

ed by contempt, advice, or reproof, but were resolved to expect at ease the favour of the goddess.

AMONG this gay race I was wandering, and found them ready to answer all my questions, and willing to communicate their mirth: but turning round I saw two dreadful monsters entering the vale, one of whom I knew to be AGE, and the other WANT. Sport and revelling were now at an end, and an universal shriek of affright and distress burst out and awaked me.

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NUMB. 68. SATURDAY, November 10, 1750.

*Vivendum rectè, cum propter plurima, tunc his
Præcipue causis, ut linguas mancipiorum
Contemnas; nam lingua mali pars pessima
servi.* JUV.

THE younger Pliny has very justly observed, that of actions which deserve our attention, the most splendid are not always the greatest. Fame, and wonder, and applause,

^appause, are not excited but by external and adventitious circumstances, often distinct and separate from virtue and heroism. Eminence of station, greatness of effect, and all the favours of fortune, must concur to place excellence in publick view ; but fortitude, and diligence, and patience, divested of their show, glide unobserved through the croud of life, and suffer and act, though with the same vigour and constancy, yet without pity and without praise.

THIS remark may be extended to all parts of life. Nothing is to be estimated by its effect upon common eyes and common ears. A thousand miseries make silent and invisible inroads on mankind, and the heart feels innumerable throbs, which never break into complaint. Perhaps, likewise, our pleasures are for the most part equally secret, and most are born up by some private satisfaction, some internal consciousness, some latent hope, some peculiar prospect, which they never communicate, but reserve for solitary hours, and clandestine meditation.

THE main of life is, indeed, composed of small incidents, and petty occurrences ; of

wishes for objects not remote, and grief for disappointments of no fatal consequence; of insect vexations which sting us and fly away, impertinences which buzz a while about us, and are heard no more; of meteorous pleasures which dance before us and are dissipated, of compliments which glide off the soul like other musick, and are forgotten by him that gave and him that received them.

SUCH is the general heap out of which every man is to cull his own condition: for, as the chymists tell us, that all bodies are resolvable into the same elements, and that the boundless variety of things arises from the different proportions of very few ingredients; so a few pains, and a few pleasures are all the materials of human life, and of these the proportions are partly allotted by providence, and partly left to the arrangement of reason and of choice.

As these are well or ill disposed, man is for the most part happy or miserable. For very few are involved in great events, or have their thread of life entwisted with the chains of causes on which armies or nations are suspended; and even those who seem wholly
 busied

busied in publick affairs, and elevated above low cares, or trivial pleasures, pass the chief part of their time in familiar and domestick scenes; from these they came into publick life, to these they are every hour recalled by passions not to be suppressed; in these they have the reward of their toils, and to these at last they retire.

THE great end of prudence is to give cheerfulness to those hours, which splendour cannot gild, and acclamation cannot exhilarate; those soft intervals of unbended amusement, in which a man shrinks to his own natural dimensions, and throws aside the ornaments or disguises, which he feels in privacy to be useless incumbrances, and to lose all effect when they become familiar. To be happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labour tends, and of which every desire prompts the prosecution.

It is, indeed, at home that every man must be known, by those who would make a just estimate either of his virtue or felicity; for smiles and embroidery are alike occasional,

and the mind is often dressed for show in painted honour, and fictitious benevolence.

EVERY man must have found some whose lives, in every house but their own, was a continual series of hypocrisy, and who concealed under fair appearances bad qualities, which, whenever they thought themselves out of the reach of censure, broke out from their restraint, like winds imprisoned in their caverns, and whom every one had reason to love, but they whose love a wise man is chiefly solicitous to procure. And there are others who, without any show of general goodness, and without the attractions, by which popularity is conciliated, are received among their own families as bestowers of happiness, and revered as instructors, guardians, and benefactors.

THE most authentick witnesses of any man's character are those who know him in his own family, and see him without any restraint, or rule of conduct, but such as he voluntarily prescribes to himself. If a man carries virtue with him into his private apartments, and takes no advantage of unlimited power, or probable secrecy; if we trace him through

through the round of his time, and find that his character, with those allowances which mortal frailty must always want, is uniform and regular, we have all the evidence of his sincerity, that one man can have with regard to another; and, indeed, as hypocrisy cannot be its own reward, we may, without hesitation, determine that his heart is pure.

THE highest panegyrick, therefore, that private virtue can receive, is the praise of servants. For, however vanity or insolence may look down with contempt on the suffrage of men, undignified by wealth, and unenlightened by education, it very seldom happens that they commend or blame without justice. Vice and virtue are easily distinguished. Oppression, according to Harrington's aphorism, will be felt by those that cannot see it; and, perhaps, it falls out very often that, in moral questions, the philosophers in the gown, and in the livery, differ not so much in their sentiments, as in their language, and have equal power of discerning right, though they cannot point it out to others with equal address.

THERE are very few faults to be committed in solitude, or without some agents, partners,

ners, confederates, or witnesses; and, therefore, the servant must commonly know the secrets of a master, who has any secrets to entrust; and failings, merely personal, are so frequently exposed by that security which pride and folly generally produce, and so inquisitively watched by that desire of reducing the inequalities of condition, which the lower orders of the world will always feel, that the testimony of a menial domestick can seldom be considered as defective for want of knowledge. And though its impartiality may be sometimes suspected, it is at least as credible as that of equals, where rivalry instigates censure, or friendship dictates palliations.

THE danger of betraying our weakness to our servants, and the impossibility of concealing it from them, may be justly considered as one motive to a regular and irreproachable life. For no condition is more hateful or despicable, than his who has put himself in the power of his servant; in the power of him whom, perhaps, he has first corrupted by making him subservient to his vices, and whose fidelity he therefore cannot enforce by any precepts of honesty or reason. It is seldom known that authority, thus acquired, is possessed without insolence

insolence, or that the master is not forced to confess, by his tameness or forbearance, that he has enslaved himself by some foolish confidence. And his crime is equally punished, whatever part he takes of the choice to which he is reduced; and he is, from that fatal hour, in which he sacrificed his dignity to his passions, in perpetual dread of insolence or defamation; of a controuler at home, or an accuser abroad. He is condemned to purchase, by continual bribes, that secrecy which bribes never secured, and which, after a long course of submission, promises, and anxieties, he will find violated in a fit of rage, or in a frolick of drunkenness.

To dread no eye, and to suspect no tongue, is the great prerogative of innocence; an exemption granted only to invariable virtue. But guilt has always its horrors and solitudes; and, to make it yet more shameful and detestable, is doomed often to stand in awe of those, to whom nothing could give influence or weight, but their power of betraying.