

they profess argument and reflection, they ought to know that the body is not forced beyond its strength, but with the loss of more vigour than is proportionate to the effect produced ; and that whoever takes up life beforehand, by depriving himself of rest and refreshment, must not only pay back the hours, but pay them back with usury ; and for the gain of a few months but half enjoyed, must give up years to the listlessness of languor, and the implacability of pain ; they whose endeavour is mental excellence, will learn at last, perhaps too late, how much it is endangered by diseases of the body, and find that knowledge may easily be lost in the starts of melancholy, the flights of impatience, and the peevishness of decrepitude.

NUMB. 49. TUESDAY, September 4, 1750.

*Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei
Vitabit Libitinam, usque ego posterâ
Crescam laude recens.*

HOR.

THE first motives of human actions are those appetites which providence has given to most, in common with the rest of the inhabitant ;

habitants of the earth. Immediately after our birth, thirst and hunger incline us to the breast, which we draw by instinct, like other young creatures, and, when we are satisfied, we express our uneasiness by importunate and incessant cries, till we have obtained a place or posture proper for repose.

THE next call that rouses us from a state of inactivity, is that of our passions; we quickly begin to be sensible of hope and fear, love and hatred, desire and aversion; these arising from the power of comparison and reflection extend their range wider, as our reason strengthens, and our knowledge enlarges. At first we have no thought of pain, but when we actually feel it; we afterwards begin to fear it, yet not before it approaches us very nearly; but by degrees we discover it at a greater distance, and find it lurking in remote consequences. Our terror in time improves into caution, and we learn to look round with vigilance and solicitude, to stop all the avenues at which misery can enter, and to perform or endure many things in themselves toilsome and unpleasing, because we know by reason, or by experience, that our labour will be overbalanced by the reward, that it will either procure

procure some positive good, or avert some evil greater than itself.

BUT as the soul advances to a fuller exercise of its powers, the animal appetites, and the passions immediately arising from them, are not sufficient to find it employment; the wants of nature are soon supplied, the fear of their return is easily precluded, and something more is necessary to relieve the long intervals of inactivity, and to give those faculties, which cannot lie wholly quiescent, some particular direction. For this reason new desires and artificial passions are by degrees produced; and, from having wishes only in consequence of our wants, we begin to feel wants in consequence of our wishes; we persuade ourselves to set a value upon things which are of no use, but because we have agreed to value them; things which can neither satisfy hunger, nor mitigate pain, nor secure us from any real calamity, and which, therefore, we find of no esteem among those nations whose artless and barbarous manners keep them always anxious for the necessaries of life.

THIS is the original of avarice, vanity, ambition, and generally of all those desires which

which arise from the comparison of our condition with that of others. He that thinks himself poor, because his neighbour is richer ; he that like Cæsar would rather be the first man of a village than the second in the capital of the world, has apparently kindled in himself desires which he never received from nature, and acts upon principles established only by the authority of custom.

OF those adscititious passions, some, as avarice and envy, are universally condemned ; some, as friendship and curiosity, generally praised ; but there are others about which the suffrages of the wise are divided, and of which it is doubted, whether they tend most to promote the happiness, or increase the miseries of mankind.

OF this ambiguous and disputable kind is the love of fame, a desire of filling the minds of others with admiration, and of being celebrated by generations to come with praises which we shall not hear. This ardour has been considered by some, as nothing better than splendid madness, as a flame kindled by pride, and fanned by folly ; for what, say they, can be more remote from wisdom, than to direct

rect all our actions by the hope of that which is not to exist till we ourselves are in the grave? To pant after that which can never be possessed, and of which the value thus wildly put upon it, arises from this particular condition, that, during life, it is not to be obtained? To gain the favour, and hear the applauses of our contemporaries, is indeed equally desirable with any other prerogative of superiority, because fame may be of use to smooth the paths of life, to terrify opposition, and fortify tranquillity; but to what end shall we be the darlings of mankind, when we can no longer receive any benefits from their favour? It is more reasonable to wish for reputation while it may be yet enjoyed, as Anacreon calls upon his companions to give him for present use the wine and garlands which they purpose to bestow upon his tomb.

THE advocates for the love of fame allege in its vindication, that it is a passion natural and universal; a flame lighted by heaven, and always burning with greatest vigour in the most enlarged and elevated minds. That the desire of being praised by posterity implies a resolution to deserve their praises, and that the folly charged upon it, is only a noble and

disinterested generosity, which is not felt, and therefore not understood by those who have been always accustomed to refer every thing to themselves, and whose selfishness has contracted their understandings. That the soul of man, formed for eternal life, naturally springs forward beyond the limits of corporeal existence, and rejoices to consider herself as cooperating with future ages, and as coextended with endless duration. That the censure urged with so much petulance, the reproach of labouring for what cannot be enjoyed, is founded on an opinion which may with great probability be questioned; for since we suppose the powers of the soul to be enlarged by its separation, why should we conclude that its knowledge of sublunary transactions is contracted or extinguished?

UPON an attentive and impartial review of the argument, it will appear that the love of fame is to be regulated, rather than extinguished; and that men should be taught not to be wholly careless about their memory, but to endeavour that they may be remembered chiefly for their virtues, since no other reputation will be able to transmit any pleasure beyond the grave.

IT is evident that fame, considered merely as the immortality of a name, is not less likely to be the reward of bad actions than of good; and that therefore he has no certain principle for the regulation of his conduct, whose single aim is not to be forgotten; and history will inform us, that this blind and undistinguishing appetite of renown has always been uncertain in its effects, and directed by accident or opportunity, indifferently to the benefit or devastation of the world. When Themistocles complained that the trophies of Miltiades hindered him from sleep, he was animated by them to perform the same services in the same cause. But Cæsar, when he wept at the sight of Alexander's picture, having no honest opportunities of action, let his ambition break out to the ruin of his country.

IF, therefore, the love of fame is so far indulged by the mind as to become independent and predominant, it is dangerous and irregular; but it may be usefully employed as an inferior and secondary motive, and will serve sometimes to revive our activity when we begin to languish and lose sight of that more certain, more valuable, and more durable reward, which ought always to be our first hope and

our last. But it must be strongly impressed upon our minds, that virtue is not to be pursued as one of the means to fame, but fame to be accepted as the only recompence which mortals can bestow on virtue; to be accepted with complacence, but not sought with eagerness. Simply to be remembered is no advantage; it is a privilege which satire as well as panegyric can confer, and is not more enjoyed by Titus or Constantine, than by Timocreon of Rhodes, of whom we only know from his epitaph, *that he had eaten many a meal, drank many a flaggon, and uttered many a reproach.*

Πολλὰ φάγων, καὶ πολλὰ πινὼν, καὶ πολλὰ κακ' εἰπὼν
Ἀνδρῶπις, κεῖται Τιμοκρέων Ῥοδίου.

THE true satisfaction which is to be drawn from the consciousness that we shall share the attention of future times, must arise from the hope, that, with our name, our virtues will be propagated; and that those whom we cannot benefit in our lives, may receive instruction from our examples, and incitement from our renown.