certain paſſions expreſſed in a ſong, this regular aſſociation raiſes theſe ſounds, in progreſs of time, into a kind of natural and expreſſive language of the paſſions. Melody *, therefore, is to be conſidered, in a certain degree, as a relative thing, founded in the particular aſſociations and habits

* Brown.

habits of different people, and, by cuſtom, like language, annexed to their ſentiments and paſſions. We generally hear with pleaſure the muſic we have been accuſtomed to in our youth, becauſe it awakes the memory of our guiltleſs and happy days. We are even ſometimes wonderfully affected with airs, that neither appear to ourſelves, nor to others, to have any peculiar expreſſion. The reaſon is, we have firſt heard theſe airs at a time when our minds were ſo deeply affected by ſome paſſion, as to give a tincture to every object that preſented itſelf at the ſame time; and though the paſſion and the cauſe of it are entirely forgot, yet an object that has once been connected with them, will often awake the emotion, tho' it cannot recal to remembrance the original cauſe of it.

Similar

Similar aſſociations * are formed, by the appropriations, in a great meaſure accidental, which different nations have given to particular muſical inſtruments, as bells, drums, trumpets, and organs; in conſequence of which they excite ideas and paſſions in ſome people, which they do not in others. No Engliſhman can annex warlike ideas to the ſound of a bagpipe.

We have endeavoured to explain ſome of the cauſes which gave ſuch energy to the ancient muſic, and which ſtill endear the melody of every country to its own inhabitants: Perhaps, for the reaſons mentioned above, if we were to recover the muſic which once had ſo much power in the early periods of the Greek ſtates, it might have no ſuch charms for modern ears, as ſome great admirers of antiquity

* Brown.

imagine. Inſtrumental muſic, indeed, unaccompanied with dance and ſong, was never held in eſteem till the later periods of antiquity, in which a general ſeparation of theſe arts took place. Plato * calls inſtrumental muſic an unmeaning thing, and an abuſe of melody.

There is another cauſe, which might probably contribute to make the ancient muſic more powerfully expreſſive. In the infant ſtate of ſocieties, men's † feelings and paſſions are ſtrong, becauſe they are never diſguiſed nor reſtrained; their imaginations are warm and luxuriant, from never having ſuffered any check. This diſpoſes them to that enthuſiaſm ſo favourable to poetry and muſic. The effuſions

* De Legibus.

† This ſubject is treated with great accuracy and judgment by Dr Blair, in his elegant diſſertation on the poems of Oſſian.

fusions of genius among ſuch a people may often poſſeſs the moſt pathetic ſublimity and ſimplicity of ſtile, though greatly deficient in point of elegance and regularity. And it is to be obſerved, that theſe laſt qualities are more peculiarly requiſite in ſome of the other fine arts, than they are in that ſpecies of muſic which is deſigned to affect the paſſions, where too much ornament is always hurtful, and, inſtead of promoting, is much more likely to defeat the deſired effect *. The tranquillity,

* Simplicity and conciſeneſs are never-failing characteriſtics of the ſtile of a ſublime writer. He reſts on the majeſty of his ſentiments, not on the pomp of his expreſſions. The main ſecret of being ſublime, is to ſay great things in few and plain words: for every ſuperfluous decoration degrades a ſublime idea. The mind riſes and ſwells, when a lofty deſcription or ſentiment is preſented to it in

tranquillity, too, of rural life, and the variety of images with which it fills the imagination, have as beneficial an influence upon genius as they have upon the difpofitions of the heart. The country, and particularly the paftoral countries, are the favourite receffes of poetry and mufic.

The introduction of harmony opened a new world in mufic. It promifed to give that variety which melody alone could never afford, and likewife to give to melody an

in its native form. But no fooner does the poet attempt to fpread out this fentiment or defcription, and to drefs it round and round with glittering ornaments, than the mind begins to fall from its high elevation; the tranfport is over; the beautiful may remain, but the fublime is gone. Dr Blair's Critical Differtation on the Poems of Offian.

The application of thefe ingenious obfervations to mufic is too obvious to need any illuftration.

an additional charm and energy. Unfortunately the firſt compoſers were ſo immerſed in the ſtudy of harmony, which ſoon appeared to be a ſcience of great extent and intricacy, that theſe principal ends of it were forgot. They valued themſelves on the laboured conſtruction of parts, which were multiplied in a ſurpriſing manner—In fact, this art of counterpoint and complicated harmony, invented by Guido in the eleventh century, was brought to its higheſt degree of perfection by Paleſtrini, who lived in the time of Leo X. But this ſpecies of muſic could only be underſtood by the few who had made it their particular ſtudy. To every one elſe it appeared a confuſed jargon of ſounds without deſign or meaning. To the very few who underſtood it, there appeared an evident deficiency in air or melody, eſpecially when the parts were

made

made to run in ſtrict fugues or canons, with which air is in a great meaſure incompatible.—Beſides the real deficiency of air in theſe compoſitions, it required the attention to be conſtantly exerted to trace the ſubject of the muſic, as it was alternately carried on through the ſeveral parts; an attention inconſiſtent with what delights the ear, much more with what touches the paſſions; where this is the deſign of the compoſer, the mind muſt be totally diſengaged, muſt ſee no contrivance, admire no execution, but be open and paſſive to the intended impreſſion.

We muſt however acknowledge, that there was often a gravity, a majeſty, and ſolemnity, in theſe old full compoſitions, admirably ſuited for the public ſervices of the church. Although, perhaps, leſs fitted to excite particular paſſions, yet they tended to ſooth the mind into a tranquillity

quillity that difengaged it from all earthly cares and pleafures, and, at the fame time, difpofed it to that peculiar elevation which raifes the foul to Heaven, efpecially when accompanied by the fweet and folemn notes of the organ.

The artifice of fugues in vocal mufic feems, in a peculiar manner, ill adapted to affect the paffions. If every one of four voices is expreffing a different fentiment and a different mufical paffage at the fame time, the hearer cannot poffibly attend to, and be affected by them all.— This is a ftile of compofition in which a perfon, without the leaft tafte or genius, may become a confiderable proficient, by the mere force of ftudy: but without a very great fhare of thefe, to give fpirit and meaning to the leading airs or fubjects, fuch compofitions will always be dry and unaffecting. Catches, indeed,

are

are a ſpecies of fugues, highly productive of mirth and jollity; but the pleaſure we receive from theſe ſeldom ariſes either from the melody itſelf, or from its being peculiarly expreſſive of the ſubject. It ariſes principally from the droll and unexpected aſſemblage of words from the different parts, and from the ſpirit and humour with which they are ſung.

Beſides the objections that lie againſt all complex muſic with reſpect to its compoſition, there are others ariſing from the great difficulty of its execution. It is not eaſy to preſerve a number of inſtruments, playing together, in tune. Stringed inſtruments are falling, while wind inſtruments naturally riſe in their tone during the performance. It is not even ſufficient that all the performers play in the moſt exact tune and time. They muſt all underſtand the ſtile and deſign of the compoſition,

pofition, and be able to make the refponfes in the fugue with proper fpirit. Every one muft know how to carry on the fubject with the proper expreffion, when it is his turn to lead; and, when he falls into an auxiliary part, he muft know how to conduct his accompanyment in fuch a manner, as to give an additional force to the leading fubject. But mufical tafte and judgment are moft remarkably difplayed in the proper accompanying of vocal mufic, efpecially with the thorough bafs. If this is not conducted with the ftricteft attention to heighten the intended expreffion of the fong, it deftroys it altogether, as frequently happens from the throwing in the full chords, when a fingle note fhould only have been ftruck, or when, perhaps, the accompanyment fhould have ceafed altogether.

These are difficulties few performers have an idea of, and fewer are able to conquer. Moſt of them think they ſufficiently acquit themſelves, if they play in tune and in time; and vanity often leads them to make their voice or inſtrument to be heard above the reſt, without paying the leaſt regard to the deſign of the compoſer.

It has been much the faſhion, for ſome years paſt, to regard air alone in muſical compoſitions; and the full and regular works of harmony have fallen into neglect, being conſidered as cold and ſpiritleſs. This change has been introduced by compoſers, who unfortunately happened to be great performers themſelves. Theſe people had no opportunities, in the old compoſitions, of ſhewing the dexterity of their execution; the wild and extravagant flights which they indulged, in

order

order to display this, being absolutely destructive of the harmony. They introduced, therefore, solo's of their own composition, or concerto's, which from the thinness and meagreness of the parts, cannot be considered in any other light than solo's.—It is not easy to characterise the stile of most of these pieces. In truth, they have no character or meaning at all. The authors of them are little concerned what subject they choose, their single view being to excite the surprise and admiration of their hearers. This they do by the most unnatural and wild excursions, that have not the remotest tendency to charm the ear or touch the heart. In many passages they are grating to the ear, when performed by the best hands, but, when executed by ordinary performers, they are perfectly intolerable. These compositions, therefore, want the merit

which

which full harmony poſſeſſes, and are deficient in that ſimplicity, ſpirit, and elegance, which alone can recommend melody.

The preſent mode is to admire a new noiſy ſtile of compoſition, lately cultivated in Germany, and to deſpiſe Corelli as wanting ſpirit and variety. The truth is, Corelli's ſtile and this will not bear a compariſon. Corelli's excellence conſiſts in the chaſtity of his compoſition, and in the richneſs and ſweetneſs of his harmonies. The other ſometimes pleaſes by its ſpirit and a wild luxuriancy, which makes an agreeable variety in a concert, but poſſeſſes too little of the elegance and pathetic expreſſion of muſic to remain long the public taſte. The great merit of that nobleman's compoſitions, who firſt introduced this ſpecies of muſic into this country, and his own ſpirited performance of them,

them, firſt ſeduced the public ear. They are certainly much ſuperior to any of the kind we have yet heard; though, by the delicacy of the airs in his ſlow movements, he diſplays a genius capable of ſhining in a much ſuperior ſtile of muſic.

Though muſic, conſidered in its uſeful application to delight the ear, and touch the paſſions of the bulk of mankind, requires the utmoſt ſimplicity, yet, conſidered as an art, capable of giving a laſting and varied pleaſure to the few, who, from a ſtronger natural taſte, devote part of their time and attention to its cultivation, it both admits, and requires variety, and even ſome degree of complication.— Not only the ear, but the muſical taſte, becomes more delicate by cultivation.

When the ear becomes acquainted with a variety of melodies, it begins, by degrees, to reliſh others, beſides thoſe which

are

are national. A national melody may have expreſſions for only a few affections. A cultivated and enlarged taſte eaſily adopts a greater variety of expreſſions for theſe and other affections, and learns, from the deepeſt receſſes of harmony, to expreſs ſome that have never been excited by any national muſic.

When one practiſes muſic much, the ſimplicity of melody tires the ear. When he begins to hear an air he was formerly acquainted with, he immediately recollects the whole, and this anticipation often prevents his enjoying it. He requires, therefore, the aſſiſtance of harmony, which, without hurting the melody, gives a variety to the muſic, and ſometimes renders the melody more expreſſive.—Practice enables one to trace the ſubject of a complex concerto, as it is carried through the ſeveral parts, which to a common ear is

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an unmeaning jumble of ſounds. Diſtinct from the pleaſure which the ear receives here from the muſic, there is another, which ariſes from the perception of the contrivance and ingenuity of the compoſer.—This enjoyment, it muſt be owned, is not of that heart-felt ſort which ſimple muſic alone can give, but of a more ſober and ſedate kind, which proves of longer duration: And it muſt be conſidered, that whatever touches the heart or the paſſions very ſenſibly, muſt be applied with a judicious and very ſparing hand.—The ſweeteſt and fulleſt chords muſt be ſeldom repeated, otherwiſe the certain effect is ſatiety and diſguſt.—They who are beſt acquainted with the human heart, need not be told that this obſervation is not confined to muſic.

On the whole, we may obſerve, that muſical genius conſiſts in the invention of

melody

melody ſuited to produce a deſired effect on the mind.—Muſical taſte conſiſts in conducting the melody with ſpirit and elegance, in ſuch a manner as to produce this ſingle effect in its full force.

Judgment in muſic is ſhewn in the contrivance of ſuch harmonious accompanyments to the melody as may give it an additional energy, and a variety, without deſtroying its ſimplicity; in the preparation and reſolution of diſcords; and in the artful tranſitions from one key to another.—Taſte in a performer conſiſts in a knowledge of the compoſer's deſign, and expreſſing it in a ſpirited and pathetic manner, without any view of ſhewing the dexterity of his own execution.

But though all theſe circumſtances of compoſition and performance ſhould concur in any piece of muſic, yet it muſt always fail in affecting the paſſions, unleſs

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its meaning and direction be ascertained, by adapting it to sentiment and pathetic composition.

It exerts its greatest powers when used as an assistant to poetry: hence the great superiority of vocal to instrumental music, the human voice being capable of more justness, and, at the same time, of a more delicate musical expression, than any instrument whatever; the perfection of an instrument depending on its nearest approach to it. Vocal music is much confined by the language it is performed in. The harmony and sweetness of the Greek and Italian languages give them great advantages over the English and French, which are harsh, unmusical, and full of consonants; and this, among other inconveniences, occasions perpetual sacrifices of the quantity to the modulation *.

* Rousseau.

This is one great caufe of the flightnefs and want of variety of the French mufic, which they in vain endeavour to cover and fupply by laboured and complex accompanyments.

As vocal mufic is the firft and moft natural mufic of every country, it is reafonable to expect it to bear fome analogy to the poetry of the country, to which it is always adapted.—The remarkable fuperiority of the Scotch fongs to the Englifh, may, in a great meafure, be accounted for from this principle. The Scotch fongs are fimple and tender, full of ftrokes of Nature and paffion. So is their mufic. Many of the Englifh fongs abound in quaint and childifh conceits. They all aim at wit, and fometimes attain it; but mufic has no expreffion for wit, and the mufic of their fongs is therefore flat and infipid, and fo little efteem-

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ed by the English themſelves, that it is in a perpetual fluctuation, and has never had any characteriſtic ſtile *.

On the other hand, England has produced many admirable compoſers of Church Muſic. Their great attachment to counterpoint hath indeed often led them into a wrong track; in other reſpects, they have ſhewn both genius and taſte.—Religion opens the ampleſt field for

* Doctor Brown very ingeniouſly obſerves, that moſt countries peopled by colonies, which, after a certain period of civilization, have iſſued from their native ſoil, poſſeſs no characteriſtic muſic of their own; that the Iriſh, Welſh, and Scotch, are ſtrictly natives, and, accordingly, have a muſic of their own; that the Engliſh, on the contrary, are a foreign mixture of late eſtabliſhed colonies, and, as a conſequence of this, have no native muſic; and that the original muſic of England muſt be ſought for in Wales.

for muſical, as well as poetical genius; it affords almoſt all the variety of ſubjects, which muſic can expreſs; the ſublime, the joyous, the chearful, the ſerene, the devout, the plaintive, the ſorrowful. It likewiſe warms the heart with that enthuſiaſm ſo peculiarly neceſſary in all works of genius. Accordingly our fineſt compoſitions in muſic, are in the Church ſtile. Handel, far advanced in life, when his conſtitution and ſpirits ſeemed nearly exhauſted, was ſo rouſed by this ſubject, that he exhibited proofs of extent and ſublimity of genius in his Meſſiah, ſuperior to any he had ſhewn in his moſt vigorous period of life. We have another inſtance of the ſame kind in Marcello, a noble Venetian, who ſet the firſt fifty pſalms to muſic. In this work he has united the ſimplicity and pathos

pathos of the ancient mufic with the grace and variety of the modern. In compliance with the tafte of the times, he was fometimes forced to leave that fimplicity of ftile which he loved and admired, but by doing fo he has enriched the art with a variety of the moft expreffive and unufual harmonies.

The great object in vocal mufic is to make the mufic expreffive of the fentiment. How little this is ufually regarded appears by the practice of finging all the parts of a fong to the fame mufic, though the fentiments and paffions to be expreffed be ever fo different. If the mufic has any character at all, this is a manifeft violation of tafte and common fenfe, as it is obvious every different fentiment and paffion fhould be expreffed in a ftile peculiarly fuited to itfelf.

But

But the moſt common blunder in com-poſers, who aim at expreſſion, is their miſtaking imitation for it.—

Muſic * conſidered as an imitative art, can imitate only ſounds or motion, and this laſt but very imperfectly. A com-poſer ſhould make his muſic expreſſive of the ſentiment, and never have a re-ference to any particular word uſed in conveying that ſentiment, which is a common practice, and really a miſerable ſpecies of punning. Beſides, where imi-tation is intended, it ſhould generally be laid upon the inſtrumental accompany-ments, which by their greater compaſs and variety are fitter to perform the imi-tation, while the voice is left at liberty to expreſs the ſentiment. When the imitation is laid upon the voice, it ob-liges it to a ſtrained and unnatural exer-

tion,

* See Harris and Aviſon.

tion, and prevents the diſtinct articulation of the words, which it is neceſſary to preſerve, in order to convey the meaning of the ſong.—Handel ſometimes obſerved this very carefully, at other times, as his genius or attention was very unequal, he entirely neglected it. In that beautiful ſong of the Il Penſeroſo,

> " Oft on a plat of riſing ground,
> " I hear the far off curfew ſound,"

he has thrown the imitation of the bell, with great art and ſucceſs, into the ſymphony, and reſerves the ſong entire for the expreſſion of that pleaſing tranquil melancholy, which the words ſo emphatically convey. He has ſhewn the ſame addreſs in the celebrated ſong of Acis and Galatea,

> " Huſh, ye little warbling quire,"

where

where he has laid the imitation of the warbling of the birds upon the ſymphony and accompanyments, and preſerves in the ſong that ſimplicity and languiſhing tenderneſs, which the ſubject of it particularly required.—On the other hand, in the ſong in Semele,

"The morning lark to mine accords his note,
"And tunes to my diſtreſs his warbling throat,"

he runs a long and laboured diviſion on the word Warbling; and after all, the voice gives but a very faint imitation of the warbling of the lark, though the violins in the ſymphony could have expreſſed it with great juſtneſs and delicacy.

In the union of poetry and muſic, the muſic ſhould be ſubſervient to the poetry: the very reverſe is the common practice; the poetry is ever made ſubordi-

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nate to the mufic. Handel made thofe who compofed the words of his Oratorios, alter and tranfpofe them, as he thought beft fuited his mufic; and as no man of genius could fubmit to this, we generally find the poetry the moft wretched imaginable.

We have frequently a more fhocking inftance of the little regard the compofer has to the poetry, and to the effect which fhould be left upon the mind, in the unmeaning repetition of the firft part of the mufic after the fecond. It frequently happens, that a fucceffion of very oppofite paffions takes place in the courfe of a fong; for inftance, from anger to reconciliation and tendernefs, with which the fenfe requires it fhould conclude; yet the compofer fometimes conftructs his mufic in fuch a way, as requires a return from the fecond to the firft part

with which the ſong muſt end. This is not only a glaring abſurdity in point of ſenſe, but diſtracts the mind by a moſt unnatural ſucceſſion of paſſions.—

We have another inſtance of the little regard paid to the ultimate end of muſic, the affecting of the heart and paſſions, in the univerſally allowed practice of making a long flouriſh or cadence at the cloſe of a ſong, and ſometimes at other periods of it. In this the performer is left at liberty to ſhew the utmoſt compaſs of his throat and execution; and all that is required, is, that he ſhould conclude in the proper key; the performer accordingly takes this opportunity of ſhewing the audience the extent of his abilities, by the moſt fantaſtical and unmeaning extravagance of execution. The diſguſt which this gives to ſome, and the ſurpriſe which it excites in all the audience,

dience, breaks the tide of paſſion in the ſoul, and deſtroys all the effects which the compoſer has been ſtraining to produce.

It may be obſerved that the loud applauſes ſo frequently given to pieces of muſic, ſeldom imply any compliment either to the compoſition itſelf, or to the performer's juſt execution of it. They only expreſs our admiration of the performer's fine ſhake, or ſwelling of a note, his power of protracting a note twice as long as another could do without loſing his breath entirely, or of the variety of his cadence running out into the moſt extraneous modulation, and then artfully conducted to a proper concluſion in the key. But all theſe feats of art, the better they are executed, and the greater ſurpriſe they excite, the more effectually do they deſtroy the impreſſion of the

the preceding mufic, if it was ever capable of producing any. They are in general as little effential to good mufic, as the tricks of a Harlequin are to that gracefulnefs, elegance, and dignity of movement, which conftitute the perfection of dancing. The genuine applaufe beftowed on mufic is to be fought for in the profound filence, in the emphatic looks, and in the tears of the audience. —

Our Oratorios labour under two difadvantages; their being deprived of action and fcenery; and their having no unity or defign as a whole. They are little elfe than a collection of fongs pretty much independent of one another. Now the effect of a dramatic performance does not depend on the effect of particular paffages, confidered by themfelves, but on that artful conftruction, by which one part gives ftrength to another, and

gradually

gradually works the mind up to thoſe ſentiments and paſſions, which it was the deſign of the author to produce.

The effects of muſic depend upon many other circumſtances beſides its connection with poetry. The effect, for inſtance, of cathedral muſic depends greatly on its being properly adapted to the particular ſervice of the day, and diſcourſe of the preacher ; and ſuch a direction of it requires great taſte and judgment. Yet this is never attended to : the whole conduct of it is left to the caprice of the organiſt, who makes it airy or grave, chearful or plaintive, as it ſuits his own fancy, and often degrades the ſolemnity and gravity ſuitable to divine worſhip, by the lighteſt and moſt trivial airs.

We ſee the ſame want of public taſte in the muſic performed between the acts of

of a tragedy*, where the tone of paſſion is often broke in upon, and deſtroyed by airy and impertinent muſic.

The effect of muſic may ſometimes be loſt by an unhappy aſſociation of ideas with the perſon and character of a performer. When we hear at the Oratorio an Italian eunuch ſqueaking forth the vengeance of divine wrath, or a gay lively ſtrumpet pouring forth the complaint of a deeply penitent and contrite heart, we muſt be hurt by ſuch an aſſociation.

Theſe obſervations relate principally to the public taſte of muſic in Britain, if the public here can be ſaid to have any taſte in this ſubject.

I ſhall readily allow that muſic, conſidered merely as the art of affecting the ear agreeably by the power of ſounds, is at preſent in a higher ſtate than perhaps it

* Elements of criticiſm

it has ever been in any period; that the principles of harmony were never ſo well aſcertained; and that there never was at any time ſo great a number of performers, in every branch of the art, diſtinguiſhed for the ſpirit, brilliancy, and elegance of their execution. But, notwithſtanding all theſe advantages, it appears to be a fact, of which all men of common ſenſe and obſervation, whether learned in the ſcience or not, are equally judges; that muſic, conſidered as the art of deeply affecting the heart, and commanding the paſſions by the power of ſounds, is in a very low ſtate, and that the principles on which theſe great and important effects depend, are either unknown or neglected. Of late years ſeveral compoſers of the higheſt rank ſeem to have been very ſenſible of this capital defect of our modern muſic. In Italy particularly,

larly, that native country of all the elegant arts, a chaſtity, a ſimplicity, and pathos of ſtyle has been cultivated by ſome eminent maſters, and ſucceſsfully imitated by others in different parts of Europe. But the evil I complain of ſeems too complicated and too deeply rooted to admit now of a cure. The rage for variety is ſo exceſſive, and the taſte, of courſe, ſo indiſcriminating, that compoſers and performers, who depend on the public for their ſubſiſtence, muſt ſatisfy it with any food they can procure, if it has only novelty to recommend it.

The wild effuſions of unbridled fancy are often honoured with the titles of invention, ſpirit, and genius; and taſte ſeems, in general, to mean nothing but an attachment to what is new, and a contempt for whatever is old in muſic. Hence it ſeems to be now very generally

admitted

admitted, that there are no fixed principles of taſte in muſic, as in the other fine arts, and that it has no foundation but in caprice and faſhion. But I conceive that the principles of juſt taſte, in this art, are as permanently founded in truth and human nature, as thoſe of any art or ſcience whatever, and that theſe principles may be as certainly aſcertained by collecting and arranging the genuine feelings of Nature. The principles which deſerve the chief attention, as being the firſt in point of dignity and utility, are thoſe which relate to the power of muſic in commanding the paſſions; next to theſe, the principles of the art exerciſed merely with the view of amuſement, by a tranſient gratification of the ear, ſhould be examined and aſcertained; and in the laſt and loweſt place, the ſimple powers of execution may be conſidered as employed with the ſole view

of exciting furprife and admiration of the performer's abilities.

I could not purfue this fubject farther without entering deeply into the intricacies of the technical part of mufic, which I have carefully endeavoured to avoid. My defign was only to fhew, that tafte in mufic has its foundation in Nature and common fenfe; that its nobleft powers have been neglected; and that men of fenfe and genius fhould not imagine they want an ear, or a mufical tafte, becaufe they do not relifh much of the modern mufic; as, in many cafes, this is rather a proof of the goodnefs of both.

After all, it cannot be expected, that either mufic, or any of the fine arts, will ever be cultivated in fuch a manner as to make them ufeful and fubfervient to life, till the natural union be reftored which fo happily fubfifted between them and philofophy

philoſophy in ancient days; when philoſophy not only gave to the world the moſt accompliſhed generals and ſtateſmen, but preſided with the greateſt luſtre and dignity over rhetoric, poetry, muſic, and all the elegant arts that poliſh and adorn mankind.

SECTION IV.

IT was formerly obſerved, that the pleaſures ariſing from works of taſte and imagination were confined to a ſmall part of mankind, and that although the foundations of a good taſte are laid in human nature, yet, without culture, it never becomes a conſiderable ſource of pleaſure. As we formerly made a few obſervations on the real effects produced by a cultivated taſte in ſome of the fine arts, we ſhall proceed to conſider its influence on the pleaſure ariſing from ſuch works of genius as are in a particular manner addreſſed to the imagination and the heart.

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This pleaſure, in the earlier part of life, is often extremely high. Youth, indeed, has peculiar advantages in this reſpect. The imagination is then lively and vigorous, the heart warm and feeling, equally open to the joyous impreſſions of wit and humour, the force of the ſublime, and every ſofter and more delicate ſentiment of humanity. It is matter of real concern to obſerve the gradual decay of this innocent and rich ſource of enjoyment, together with many others equally pure and Natural.—Nature, it is true, has allotted different pleaſures to different periods of life; but there is no reaſon to think, that Nature has totally excluded any period from thoſe pleaſures of which we are now treating.

We have already lamented that many of the uſeful ſciences, as well as fine arts, were left entirely in the hands of men

unaſſiſted with learning and philoſophy: but there is ſome reaſon to ſuſpect, that theſe aſſiſtances have commonly been applied to works of taſte and imagination, in ſuch a manner as has rather weakened than added to their force and influence.— This ſubject is intereſting, and deſerves a particular diſcuſſion.

The imagination, like every thing in Nature, is ſubjected to general and fixed laws, which can be diſcovered only by experience. But it is no eaſy matter preciſely to aſcertain theſe laws. The ſubject is ſo fleeting, ſo various in different countries, in different conſtitutions of men, and even in the ſame perſon in different periods and ſituations in life, that it requires the talents of a perſon of the moſt enlarged knowledge of mankind to reduce its laws to any kind of ſyſtem; and this perſon likewiſe muſt be

poſſeſſed of the moſt delicate ſenſibility of heart and imagination, otherwiſe he cannot underſtand what he is employed about.—Such a ſyſtem of laws, particularly relating to dramatic and epic poetry, was formed by ſome great men of antiquity, and has been ſince very univerſally adopted. Light has thereby been thrown on ſome of the great principles of criticiſm; and rules have been eſtabliſhed, founded on the experience of ſuch beauties as were diſcovered to pleaſe moſt univerſally. But without detracting from the merit of the ancient critics, it muſt be obſerved, that nothing tends more to check the improvement of any art or ſcience, than the reducing all its principles too haſtily into a regular ſyſtem. The bulk of mankind are incapable of thinking or judging for themſelves on any ſubject. There are a few leading

ſpirits

ſpirits whom the reſt muſt follow. This makes ſyſtems ſo univerſally acceptable. If they cannot teach people to think and to feel, they teach them what to ſay, which anſwers all the purpoſes of the moſt univerſally ruling paſſion among mankind, Vanity.

Theſe obſervations are particularly applicable to ſyſtems and rules of criticiſm. When theſe are conſidered as aſſiſtances merely to the operations of taſte; as giving proper openings for the diſcernment of beauty, by collecting and arranging the feelings of Nature, they promote the improvement of the fine arts. But when they are conſidered as fixed and eſtabliſhed ſtandards, from which there lies no further appeal; when they would impoſe upon us the weight of authority, and fix a preciſe and narrow line, beyond which works of imagination muſt not ſtray; in

this

this cafe they do infinitely more harm than good. Tafte, of all the powers of the mind, is leaft fuited to and moft impatient of fuch ftrict confinement. Some general principles may be pointed out, but to dream of applying always the fquare and the compafs to fuch thin and delicate feelings, as thofe of the imagination, is a vain attempt. Add to this, that all criticifm muft, in a certain degree, be temporary and local.

Some tempers, and even fome nations, are moft pleafed with nature in her faireft and moft regular forms, while others admire her in the great, the wonderful, and the wild. Thus elegance, regularity, and fentiment are chiefly attended to in France, and French criticifm principally regards thefe; but its rules can with no propriety be applied in England, where the natural genius or tafte of the

people is very different. The grand, the ſublime, the ſurpriſing, and whatever very forcibly ſtrikes the imagination, ought there to be principally regarded. Where theſe are wanting, the utmoſt elegance and propriety will appear cold and inſipid: where theſe are found, elegance and propriety can be in a good meaſure diſpenſed with.

Whenever what is called a very correct taſte generally prevails, the powers of genius and invention gradually languiſh; and the conſtant attention to prevent giving offence to a few, renders it impoſſible to give much pleaſure to any.

Refinement and delicacy of taſte is an acquiſition very dangerous and deceitful. It flatters our pride by giving us a conſcious ſuperiority over the reſt of mankind, and by ſpecious promiſes of enjoyment unknown to vulgar minds, often

cheats us out of thoſe pleaſures which are equally attainable by the whole ſpecies, and which nature intended every one ſhould enjoy. People poſſeſſed of extreme delicacy are haunted, as it were, with an evil genius, by certain ideas of the coarſe, the low, the vulgar, the irregular, which ſtrike them in all the natural pleaſures of life, and render them incapable of enjoying them.

There is ſcarcely an external or internal ſenſe but may be brought, by conſtant indulgence and attention, to ſuch a degree of acuteneſs as to be diſguſted at every object that is preſented to it.—This extreme ſenſibility and refinement, though at firſt uſually produced by vanity and affectation, yet by a conſtant attention to all the little circumſtances that feed them, ſoon become real and genuine. But nature has ſet bounds to all our pleaſures,

fures. We may enjoy them fafely within thefe bounds, but if we refine too much upon them, the certain confequence is difappointment and chagrin.

When fuch a falfe delicacy, or, what has much the fame effect, when the affectation of it becomes generally prevalent, it checks, in works of tafte, all vigorous efforts of genius and imagination, enervates the force of language, and produces that mediocrity, that coldnefs and infipidity of compofition, which does not indeed greatly difguft, but never can give high pleafure. This is one bad effect of criticifm falling into wrong hands; efpecially when men poffeffed of mere learning and abftract philofophy condefcend to beftow their attention on works of tafte and imagination. As fuch men are fometimes deficient in thofe powers of fancy, and that fenfibility of heart,

which

which are essential to the relishing such subjects, they are too often apt to despise and condemn those things of which they have no right to judge, as they are neither able to perceive, nor to feel them.

A clear and acute understanding is far from being the only quality necessary to form a perfect critic. The heart is often more concerned here than the head. In general, it seems the more proper business of true philosophical criticism to observe and watch the excursions of fancy at a distance, than to be continually checking all its little irregularities. Too much restraint and pruning is of more fatal consequence here than a little wildness and luxuriancy.

The beauties * of every work of taste are of different degrees, and so are its blemishes.

* Musaem, vol. I.

blemiſhes. The greateſt blemiſh is the want of ſuch beauties as are characteriſtic, and eſſential to its kind. Thus in dramatic poetry one part may be conſtructed according to the laws of unity and truth, whilſt another directly contradicts them. The French, by their great attention to the general oeconomy and unity of their fable, and the conſtruction of their ſcenes, have univerſally obtained the character of ſuperior correctneſs to the Engliſh. Their reputation in this reſpect is well founded. In their dramatic writings we meet with much leſs that offends: and it muſt alſo be acknowledged, that, beſides mere regularity of conſtruction, they poſſeſs in a high degree the merit of beautiful poetry and tender ſentiments. But when we examine them in another light, we find them excelled by the Engliſh. There is a want of

force,

force, often a degree of languor, even in their beſt pieces. The ſpeeches are generally too long and declamatory, the ſentiments too fine-ſpun, and the characters enervated by a certain French appearance with which they are apt to be marked. Whereas, in the Engliſh theatre, if there be leſs elegance and regularity, there is more fire, more force, and more ſtrength. The paſſions ſpeak more their own native language; and the characters are drawn with a coarſer indeed, but however with a bolder hand.—Shakeſpeare, by his lively creative imagination, his ſtrokes of nature and paſſion, and by preſerving the conſiſtency of his characters, amply compenſates for his tranſgreſſions againſt the rules of time and place, with which the imagination can eaſily diſpenſe. His frequently breaking the tide of the paſſions, by the introduction

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of low and abſurd comedy, is a more capital tranſgreſſion againſt nature and the fundamental laws of the drama.

Probability is one of the boundaries, within which it has pleaſed criticiſm to confine the imagination. This appears plauſible, but upon inquiry will perhaps be found too ſevere a reſtraint. It is obſerved by the ingenious and elegant author of the Adventurer, that events may appear to our reaſon not only improbable, but abſurd and impoſſible, whilſt yet the imagination may adopt them with facility and delight. The time was, when an univerſal belief prevailed of inviſible agents intereſting themſelves in the affairs of this world. Many events were ſuppoſed to happen out of the ordinary courſe of things by the ſupernatural agency of theſe ſpirits, who were believed to be of different ranks, and of

different dispositions towards mankind. Such a belief was well adapted to make a deep impression on some of the most powerful principles of our nature, to gratify the natural passion for the marvellous, to dilate the imagination, and to give boundless scope to its excursions.

In those days the old romance was in its highest glory. And though a belief of the interposition of these invisible powers in the ordinary affairs of mankind has now ceased, yet it still keeps its hold of the imagination, which has a natural propensity to embrace this opinion. Hence we find that oriental tales continue to be universally read and admired, by those who have not the least belief in the Genii, who are the most important agents in the story. All that we require in these works of imagination is an unity

and consistency of character *. The imagination willingly allows itself to be deceived into a belief of the existence of beings, which reason sees to be ridiculous; but then every event must take place in such a regular manner as may be naturally expected from the interposition of such superior intelligence and power. It is not a single violation of truth and probability that offends, but such a violation as perpetually recurs. We have a strong evidence of the facility with which the imagination is deceived, in the effects produced by a well-acted tragedy. The imagination there soon becomes too much heated, and the passions too much interested, to permit reason to reflect that we are agitated with the feigned distress of people entirely at their ease. We suffer ourselves to be transported

* Adventurer.

tranſported from place to place, and believe we are hearing the private ſolioquy of a perſon in his chamber, while he is talking on a ſtage ſo as to be heard by thouſands.

The deception in our modern novels is more perfect than in the old romance; but as they profeſs to paint nature and characters as they really are, it is evident that the powers of fancy cannot have the ſame play, nor can the ſucceſſion of incidents be ſo quick nor ſo ſurprizing. It requires therefore a genius of the firſt claſs to give them that ſpirit and variety ſo neceſſary to captivate the imagination, and to preſerve them from ſinking into dry narrative and tireſome declamation.

Notwithſtanding the ridiculous extravagance of the old romance in many particulars, it ſeems calculated to produce more favourable effects on the morals of

of mankind, than our modern novels.— If the former did not reprefent men as they really are, it reprefented them as they ought to be; its heroes were patterns of courage, generofity, truth, humanity, and the moft exalted virtues. Its heroines were diftinguifhed for modefty, delicacy, and the utmoft dignity of manners.—The latter reprefent mankind too much what they are, paint fuch fcenes of pleafure and vice as ought never to fee the light, and thus in a manner hackney youth in the ways of wickednefs, before they are well entered into the world; expofe the fair fex in the moft wanton and fhamelefs manner to the eyes of the world, by ftripping them of that modeft referve, which is the foundation of grace and dignity, the veil with which nature intended to protect them from too familiar an eye, in order to be

at once the greateſt incitement to love and the greateſt ſecurity to virtue.—In ſhort, the one may miſlead the imagination; the other tends to inflame the paſſions and to corrupt the heart.

The pleaſure which we receive from hiſtory ariſes in a great meaſure from the ſame ſource with that which we receive from romance. It is not the bare recital of facts that gives us pleaſure. They muſt be facts that give ſome agitation to the mind by their being important, intereſting, or ſurprizing. But events of this kind do not very frequently occur in hiſtory, nor does it deſcend to paint thoſe minute features of particular perſons which are more likely to engage our affections and intereſt our paſſions than the fate of nations. It is not therefore ſurpriſing that we find it ſo difficult to keep attention awake in read-

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ing hiſtory, and that fewer have ſucceeded in this kind of compoſition than in any other. To render hiſtory pleaſing and intereſting, it is not enough that it be ſtrictly impartial, that it be written with the utmoſt elegance of language, and abound in the moſt judicious and uncommon obſervations. We are never agreeably intereſted in a hiſtory, till we contract an attachment to ſome public and important cauſe, or ſome diſtinguiſhed characters which it repreſents to us. The fate of theſe engages the attention, and keeps the mind in an anxious yet pleaſing ſuſpenſe. Nor do we require the author to violate the truth of hiſtory, by repreſenting our favourite cauſe or hero as perfect; we will allow him to repreſent all their weakneſſes and imperfections, but ſtill it muſt be with ſuch a tender and delicate hand as not to de-

ſtroy

ſtroy our attachment. There is a ſort of unity or conſiſtency of character that we expect even in hiſtory. An author of any ingenuity can, if he pleaſes, eaſily diſappoint this expectation, without deviating from truth. There are certain features in the greateſt and worthieſt men, which may be painted in ſuch a light as to make their characters appear little and ridiculous. Thus if an hiſtorian be conſtantly attentive to check admiration, it is certainly in his power; but if the mind be thus continually diſappointed, and can never find an object that may be contemplated with pleaſure, though we may admire his genius, and be inſtructed by his hiſtory, he will never leave a pleaſing and grateful impreſſion on the mind. Where this is the prevailing ſpirit and genius of a hiſtory, it not only deprives us of a great part of the

the pleaſure we expected from it, but leaves diſagreeable effects on the mind, as it ſtifles that noble enthuſiaſm which is the foundation of all great actions, and produces a fatal ſcepticiſm, coldneſs and indifference about all characters and principles whatſoever. We acknowledge indeed that this manner of writing may be of great ſervice in correcting the narrow prejudices of party and faction; as they will be more influenced by the repreſentations of one who ſeems to take no ſide, than by any thing which can be ſaid by their antagoniſts.

But the principal and moſt important end of hiſtory, is to promote the intereſts of liberty and virtue, and not merely to gratify curioſity. Impartial hiſtory will always be favourable to theſe intereſts. The elegance of its ſtile and compoſition, is chiefly to be valued, as

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it ſerves to engage the reader's attention. But if an Hiſtorian has no regard to what we here ſuppoſe ſhould be the ultimate ends of hiſtory, if he conſiders it only as calculated to give an exerciſe and amuſement to the mind, he may undoubtedly make his work anſwer a very different purpoſe. The circumſtances that attend all great events are ſo complicated, and the weakneſſes and inconſiſtencies of every human character, however exalted and amiable, are ſo various, that an ingenious writer has an opportunity of placing them in a point of view that may ſuit whatever cauſe he chooſes to eſpouſe. Under the ſpecious pretence of a regard to truth, and a ſuperiority to vulgar prejudices, he may render the beſt cauſe doubtful, and the moſt reſpectable character ambiguous. This may be eaſily done without any abſolute de-

viation from truth; by only ſuppreſſing ſome circumſtances, and giving a high colouring to others; by taking advantage of the frivolous and diſſolute ſpirit of the age, which delights in ſeeing the moſt ſacred and important ſubjects turned into ridicule; and by inſinuations that convey, in the ſtrongeſt manner, ſentiments which the author, from affected fear of the laws, or a pretended delicate regard to eſtabliſhed opinions, ſeems unwilling fully and clearly to expreſs. Of all the methods that have been uſed to ſhake thoſe principles on which the virtue, the liberties, and the happineſs of mankind depend, this is the moſt dangerous as well as the moſt illiberal and diſingenuous. It is impoſſible to confute a hint, or to anſwer an objection that is not fully and explicitly ſtated. There is a certain ſpecies of impartiality with

with which no man, who has good principles, or a ſenſible heart, will ſit down to write hiſtory; that impartiality, which ſuppoſes an abſolute indifference to whatever may be its conſequences on the minds of the readers. Such an indifference, in regard to the reſult of our inquiries, is natural and proper in the abſtract ſciences, and in thoſe philoſophical diſquiſitions, where truth is the ſingle and ultimate object, not connected with any thing that may engage the affections or eſſentially affect the intereſts of mankind. But a candid hiſtorian, who is the friend of mankind, will diſclaim this coldneſs and inſenſibility: he will openly avow his attachment to the cauſe of liberty and virtue, and will conſider the ſubſerviency of his hiſtory to their intereſts as its higheſt merit and honour. He will be perſuaded that truth, that impartial hiſtory, can never hurt

theſe

thefe facred interefts; but he will never pretend fo far to diveft himfelf of the feelings of a man, as to be indifferent whether they do or not.

A lively imagination, and particularly a poetical one, bears confinement no where fo ill as in the ufe of metaphor and imagery. This is the peculiar province of the imagination. The soundeft head can neither affift nor judge in it. The poet's eye, as it *glances* * *from heaven to earth*, *from earth to heaven*, is ftruck with numberlefs fimilitudes and analogies, that not only pafs unnoticed by the reft of mankind, but cannot even be comprehended when fuggefted to them. There is a correfpondence between certain external forms of nature, and certain affections of the mind, that may be felt, but cannot always be explained.

Sometimes

* Shakefpeare.

Sometimes the affociation may be accidental, but it often feems to be innate. Hence the great difficulty of afcertaining the true fublime. It cannot in truth be confined within any bounds ; it is entirely relative, depending on the warmth and livelinefs of the imagination, and therefore different in different countries. For the fame reafon, wherever there is great richnefs and profufion of imagery, which in fome fpecies of poetry is a principal beauty, there are always very general complaints of obfcurity, which is increafed by thofe fudden tranfitions that bewilder a common reader, but are eafily traced by a poetical one. An accurate fcrutiny into the propriety of images and metaphors is fruitlefs. If it be not felt at firft, it can feldom be communicated: while we endeavour to analyfe it, the impreffion vanifhes. The fame obfervation

may

may be applied to wit, which consists in a quick and unexpected assemblage of ideas, that strike the mind in an agreeable manner either by their resemblance or their incongruity. Neither is the justness of humour a subject that will bear reasoning. This consists in a lively painting of those weaknesses of character, which are not of importance enough to raise pity or indignation, but only excite mirth and laughter. One must have an idea of the original to judge of, or be affected by the representation, and if he does not see its justness at the first glance, he never sees it. For this reason most works of humour, ridicule, and satire, which paint the particular features and manners of the times, being local and transient, quickly lose their poignancy, and become obscure and insipid.

Whatever is the object of imagination and taſte can only be ſeen to advantage at a certain diſtance, and in a particular light. If brought too near the eye, the beauty which charmed before appears faded, and often diſtorted. It is therefore the buſineſs of judgment to aſcertain this point of view, to exhibit the object to the mind in that poſition which gives it moſt pleaſure, and to prevent the mind from viewing it in any other. This is generally very much in our own power. It is an art which we all practice in common life. We learn by habit to turn the eye to the agreeable ſide of any object which gives us pleaſure, and to keep the dark one out of ſight. If this be kept within any reaſonable bounds, the ſoundeſt judgment will not only connive at, but approve it.—Whatever we admire or love, as great, or beautiful, or amiable,

amiable, has certain circumſtances be-longing to it, which, if attended to, would poiſon our enjoyment.—We are agreeably ſtruck with the grandeur and magnificence of nature in her wildeſt forms; with the proſpect of vaſt and ſtupendous mountains; but is there any neceſſity for our attending, at the ſame time, to the bleakneſs, the coldneſs, and the barrenneſs, which are univerſally connected with them? When a lover contemplates with rapture the charms of beauty and elegance, that captivate his heart, need he at the ſame time reflect how uncertain and tranſient the object of his paſſion is, and that the ſucceſſion of a few years muſt lay it mouldering in the duſt?

But we not only think it unneceſſary always to ſee the whole truth, but frequently allow and juſtify ourſelves in

viewing

viewing things magnified beyond the truth. We indulge a manifeſt partiality to our friends, to our children, and to our native country. We not only keep their failings, as much as prudence will juſtify, out of ſight, but we exalt in our imagination all their good qualities beyond their juſt value. Nor does the general ſenſe of mankind condemn this indulgence; for this very good reaſon, becauſe it is natural, and becauſe we could not forego it, without loſing at the ſame time all ſenſe of friendſhip, natural affection, and patriotiſm.—There appears no ſufficient reaſon why this conduct, which we obſerve in common life, ſhould not be followed in our inquiries into works of imagination. A perſon of a cultivated taſte, while he reſigns himſelf to the firſt impreſſions of pleaſure excited by real excellence, can at the ſame time, with the

ſlighteſt glance of the eye, perceive whe-
ther the work will bear a nearer inſpec-
tion. If it can bear this, he has an addi-
tional pleaſure, ariſing from thoſe latent
beauties which ſtrike the imagination
leſs forcibly. If he finds it cannot bear
this examination, he ſhould remove his
attention immediately, and he ſhould
gratefully enjoy the pleaſure he has alrea-
dy received.

A correct taſte is very much offended
with Dr Young's Night Thoughts; it
obſerves that the repreſentation there gi-
ven of human life is falſe and gloomy;
that the Poetry ſometimes ſinks into chil-
diſh conceits, or proſaic flatneſs, but of-
tener riſes into the turgid or falſe ſu-
blime; that it is perplexed and obſcure;
that the reaſoning is often weak; and
that the general plan of the work is ill
laid, and not happily conducted.—Yet
this

this work may be read with very different sentiments. It may be found to contain many touches of the moſt ſublime poetry that any language has produced, and to be full of thoſe pathetic ſtrokes of nature and paſſion, which touch the heart in the moſt tender and affecting manner.

Beſides, the mind is ſometimes in a diſpoſition to be pleaſed only with dark views of human life.

There are afflictions too deep to bear either reaſoning or amuſement. They may be ſoothed, but cannot be diverted. The gloom of the Night Thoughts perfectly correſponds with this ſtate of mind. It indulges and flatters the preſent paſſion, and, at the ſame time, preſents thoſe motives of conſolation which alone can render certain griefs ſupportable.—We may here obſerve that ſecret and wonderful

endear-

endearment, which nature has annexed to all our ſympathetic feelings. We enter into the deepeſt ſcenes of diſtreſs and ſorrow with a melting ſoftneſs of heart, far more delightful than all the joys which diſſipated and unthinking mirth can inſpire. Dr Akenſide * deſcribes this very pathetically.

————— ———Aſk the faithful youth,
Why the cold urn of her, whom long he loved,
So often fills his arms; ſo often draws
His lonely footſteps at the ſilent hour,
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
Oh! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds
Should ne'er ſeduce his boſom to forego
That ſacred hour, when ſtealing from the noiſe
Of care and envy, ſweet remembrance ſoothes,
With virtue's kindeſt looks, his aking breaſt,
And turns his tears to rapture.

He

* Pleaſures of Imagination.

He afterwards proceeds to paint, with all the enthuſiaſm of liberty and poetic genius, and in all the ſweetneſs and harmony of numbers, thoſe heart-ennobling ſorrows, which the mind feels by the repreſentation of the preſent miſerable condition of thoſe countries, which were once the happy ſeats of genius, liberty, and the greateſt virtues that adorn humanity.

What ought chiefly to be regarded in the culture of taſte, is to diſcover thoſe many beauties in the works of nature and art, which would otherwiſe eſcape our notice. Thomſon, in that beautiful deſcriptive poem, the Seaſons, pleaſes from the juſtneſs of his painting; but his greateſt merit conſiſts in impreſſing the mind with numberleſs beauties of nature, in her various and ſucceſſive forms, which formerly paſſed unheeded.—This is the moſt

pleaſing

pleaſing and uſeful effect of criticiſm ; to diſplay new ſources of pleaſure unknown to the bulk of mankind ; and it is only ſo far as it diſcovers theſe, that taſte can with reaſon be accounted a bleſſing.

It has been often obſerved, that a good taſte and a good heart commonly go together. But that ſort of taſte which is conſtantly prying into blemiſhes and deformity, can have no good effect, either on the temper or the heart. The mind naturally takes a taint from thoſe objects and purſuits in which it is uſually employed. Diſguſt, often recurring, ſpoils the temper ; and a habit of nicely diſcriminating, when carried into real life, contracts the heart, and, by holding up to view the faults and weakneſſes inſeparable from every character, not only checks all the benevolent and generous affections,

but

but ſtifles all the pleaſing emotions of love and admiration.

The habit of dwelling too much on what is ridiculous in ſubjects of taſte, when transferred into life, has likewiſe a bad effect upon the character, if not ſoftened by a large portion of humanity and good humour, as it confers only a ſullen and gloomy pleaſure, by feeding the worſt and moſt painful feelings of the human heart, envy and malignity. But an intimate acquaintance with the works of nature and genius, in their moſt beautiful and amiable forms, humanizes and ſweetens the temper, opens and extends the imagination, and diſpoſes to the moſt pleaſing views of mankind and of providence. By conſidering Nature in this favourable point of view, the heart is dilated, and filled with the moſt benevolent ſentiments; and then, indeed, the ſecret

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ſympathy and connection between the feelings of natural and moral beauty, the connection between a good taſte and a good heart, appears with the greateſt luſtre.

SECTION

SECTION V.

WE proceed now to conſider that principle of human nature which ſeems in a peculiar manner the characteriſtic of the ſpecies, the ſenſe of religion. It is not my intention here to conſider the evidence of religion as founded in truth; I propoſe only to examine it as a principle founded in human nature, and the influence it actually has, or may have, on the happineſs of mankind.—The beneficial conſequences which ſhould naturally reſult from this principle, ſeem very obvious. There is ſomething peculiarly ſoothing and comfortable in a firm belief

that the whole frame of nature is ſupport-
ed and conducted by an eternal and om-
nipotent Being, of infinite goodneſs, who
intends, by the whole courſe of his provi-
dence, to promote the greateſt good of all
his creatures ; a belief that we are ac-
quainted with the means of conciliating
the Divine favour, and that, in conſe-
quence of this, we have it in our power to
obtain it ; a belief that this life is but
the infancy of our exiſtence, that we
ſhall ſurvive the ſeeming deſtruction of
our preſent frame, and have it in our
power to ſecure our entrance on a new
ſtate of eternal felicity. If we believe
that the conduct which the Deity requires
of us is ſuch as moſt effectually ſecures
our preſent happineſs, together with the
peace and happineſs of ſociety, we ſhould
of courſe conclude that theſe ſentiments
would be fondly cheriſhed and adopted
by

by all wiſe and good men, whether they were ſuppoſed to ariſe from any natural anticipation of the human mind, the force of reaſon, or an immediate revelation from the Supreme Being.

But, though the belief of a Deity, and of a future ſtate of exiſtence, have univerſally prevailed in all ages and nations, yet it has been diverſified and connected with a variety of ſuperſtitions, which have often rendered it uſeleſs, and ſometimes hurtful, to the general intereſts of mankind. The Supreme Being has ſometimes been repreſented in ſuch a light, as made him rather an object of terror than of love; as executing both preſent and eternal vengeance on the greateſt part of the world, for crimes they never committed, and for not believing doctrines which they never heard.—Men have been taught that they did God acceptable ſervice by ab-

ſtracting

ſtracting themſelves from all the duties they owed to ſociety, by denying themſelves all the pleaſures of life, and even by voluntarily enduring, and inflicting on themſelves, the ſevereſt tortures which nature could ſupport. They have been taught that it was their duty to perſecute their fellow-creatures in the moſt cruel manner, in order to bring them to an uniformity with themſelves in religious opinions ; a ſcheme equally barbarous and impracticable. In fine, religion has often been uſed as an engine to deprive mankind of their moſt valuable privileges, and to ſubject them to the moſt deſpotic tyranny.

Theſe pernicious conſequences have given occaſion to ſome ingenious men to queſtion, whether atheiſm or ſuperſtition were moſt deſtructive to the happineſs of ſociety ; while others have been ſo much impreſſed by them, that they ſeemed to enter-

entertain no doubt of its being ſafer to diveſt mankind of all religious opinions and reſtraints whatever, than to run the riſk of the abuſes which they thought almoſt inſeparable from them.—This ſeems to be the moſt favourable conſtruction that can be put on the conduct of the patrons of atheiſm. But, however ſpecious this pretence might have been ſome centuries ago, there does not at this time appear to be the leaſt foundation for it. Experience has now ſhewn that religion may ſubſiſt in a public eſtabliſhment, diveſted of that abſurd and pernicious ſuperſtition, which was only adventitious, and moſt apparently contrary to its geguine and original ſpirit and genius.—To ſeparate religion entirely from ſuperſtition, in every individual, may indeed be impoſſible, becauſe it is impoſſible to make all mankind think wiſely and properly

perly on any one ſubject, where the underſtanding alone is concerned, much more where the imagination and the affections are ſo deeply intereſted. But, if the poſitive advantages of religion to mankind be evident, this ſhould ſeem a ſufficient reaſon for every worthy man to ſupport its cauſe, and, at the ſame time, to keep it diſengaged from thoſe accidental circumſtances that have ſo highly diſhonoured it.

Mankind certainly have a ſenſe of right and wrong, independent of religious belief; but experience ſhews, that the allurements of preſent pleaſure, and the impetuoſity of paſſion, are ſufficient to prevent men from acting agreeably to this moral ſenſe, unleſs it be ſupported by religion, the influence of which upon the imagination and paſſions, if properly directed, is extremely powerful.

We

We ſhall readily acknowledge that many of the greateſt enemies of religion have been diſtinguiſhed for their honour, probity, and good nature. But it is to be conſidered, that many virtues, as well as vices, are conſtitutional. A cool and equal temper, a dull imagination, and unfeeling heart, enſure the poſſeſſion of many virtues, or rather are a ſecurity againſt many vices. They may produce temperance, chaſtity, honeſty, prudence, and a harmleſs, inoffenſive behaviour. Whereas keen paſſions, a warm imagination, and a great ſenſibility of heart, lay a natural foundation for prodigality, debauchery, and ambition ; attended, however, with the ſeeds of all the ſocial and moſt heroic virtues. Such a temperature of mind carries along with it a check to its conſtitutional vices, by rendering thoſe poſſeſſed of it peculiarly ſuſceptible of

religious impreſſions. They often ap-pear, indeed, to be the greateſt enemies to religion, but that is entirely owing to their impatience of its reſtraints. Its moſt dangerous enemies have ever been among the temperate and chaſte philoſo-phers, void of paſſion and ſenſibility, who had no vicious appetites to be reſtrained by its influence, and who were equally unſuſceptible of its terrors or its pleaſures. Abſolute infidelity, or ſettled ſcepticiſm, in religion, we acknowledge is no proof of want of underſtanding, or a vicious diſpoſition, but is certainly a very ſtrong preſumption of the want of imagination and ſenſibility of heart, and of a pervert-ed underſtanding. Some philoſophers have been infidels, few men of taſte and ſentiment. Yet the examples of Lord Bacon, Mr Locke, and Sir Iſaac Newton, among many other firſt names in philoſo-

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phy, are a ſufficient evidence, that religious belief is perfectly compatible with the cleareſt and moſt enlarged underſtanding.

Several of thoſe who have ſurmounted what they call religious prejudices themſelves, affect to treat ſuch as are not aſhamed to avow their regard to religion, as men of weak underſtandings and feeble minds. But this ſhews either want of candour, or great ignorance of human nature. The fundamental articles of religion have been very generally believed by men the moſt diſtinguiſhed for acuteneſs and accuracy of judgment. Nay, it is unjuſt to infer the weakneſs of a perſon's head, on other ſubjects, from his attachment even to the fooleries of ſuperſtition. Experience ſhews, that, when the imagination is heated, and the affections deeply intereſted, they level all diſtinc-

tions of underſtanding ; yet this affords no preſumption of a ſhallow judgment in ſubjects where the imagination and paſſions have no influence.

Feebleneſs of mind is a reproach frequently thrown, not only upon ſuch as have a ſenſe of religion, but upon all who poſſeſs warm, open, chearful tempers, and hearts peculiarly diſpoſed to love and friendſhip. But the reproach is ill founded. Strength of mind does not conſiſt in a peeviſh temper, in a hard inflexible heart, and in bidding defiance to God Almighty. It conſiſts in an active reſolute ſpirit, in a ſpirit that enables a man to act his part in the world with propriety, and to bear the misfortunes of life with uniform fortitude and dignity. This is a ſtrength of mind which neither atheiſm nor univerſal ſcepticiſm will ever be able to inſpire. On the contrary, it will

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be found that they tend to chill all the powers of imagination ; to depreſs ſpirit as well as genius ; to ſour the temper, and contract the heart. The higheſt religious ſpirit, and veneration for Providence, breathes in the writings of the ancient Stoics ; a ſect diſtinguiſhed for producing the moſt active intrepid virtuous men that ever did honour to human nature.

Can it be pretended that atheiſm or univerſal ſcepticiſm have any tendency to form ſuch characters ? Do they tend to inſpire that magnanimity and elevation of mind, that ſuperiority to ſelfiſh and ſenſual gratifications, that contempt of danger and of death, when the cauſe of virtue, of liberty, or their country, requires, which diſtinguiſh the character of patriots and heroes ? or is their influence more favourable on the humbler and

gentler virtues of private and domeſtic life? Do they ſoften the heart, and render it more delicately ſenſible of the thouſand nameleſs duties and endearments of a huſband, a father, or a friend? Do they produce that habitual ſerenity, and chearfulneſs of temper, that gaiety of heart, which makes a man beloved as a companion? or do they dilate the heart with the liberal and generous ſentiments, and that love of human kind, which would render him revered and bleſſed, as the patron of depreſſed merit, the friend of the widow and orphan, the refuge and ſupport of the poor and the unhappy?

The general opinion of mankind, that there is a ſtrong connection between a religious diſpoſition and a feeling heart, appears from the univerſal diſlike which all men have to infidelity in the fair ſex. We not only look on it as removing the

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principal ſecurity we have for their vir-
tue, but as the ſtrongeſt proof of their
want of that ſoftneſs and delicate ſenſibi-
lity of heart, which peculiarly endears
them to us, and more effectually ſecures
their empire over us, than any quality
they can poſſeſs.

There are, indeed, ſome men who can
perſuade themſelves, that there is no Su-
preme Intelligence who directs the courſe
of nature ; who can ſee thoſe they have
been connected with by the ſtrongeſt
bonds of nature and friendſhip gradually
diſappearing ; who are perſuaded that this
ſeparation is final and eternal, and who
expect that they themſelves ſhall ſoon
ſink down after them into nothing ; and
yet ſuch men appear eaſy and contented.
But, to a ſenſible heart, and particularly
to a heart ſoftened by paſt endearments
of love or friendſhip, ſuch opinions are
attended

attended with gloom inexpreſſible ; they ſtrike a damp into all the pleaſures and enjoyments of life, and cut off thoſe proſpects which alone can comfort the ſoul under certain diſtreſſes, where all other aid is feeble and ineffectual.

Scepticiſm, or ſuſpenſe of judgment as to the truth of the great articles of religion, is attended with the ſame fatal effects. Wherever the affections are deeply intereſted, a ſtate of ſuſpenſe is more intolerable, and more diſtracting to the mind, than the ſad aſſurance of the evil which is moſt dreaded.

There are many who have paſt the age of youth and beauty, who have reſigned the pleaſures of that ſmiling ſeaſon ; who begin to decline into the vale of years, impaired in their health, depreſſed in their fortunes, ſtript of their friends, their children, and perhaps ſtill more tender and

endearing

endearing connections. What resource can this world afford them? It presents a dark and dreary waste, through which there does not issue a single ray of comfort. Every delusive prospect of ambition is now at an end; long experience of mankind, an experience very different from what the open and generous soul of youth had fondly dreamt of, has rendered the heart almost inaccessible to new friendships. The principal sources of activity are taken away, when those for whom we labour are cut off from us, those who animated, and those who sweetened all the toils of life. Where then can the soul find refuge, but in the bosom of religion? There she is admitted to those prospects of Providence and futurity, which alone can warm and fill the heart. I speak here of such as retain the feelings of humanity, whom misfortunes have

softened,

ſoftened, and perhaps rendered more delicately ſenſible; not of ſuch as poſſeſs that ſtupid inſenſibility which ſome are pleaſed to dignify with the name of philoſophy.

It ſhould therefore be expected that thoſe philoſophers, who ſtand in no need themſelves of the aſſiſtance of religion to ſupport their virtue, and who never feel the want of its conſolations, would yet have the humanity to conſider the very different ſituation of the reſt of mankind; and not endeavour to deprive them of what habit, at leaſt, if they will not allow it to be nature, has made neceſſary to their morals and to their happineſs.—It might be expected that humanity would prevent them from breaking into the laſt retreat of the unfortunate, who can no longer be objects of their envy or reſentment, and tearing from them their only

remaining

remaining comfort. The attempt to ridicule religion may be agreeable to ſome, by relieving them from a reſtraint upon their pleaſures, and may render others very miſerable, by making them doubt thoſe truths, in which they were moſt deeply intereſted; but it can convey real good and happineſs to no one individual.

To ſupport openly and avowedly the cauſe of infidelity, may be owing, in ſome, to the vanity of appearing wiſer than the reſt of mankind; to vanity, that amphibious paſſion, that ſeeks for food, not only in the affectation of every beauty, and every virtue, that adorn humanity, but of every vice and perverſion of the underſtanding, that diſgrace it. The zeal of making proſelytes to it may often be attributed to a like vanity of poſſeſſing a direction and aſcendency over the minds of men, which is a very flattering ſpecies of

ſuperiority. But there ſeems to be ſome other cauſe that ſecretly influences the conduct of ſome that reject all religion, who, from the reſt of their character, cannot be ſuſpected of vanity, or any ambition of ſuch ſuperiority. This we ſhall attempt to explain.

The very differing in opinion, upon any intereſting ſubject, from all around us, gives a diſagreeable ſenſation. This muſt be greatly increaſed in the preſent caſe, as the feeling, which attends infidelity or ſcepticiſm in religion, is certainly a comfortleſs one, where there is the leaſt degree of ſenſibility.—Sympathy is much more ſought after by an unhappy mind, than by one chearful and at eaſe. We require a ſupport in the one caſe, which, in the other, is not neceſſary. A perſon, therefore, void of religion, feels himſelf as it were alone in the midſt of ſociety ;

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and though, for prudential reafons, he choofes, on fome occafions, to difguife his fentiments, and join in fome form of religious worfhip, yet this, to a candid and ingenuous mind, muft always be very painful; nor does it abate the difagreeable feeling which a focial fpirit has in finding itfelf alone, and without any friend to footh and participate its uneafinefs. This feems to have a confiderable fhare in that anxiety which free-thinkers generally difcover to make profelytes to their opinions, an anxiety much greater than what is fhewn by thofe whofe minds are at eafe in the enjoyment of happier profpects.

The excufe which thefe gentlemen plead for their conduct, is a regard for the caufe of truth. But this is a very infufficient one. None of them act upon this principle, in its largeft extent and appli-

application, in common life. Nor could any man live in the world, and pretend ſo to do. In the purſuit of happineſs, *our being's end and aim* *, the diſcovery of truth is far from being the moſt important object. It is true the mind receives a high pleaſure from the inveſtigation and diſcovery of truth, in the abſtract ſciences, in the works of nature and art, but in all ſubjects, where the imagination and affections are deeply concerned, we regard it only ſo far as it is ſubſervient to them.—One of the firſt principles of ſociety, of decency, and of good manners, is, that no man is entitled to ſay every thing he thinks true, when it would be injurious or offenſive to his neighbour. If it was not for this principle, all mankind would be in a ſtate of hoſtility.

Suppoſe

* Pope.

Suppofe a perfon to lofe an only child, the fole comfort and happinefs of his life. When the firft overflowings of nature is paft, he recollects the infinite goodnefs, and impenetrable wifdom, of the difpofer of all events, he is perfuaded that the revolution of a few years will again unite him to his child, never more to be feparated. With thefe fentiments, he acquiefces with a melancholy yet pleafing refignation to the divine will. Now, fuppofing all this to be a deception, a pleafing dream, would not the general fenfe of mankind condemn the philofopher, as barbarous and inhuman, who fhould attempt to wake him out of it ?—Yet, fo far does vanity prevail over good nature, that we frequently fee men, on other occafions of the moft benevolent tempers, labouring to cut off that hope, which can alone chear the heart under all the pref-

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ſures and afflictions of human life, and enable us to reſign it with chearfulneſs and dignity.

Religion may be conſidered in three different views. Firſt, As containing doctrines relating to the being and perfections of God, his moral adminiſtration of the world, a future ſtate of exiſtence, and particular communications to mankind by an immediate ſupernatural revelation.—Secondly, As a rule of life and manners.—Thirdly, As the ſource of certain peculiar affections of the mind, which either give pleaſure or pain, according to the particular genius and ſpirit of the religion that inſpires them.

In the firſt of theſe views, which gives a foundation to all religious belief, and on which the other two depend, reaſon is principally concerned. On this ſubject, the greateſt efforts of human genius

and application have been exerted, and with the moſt deſirable ſucceſs, in thoſe great and important articles that ſeem moſt immediately to affect the intereſt and happineſs of mankind But, when our inquiries are here puſhed to a certain length, we find that Providence has ſet bounds to our reaſon, and even to our capacities of apprehenſion. This is particularly the caſe with reſpect to infinity, and the moral oeconomy of the Deity. The objects are here in a great meaſure beyond the reach of our conception ; and induction from experience, on which all our other reaſonings are founded, cannot be applied to a ſubject altogether diſſimilar to any thing we are acquainted with.—Many of the fundamental articles of religion are ſuch, that the mind may have the fulleſt conviction of their truth, but they muſt be viewed at a diſtance, and

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are rather the objects of ſilent and religious veneration, than of metaphyſical diſquiſition. If the mind attempts to bring them to a nearer view, it is confounded with their ſtrangeneſs and immenſity.

When we purſue our inquiries into any part of nature, beyond certain bounds, we find ourſelves involved in perplexity and darkneſs. But there is this remarkable difference between theſe and religious inquiries: In the inveſtigation of nature, we can always make a progreſs in knowledge, and approximate to the truth by the proper exertion of genius and obſervation; but our inquiries into religious ſubjects are confined within very narrow bounds; nor can any force of reaſon or application lead the mind one ſtep beyond that impenetrable gulf, which ſeparates the viſible and inviſible world.

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Though the articles of religious belief, which fall within the comprehenſion of mankind, and ſeem eſſential to their happineſs, are few and ſimple, yet ingenious men have contrived to erect them into moſt tremendous ſyſtems of metaphyſical ſubtlety, which will long remain monuments, both of the extent and the weakneſs of human underſtanding. The pernicious conſequences of ſuch ſyſtems have been various. By attempting to eſtabliſh too much, they have hurt the foundation of the moſt intereſting principles of religion.—Moſt men are educated in a belief of the peculiar and diſtinguiſhing opinions of ſome one religious ſect or other. They are taught that all theſe are equally founded on Divine authority, or the cleareſt deductions of reaſon. By which means, their ſyſtem of religion hangs ſo much together, that one part cannot be

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ſhaken, without endangering the whole. But, wherever any freedom of inquiry is allowed, the abſurdity of ſome of theſe opinions, and the uncertain foundation of others, cannot be concealed. This naturally begets a general diſtruſt of the whole, with that fatal lukewarmneſs in religion, which is its neceſſary conſequence.

The very habit of frequent reaſoning, and diſputing upon religious ſubjects, diminiſhes that reverence, with which the mind would otherwiſe conſider them. This ſeems particularly to be the caſe, when men preſume to enter into a minute ſcrutiny of the views and oeconomy of Providence, in the adminiſtration of the world, why the Supreme Being made it as it is, the freedom of his actions, and many other ſuch queſtions, infinitely beyond our reach. The natural tendency of this

is to leſſen that awful veneration with which we ought always to contemplate the Divinity, but which can never be preſerved, when men canvaſs his ways with ſuch unwarrantable freedom. Accordingly we find, amongſt thoſe ſectaries where ſuch diſquiſitions have principally prevailed, that he has been mentioned, and even addreſſed, with the moſt indecent and ſhocking familiarity. The truly devotional ſpirit, whoſe chief foundation and characteriſtic is genuine and profound humility, is not to be looked for among ſuch perſons.

Another bad effect of this ſpeculative theology has been to withdraw people's attention from its practical duties.—We uſually find that thoſe, who are moſt diſtinguiſhed by their exceſſive zeal for opinions in religion, ſhew great moderation and coolneſs as to its precepts; and their

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great ſeverity, in this reſpect, is commonly exerted againſt a few vices where the heart is but little concerned, and to which their own diſpoſitions preſerve them from any temptations.

But the worſt effects of ſpeculative and controverſial theology are thoſe which it produces on the temper and affections.—When the mind is kept conſtantly embarraſſed in a perplexed and thorny path, where it can find no ſteady light to ſhew the way, nor foundation to reſt on, the temper loſes its native chearfulneſs, and contracts a gloom and ſeverity, partly from the chagrin of diſappointment, and partly from the ſocial and kind affections being extinguiſhed for want of exerciſe. When this evil is exaſperated by oppoſition and diſpute, the conſequences prove very fatal to the peace of ſociety; eſpecially when men are perſuaded, that their

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holding certain opinions entitles them to the divine favour ; and that those who differ from them are devoted to eternal destruction. This persuasion breaks at once all the ties of society. The toleration of men who hold erroneous opinions, is considered as conniving at their destroying, not only themselves, but all others, who come within the reach of their influence. This produces that cruel and implacable spirit, which has so often disgraced the cause of religion, and dishonoured humanity.

Yet the effects of religious controversy have sometimes proved beneficial to mankind. That spirit of free inquiry, which incited the first reformers to shake off the yoke of ecclesiastical tyranny, naturally begot just sentiments of civil liberty, especially when irritated by persecution. When such sentiments came to be united

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with that bold enthuſiaſm, that ſeverity of temper and manners, which diſtinguiſhed ſome of the reformed ſects; they produced thoſe reſolute and inflexible men, who alone were able to aſſert the cauſe of liberty, in an age when the Chriſtian world was enervated by luxury or ſuperſtition; and to ſuch men we owe that freedom and happy conſtitution, which we at preſent enjoy.—But theſe advantages of religious enthuſiaſm have been but accidental.

In general, it would appear, that religion, conſidered as a ſcience, in the manner it has been uſually treated, is but little beneficial to mankind, neither tending to enlarge the underſtanding, ſweeten the temper, or mend the heart. At the ſame time, the labours of ingenious men, in explaining obſcure and difficult paſſages of ſacred writ, have been highly uſeful

ful and neceſſary. And, though it is natural for men to carry their ſpeculations, on a ſubject that ſo nearly concerns their preſent and eternal happineſs, farther than reaſon extends, or than is clearly and expreſsly revealed; yet theſe can be followed by no bad conſequences, if they are carried on with that modeſty and reverence which the ſubject requires. They become pernicious only when they are formed into ſyſtems, to which the ſame credit and ſubmiſſion is required, as to Holy Writ itſelf.

We ſhall now proceed to conſider religion as a rule of life and manners. In this reſpect, its influence is very extenſive and beneficial, even when disfigured by the wildeſt ſuperſtition, as it is able to check and conquer thoſe paſſions, which reaſon and philoſophy are too weak to encounter. But it is much to be regret-

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ted, that the application of religion to this end hath not been attended to with that care which the importance of the subject required.—The speculative part of religion seems generally to have engrossed the attention of men of genius.—This has been the fate of all the useful and practical arts of life, and the application of religion to the regulation of life and manners must be considered entirely as a practical art.—The causes of this neglect seem to be these.—Men of a philosophical genius have an aversion to all application, where the active powers of their own minds are not immediately employed. But, in acquiring a practical art, a philosopher is obliged to spend most of his time in employments where his genius and understanding have no exercise.—The fate of the practical parts of medicine and of religion have been pretty similar.

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The object of the one is to cure the diseases of the body; of the other, to cure the diseases of the mind. The progress and degree of perfection of both these arts ought to be estimated by no other standard than their success in the cure of the diseases, to which they are severally applied. In medicine, the facts on which the art depends are so numerous and complicated, so misrepresented by fraud, credulity, or a heated imagination, that there has hardly ever been found a truly philosophical genius, who has attempted the practical part of it. There are, indeed, many obstacles of different kinds, which concur to render any improvement in the practice of physic a matter of the utmost difficulty, at least while the profession rests on its present narrow foundation. Almost all physicians, who have been men of ingenuity, have amused

themſelves in forming theories, which gave exerciſe to their invention, and at the ſame time contributed to their reputation. Inſtead of being at the trouble of making obſervations themſelves, they culled out of the promiſcuous multitude already made, ſuch as beſt ſuited their purpoſe, and dreſſed them up in the way their ſyſtem required. In conſequence of this, the hiſtory of medicine does not ſo much exhibit the hiſtory of a progreſſive art, as a hiſtory of opinions, which prevailed perhaps for twenty or thirty years, and then ſunk into contempt and oblivion.—The caſe has been nearly ſimilar in practical divinity. But this is attended with much greater difficulties, than the practical part of medicine. In this laſt, nothing is required, but aſſiduous and accurate obſervation, and a good underſtanding to direct the proper application

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of ſuch obſervation. But to cure the diſeaſes of the mind, there is required that intimate knowledge of the human heart, which muſt be drawn from life itſelf, and which books can never teach; of the various diſguiſes, under which vice recommends herſelf to the imagination; of the artful aſſociation of ideas, which ſhe forms there; and of the many nameleſs circumſtances that ſoften the heart, and render it acceſſible. It is likewiſe neceſſary to have a knowledge of the arts of inſinuation and perſuaſion, of the art of breaking falſe or unnatural aſſociations of ideas, or inducing counter aſſociations, and oppoſing one paſſion to another; and, after all this knowledge is acquired, the ſucceſsful application of it to practice depends, in a conſiderable degree, on powers, which no extent of underſtanding can confer.

Vice does not depend ſo much on a perverſion of the underſtanding, as of the imagination and paſſions, and on habits originally founded on theſe. A vicious man is generally ſenſible enough that his conduct is wrong ; he knows that vice is contrary both to his duty and to his interest, and therefore all laboured reaſoning to ſatisfy his underſtanding of theſe truths is uſeleſs, becauſe the diſeaſe does not lie in the underſtanding. The evil is ſeated in the heart. The imagination and paſſions are engaged on its ſide, and to them the cure muſt be applied. Here has been the general defect of writings and ſermons, intended to reform mankind. Many ingenious and ſenſible remarks are made on the ſeveral duties of religion, and very judicious arguments are brought to enforce them. Such performances may be attended to with pleaſure, by pious and

well difpofed perfons, who likewife may derive from thence ufeful inftruction for their conduct in life. The wicked and profligate, if ever books of this fort fall in their way, very readily allow that what they contain are great and eternal truths, but they leave no lafting impreffion. If any thing can roufe them, it is the power of lively and pathetic defcription, which traces and lays open their hearts through all their windings and difguifes, makes them fee and confefs their own characters in all their deformity and horror, impreffes their hearts, and interefts their paffions, by all the motives of love, gratitude, and fear, the profpect of rewards and punifhments, and whatever other motives religion or nature may dictate. But to do this effectually requires very different powers from thofe

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of the underſtanding. A lively and well-regulated imagination is eſſentially requiſite.

In public addreſſes to an audience, the great end of reformation is moſt effectually promoted, becauſe all the powers of voice and action, all the arts of eloquence, may be brought to give their aſſiſtance. But ſome of thoſe arts depend on gifts of nature, and cannot be attained by any ſtrength of genius or underſtanding. Even where nature has been liberal of thoſe neceſſary requiſites, they muſt be cultivated by much practice before the proper exerciſe of them can be acquired.—Thus, a public ſpeaker may have a voice that is muſical, and of great compaſs, but it requires much time and labour to attain its juſt modulation, and that variety of flection

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and tone, which a pathetic difcourfe requires. The fame difficulty attends the acquifition of that propriety of action, that power over the expreffive features of the countenance, particularly of the eyes, fo neceffary to command the hearts and paffions of an audience.

It is ufually thought that a preacher, who feels what he is faying himfelf, will naturally fpeak with that tone of voice, and expreffion in his countenance, that beft fuit the fubject, and which cannot fail to move his audience. Thus, it is faid, a perfon under the influence of fear, anger, or forrow, looks and fpeaks in the manner naturally expreffive of thefe emotions. This is true in fome meafure; but it can never be fuppofed, that any preacher will be able to enter into his fubject with fuch real warmth upon every occafion. Befides, every prudent man

will

will be afraid to abandon himſelf ſo entirely to any impreſſion, as he muſt do to produce this effect. Moſt men, when ſtrongly affected by any paſſion or emotion, have ſome peculiarity in their appearance, which does not belong to the natural expreſſion of ſuch an emotion. If this be not properly corrected, a public ſpeaker, who is really warmed and animated with his ſubject, may nevertheleſs make a very ridiculous and contemptible figure.—It is the buſineſs of art to ſhew nature in her moſt amiable and graceful forms, and not with thoſe peculiarities in which ſhe appears in particular inſtances; and it is this difficulty of properly repreſenting nature, that renders the eloquence and action, both of the pulpit and the ſtage, acquiſitions of ſuch difficult attainment.

But,

But, besides those talents inherent in the preacher himself, an intimate knowledge of nature will suggest the necessity of attending to certain external circumstances, which operate powerfully on the mind, and prepare it for receiving the designed impressions. Such, in particular, is the proper regulation of church music, and the solemnity and pomp of public worship. Independently of the effect that these particulars have on the imagination, it might be expected that a just taste, and a sense of decency and propriety, should make them more attended to than we find they are. We acknowledge that they have been abused, and have occasioned the grossest superstition; but this universal propensity to carry them to excess, is the strongest proof that the attachment to them is deeply rooted in human nature, and consequent-

ly, that it is the bufinefs of good fenfe to regulate, and not vainly to attempt to extinguifh it. Many religious fects, in their infancy, have fupported themfelves without any of thefe external affiftances; but, when time has abated the fervour of their firft zeal, we always find that their public worfhip has been conducted with the moft remarkable coldnefs and inattention, unlefs fupported by well regulated ceremonies. In fact, it will be found, that thofe fects who, at their commencement, have been moft diftinguifhed for a religious enthufiafm, that defpifed all forms, and the genius of whofe tenets could not admit the ufe of any, have either been of fhort duration, or ended in infidelity.

The many difficulties that attend the practical art of making religion influence the manners and lives of mankind,

by acquiring a command over the imagination and paſſions, have made it too generally neglected, even by the moſt eminent of the clergy for learning and good ſenſe. Theſe have rather choſen to confine themſelves to a tract, where they were ſure to excel by the force of their own genius, than to attempt a road where their ſucceſs was doubtful, and where they might be outſhone by men greatly their inferiors. It has therefore been principally cultivated by men of lively imaginations, poſſeſſed of ſome natural advantages of voice and manner. But, as no art can ever become very beneficial to mankind, unleſs it be under the direction of genius and good ſenſe, it has too often happened, that the art we are now ſpeaking of has become ſubſervient to the wildeſt fanaticiſm, ſometimes to the gratification of vanity, and

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ſometimes to ſtill more unworthy purpoſes.

The third view of religion conſiders it as engaging and intereſting the affections, and comprehends the devotional or ſentimental part of it.—The devotional ſpirit is in ſome meaſure conſtitutional, depending on livelineſs of imagination, and ſenſibility of heart, and, like theſe qualities, prevails more in warmer climates than it does in ours. What ſhews its great dependence on the imagination, is the remarkable attachment it has to poetry and muſic, which Shakeſpeare calls the food of love, and which may with equal truth be called the food of devotion. Muſic enters into the future paradiſe of the devout of every ſect, and of every country. The Deity, viewed by the eye of cool reaſon, may be ſaid with great propriety to dwell in light inacceſſible.

ſible. The mind ſtruck with the immenſity of his being, and with a ſenſe of its own littleneſs and unworthineſs, admires, with that diſtant awe and veneration that almoſt excludes love. But, viewed by a devout imagination, he may become an object of the warmeſt affection, and even paſſion.—The philoſopher contemplates the Deity in all thoſe marks of wiſdom and benignity diffuſed through the various works of nature. The devout man confines his views rather to his own particular connection with the Deity, the many inſtances of his goodneſs he himſelf has experienced, and the many greater he ſtill hopes for. This eſtabliſhes a kind of intercourſe, which often intereſts the heart and paſſions in the deepeſt manner.

The devotional taſte, like all other taſtes, has had the hard fate to be condemned

demned as a weakneſs, by all who are ſtrangers to its joys and its influence. Too much, and too frequent occaſion has been given, to turn this ſubject into ridicule.—A heated and devout imagination, when not under the direction of a very ſound underſtanding, is apt to run very wild, and is at the ſame time impatient to publiſh all its follies to the world. —The feelings of a devout heart ſhould be mentioned with great reſerve and delicacy, as they depend upon private experience, and certain circumſtances of mind and ſituation, which the world can neither know nor judge of. But devotional writings, executed with judgment and taſte, are not only highly uſeful, but, to all who have a true ſenſe of religion, peculiarly engaging.

The devotional ſpirit, united to good ſenſe and a chearful temper, gives that ſtea-

ſteadineſs to virtue, which it always wants, when produced and ſupported by good natural diſpoſitions only. It corrects and humanizes thoſe conſtitutional vices, which it is not able entirely to ſubdue, and, though it too often fails to render men perfectly virtuous, it preſerves them from becoming utterly abandoned. It has, beſides, the moſt favourable influence on all the paſſive virtues; it gives a ſoftneſs and ſenſibility to the heart, and a mildneſs and gentleneſs to the manners; but, above all, it produces an univerſal charity and love to mankind, however different in ſtation, country, or religion. There is a ſublime yet tender melancholy, almoſt the univerſal attendant on genius, which is too apt to degenerate into gloom and diſguſt with the world. Devotion is admirably calculated to ſooth

ſooth this diſpoſition, by inſenſibly leading the mind, while it ſeems to indulge it, to thoſe proſpects which calm every murmur of diſcontent, and diffuſe a chearfulneſs over the darkeſt hours of human life.—Perſons in the pride of high health and ſpirits, who are keen in the purſuits of pleaſure, intereſt, or ambition, have either no ideas on this ſubject, or treat it as the enthuſiaſm of a weak mind. But this really ſhews great narrowneſs of underſtanding; a very little reflection and acquaintance with nature might teach them, on how precarious a foundation their boaſted independence on religion is built; the thouſand nameleſs accidents that may deſtroy it; and that, though for ſome years they ſhould eſcape theſe, yet that time muſt impair the greateſt vigour of health and ſpirits, and deprive them

of

of all thoſe objects for which at preſent they think life only worth enjoying.—It ſhould ſeem, therefore, very neceſſary to ſecure ſome permanent object, ſome real ſupport to the mind, to chear the ſoul when all others ſhall have loſt their influence.—The greateſt inconvenience, indeed, that attends devotion, is taking ſuch a faſt hold of the affections, as ſometimes threatens the extinguiſhing of every other active principle of the mind. For, when the devotional ſpirit falls in with a melancholy temper, it is too apt to depreſs the mind entirely, to ſink it to the weakeſt ſuperſtition, and to produce a total retirement and abſtraction from the world, and all the duties of life.

I ſhall now conclude theſe looſe obſervations on the advantages ariſing to mankind from thoſe faculties, which diſtin-

guiſh them from the reſt of the animal world; advantages which do not ſeem correſpondent to what might be reaſonably expected from a proper exertion of theſe faculties, particularly among the few who have the higheſt intellectual abilities, and full leiſure to improve them. The capital error ſeems to conſiſt in ſuch men's confining their attention chiefly to inquiries that are either of little importance, or the materials of which lie in their own minds.—The bulk of mankind are made to act, not to reaſon, for which they have neither abilities nor leiſure. They who poſſeſs that deep, clear, and comprehenſive underſtanding, which conſtitutes a truly philoſophical genius, ſeem born to an aſcendency and empire over the minds and affairs of mankind, if they would but aſſume it. It cannot be ex-

pected

expected that they should possess all those powers and talents which are requisite in the several useful and elegant arts of life, but it is they alone who are fitted to direct and regulate their application.

FINIS.

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