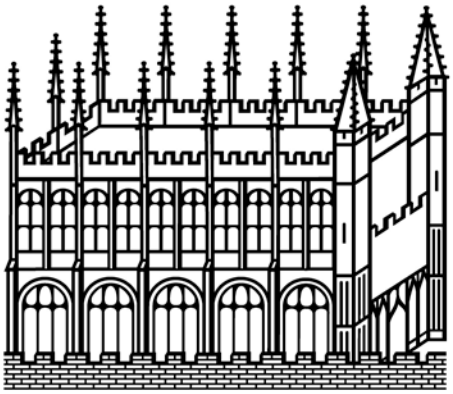

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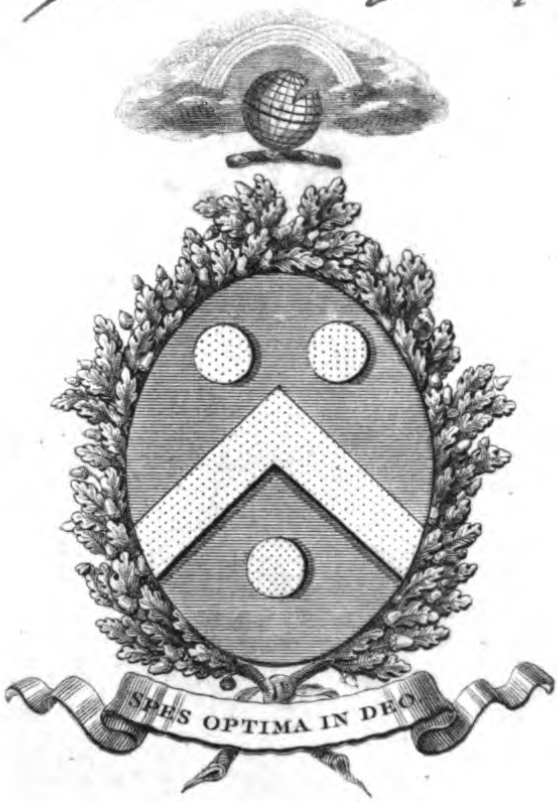

John Thomas Hope.

THE TABLE TALK

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

COMPRISING HIS

MOST INTERESTING REMARKS AND OBSERVATIONS.

COLLECTED BY

JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ. F.R.S.

—" From his cradle
" He was a Scholar, and a ripe and good one:
" And to add greater honours to his age
" Than man could give him, he died fearing Heaven.

SHAKSPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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OF

VOL. II.

TABLE TALK.

LITERATURE.

[CONTINUED].

SPEAKING of the ancient poets, Johnson observed, "Theocritus is not deserving of very high respect as a writer; as to the pastoral part, Virgil is very evidently superior. He wrote when there had been a larger influx of knowledge into the world than when Theocritus lived. Theocritus does not abound in description, though living in a beautiful country; the manners painted are coarse and gross. Virgil has much more description, more sentiment, more of nature, and more of art. Some of the most excellent parts of Theocritus are where Castor and Pollux, going with the other Argonauts, land on the Bebrycian coast, and there fall into a dispute with Amycus, the king of that country;

which is as well conducted as Euripides could have done it; and the battle is well related. Afterwards they carry off a woman, whose two brothers come to recover her, and expostulate with Castor and Pollux on their injustice; but they pay no regard to the brothers, and a battle ensues, where Castor and his brother are triumphant. Theocritus seems not to have seen that the brothers have the advantage in their argument over his Argonaut heroes.—'The Sicilian Gossips' is a piece of merit. Callimachus is a writer of little excellence. The chief thing to be learned from him is his account of Rites and Mythology, which, though desirable to be known for the sake of understanding other parts of ancient authors, is the least pleasing or valuable part of their writings."

"Maittaire's account of the Stephani is a heavy book. He seems to have been a puzzle-headed man, with a large share of scholarship, but with little geometry or logic in his head, without method, and possessed of little genius. He wrote Latin verses from time to time, and published a set in his old age which he called 'Senilia;' in which he shews so little learning or taste in writing, as to make *Carteret* a dactyl. In matters of genealogy it is necessary to give the bare names as they are; but in poetry, and

in prose of any elegance in the writing, they require to have inflection given to them. His book of the Dialects is a sad heap of confusion; the only way to write on them is to tabulate them with Notes, added at the bottom of the page, and references."

Huggins, the translator of Ariosto, and Mr. Thomas Warton, in the early part of his literary life, had a dispute concerning that poet, of whom Mr. Warton, in his 'Observations on Spenser's Fairy Queen,' gave some account, which Huggins attempted to answer with violence, and said, "I will *militate* no longer against his *nescience*." Huggins was master of the subject, but wanted expression. Mr. Warton's knowledge of it was then imperfect, but his manner lively and elegant. Johnson said, "It appears to me, that Huggins has ball without powder, and Warton powder without ball."

Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned Mr. Cumberland's Odes, which were then just published. *Johnson:* "Why, Sir, they would have been thought as good as Odes commonly are, if Cumberland had not put his name to them; but a name immediately draws censure, unless it be a name that bears down every thing before it. Nay, Cumberland has made his Odes subsi-

diary to the fame of another man; they might have run well enough by themselves, but he has not only loaded them with a name, but has made them carry double."

Johnson used at one time to go occasionally to the Green-room of Drury-lane Theatre, where he was much regarded by the players, and was very easy and facetious with them. He had a very high opinion of Mrs. Clive's comick powers, and conversed more with her than with any of them. He said, "Clive, Sir, is a good thing to sit by, she always understands what you say;" and she said of him, "I love to sit by Dr. Johnson, he always entertains me." One night, when 'The Recruiting Officer' was acted, he said to Mr. Holland, who had been expressing an apprehension that Dr. Johnson would disdain the works of Farquhar; "No, Sir, I think Farquhar a man whose writings have considerable merit."

Talking of the farce of 'High Life Below Stairs,' he said, "Here is a farce, which is really very diverting when you see it acted; and yet one may read it, and not know that one has been reading any thing at all."

Johnson, who had done liberal justice to Warburton in his edition of Shakespear, which was published during the life of that powerful

writer, with still greater liberality took an opportunity, in the life of Pope, of paying the tribute due to him, when he was no longer in "high place," but numbered with the dead.

Speaking of Boetius, who was the favourite writer of the middle ages, he said, it was very surprising, that upon such a subject, and in such a situation, he should be *magis philosophus quàm Christianus*.

"Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' (said Johnson), is a valuable work. It is, perhaps, overloaded with quotation. But there is great spirit and great power in what Burton says, when he writes from his own mind." He observed, that it was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise.

Books of Travels having been mentioned, Johnson praised Pennant very highly. Dr. Percy (who was present), knowing himself to be the heir male of the ancient Percies, and having the warmest attachment to the noble House of Northumberland, could not sit quietly and hear a man praised, who had spoken disrespectfully of Alnwick-castle, and the Duke's pleasure-grounds, especially as he thought meanly of his Travels. He therefore opposed Johnson eagerly.—*Johnson*: "Pennant, in what he has said of Aln-

wick, has done what he intended: he has made you very angry."—*Percy:* "He has said the garden is *trim*, which is representing it like a citizen's parterre, when the truth is, there is a very large extent of fine turf and gravel walks." —*J.* "According to your own account, Sir, Pennant is right. It is trim. Here is grass cut close, and gravel rolled smooth. Is not that trim? The extent is nothing against that; a mile may be as trim as a square yard. Your extent puts me in mind of the citizen's enlarged dinner, two pieces of roast-beef and two puddings. There is no variety, no mind exerted in laying out the ground, no trees."—*Percy:* "He pretends to give the natural history of Northumberland, and yet takes no notice of the immense number of trees planted there of late." —*J.* "That, Sir, has nothing to do with the *natural* history: that is *civil* history. A man who gives the natural history of the oak, is not to tell how many oaks have been planted in this place or that. A man who gives the natural history of the cow, is not to tell how many cows are milked at Islington. The animal is the same, whether milked in the Park or at Islington."— *P.* "Pennant does not describe well; a carrier who goes along the side of Lochlomond would describe it better."—*J.* "I think he de-

scribes very well."—*P.* "I travelled after him."—*J.* "And *I* travelled after him."—*P.* "But, my good friend, you are short-sighted, and do not see so well as I do." The company wondered at Dr. Percy's venturing thus. Dr. Johnson said nothing at the time; but inflammable particles were collecting for a cloud to burst. In a little while Dr. Percy said something more in disparagement of Pennant.—*J.* (pointedly) "This is the resentment of a narrow mind, because he did not find every thing in Northumberland."—*P.* (feeling the stroke) "Sir, you may be as rude as you please."—*J.* "Hold, Sir! don't talk of rudeness; remember, Sir, you told me (puffing hard with passion struggling for a vent) I was short-sighted. We have done with civility. We are to be as rude as we please."—*P.* "Upon my honour, Sir, I did not mean to be uncivil."—J. "I cannot say so, Sir; I *did* mean to be uncivil, thinking *you* had been uncivil." Dr. Percy rose, ran up to him, and, taking him by the hand, assured him affectionately, that his meaning had been misunderstood; upon which a reconciliation instantly took place.—*J.* "My dear Sir, I am willing you shall *hang* Pennant."—*P.* (resuming the former subject) "Pennant complains that the helmet is not hung out to invite to the hall of hos-

pitality. Now I never heard that it was the custom to hang out a *helmet.*"—*J.* "Hang him up, hang him up."—*Boswell:* (humouring the joke) "Hang out his skull instead of a helmet, and you may drink ale out of it in your hall of Odin, as he is your enemy; that will be truly ancient. *There* will be 'Northern Antiquities.'" —*J.* "He's a *Whig*, Sir; a *sad dog*, (smiling at his own violent expressions, merely for *political* difference of opinion). But he's the best traveller I ever read; he observes more things than any one else does."

He gave much praise to his friend Dr. Burney's elegant and entertaining Travels, and told Mr. Seward, that he had them in his eye, when writing his "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland."

Dr. Dodd's poem entitled, 'Thoughts in a Prison,' appearing an extraordinary effort by a man who was in Newgate for a capital crime, Mr. Boswell was desirous to hear Johnson's opinion of it. To my surprise (says Mr. B.) he told me he had not read a line of it. I took up the book and read a passage to him.—*Johnson:* "Pretty well, if you are previously disposed to like them." I read another passage, with which he was better pleased. He then took the book into his own hands, and having looked at the

prayer at the end of it, he said, "What *evidence* is there that this was composed the night before he suffered? *I* do not believe it." He then read aloud where he prays for the King, &c. and observed, "Sir, do you think that a man, the night before he is to be hanged, cares for the succession of a royal family? though he *may* have composed this prayer then. A man who has been canting all his life may cant to the last; and yet a man who has been refused a pardon after so much petitioning, would hardly be praying thus fervently for the King."

Mr. Boswell one day asked, "Was not Dr. John Campbell a very inaccurate man in his narrative, Sir? He once told me, that he drank thirteen bottles of port at a sitting."—*Johnson:* "Why, Sir, I do not know that Campbell ever lied with pen and ink; but you could not entirely depend on any thing he told you in conversation, if there was fact mixed with it. However, I loved Campbell: he was a solid orthodox man; he had a reverence for religion. Though defective in practice, he was religious in principle; and he did nothing grossly wrong that I have heard."

Mr. Boswell had lent Johnson, 'An Account of Scotland in 1702,' written by a man of various enquiry, an English Chaplain to a regiment.

stationed there.—" It is sad stuff, Sir, (said the Doctor), miserably written, as books in general then were. There is now an elegance of style universally diffused. No man now writes so ill as Martin's Account of the Hebrides is written. A man could not write so ill if he should try. Set a merchant's clerk now to write, and he'll do better."

" Thomas à Kempis (he observed) must be a good book, as the world has opened its arms to receive it. It is said to have been printed, in one language or other, as many times as there have been months since it first came out. I always was struck with this sentence in it:— 'Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be.' "

He said, the critics had done too much honour to Sir Richard Blackmore, by writing so much against him. In his 'Creation' he had been helped by various wits, a line by Phillips and a line by Tickell; so that by their aid, and that of others, the poem had been made out.

Lord Chesterfield's 'Letters to his Son' (he thought) might be made a very pretty book. Take out the immorality, and it should be put into the hands of every young gentleman. An

elegant manner and easiness of behaviour are acquired gradually and imperceptibly. No man can say 'I'll be genteel.' There are ten genteel women for one genteel man, because they are more restrained. A man without some degree of restraint is insufferable; but we are all less restrained than women. Were a woman sitting in company to put out her legs before her as most men do, we should be tempted to kick them in."

"I read (said he) 'Sharpe's Letters on Italy' over again when I was at Bath. There is a great deal of matter in them."

Johnson usually spoke with contempt of Colley Cibber. "It is wonderful (said he) that a man who for forty years had lived with the great and the witty, should have acquired so ill the talents of conversation: and he had but half to furnish; for one half of what he said was oaths." He, however, allowed considerable merit to some of his comedies, and said, there was no reason to believe that the 'Careless Husband' was not written by himself.—Mr. Davies said, he was the first dramatic writer who introduced genteel ladies upon the stage. Johnson refuted this observation, by instancing several such characters in comedies before his time.—*Davies* (trying to defend himself from a charge of igno-

rance), " I mean genteel moral characters."—" I think (said Mr. Hicky), gentility and morality are inseparable."—*Boswell:* " By no means, Sir: the genteelest characters are often the most immoral. Does not Lord Chesterfield give precepts for uniting wickedness and the graces? A man indeed is not genteel when he gets drunk; but most vices may be committed very genteely: a man may debauch his friend's wife genteely; he may cheat at cards genteely."—*Hicky:* " I do not think *that* is genteel."—*B.* " Sir, it may not be like a gentleman, but it may be genteel."—*J.* " You are meaning two different things. One means exterior grace; the other honour. It is certain that a man may be very immoral with exterior grace. Lovelace, in ' Clarissa,' is a very genteel and a very wicked character. Tom Hervey, who died t'other day, though a vicious man, was one of the genteelest men that ever lived." —*B.* " Cibber was a man of observation?"—*J.* " I think not."—*B.* " You will allow his ' Apology' to be well done."—*J.* " Very well done to be sure, Sir.—That book is a striking proof of the justice of Pope's remark:

" Each might his several province well command,
" Would all but stoop to what they understand."

B. "And his plays are good."—*J.* "Yes; but that was his trade; *l'esprit du corps;* he had been all his life among players and play-writers. I wonder that he had so little to say in conversation, for he had kept the best company, and learnt all that can be got by the ear. He abused Pindar to me, and then shewed me an Ode of his own, with an absurd couplet, making a linnet soar on an eagle's wings. I told him that when the ancients made a simile, they always made it like something real."

Of old Sheridan he remarked, that he neither wanted parts nor literature; but that his vanity and Quixotism obscured his merits. He said, foppery was never cured; it was the bad stamina of the mind, which, like those of the body, were never rectified: once a coxcomb, and always a coxcomb.

When the Rev. Mr. Horne (now Horne Tooke, Esq.) published his 'Letter to Mr. Dunning on the English Particle,' Johnson read it; and though not treated in it with sufficient respect, he had candour enough to say to Mr. Seward, "Were I to make a new edition of my Dictionary, I would adopt several of Mr. Horne's etymologies; I hope they did not put the dog into the pillory for his libel; he has too much literature for that."

He said, that Bacon was a favourite author with him; but he had never read his works till he was compiling the English Dictionary, in which, he said, we might see Bacon very often quoted. He observed, that a Dictionary of the English language might be compiled from Bacon's writings alone, and that he had once an intention of giving an edition of Bacon, at least of his English works, and writing the life of that great man. Had he executed this intention, there can be no doubt that he would have done it in a most masterly manner.

Of his fellow collegian, the celebrated Mr. George Whitefield, he said, "Whitefield never drew so much attention as a mountebank does: he did not draw attention by doing better than others, but by doing what was strange. Were Astley to preach a sermon standing upon his head on a horse's back, he would collect a multitude to hear him; but no wise man would say he had made a better sermon for that. I never treated Whitefield's ministry with contempt; I believe he did good. He had devoted himself to the lower classes of mankind, and among them he was of use; but when familiarity and noise claim the praise due to knowledge, art, and elegance, we must beat down such pretensions." He would not allow much merit to Whitefield's

oratory. "His popularity, Sir, (said he), is chiefly owing to the peculiarity of his manner. He would be followed by crowds were he to wear a night-cap in the pulpit, or were he to preach from a tree."

He said, "John Wesley's conversation is good, but he is never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have out his talk, as I do."

At another time he said, "I have read Dr. Blair's sermon on Devotion, from the text '*Cornelius, a devout man.*' His doctrine is the best limited, the best expressed; there is the most warmth without fanaticism, the most rational transport. There is one part of it which I disapprove, and I'd have him correct it; which is, that 'he who does not feel joy in religion is far from the kingdom of Heaven!' There are many good men whose fear of God predominates over their love. It may discourage. It was rashly said. A noble sermon it is indeed. I wish Blair would come over to the church of England."

He talked of Lord Lyttelton's extreme anxiety as an author, observing, that "he was thirty years in preparing his History, and that he employed a man to point it for him; as if (laughing) another man could point his sense better

than himself." Mr Murphy said, he understood his history was kept back several years for fear of Smollet.—*Johnson:* "This seems strange to Murphy and me, who never felt that anxiety, but sent what we wrote to the press, and let it take its chance."—*Mrs. Thrale:* "The time has been, Sir, when you felt it."—*J.* "Why really, Madam, I do not recollect a time when that was the case."

Lord Lyttelton's Dialogues he deemed a nugatory performance. "That man (said he) sat down to write a book, to tell the world what the world had all his life been telling him."

He attacked Lord Monboddo's strange speculation on the primitive state of human nature; observing, "Sir, it is all conjecture about a thing useless, even were it known to be true. Knowledge of all kinds is good: conjecture as to things useful is good; but conjecture as to what it would be useless to know, such as whether men went upon all four, is very idle."

The conversation turning upon Mr. David Hume's style, Johnson said, "Why, Sir, his style is not English; the structure of his sentences is French. Now the French structure and the English structure may, in the nature of

things, be equally good; but if you allow that the English language is established, he is wrong. My name might originally have been Nicholson, as well as Johnson; but were you to call me Nicholson now, you would call me very absurdly."

Dr. Adams had distinguished himself by an able answer to David Hume's 'Essay on Miracles.' He told Mr. Boswell he had once dined in company with Hume in London; that Hume shook hands with him, and said, "You have treated me much better than I deserve;" and that they exchanged visits. Mr. B. objected to treating an infidel writer with smooth civility. "Where there is a controversy concerning a passage in a classic author, or concerning a question in antiquities, or any other subject in which human happiness is not deeply interested (Mr. B. argues), a man may treat his antagonist with politeness, and even respect; but where the controversy is concerning the truth of religion, it is of such vast importance to him who maintains it, to obtain the victory, that the person of an opponent ought not to be spared. If a man firmly believes that religion is an invaluable treasure, he will consider a writer who endeavours to deprive mankind of it as a *robber;* he will look upon him as *odious,* though the infidel

might think himself in the right. A robber who reasons as the gang do in the 'Beggars' Opera,' who call themselves *practical* philosophers, and may have as much sincerity as pernicious *speculative* philosophers, is not the less an object of just indignation. An abandoned profligate may think that it is not wrong to debauch my wife; but shall I therefore not detest him? and if I catch him in making an attempt, shall I treat him with politeness? No, I will kick him down stairs, or run him through the body; that is, if I really love my wife, or have a true rational notion of honour. An infidel then should not be treated handsomely by a Christian, merely because he endeavours to rob with ingenuity. I do declare, however, that I am exceedingly unwilling to be provoked to anger; and could I be persuaded that truth would not suffer from a cool moderation in its defenders, I should wish to preserve good humour at least, in every controversy; nor indeed do I see why a man should lose his temper while he does all he can to refute an opponent. I think ridicule may be fairly used against an infidel; for instance, if he be an ugly fellow, and yet absurdly vain of his person, we may contrast his appearance with Cicero's beautiful image of Virtue, could she be seen. Johnson coincided with me, and said, 'When

a man voluntarily engages in an important controversy, he is to do all he can to lessen his antagonist, because authority from personal respect has much weight with most people, and often more than reasoning. If my antagonist writes bad language, though that may not be essential to the question, I will attack him for his bad language.'—*Adams:* "You would not jostle a chimney-sweeper."—*Johnson:* "Yes, Sir, if it were necessary to jostle him *down.*"

He censured Lord Kaimes's 'Sketches of the History of Man,' for misrepresenting Clarendon's account of the appearance of Sir George Villiers's ghost, as if Clarendon were weakly credulous; when the truth is, that Clarendon only says, that the story was upon a better foundation of credit than usually such discourses are founded upon; nay speaks thus of the person who was reported to have seen the vision, "the poor man, *if he had been at all waking;*" which Lord Kaimes has omitted. He added, "in this book it is maintained that virtue is natural to man, and that if we would but consult our own hearts we should be virtuous. Now after consulting our own hearts all we can, and with all the helps we have, we find how few of us are virtuous. This is saying a thing which all mankind know not to be true."

" 'The Elements of Criticism,' (said he), is a pretty essay, and deserves to be held in some estimation, though much of it is chimerical." He proceeded: "The Scotchman has taken the right method in his 'Elements of Criticism.' I do not mean that he has taught us any thing; but he has told us old things in a new way."—*Murphy:* "He seems to have read a great deal of French criticism, and wants to make it his own; as if he had been for years anatomising the heart of man, and peeping into every cranny of it."—*Goldsmith:* "It is easier to write that book, than to read it."—*Johnson:* "We have an example of true criticism in Burke's 'Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful;' and if I recollect there is also Du Bos; and Bouhours, who shews all beauty to depend on truth. There is no great merit in telling how many plays have ghosts in them, and how this ghost is better than that. You must shew how terror is impressed on the human heart.—In the description of night in Macbeth, the beetle and the bat detract from the general idea of darkness,—inspissated gloom."

Johnson told Mr. B. that he was glad that he had by General Oglethorpe's means become acquainted with Dr. Shebbeare. Indeed (says Mr. B.) that gentleman, whatever objections were

made to him, had knowledge and abilities much above the class of ordinary writers, and deserves to be remembered as a respectable name in literature, were it only for his admirable 'Letters on the English Nation,' under the name of 'Battista Angeloni, a Jesuit.'"

Johnson and Shebbeare were frequently named together, as having in former reigns had no predilection for the family of Hanover. The author of the celebrated 'Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers' introduces them in one line, in a list of those who "tasted the sweets of his present Majesty's reign." Such was Johnson's candid relish of the merit of that satire, that he allowed Dr. Goldsmith, as he told Mr. Boswell, to read it to him from beginning to end, and did not refuse his praise to its execution.

Mr. Boswell mentioned the very liberal payment which had been received for reviewing; and, as evidence of this, that it had been proved in a trial, that Dr. Shebbeare had received six guineas a sheet for that kind of literary labour. —*Johnson:* "Sir, he might get six guineas for a particular sheet, but not *communibus sheetibus*."—*Boswell:* "Pray, Sir, by a sheet of review, is it meant that it shall be all of the writer's own composition; or are extracts made from the book reviewed, deducted?"—*J.* "No, Sir;

it is a sheet, no matter of what."—*B.* "I think that is not reasonable."—*J.* "Yes, Sir, it is. A man will more easily write a sheet all his own than read an octavo volume to get extracts." To one of Johnson's wonderful fertility of mind, perhaps writing was really easier than reading and extracting; but with ordinary men the case is very different. A great deal, indeed, will depend upon the care and judgment with which the extracts are made. We can, (observes Mr. B.) suppose the operation to be tedious and difficult; but in many instances we must observe crude morsels cut out of books as if at random; and when a large extract is made from one place, it surely may be done with very little trouble. One might, I must acknowledge, however, be led, from the practice of reviewers, to suppose that they take a pleasure in original writing; for we often find, that instead of giving an accurate account of what has been done by the author whose work they are reviewing, which is surely the proper business of a literary journal, they produce some plausible and ingenious conceits of their own upon the topicks which have been discussed.

Again talking of the reviews, Johnson said, "I think them very impartial: I do not know an instance of partiality."—"The Monthly Re-

viewers (said he) are not Deists; but they are Christians with as little christianity as may be; and are for pulling down all establishments. The Critical Reviewers are for supporting the constitution both in Church and State. The Critical Reviewers, I believe, often review without reading the books through; but lay hold of a topick, and write chiefly from their own minds. The Monthly Reviewers are duller men, and are glad to read the books through." Sir Joshua Reynolds said, that he wondered to find so much good writing employed in them, when the authors were to remain unknown, and so could not have the motive of fame.—*Johnson:* "Nay, Sir, those who write in them write well in order to be paid well."

He praised Signior Baretti. "His account of Italy (said he) is a very entertaining book; and, Sir, I know no man who carries his head higher in conversation than Baretti. There are strong powers in his mind: he has not, indeed, many hooks; but with what hooks he has, he grapples very forcibly."

Mr. B. censured a ludicrous fantastick dialogue between two coach-horses, and other such stuff, which Baretti had lately published. Johnson joined, and said, "Nothing odd will do long. 'Tristram Shandy' did not last."—Mr. B. ex-

pressed a desire to be acquainted with a lady who had been much talked of, and universally celebrated for extraordinary address and insinuation. Johnson said, "Never believe extraordinary characters which you hear of people. Depend upon it, Sir, they are exaggerated. You do not see one man shoot a great deal higher than another."—Mr. Burke was mentioned. "Yes, (said Johnson; Burke *is* an extraordinary man; his stream of mind is perpetual." —The Doctor's high estimation of the talents of this gentleman was uniform from their early acquaintance. When Mr. Burke was first elected a member of parliament, and Sir John Hawkins expressed a wonder at his attaining a seat, Johnson said, "Now we who know Mr. Burke, know that he will be one of the first men in this country." And once when Johnson was ill, and unable to exert himself as much as usual without fatigue, Mr. Burke having been mentioned, he said, "That fellow calls forth all my powers. Were I to see Burke now it would kill me." So much was he accustomed to consider conversation as a contest, and such was his notion of Burke as an opponent.

He used frequently to observe, that men might be very eminent in a profession without our perceiving any particular power of mind in

them in conversation. "It seems strange, (said he), that a man should see so far to the right, who sees so short a way to the left. Burke is the only man whose common conversation corresponds with the general fame which he has in the world. Take up whatever topick you please, he is ready to meet you."

Talking of the wonderful concealment of the author of the letters signed *Junius*, he said, "I should have believed Burke to be Junius, because I know no man but Burke who is capable of writing these letters; but Burke spontaneously denied it to me. The case would have been different had I asked him if he was the author; a man so questioned, as to an anonymous publication, may think he has a right to deny it."

However Johnson may have usually talked of Young the poet, yet when he sat, as "an ardent judge zealous to his trust, giving sentence" upon the excellent works of Young, he allowed them the high praise to which they are justly entitled. "The Universal Passion (says he) is indeed a very great performance,—his distichs have the weights of solid sentiment, and his points the sharpness of resistless truth. In his 'Night Thoughts' he has exhibited a very wide display of original poetry, variegated with deep reflec-

tions and striking allusions; a wilderness of thought, in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verse could not be changed for rhyme but with disadvantage. Particular lines are not to be regarded, the power is in the whole, and in the whole there is a magnificence like that ascribed to Chinese plantation, the magnificence of vast extent and endless diversity."

Mr. Boswell goes on to remark, "But there is in this poem not only all that Johnson so well brings in view, but a power of the *pathetick* beyond almost any example that I have seen. He who does not feel his nerves shaken, and his heart pierced by many passages in this extraordinary work, particularly by that most affecting one which describes the gradual torment suffered by the contemplation of an object of affectionate attachment visibly and certainly decaying into dissolution, must be of a hard and obstinate frame. To all the other excellences of 'Night Thoughts' let me add the great and peculiar one, that they contain not only the noblest sentiments of virtue and contemplations on immortality, but the *Christian Sacrifice*, the *Divine Propitiation*, with all its interesting circumstances, and consolations to a wounded spirit,

solemnly and poetically displayed in such imagery and language as cannot fail to exalt, animate, and soothe the truly pious. No book whatever can be recommended to young persons with better hopes of seasoning their minds with *vital religion*, than Young's 'Night Thoughts.'"

Johnson said, that the description of the temple, in 'The Mourning Bride,' was the finest poetical passage he had ever read; he recollected none in Shakespear equal to it. "But, (said Garrick, who was present, all-alarmed for 'the god of his idolatry'), we know not the extent and variety of his powers. We are to suppose there are such passages in his works. Shakespear must not suffer from the badness of our memories."—Johnson, diverted by this enthusiastic jealousy, went on with greater ardour; "No, Sir; Congreve has *nature*," (smiling on the tragick eagerness of Garrick); but composing himself, he added, "Sir, this is not comparing Congreve on the whole, with Shakespear on the whole; but only maintaining that Congreve has one finer passage than any that can be found in Shakespear. Sir, a man may have no more than ten guineas in the world, but he may have those ten guineas in one piece; and so may have a finer piece than a man who has ten thousand pounds; but then he has only one

ten-guinea piece. What I mean is, that you can shew me no passage where there is simply a description of material objects, without any intermixture of moral notions, which produces such an effect. Mr. Murphy mentioned Shakespear's description of the night before the battle of Agincourt; but it was observed, it had *men* in it. Mr. Davies suggested the speech of Juliet, in which she figures herself awaking in the tomb of her ancestors. Some one mentioned the description of Dover Cliff.—*Johnson:* "No, Sir; it should be all precipice, all vacuum. The crows impede your fall. The diminished appearance of the boats, and other circumstances, are all very good description; but do not impress the mind at once with the horrible idea of immense height. The impression is divided; you pass on by computation from one stage of the tremendous space to another. Had the girl in 'The Mourning Bride' said she could not cast her shoe to the top of one of the pillars in the temple, it would not have aided the idea, but weakened it." Again adverting to the passage in Congreve with high commendation, he said, "Shakespear never has six lines together without a fault. Perhaps you may find seven; but it does not refute my general assertion. If I come to an orchard, and say there's no fruit

here, and then comes a poring man who finds two apples and three pears, and tells me, 'Sir, you are mistaken, I have found both apples and pears,' I should laugh at him; what would that be to the purpose?"

Talking of Shakespear's witches, Johnson said, "They are beings of his own creation; they are a componnd of malignity and meanness, without any abilities, and are quite different from the Italian magician. King James says, in his 'Dæmonology,' 'Magicians command the devils; witches are their servants.' The Italian magicians are elegant beings."—*Ramsay:* "Opera witches, not Drury-Lane witches."

"Colman, (said Johnson), in a note on his translation of Terence, talking of Shakespear's learning, asks, 'What says Farmer to this? What says Johnson?" Upon this he observed, "Sir, let Farmer answer for himself: *I* never engaged in this controversy. I always said, Shakespear had Latin enough to grammaticise his English."

The character of Mallet having been introduced, and spoken of slightingly by Goldsmith, Johnson said, "Why, Sir, Mallet had talents enough to keep his literary reputation alive as long as he himself lived; and that, let me

tell you, is a good deal."—*Goldsmith:* "But I cannot agree that it was so. His literary reputation was dead long before his natural death. I consider an author's literary reputation to be alive only while his name will ensure a good price for his copy from the booksellers. I will get you (to Johnson) a hundred guineas for any thing whatever that you shall write, if you put your name to it."

Mr. Boswell mentioned Mallet's tragedy of 'Elvira,' which had been acted the preceding winter at Drury-Lane, and that the Honourable Andrew Erskine, Mr. Dempster, and himself, had joined in writing a pamphlet, entitled 'Critical Strictures,' against it. That the mildness of Dempster's disposition had, however, relented; and he had candidly said, "We have hardly a right to abuse this tragedy; for, bad as it is, how vain should either of us be to write one not near so good!"—*Johnson:* "Why, no, Sir; this is not just reasoning. You *may* abuse a tragedy, though you cannot write one. You may scold a carpenter who has made you a bad table, though you cannot make a table. It is not your trade to make tables."

Of Mr. Mallet he usually spoke with no great respect; he said, that he was ready for any dirty job; that he had wrote against Byng at the in-

stigation of the Ministry, and was equally ready to write for him, provided he found his account in it. "Mallet's Life of Bacon (said he) has no inconsiderable merit, as an acute and elegant dissertation relative to its subject; but Mallet's mind was not comprehensive enough to embrace the vast extent of Lord Verulam's genius and research. Dr. Warburton therefore observed with witty justness, "That Mallet, in his Life of Bacon, had forgotten that he was a Philosopher; and that if he should write the Life of the Duke of Marlborough, which he had undertaken to do, he would probably forget that he was a General."

Lord Hailes had sent Johnson a present of a curious little printed Poem, on repairing the University of Aberdeen, by David *Malloch*, which he thought would please Johnson, as affording clear evidence that Mallet had appeared even as a literary character by the name of *Malloch;* his changing which to one of softer sound, had given Johnson occasion to introduce him into his Dictionary, under the article *Alias*. This piece was, it is supposed, one of Mallet's first essays. It is preserved in his works with several variations. Johnson having read aloud, from the beginning of it, where there were some commonplace assertions as to the superiority of ancient

times ;—" How false (said he) is all this, to say that in ancient times learning was not a disgrace to a peer, as it is now. In ancient times a peer was as ignorant as any one else. He would have been angry to have it thought he could write his name. Men in ancient times dared to stand forth with a degree of ignorance, with which nobody would dare now to stand forth. I am always angry when I hear ancient times praised at the expence of modern times. There is now a great deal more learning in the world than there was formerly ; for it is universally diffused. You have, perhaps, no man who knows as much Greek and Latin as Bentley ; no man who knows as much mathematicks as Newton ; but you have many more men who know Greek and Latin, and who know mathematicks. Mallet, I believe, never wrote a single line of his projected Life of the Duke of Marlborough. He groped for materials ; and thought of it till he had exhausted his mind. Thus it sometimes happens that men entangle themselves in their own schemes."

He allowed high praise to Thomson as a poet ; but when one of the company said he was also a very good man, our moralist contested this with great warmth, accusing him of gross sensuality and licentiousness of manners. " I was (says

Mr. B.) very much afraid, that in writing Thomson's life, Dr. Johnson would have treated his private character with a stern severity, but I was agreeably disappointed; and I may claim a little merit in it, from my having been at pains to send him authentick accounts of the affectionate and generous conduct of that poet to his sisters; one of whom, the wife of Mr. Thomson, schoolmaster at Lanark, I knew, and was presented by her with three of his letters, one of which Dr. Johnson has inserted in his Life."

"Thomson, I think, (said the Doctor), had as much of the poet about him as most writers. Every thing appeared to him through the medium of his favourite pursuit. He could not have viewed two candles burning but with a poetical eye."—"Thomson (he added at another time) had a true poetical genius, the power of viewing every thing in a poetical light. His fault is such a cloud of words sometimes, that the sense can hardly peep through. Shiels, who compiled 'Cibber's Lives of the Poets,' was one day sitting with me. I took down Thomson, and read aloud a large portion of him, and then asked, is not this fine? Shiels having expressed the highest admiration, Well, Sir, (said I), I have omitted every other line."

Talking of the Irish Clergy, he said, Swift

was a man of great parts, and the instrument of much good to his country.

One observation which Johnson makes in Swift's life should be often inculcated : " It may be justly supposed, that there was in his conversation what appears so frequently in his letters, an affectation of familiarity with the great, an ambition of momentary equality, sought and enjoyed by the neglect of those ceremonies which custom has established as the barriers between one order of society and another. This transgression of regularity was by himself and his admirers termed greatness of soul ; but a great mind disdains to hold any thing by courtesy, and therefore never usurps what a lawful claimant may take away. He that encroaches on another's dignity puts himself in his power ; he is either repelled with helpless indignity, or endured by clemency and condescension."

At another time he said, " Swift has a higher reputation than he deserves. His excellence is strong sense ; for his humour, though very well, is not remarkably good. I doubt whether the ' Tale of the Tub' be his ; for he never owned it, and it is much above his usual manner." A person praised Swift's ' Conduct of the Allies ;' Johnson called it a performance of very little ability. " Surely, Sir, (said Dr. Douglas), you

must allow it has strong facts."—*Johnson:* "Why, yes, Sir; but what is that to the merit of the composition? In the Sessions-paper of the Old Bailey there are strong facts. House-breaking is a strong fact; robbery is a strong fact; and murder is a *mighty* strong fact: but is great praise due to the historian of those strong facts? No, Sir; Swift has told what he had to tell distinctly enough, but that is all. He had to count ten, and he has counted it right. Why, Sir, Tom Davies (who was present) might have written the 'Conduct of the Allies.'"

He praised Delaney's 'Observations on Swift;' said that his book and Lord Orrery's might both be true, though one viewed Swift more, and the other less favourably; and that between both we might have a complete notion of Swift.

'The Beggars' Opera,' and tbe common question, whether it was pernicious in its effects, having been introduced, Johnson said, "As to this matter, which has been very much contested, I myself am of opinion, that more influence has been ascribed to 'The Beggars' Opera' than it in reality ever had; for I do not believe that any man was ever made a rogue by being present at its representation. At the same time I do not deny, that it may

have some influence, by making the character of a rogue familiar, and in some degree pleasing."

Of Hoole's 'Cleonice' he said, "The plot is well framed, the intricacy artful, the disentanglement easy, the suspense affecting, and the passionate parts properly interposed."

Buchanan, he said, was a very fine poet; and was the first who complimented a lady, by ascribing to her the different perfections of the heathen goddesses; but that Johnston improved upon this, by making his lady, at the same time, free from their defects.

He dwelt upon Buchanan's elegant verses to Mary Queen of Scots, *Nympha Caledoniæ*, &c. and spoke with enthusiasm of the beauty of Latin verse. "All the modern languages (said he) cannot furnish so melodious a line as

"Formosam resonare doces Amarillida silvas."

"Buchanan (he observed) has fewer *centos* than any modern Latin poet. He not only has great knowledge of the Latin language, but was a great poetical genius. Both the Scaligers praise him."

Mrs. Thrale once disputed with Johnson on the merit of Prior. He attacked him powerfully; said he wrote of love like a man who

had never felt it: his love verses were college verses; and he repeated the song 'Alexis shunn'd his Fellow Swains," &c. in so ludicrous a manner, as to make all the company wonder how any one could have been pleased with such fantastical stuff. Mrs. Thrale stood to her guns with great courage in defence of amorous ditties, which Johnson despised, till he at last silenced her by saying, "My dear Lady, talk no more of this. Nonsense can be defended but by nonsense."

A proposition which had been agitated, that monuments to eminent persons should, for the time to come, be erected in St. Paul's church as well as in Westminster Abbey, was mentioned; and it was asked, who should be honoured by having his monument first erected there? Somebody suggested Pope.—*Johnson:* "Why, Sir, as Pope was a Roman Catholick, I would not have his to be first. I think Milton's rather should have the precedence. I think more highly of him now than I did at twenty. There is more thinking in him and in Butler, than in any of our poets."

It was a lively saying of Dr. Johnson to Miss Hannah More, who had expressed a wonder, that the poet who had written 'Paradise Lost' should write such poor Sonnets: "Milton,

Madam, was a genius that could cut a Colossus from a rock; but could not carve heads upon cherry-stones."

He censured Ruffhead's Life of Pope; and said, "he knew nothing of Pope, and nothing of poetry." He praised Dr. Joseph Warton's Essay on Pope; but said, he supposed we should have no more of it, as the author had not been able to persuade the world to think of Pope as he did.—*Boswell:* "Why, Sir, should that prevent him from continuing his work? He is an ingenious counsel, who has made the most of his cause; he is not obliged to gain it."—*Johnson:* "But, Sir, there is a difference when the cause is of a man's own making."

Mr. Boswell told Johnson, that Pope and Dryden had been thus distinguished by a foreign writer: "Pope drives a handsome chariot, with a couple of neat trim nags; Dryden a coach, and six stately horses."—*J.* "Why, Sir, the truth is, they both drive coaches and six; but Dryden's horses are either galloping or stumbling: Pope's go at a steady even trot."

Johnson said, Pope's characters of men were admirably drawn, those of women not so well. He repeated, in his forcible melodious man-

ner, the concluding lines of the Dunciad.—While he was talking loudly in praise of those lines, one of the company ventured to say, "Too fine for such a poem: a poem on what?" —*Johnson:* (with a disdainful look), "Why, on *dunces*. It was worth while being a dunce then. Ah, Sir, hadst *thou* lived in those days! It is not worth while being a dunce now, when there are no wits." Bickerstaff observed, as a peculiar circumstance, that Pope's fame was higher when he was alive than it was then. Johnson said, his Pastorals were poor things, though the versification was fine. He told us, with high satisfaction, the anecdote of Pope's enquiring who was the author of his 'London,' and saying he will be soon *deterré*. He observed, that in Dryden's poetry there were passages drawn from a profundity which Pope could never reach. He repeated some fine lines on love by the former (which I have now forgotten), and gave great applause to the character of Zimri. Goldsmith said, that Pope's character of Addison shewed a deep knowledge of the human heart.

"In the year 1763 (says Mr. Boswell, addressing himself to Dr. Johnson), being at London, I was carried by Dr. John Blair, Prebendary of Westminster, to dine at old Lord

Bathurst's; where we found the late Mr. Mallet, Sir James Porter, who had been ambassador at Constantinople, the late Dr. Macaulay, and two or three more. The conversation turning on Mr. Pope, Lord Bathurst told us, that 'The Essay on Man' was originally composed by Lord Bolingbroke in prose, and that Mr. Pope did no more than put it into verse: that he had read Lord Bolingbroke's manuscript in his own hand-writing; and remembered well, that he was at a loss whether most to admire the elegance of Lord Bolingbroke's prose, or the beauty of Mr. Pope's verse. When Lord Bathurst told this, Mr. Mallet bade me attend, and remember this remarkable piece of information; as, by the course of nature, I might survive his Lordship, and be a witness of his having said so. The conversation was indeed too remarkable to be forgotten. A few days after, meeting with you, who were then also at London, you will remember that I mentioned to you what had passed on this subject, as I was much struck with this anecdote. But what ascertains my recollection of it beyond doubt is, that being accustomed to keep a journal of what passed when I was at London, which I wrote out every evening, I find the particulars of the above information, just as I have now

given them, distinctly marked; and am thence enabled to fix this conversation to have passed on Friday, the 22d of April, 1763."

Johnson said, "Depend upon it, Sir, this is too strongly stated. Pope may have had from Bolingbroke the philosophic stamina of his Essay; and admitting this to be true, Lord Bathurst did not intentionally falsify. But the thing is not true in the latitude that Blair seems to imagine; we are sure that the poetical imagery, which makes a great part of the poem, was Pope's own. It is amazing, Sir, what deviations there are from precise truth, in the account which is given of almost every thing. I once told Mrs. Thrale, 'You have so little anxiety about truth, that you never tax your memory with the exact thing.' Now what is the use of the memory to truth, if one is careless of exactness? Lord Hailes's 'Annals of Scotland' are very exact; but they contain mere dry particulars. They are to be considered as a dictionary. You know such things are there; and may be looked at when you please. Robertson paints; but the misfortune is, you are sure he does not know the people whom he paints; so you cannot suppose a likeness.—Characters should never be given by an historian, unless he knew the people whom he describes, or copies from those who knew them."

Mr. Boswell also relates (though not on the authority of his journal), that in the same conversation he took notice of a report which had been sometimes propagated, that he did not understand Greek. Lord Bathurst said, that he knew that to be false: for that part of the Iliad was translated by Mr. Pope in his house in the country; and that in the mornings when they assembled at breakfast, Mr. Pope used frequently to repeat, with great rapture, the Greek lines which he had been translating, and then to give them his version of them, and to compare them together.

Mr. Beauclerk one day repeated to Dr. Johnson, Pope's lines,

> 'Let modest Foster, if he will, excel
> 'Ten metropolitans in preaching well.'

Then asked the Doctor, "Why did Pope say this?"—*Johnson:* "Sir, he hoped it would vex somebody."

Talking of the minuteness with which people will often record the sayings of eminent persons, a story was told, that when Pope was on a visit to Spence at Oxford, as they looked from the window they saw a gentleman commoner, who was just come in from riding, amusing himself with whipping at a post. Pope took occasion to say, "that young gentleman seems to have

little to do." Mr. Beauclerk observed, "Then, to be sure, Spence turned round and wrote that down; and went on to say to Dr. Johnson, 'Pope, Sir, would have said the same of you, if he had seen you distilling.'"—*Johnson:* "Sir, if Pope had told me of my distilling, I would have told him of his grotto."—Mr. Ramsay said, "I am old enough to have been a contemporary of Pope. His poetry was highly admired in his life-time, more a great deal than after his death."—*J.* "Sir; it has not been less admired after his death; it has only not been as much talked of; but that is owing to its being now more distant, and people having other writings to talk of. Virgil is less talked of than Pope, and Homer is less talked of than Virgil; but they are not less admired. We must read what the world reads at the moment. It has been maintained that this superfœtation, this teeming of the press in modern times, is prejudicial to good literature, because it obliges us to read so much of what is of inferior value, in order to be in the fashion; so that better works are neglected for want of time, because a man will have more gratification of his vanity in conversation from having read modern books, than from having read the best works of antiquity. But it must be considered, that we have

now more knowledge generally diffused; all our ladies read now, which is a great extension. Modern writers are the moons of literature; they shine with reflected light, with light borrowed from the ancients. Greece appears to me to be the fountain of knowledge; Rome of elegance."—*Ramsay:* "I suppose Homer's 'Iliad' to be a collection of pieces which had been written before his time. I should like to see a translation of it in poetical prose, like the book of Ruth or Job."—*Robertson:* "Would you, Dr. Johnson, who are master of the English language, but try your hand upon a part of it."—*J.* "Sir, you could not read it without the pleasure of verse."

On another occasion, Johnson said, "Sir, a thousand years may elapse before there shall appear another man with a power of versification equal to that of Pope." That power must undoubtedly be allowed its due share in enhancing the value of his captivating composition.

He said, that the dispute as to the comparative excellence of Homer or Virgil, was inaccurate. We must consider (said he) whether Homer was not the greatest poet, though Virgil may have produced the finest poem. Virgil was indebted to Homer for the whole invention

of the structure of an epic poem, and for many of his beauties."

Mr. Boswell one day found fault with Foote, for indulging his talent of ridicule at the expence of his visitors, which he colloquially termed making fools of his company.—*Johnson:* "Why, Sir, when you go to see Foote, you do not go to see a saint; you go to see a man who will be entertained at your house, and then bring you on a public stage; who will entertain you at his house for the very purpose of bringing you on a public stage. Sir, he does not make fools of his company; they whom he exposes are fools already: he only brings them into action."—*Boswell:* "Foote has a great deal of humour."—*J.* "Yes, Sir."—*B.* "He has a singular talent of exhibiting character."—*J.* "Sir, it is not a talent; it is a vice; it is what others abstain from. It is not comedy, which exhibits the character of a species, as that of a miser gathered from many misers: it is farce, which exhibits individuals."—*B.* "Did not he think of exhibiting you, Sir?"—*J.* "Sir, fear restrained him; he knew I would have broken his bones. I would have saved him the trouble of cutting off a leg; I would not have left him a leg to cut off?"—*B.* "Pray, Sir, is not Foote an infidel?"—*J.* "I do not know, Sir,

that the fellow is an infidel; but if he be an infidel, he is an infidel as a dog is an infidel; that is to say, he has never thought upon the subject."—*B.* "I suppose, Sir, he has thought superficially, and seized the first notions which occurred to his mind."—*J.* "Why then, Sir, still he is like a dog, that snatches the piece next him. Did you never observe that dogs have not the power of comparing? A dog will take a small bit of meat as readily as a large, when both are before him."

Johnson said, "Foote was not a good mimic." One of the company added, "A merry Andrew, a buffoon."—*J.* "But he has wit too, and is not deficient in ideas, or in fertility and variety of imagery, and not empty of reading; he has knowledge enough to fill up his part. One species of wit he has in an eminent degree, that of escape. You drive him into a corner with both hands; but he's gone, Sir, when you think you have got him, like an animal that jumps over your head. Then he has a great range for wit; he never lets truth stand between him and a jest, and he is sometimes mighty coarse. Garrick is under many restraints from which Foote is free."—*Wilkes:* "Garrick's wit is more like Lord Chesterfield's."—*J.* "The first time I was in company with Foote was at Fitz-

herbert's. Having no good opinion of the fellow, I was resolved not to be pleased; and it is very difficult to please a man against his will. I went on eating my dinner pretty sullenly, affecting not to mind him; but the dog was so very comical, that I was obliged to lay down my knife and fork, throw myself back upon my chair, and fairly laugh it out. No, Sir, he was irresistible. He upon one occasion experienced, in an extraordinary degree, the efficacy of his powers of entertaining. Amongst the many and various modes which he tried of getting money, he became a partner with a small-beer brewer, and he was to have a share of the profits for procuring customers amongst his numerous acquaintance.—Fitzherbert was one who took his small-beer; but it was so bad that the servants resolved not to drink it. They were at some loss how to notify their resolution, being afraid of offending their master, who they knew liked Foote much as a companion. At last they fixed upon a little black boy, who was rather a favourite, to be their deputy, and deliver their remonstrance; and having invested him with the whole authority of the kitchen, he was to inform Mr. Fitzherbert, upon a certain day, that they would drink Foote's small-beer no longer. On that day Foote happened to dine at Fitzher-

bert's, and this boy served at table; he was so delighted with Foote's stories, and merriment, and grimace, that when he went down stairs he told them, 'This is the finest man I have ever seen. I will not deliver your message.' I will drink his small-beer.'" Somebody observed that Garrick could not have done this.—*Wilkes:* "Garrick would have made the small-beer still smaller. He is now leaving the stage; but he will play *Scrub* all his life."—I knew (says Mr. Boswell) that Johnson would let nobody attack Garrick but himself, as Garrick once said to me, and I had heard him praise his liberality; so to bring out his commendation of his celebrated pupil, I said loudly, "I have heard Garrick is liberal."—*J.* "Yes, Sir, I know that Garrick has given away more money than any man in England that I am acquainted with, and that not from ostentatious views. Garrick was very poor when he began life; so when he came to have money, he probably was very unskilful in giving away, and saved when he should not. But Garrick began to be liberal as soon as he could; and I am of opinion, the reputation of avarice which he has had, has been very lucky for him, and prevented his having many enemies. You despise a man for avarice, but do not hate him. Garrick might have been much better attacked

for living with more splendour than is suitable to a player; if they had had the wit to have assaulted him in that quarter, they might have galled him more. But they have kept clamouring about his avarice, which has rescued him from much obloquy and envy."

Mrs. Thrale praised Garrick's talent for light gay poetry; and, as a specimen, repeated his song in 'Florizel and Perdita,' and dwelt with peculiar pleasure on this line:

"I'd smile with the simple, and feed with the poor."

Johnson: "Nay, my dear lady, this will never do. Poor David! Smile with the simple?—What folly is that. And who would feed with the poor that can help it? No, no; let me smile with the wise, and feed with the rich."—Mr. Boswell says, "I repeated this sally to Garrick, and wondered to find his sensibility as a writer not a little irritated by it. To soothe him, I observed, that Johnson spared none of us; and I quoted the passage in Horace, in which he compares one who attacks his friends for the sake of a laugh, to a pushing ox that is marked by a bunch of hay put upon his horns; '*fœnum habet in cornu.*" "Aye, (said Garrick vehemently), he has a whole *mow* of it."

Soon after the publication of the Dictionary,

Garrick being asked by Johnson what people said of it, told him, that among other animadversions, it was objected that he cited authorities which were beneath the dignity of such a work, and mentioned Richardson. "Nay, (said Johnson), I have done worse than that: I have cited *thee*, David."

Johnson on some occasion observed, Garrick's conversation is gay and grotesque. It is a dish of all sorts, but all good things. There is no solid meat in it; there is a want of sentiment in it. Not but that he has sentiment sometimes, and sentiment too very powerful and very pleasing; but it has not its full proportion in his conversation."

Mr. B. complained that he had not mentioned Garrick in his Preface to Shakespear; and asked him if he did not admire him.—*J.* "Yes, as 'a poor player, who frets and struts his hour upon the stage'—as a shadow."—*B.* "But has he not brought Shakespear into notice?"—*J.* "Sir, to allow that would be to lampoon the age. Many of Shakespear's plays are the worse for being acted. Macbeth, for instance."—*B.* "What, Sir, is nothing gained by decoration and action? Indeed, I do wish that you had mentioned Garrick."—*J.* "My dear Sir, had I mentioned him, I must have mentioned

many more: Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Cibber—nay, and Mr. Cibber too; he too altered Shakespear." —*B.* "You have read his Apology, Sir?"— *J.* "Yes, it is very entertaining. But as for Cibber himself, taking from his conversation all that he ought not to have said, he was a poor creature. I remember when he brought me one of his Odes to have my opinion of it, I could not bear such nonsense, and would not let him read it to the end; so little respect had I for *that great man* (laughing)! Yet I remember Richardson wondering that I could treat him with familiarity."

"Garrick (he observed) does not play the part of Archer in 'The Beaux Stratagem' well. The gentleman should break out through the footman, which is not the case as he does it."

Mr. Boswell dining with Johnson at Mr. Beauclerk's one day with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Jones (afterwards Sir William), Mr. Langton, Mr. Steevens, Mr. Paradise, and Dr. Higgins, mentioned that Mr. Wilkes had attacked Garrick to him, as a man who had no friend. *Johnson:* "I believe he is right, Sir. Οι φιλοι ου φιλος.—He has friends, but no friend. Garrick was so diffused, he had no man to whom he wished to unbosom himself. He found people always ready to applaud him, and that always

for the same thing; so he saw life with great uniformity."—*Boswell:* "Garrick did not need a friend, as he got from every body all he wanted. What is a friend? One who supports you, and comforts you, while others do not. Friendship, you know, Sir, is the cordial drop, 'to make the nauseous draught of life go down;' but if the draught be not nauseous, if it be all sweet, there is no occasion for that drop."—*Johnson:* "Many men would not be content to live so. I hope I should not. They would wish to have an intimate friend, with whom they might compare minds, and cherish private virtues." One of the company mentioned Lord Chesterfield, as a man who had no friend.—*J.* "There were more materials to make friendship in Garrick, had he not been so diffused."—*B.* "Garrick was pure gold, but beat out to thin leaf. Lord Chesterfield was tinsel."—*J.* "Garrick was a very good man, the cheerfullest man of his age; a decent liver in a profession which is supposed to give indulgence to licentiousness; and a man who gave away freely money acquired by himself. He began the world with a great hunger for money; the son of a half-pay officer, bred in a family whose study was to make four-pence do as much as others made four-pence half-penny do; but

when he had got money he was very liberal."—Mr. Boswell animadverted on his eulogy on Garrick, in his 'Lives of the Poets.'—"You say, Sir, his death eclipsed the gaiety of nations."—*J.* "I could not have said more nor less. It is the truth; *eclipsed*, not *extinguished*; and his death *did* eclipse; it was like a storm."—*B.* "But why nations? Did his gaiety extend farther than his own nation?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, some exaggeration must be allowed. Besides, nations may be said, if we allow the Scotch to be a nation, and to have gaiety, which they have not. *You* are an exception though. Come, gentlemen, let us candidly admit that there is one Scotchman who is cheerful."—*Beauclerk*: But he is a very unnatural Scotchman." I however (says Mr. B.) continued to think the compliment to Garrick hyperbolically untrue. His acting had ceased some time before his death; at any rate he had acted in Ireland but a short time, at an early period of his life, and never in Scotland. I objected also to what appears an anticlimax of praise, when contrasted with the preceding panegyric—'and diminished the public stock of harmless pleasure!' "Is not *harmless pleasure* very tame!"—*J.* "Nay, Sir, harmless pleasure is the highest praise. Pleasure is a word of dubious import; pleasure is in general

dangerous and pernicious to virtue; to be able therefore to furnish pleasure that is harmless, pleasure pure and unalloyed, is as great a power as man can possess." This was, perhaps, as ingenious a defence as could be made: still, however (says Mr. B.) I was not satisfied.

His friend Garrick was so busy in conducting the drama, that they could not have so much intercourse as Mr. Garrick used to profess an anxious wish that there should be. There might indeed be something in the contemptuous severity as to the merit of acting, which his old preceptor nourished in himself, that would mortify Garrick after the great applause he received from the audience. For though Johnson said of him, "Sir, a man who has a nation to admire him every night, may well be expected to be somewhat elated;" yet he would treat theatrical matters with a ludicrous slight. He said one evening, "I met David coming off the stage, drest in a woman's riding-hood, when he acted in 'The Wonder;' I came full upon him, and I believe he was not pleased."

Sir Joshua Reynolds observed with great truth, that Johnson considered Garrick to be as it were his *property*. He would allow no man either to blame or to praise Garrick in his presence, without contradicting him.

Goldsmith, in his diverting simplicity, complained one day, in a mixed company, of Lord Camden. "I met him (said he) at Lord Clare's house in the country, and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man." The company having laughed heartily, Johnson stood forth in defence of his friend. "Nay, gentlemen, (said he), Dr. Goldsmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith; and I think it is much against Lord Camden that he neglected him."

Nor could he patiently endure to hear that such respect as he thought due only to higher intellectual qualities, should be bestowed on men of slighter, though perhaps more amusing talents. I told him (says Mr. B.) that one morning, when I went to breakfast with Garrick, who was very vain of his intimacy with Lord Camden, he accosted me thus:—"Pray now, did you?—did you meet a little lawyer turning the corner, eh?"—"No, Sir, (said I); pray what do you mean by the question?"—"Why, (replied Garrick, with an affected indifference, yet as if standing on tip-toe), Lord Camden has this moment left me. We have had a long walk together."—*J.* "Well, Sir, Garrick talked very properly. Lord Camden

was a little lawyer, to be associating so familiarly with a player."

Mrs. Montagu, a lady distinguished for having written an Essay on Shakespear, being mentioned, Sir Joshua Reynolds said, "I think that essay does her honour."—*Johnson:* "Yes, Sir, it does *her* honour; but it would do nobody else honour. I have, indeed, not read it all. But when I take up the end of a web, and find it packthread, I do not expect by looking further to find embroidery. Sir, I will venture to say, there is not one sentence of true criticism in her book."—*Garrick:* "But, Sir, surely it shews how much a certain French writer has mistaken Shakespear, which nobody else has done."—*J.* "Sir, nobody else has thought it worth while; and what merit is there in that? You may as well praise a schoolmaster for whipping a boy who has construed ill. No, Sir, there is no real criticism in it; none shewing the beauty of thought, as formed on the workings of the human heart."

He said that he had given Mrs. Montagu a catalogue of all Daniel Defoe's works of imagination; most, if not all of which, as well as of his other works, he enumerated; allowing a considerable share of merit to a man who, bred

a tradesman, had written so variously and so well. Indeed his 'Robinson Crusoe' is enough of itself to establish his reputation.

It always appeared, that he estimated the compositions of Richardson too highly, and that he had an unreasonable prejudice against Fielding. In comparing those two writers, he used this expression: "that there was as great a difference between them as between a man who knew how a watch was made, and a man who could tell the hour by looking on the dial-plate." This was a short and figurative state of his distinction between drawing characters of nature and characters only of manners. "But (says Mr. B.) I cannot help being of opinion, that the neat watches of Fielding are as well constructed as the large clocks of Richardson, and that his dial-plates are brighter. Fielding's characters, though they do not expand themselves so widely in dissertation, are as just pictures of human nature, and I will venture to say, have more striking features and nicer touches of the pencil; and though Johnson used to quote with approbation a saying of Richardson's, 'that the virtues of Fielding's heroes were the vices of a truly good man,' I will venture to add, that the moral tendency of Fielding's writings, though it does not encourage a strained and

rarely possible virtue, is ever favourable to honour and honesty, and cherishes the benevolent and generous affections. He, who is as good as Fielding would make him, is an amiable member of society, and may be led on by more regulated instructors to a high state of ethical perfection."

Johnson at another time said, "Sir Francis Wronghead is a character of manners, though drawn with great humour." He then repeated very happily all Sir Francis's credulous account to Manly, of his being with "the great man," and securing a place. Being asked if 'The Suspicious Husband' did not furnish a well drawn character, that of Ranger, Johnson said, "No, Sir; Ranger is just a rake, a mere rake, and a lively young fellow, but no *character*."

Richardson had little conversation, except about his own works, of which Sir Joshua Reynolds said he was always willing to talk, and glad to have them introduced. Johnson when he carried Mr. Langton to see him, professed that he could bring him out into conversation, and used this allusive expression, "Sir, I can make him *rear*;" but he failed, for in that interview Richardson said little else than that there lay in the room a translation into German of his 'Clarissa.'

Talking of some of the modern plays, Johnson said, 'False Delicacy' was totally void of character. He praised Goldsmith's 'Good Natured Man;' said it was the best comedy that had appeared since the 'Provoked Husband,' and that there had not been of late any such character exhibited on the stage as that of Croaker. Mr. B. observed, that it was the Suspirius of Johnson's Rambler. He said, Goldsmith had owned he had borrowed it from thence. "Sir, (continued he), there is all the difference in the world between characters of nature and characters of manners; and *there* is the difference between the characters of Fielding and those of Richardson. Characters of manners are very entertaining; but they are to be understood by a more superficial observer than characters of nature, where a man must dive into the recesses of the human heart."

Of Dr. Goldsmith he said, "No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, nor more wise when he had."

Of Goldsmith's 'Traveller,' he said "There has not been so fine a poem since Pope's time."

At another time, Goldsmith being mentioned, "It is amazing (said Johnson) how little Goldsmith knows. He seldom comes where he is

not more ignorant than any one else."—*Sir Joshua Reynolds:* "Yet there is no man whose company is more liked."—*Johnson:* "To be sure, Sir. When people find a man of the most distinguished abilities as a writer, their inferior while he is with them, it must be highly gratifying to them. What Goldsmith comically says of himself is very true,—he always gets the better when he argues alone; meaning, that he is master of a subject in his study, and can write well upon it; but when he comes into company, he grows confused, and unable to talk. Take him as a poet, his 'Traveller' is a very fine performance; aye, and so is his 'Deserted Village,' were it not sometimes too much the echo of his 'Traveller.' Whether, indeed, we take him as a poet,—as a comick writer,—or as an historian, he stands in the first class."—*Boswell:* "An historian! my dear Sir, you surely will not rank his compilation of the Roman History with the works of other historians of this age?"—*J.* "Why, who are before him?"—*B.* "Hume, Robertson, Lord Lyttelton."—*J.* (His antipathy to the Scotch beginning to rise), "I have not read Hume; but doubtless Goldsmith's History is better than the *verbiage* of Robertson, or the foppery of Dalrymple."—*B.* "Will you not admit the superiority

of Robertson, in whose History we find such penetration—such painting?"—*J.* "Sir, you must consider how that penetration and that painting are employed. It is not history, it is imagination. He who describes what he never saw draws from fancy. Robertson paints minds as Sir Joshua paints faces in a history-piece; he imagines an heroic countenance. You must look upon Robertson's work as a romance, and try it by that standard. History it is not. Besides, Sir, it is the great excellence of a writer to put into his book as much as his book will hold. Goldsmith has done this in his History. Now Robertson might have put twice as much into his book. Robertson is like a man who has packed gold in wool; the wool takes up more room than the gold. No, Sir; I always thought Robertson would be crushed by his own weight,—would be buried under his own ornaments. Goldsmith tells you shortly all you want to know; Robertson detains you a great deal too long. No man will read Robertson's cumbrous detail a second time; but Goldsmith's plain narrative will please again and again. I would say to Robertson what an old tutor of a college said to one of his pupils: 'Read over your compositions, and wherever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine,

strike it out.' Goldsmith's Abridgement is better than that of Lucius Florus or Eutropius; and I will venture to say, that if you compare him with Vertot, in the same places of the Roman History, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying every thing he has to say in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian Tale."

Dr. Goldsmith's play, 'She Stoops to Conquer,' being mentioned, Johnson said, "I know of no comedy for many years that has so much exhilarated an audience, that has answered so much the great end of comedy, making an audience merry."

Johnson observed, that it was long before Goldsmith's merit came to be acknowledged.—That he once complained to him, in ludicrous terms of distress, "Whenever I write any thing, the public *make a point* to know nothing about it;" but that his 'Traveller' brought him into high reputation.—*Mr. Langton:* "There is not one bad line in that poem; not one of Dryden's careless verses."—*Sir Joshua:* "I was glad to hear Charles Fox say it was one of the finest poems in the English language."—*Langton:* "Why was you glad? you surely had no doubt of this before."—*Johnson:* "No;

the merit of 'The Traveller' is so well established, that Mr. Fox's praise cannot augment it, nor his censure diminish it."—*Sir Joshua:* "But his friends may suspect they had a too great partiality for him."—*J.* "Nay, Sir, the partiality of his friends was always against him. It was with difficulty we could give him a hearing. Goldsmith had no settled notions upon any subject; so he talked always at random. It seemed to be his intention to blurt out whatever was in his mind, and see what would become of it. He was angry too when catched in an absurdity; but it did not prevent him from falling into another the next minute. I remember Chamier, after talking with him for some time, said, 'Well, I do believe he wrote this poem himself; and, let me tell you, that is believing a great deal.' Chamier once asked him what he meant by *slow*, the last word in the first line of 'The Traveller,'

'Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow.'

Did he mean tardiness of locomotion? Goldsmith, who would say something without consideration, answered, 'Yes.' I was sitting by, and said, 'No, Sir; you do not mean tardiness of locomotion; you mean that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude.'

Chamier believed then that I had written the line, as much as if he had seen me write it. Goldsmith, however, was a man who, whatever he wrote, did it better than any other man could do. He deserved a place in Westminster-Abbey, and every year he lived would have deserved it better. He had, indeed, been at no pains to fill his mind with knowledge. He transplanted it from one place to another; and it did not settle in his mind; so he could not tell what was in his own books."

"Goldsmith (he said) referred every thing to vanity; his virtues and his vices too were from that motive. He was not a social man. He never exchanged mind with you."

Goldsmith had long a visionary project, that some time or other, when his circumstances should be easier, he would go to Aleppo, in order to acquire a knowledge, as far as might be, of any arts peculiar to the East, and introduce them into Britain. When this was talked of in Dr. Johnson's company, he said, "Of all men, Goldsmith is the most unfit to go out upon such an enquiry; for he is utterly ignorant of such arts as we already possess, and consequently could not know what would be accessions to our present stock of mechanical knowledge. Sir, he would bring home a grinding-

barrow, which you see in every street in London, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement."

Of Goldsmith he on some other occasion said, "he was not an agreeable companion, for he talked always for fame. A man who does so never can be pleasing. The man who talks to unburden his mind is the man to delight you. An eminent friend of ours is not so agreeable as the variety of his knowledge would otherwise make him, because he talks partly from ostentation. Goldsmith too was very envious." Mr. B. defended him, by observing that he owned it frankly upon all occasions.—*J.* "Sir, you are enforcing the charge. He had so much envy that he could not conceal it. He was so full of it that he overflowed. He talked of it to be sure often enough. Now, Sir, what a man avows, he is not ashamed to think; though many a man thinks what he is ashamed to avow. We are all envious naturally; but by checking envy we get the better of it. So we are all thieves naturally; a child always tries to get at what it wants the nearest way; by good instruction and good habits this is cured, till a man has not even an inclination to seize what is another's; has no struggle with himself about it."

He said, "Goldsmith's Life of Parnell is poor; not that it is poorly written, but that he had poor materials; for nobody can write the life of a man, but those who have ate and drunk and lived in social intercourse with him."

Dr. Goldsmith, upon occasion of Mrs. Lennox's bringing out a play, said to Dr. Johnson at the club, that a person had advised him to go and hiss it, because she had attacked Shakespear in her book called 'Shakespear Illustrated.'—*Johnson:* "And did not you tell him that he was a rascal?"—*Goldsmith:* "No, Sir, I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he said."—*Johnson:* "Nay, Sir, if he lied, it is a different thing."—Colman slily said (but it is believed Dr. Johnson did not hear him), "Then the proper expression should have been,—Sir, if you don't lie, you're a rascal."

Goldsmith could sometimes take adventurous liberties with Johnson, and escape unpunished. When he once talked of a project for having a third theatre in London, solely for the exhibition of new plays, in order to deliver authors from the supposed tyranny of managers, Johnson treated it slightingly; upon which Goldsmith said, "Aye, aye, this may be nothing to you, who can now shelter yourself behind the

corner of a pension;" and Johnson bore this with good humour.

Goldsmith, upon being visited by Johnson one day in the Temple, said to him with a little jealousy of the appearance of his accommodation, "I shall soon be in better chambers than these." Johnson at the same time checked him, and paid him a handsome compliment, implying that a man of his talents should be above attention to such distinctions. "Nay, Sir, (said he), never mind that; *nil te quæsiveris extra.*"

LONDON.

London (said Johnson) is nothing to some people; but to a man whose pleasure is intellectual, London is the place. And there is no place where economy can be so well practised as in London. More can be had here for the money, even by ladies, than any where else. You cannot play tricks with your fortune in a small place; you must make an uniform appearance. Here a lady may have well furnished

apartments, and elegant dress, without any meat in her kitchen.

Mr. Boswell once expressing much regret at leaving London, where he had formed many agreeable connexions, "Sir, (said Johnson), I don't wonder at it, no man fond of letters leaves London without regret. But remember, Sir, you have seen and enjoyed a great deal; you have seen life in its highest decorations, and the world has nothing new to exhibit.—No man is so well qualified to leave publick life as he who has long tried it, and known it well. We are always hankering after untried situations, and imagining greater felicity from them than they can afford. Sir, knowledge and virtue may be acquired in all countries."

Talking of the little attachment which subsisted between near relations in London, "Sir, (said Johnson), in a country so commercial as ours, where every man can do for himself, there is not so much occasion for that attachment. No man is thought the worse of here, whose brother was hanged. In commercial countries, many of the branches of a family must depend on the stock; so in order to make the head of the family take care of them, they are represented as connected with his reputation, that, self-love being interested, he may exert him-

self to promote their interest. You have first large circles or clans; as commerce increases, the connexion is confined to families. By degrees that too goes off as having become unnecessary, and their being few opportunities of intercourse. One brother is a merchant in the city, and another is an officer in the guards. How little intercourse can these two have?"

On the state of the poor of London, Johnson said, "Saunders Welch, the Justice, who was once high constable of Holborn, and had the best opportunities of knowing the state of the poor, told me, that I under-rated the number, when I computed that twenty a week, that is above a thousand a year, died of hunger; not absolutely of immediate hunger, but of the wasting and other diseases which are the consequences of hunger. This happens only in so large a place as London, where people are not known. What we are told about the great sums got by begging is not true; the trade is overstocked; and you may depend upon it, there are many who cannot get work. A particular kind of manufacture fails; those who have been used to work at it can, for some time, work at nothing else. You meet a man begging; you charge him with idleness; he says, 'I'm willing to labour. Will you give me work?'—'I cannot.'

—'Why then you have no right to charge me with idleness.'"

Talking of living in the country, he said, "No wise man will go to live in the country, unless he has something to do which can be better done in the country. For instance, if he has to shut himself up for a year to study a science, it is better to look out to the fields, than to an opposite wall. Then if a man walks out in the country there is nobody to keep him from walking in again; but if a man walks out in London, he is not sure when he shall walk in again. A great city is to be sure the school for studying life; and 'The proper study of mankind is man,' as Pope observes."—*Boswell:* "I fancy London is the best place for society; though I have heard that the very first society of Paris is still beyond any thing that we have here."—*Johnson:* "Sir, I question if in Paris such a company as is sitting round this table could be got together in less than half a year. They talk in France of the felicity of men and women living together; the truth is, that there the men are not higher than the women, they know no more than the women do, and they are not held down in their conversation by the presence of women."—Mr. Ramsay said, "Literature is upon the growth, it is in its spring in

France; here it is rather *passée*.—*J.* "Literature was in France long before we had it. Paris was the second city for the revival of letters; Italy had it first to be sure. What have we done for literature, equal to what was done by the Stephani and others in France? Our literature came to us through France. Caxton printed only two books, Chaucer and Gower, that were not translations from the French; and Chaucer we know took much from the Italians. No, Sir, if literature be in its spring in France it is a second spring; it is after a winter. We are now before the French in literature; but we had it long after them."

Johnson was always much attached to London; he observed, that a man stored his mind better there than any where else; and that in remote situations a man's body might be feasted, but his mind was starved, and his faculties apt to degenerate, from want of exercise and competition. No place (he said) cured a man's vanity or arrogance so well as London; for as no man was either great or good *per se*, but as compared with others not so good or great, he was sure to find in the Metropolis many his equals, and some his superiors. He observed, that a man in London was in less danger of falling in love indiscreetly, than any where

else; for there the difficulty of deciding between the conflicting pretensions of a vast va-variety of objects kept him safe. He said, that he had frequently been offered country preferment if he would consent to take orders; but he could not leave the improved society of the capital, or consent to exchange the exhilarating joys and splendid decorations of public life, for the obscurity, insipidity, and uniformity of remote situations.

At another time he observed, "Sir, if you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists."

MANNERS.

JOHNSON had an utter abhorrence of affectation. Talking of old Mr. Langton, he said, "Sir, you will seldom see such a gentleman;

such are his stores of literature; such his knowledge in divinity; and such his exemplary life: and, Sir, (added he), he has no grimace, no gesticulation, no bursts of admiration on trivial occasions; he never embraces you with an overacted cordiality."

Being in company with a gentleman who affected to maintain Dr. Berkeley's strange position, "That nothing exists but as perceived by some mind;" when the gentleman was going away, Johnson said to him, "Pray, Sir, don't leave us; for we may, perhaps, forget to think of you, and then you will cease to exist."

An impudent fellow from Scotland was described to him, as affecting to be a savage, and railing at all established systems:—Johnson observed, "There is nothing surprising in this. He wants to make himself conspicuous. He would tumble in a hog-sty, as long as you looked at him and called to him to come out. But let him alone, never mind him, and he'll soon give it over."

It was added, that the same person maintained that there was no distinction between virtue and vice.—*J.* "Why, Sir, if the fellow does not think as he speaks, he is lying; and I see not what honour he can propose to himself

from having the character of a liar. But if he does really think that there is no distinction between virtue and vice, why, Sir, when he leaves our houses, let us count our spoons. There is (said he) in human nature a general inclination to make people stare; and every wise man has himself to cure of it, and does cure himself. If you wish to make people stare by doing better than others, why, make them stare till they stare their eyes out. But consider how easy it is to make people stare by being absurd. I may do it by going into a drawing-room without my shoes. You remember the gentleman in the Spectator, who had a commission of lunacy taken against him for his extreme singularity, such as never wearing a wig, but a night-cap. Now, Sir, abstractedly, the night-cap was best; but relatively, the advantage was overbalanced by his making the boys run after him."

Talking of our feeling for the distresses of others, Johnson said, "Why, Sir, there is much noise made about it, but it is greatly exaggerated. No, Sir, we have a certain degree of feeling to prompt us to do good; more than that Providence does not intend. It would be misery to no purpose."—*B.* "But suppose now, Sir, that one of your intimate friends were ap-

prehended for an offence for which he might be hanged."—*J.* "I should do what I could to bail him, and give him any other assistance; but if he were once fairly hanged, I should not suffer."—*B.* "Would you eat your dinner that day, Sir?"—*J.* "Yes, Sir; and eat it as if he were eating it with me. Why, there's Baretti, who is to be tried for his life to-morrow, friends have risen up for him on every side; yet if he should be hanged none of them will eat a slice of plumb-pudding the less. Sir, that sympathetic feeling goes a very little way in depressing the mind."

"I told him (says Mr. B.) that I had dined lately at Foote's, who shewed me a letter to him from Tom Davies, telling him that he had not been able to sleep, from the concern which he felt on account of "*this sad affair of Baretti,*" begging of him to try if he could suggest any thing that might be of service; and at the same time recommending to him an industrious young man who kept a pickle-shop."—*J.* "Aye, Sir, here you have a specimen of of human sympathy; a friend hanged, and a cucumber pickled. We know not whether Baretti or the pickle-man has kept Davies from sleep; nor does he know himself. And as to his not sleeping, Sir, Tom Davies is a very

great man ; Tom has been upon the stage, and knows how to do those things : I have not been upon the stage, and cannot do those things."— *B.* " I have often blamed myself, Sir, for not feeling for others as sensibly as many say they do."—*J.* " Sir, don't be duped by them any more. You will find these very feeling people are not very ready to do you good. They *pay* you by *feeling*."

Of the late Mr. Fitzherbert, of Derbyshire, he said, " There was no sparkle, no brilliancy in Fitzherbert; but I never knew a man who was so generally acceptable. He made every body quite easy; overpowered nobody by the superiority of his talents; made no man think worse of himself by being his rival; seemed always to listen; did not oblige you to hear much from him; and did not oppose what you said. Every body liked him ; but he had no friend, as I understand the word, nobody with whom he exchanged intimate thoughts. People were willing to think well of every thing about him. A gentleman was making an affected rant, as many people do, of great feelings about ' his dear son,' who was at school near London ; how anxious he was lest he might be ill, and what he would give to see him.—' Can't you (said Fitzherbert) take a post-chaise, and go to him ?'

This, to be sure, *finished* the affected man, but there was not much in it. However, this was circulated as wit for a whole winter, and I believe part of a summer too; a proof that he was no very witty man. He was an instance of the truth of the observation, that a man will please more upon the whole by negative qualities than by positive; by never offending, than by giving a great deal of delight. In the first place, men hate more steadily than they love; and if I have said something to hurt a man once, I shall not get the better of this by saying many things to please him."

On another occasion Johnson remarked, "That pity is not natural to man. Children are always cruel. Savages are always cruel. Pity is acquired and improved by the cultivation of reason. We may have uneasy sensations from seeing a creature in distress, without pity; for we have not pity unless we wish to relieve them. When I am on my way to dine with a friend, and finding it late, have bid the coachman make haste, if I happen to attend when he whips his horses, I may feel unpleasantly that the animals are put to pain, but I do not wish him to desist. No, Sir, I wish him to drive on."

On a very wet day, Mr. Boswell complained of the disagreeable effects of such weather; but

Johnson said, "Sir, this is all imagination, which physicians encourage; for man lives in air, as a fish lives in water; so that if the atmosphere press heavy from above, there is an equal resistance from below. To be sure, bad weather is hard upon people who are obliged to be abroad; and men cannot labour so well in the open air in bad weather as in good; but, Sir, a smith or a tailor, whose work is within doors, will surely do as much in rainy weather as in fair. Some very delicate frames, indeed, may be affected by wet weather, but not common constitutions."

One evening, when Johnson was somewhat fretful from illness, a gentleman asked him whether he had been abroad that day.—"Don't talk so childishly, (said he); you may as well ask if I hanged myself to-day."—Mr. B. mentioned politicks.—*J.* "Sir, I'd as soon have a man to break my bones as talk to me of public affairs, internal or external. I have lived to see things all as bad as they can be." He some time after observed, "That disease produces much selfishness. A man in pain is looking after ease; and lets most other things go as chance shall dispose of them."

To Mr. Boswell he once said, "you are always complaining of melancholy, and I con-

clude, from those complaints, that you are fond of it. No man talks of that which he is desirous to conceal, and every man desires to conceal that of which he is ashamed. Do not pretend to deny it—*manifestum habemus furem;* make it an invariable and obligatory law to yourself never to mention your own mental diseases; if you are never to speak of them you will think on them but little; and if you think little of them they will molest you rarely. When you talk of them, it is plain that you want either praise or pity; for praise there is no room, and pity will do you no good; therefore, from this hour speak no more, think no more about them."

"I one day asked him (says his Biographer) if he was not dissatisfied with having so small a share of wealth, and none of those distinctions in the State which are the objects of ambition. He had only a pension of three hundred a year. Why was he not in such circumstances as to keep his coach? Why had he not some considerable office?"—*J.* "Sir, I have never complained of the world; nor do I think that I have reason to complain. It is rather to be wondered at that I have so much. My pension is more out of the usual course of things than any instance that I have known. Here,

Sir, was a man avowedly no friend to government at the time, who got a pension without asking for it. I never courted the great; they sent for me; but I think they now give me up. They are satisfied; they have seen enough of me."—Upon my observing, that I could not believe this, for they must certainly be highly pleased by his conversation; conscious of his own superiority, he answered, " No, Sir; great lords and great ladies don't love to have their mouths stopped." This was very expressive of the effect which the force of his understanding and brilliancy of his fancy could not but produce; and, to be sure, they must have found themselves strangely diminished in his company. When I warmly declared how happy I was at all times to hear him—" Yes, Sir, (said he); but if you were lord chancellor it would not be so; you would then consider your own dignity."

He found great fault with a certain gentleman for keeping a bad table. " Sir, (said he), when a man is invited to dinner, he is disappointed if he does not get something good. I advised Mrs. Thrale, who has no card parties at her house, to give sweetmeats, and such good things, in an evening, as are not commonly given, and she would find company

enough come to her; for every body loves to have things which please the palate put in their way, without trouble or preparation." Such was his attention to the *minutiæ* of life and manners.

To the question, whether, when a man knows that some of his intimate friends are invited to the house of another friend, with whom they are all equally intimate, he may join them without an invitation? Johnson answered, "No, Sir; he is not to go when he is not invited. They may be invited on purpose to abuse him" (smiling).

One of the company not being come at the appointed hour, Mr. Boswell proposed, as usual upon such occasions, to order dinner to be served; adding, "Ought six people to be kept waiting for one?"—"Why, yes, (answered Johnson, with a delicate humanity), if the one will suffer more by your sitting down, than the six will do by waiting."

Talking of the mode adopted by some to rise in the world by courting great men, and being asked whether he had ever submitted to it? he said, "Why, Sir, I never was near enough to great men to court them. You may be prudently attached to great men, and yet independent; you are not to do what you think wrong, and you are to calculate, and not to

pay too dear for what you get. You must not give a shilling's worth of court for sixpence worth of good; but if you can get a shilling's worth of good for sixpence worth of court, you are a fool if you do not pay court."

Being asked how far he thought wealth should be employed in hospitality, he answered, " You are to consider, that ancient hospitality, of which we hear so much, was in an uncommercial country, when men being idle, were glad to be entertained at rich men's tables; but in a commercial country, in a busy country, time becomes precious, and therefore hospitality is not so much valued. No doubt there is still room for a certain degree of it; and a man has a satisfaction in seeing his friends eating and drinking around him: but promiscuous hospitality is not the way to gain real influence. You must help some people at table before others; you must ask some people how they like their wine oftener than others. You therefore offend more people than you please. You are like the French statesman who said when he granted a favour, *' J'ai fait dix mécontents et un ingrat.'* Besides, Sir, being entertained ever so well at a man's table, impresses no lasting regard or esteem. No, Sir, the way to make sure of power and influence is, by lending money confi-

dentially to your neighbours at a small interest, or perhaps at no interest at all, and having their bonds in your possession."—*Boswell:* "May not a man, Sir, employ his riches to advantage in educating young men of merit?"—*Johnson:* "Yes, Sir, if they fall in your way; but if it be understood that you patronize young men of merit, you will be harassed with solicitations. Yon will have numbers forced upon you who have no merit; some will force them upon you from mistaken partiality; and some from downright interested motives, without scruple; and you will be disgraced. For hospitality as formerly practised, there is no longer the same reason; heretofore the poorer people were more numerous, and, from want of commerce, their means of getting a livelihood more difficult; therefore the supporting them was an act of great benevolence; now that the poor can find maintenance for themselves, and their labour is wanted, a general undiscerning hospitality tends to ill, by withdrawing them from their work to idleness and drunkenness. Then formerly rents were received in kind, so that there was a great abundance of provisions in possession of the owners of the lands, which, since the plenty of money afforded by commerce, is no longer the case.

" Hospitality to strangers and foreigners in our country is now almost at an end, since, from the increase of them that come to us, there have been a sufficient number of people that have found an interest in providing inns and proper accommodations, which is in general a more expedient method for the entertainment of travellers. Where the travellers and strangers are few, more of that hospitality subsists, as it has not been worth while to provide places of accommodation. In Ireland there is still hospitality to strangers in some degree; in Hungary and Poland probably more."

Johnson's openness with people at a first interview was remarkable. He said once to Mr. Langton, " I think I am like Squire Richard in 'The Journey to London :' *I'm never strange in a strange place.*" He was truly *social.* He strongly censured what is much too common in England among persons of condition—maintaining an absolute silence, when unknown to each other; as for instance, when occasionally brought together in a room before the master or mistress of the house has appeared. " Two men of any other nation who are shewn into a room together, at a house where they are both visitors, will immediately find some conversation. But two Englishmen will

probably go each to a different window, and remain in obstinate silence. Sir, we as yet do not enough understand the common rights of humanity."

An eminent foreigner, when he was shewn the British Museum, was very troublesome with many absurd enquiries. "Now there, Sir, (said Johnson), is the difference between an Englishman and a Frenchman. A Frenchman must be always talking, whether he knows any thing of the matter or not; an Englishman is content to say nothing, when he has nothing to say."

Johnson repeated an observation of Bathurst's, appearing to acknowledge it to be well founded, namely, "that it was somewhat remarkable how seldom, on occasion of coming into the company of any new person, one felt any wish or inclination to see him again."

Talking of that studied behaviour which many have recommended and practised, he disapproved of it, and said, "I never considered whether I should be a grave man, or a merry man, but just let inclination, for the time, have its course."

No man was a more attentive and nice observer of behaviour in those in whose company he happened to be than Johnson; or, however

strange it may seem to many, had a higher estimation of its refinements. Lord Eliot said, that one day when Johnson and he were at dinner at a gentleman's house in London, upon Lord Chesterfield's Letters being mentioned, Johnson surprised the company by this sentence: "Every man of any education would rather be called a rascal, than accused of deficiency in *the graces*." Mr. Gibbon, who was present, turned to a lady who knew Johnson well, and lived much with him, and in his quaint manner, tapping his box, addressed her thus: "Don't you think, Madam, (looking towards Johnson), that among *all* your acquaintance, you could find *one* exception?" The lady smiled, and seemed to acquiesce.

The difference (he observed) between a well-bred and an ill-bred man is this: "One immediately attracts your liking, the other your aversion. You love the one till you find reason to hate him; you hate the other till you find reason to love him."

He said, "General Paoli had the loftiest port of any man he had ever seen." He denied that military men were always the best bred men. "Perfect good breeding, he observed, consists in having no particular mark of any profession, but a general elegance of manners; whereas in

a military man, you can commonly distinguish the *brand* of a soldier, *l'homme d'epée.*"

A foppish physician once reminded Johnson of his having been in company with him on a former occasion. "I do not remember it, Sir." The physician still insisted, adding, that he that day wore so fine a coat that it must have attracted his notice. "Sir, (said Johnson), had you been dipt in Pactolus I should not have noticed you."

Goldsmith one day, to divert some tedious minutes, strutted about, bragging of his dress, and perhaps was seriously vain of it, for his mind was wonderfully prone to such impressions. "Come, come, (said Garrick, who was of the party), talk no more of that. You are perhaps the worst—eh, eh!"—Goldsmith was eagerly attempting to interrupt him, when Garrick went on, laughing ironically, "Nay, you will always *look* like a *gentleman;* but I am talking of being well or ill *drest.*"—"Well, let me tell you, (said Goldsmith), when my tailor brought home my bloom-coloured coat, he said, Sir, I have a favour to beg of you. When any body asks you who made your clothes, be pleased to mention John Filby, at the Harrow, in Water-lane."—*Johnson:* "Why, Sir, that was because he knew the strange colour

would attract crowds to gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and see how well he could make a coat even of so absurd a colour."

Johnson had called twice on the Bishop of Killaloe before his Lordship set out for Ireland, having missed him the first time. He said, "It would have hung heavy on my heart if I had not seen him. No man ever paid more attention to another than he has done to me; and I have neglected him, not wilfully, but from being otherwise occupied. Always set a high value on *spontaneous kindness*. He, whose inclination prompts him to cultivate your friendship of his own accord, will love you more than one whom you have been at pains to attach to you."

Johnson said, that he was once much pleased to find that a carpenter who lived near him, was very ready to shew him some things in his business, which he wished to see: "it was paying (he said) respect to literature."

Of the passion of love he remarked, "that its violence and ill effects were much exaggerated; for who knows any real sufferings on that head, more than from the exorbitancy of any other passion?"

Dr. Taylor's nose happening to bleed at a time

when Johnson was with him, and Taylor saying, that it was because he had omitted to have himself blooded four days after a quarter of a year's interval, Johnson, who was a great dabbler in physick, disapproved much of periodical bleeding; for (said he) you accustom yourself to an evacuation which Nature cannot perform of herself, and therefore she cannot help you, should you, from forgetfulness or any other cause, omit it; so you may be suddenly suffocated. You may accustom yourself to other periodical evacuations, because, should you omit them, Nature can supply the omission; but Nature cannot open a vein to bleed you."— "I do not like to take an emetick (said Taylor), for fear of breaking some small vessels."— "Poh! (said Johnson) if you have so many things that will break, you had better break your neck at once, and there's an end on't. You will break no small vessels," (blowing with high derision).

Having one day asked Mr. Langton if his father and mother had sat for their pictures, which he thought it right for each generation of a family to do, and being told that they had opposed it, he said, "Sir, among the anfractuosities of the human mind, I know not if it may not be one, that there is a superstitious reluctance to sit for a picture."

Talking of a friend of his associating with persons of very discordant principles and character, Mr. B. said, that he was a very universal man, quite a man of the world—*Johnson:* "Yes, Sir; but one may be so much a man of the world as to be nothing in the world. I remember a passage in Goldsmith's 'Vicar of Wakefield,' which he was afterwards fool enough to expunge; 'I do not love a man who is zealous for nothing.'—*Boswell:* "That was a fine passage."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; there was another fine passage too which he struck out: 'When I was a young man, being anxious to distinguish myself, I was perpetually starting new propositions: but I soon gave this over; for I found that generally what was new was false.'" Mr. B. said he did not like to sit with people of whom he had not a good opinion.—*J.* "But you must not indulge your delicacy too much; or you will be a *téte-à-téte* man all your life."

When Mr. Vesey was proposed as a member of the Literary Club, Mr. Burke began by saying that he was a man of gentle manners. "Sir, (said Johnson), you need say no more. When you have said a man of gentle manners you have said enough."

The late Mr. Fitzherbert told Mr. Langton that Johnson said to him, "Sir, a man has no

more right to *say* an uncivil thing, than to *act* one; no more right to say a rude thing to another than to knock him down."

On some occasion he observed, "Though many men are nominally entrusted with the administration of hospitals and other publick institutions, almost all the good is done by one man, by whom the rest are driven on; owing to confidence in him, and indolence in them."

Speaking of a gentleman whose house was much frequented by low company, "Rags (said he) will always make their appearance where they have a right to do it."

Of the same gentleman's mode of living, he said, "The servants, instead of doing what they are bid, stand round the table in idle clusters, gaping upon the guests; and seem as unfit to attend a company, as to steer a man of war."

He remarked, "that a man should pass a part of his time with *the laughers*, by which means any thing ridiculous or particular about him might be presented to his view, and corrected." Mr. Boswell observed, that he must have been a bold laugher who would have ventured to tell Dr. Johnson of any of his particularities.

"There is (said Johnson) a wicked inclina-

tion in most people to suppose an old man decayed in his intellects. If a young or middle-aged man, when leaving a company, does not recollect where he laid his hat, it is nothing; but if the same inattention is discovered in an old man, people will shrug up their shoulders, and say, 'His memory is going.'"

Of a certain noble Lord he said, "Respect him you could not; for he had no mind of his own: love him you could not; for that which you could do with him, every one else could."

Being asked by a young nobleman, what was become of the gallantry and military spirit of the old English nobility, he replied, "Why, my Lord, I'll tell you what is become of it; it is gone into the city to look for a fortune."

Speaking of a dull tiresome fellow, whom he chanced to meet, he said, "That fellow seems to me to possess but one idea, and that is a wrong one."

To a correspondent who had been tardy in his communications, he wrote thus: "Are you playing the same trick again, and trying who can keep silence longest? Remember that all tricks are either knavish or childish; and that it is as foolish to make experiments upon the constancy of a friend, as upon the chastity of a wife. What can be the cause of this second fit

of silence, I cannot conjecture; but after one trick I will not be cheated by another, nor will harass my thoughts with conjectures about the motives of a man who probably acts only by caprice."

He one day observed to Sir William Scott, "The age is running mad after innovation; all the business of the world is to be done in a new way; men are to be hanged in a new way; Tyburn itself is not safe from the fury of innovation." It having been argued that this was an improvement, "No, Sir, (said he eagerly), it is *not* an improvement: they object that the old method drew together a number of spectators; —Sir, executions are intended to draw spectators. If they do not draw spectators, they do not answer the purpose. The old method was most satisfactory to all parties; the public was gratified by a procession; the criminal was supported by it. Why is all this to be swept away?"

He said, "Mankind have a strong attachment to the habitations to which they have been accustomed. You see the inhabitants of Norway do not with one consent quit it, and go to some part of America, where there is a mild climate, and where they may have the same produce from land, with the tenth part of the labour.

No, Sir; their affection for their old dwellings, and the terror of a general change, keep them at home. Thus we see many of the finest spots in the world thinly inhabited, and many rugged spots well inhabited."

"Madness (he said on some other occasion) frequently discovers itself merely by unnecessary deviation from the usual modes of the world. My poor friend Smart shewed the disturbance of his mind, by falling upon his knees, and saying his prayers in the street, or in any other unusual place. Now, although, rationally speaking, it is greater madness not to pray at all, than to pray as Smart did, I am afraid there are so many who do not pray, that their understanding is not called in question."

In a conversation on gaming, a gentleman animadverted on it with severity, "Nay, gentlemen, (said Johnson), let us not aggravate the matter. It is not roguery to play with a man who is ignorant of the game, while you are master of it, and so win his money; for he thinks he can play better than you, as you think you can play better than he; and the superior skill carries it."—*Erskine:* "He is a fool, but you are not a rogue."—*Johnson:* "That's much about the truth, Sir. It must be considered, that a man who only does what

every one of the society to which he belongs would do, is not a dishonest man. In the republic of Sparta it was agreed, that stealing was not dishonourable, if not discovered. I do not commend a society where there is an agreement that what would not otherwise be fair, shall be fair; but I maintain, that an individual of any society, who practises what is allowed, is not a dishonest man."—*Boswell:* "So then, Sir, you do not think ill of a man who wins perhaps forty thousand pounds in a winter?"—*J.* "Sir, I do not call a gamester a dishonest man; but I call him an unsocial man, an unprofitable man. Gaming is a mode of transferring property without producing any intermediate good. Trade gives employment to numbers, and so produces intermediate good."

Talking of a gentleman who was supposed to be gradually involving his circumstances by bad management, Johnson said to Mr. B. "Wasting a fortune, is evaporation by a thousand imperceptible means. If it were a stream, they'd stop it. You must speak to him. It is really miserable. Were he a gamester, it could be said he had hopes of winning. Were he a bankrupt in trade, he might have grown rich; but he has neither spirit to spend, nor resolution to spare. He does not spend fast enough to have pleasure

from it; he has the crime of prodigality, and the wretchedness of parsimony. If a man is killed in a duel, he is killed as many a one has been killed; but it is a sad thing for a man to lie down and die; to bleed to death, because he has not fortitude enough to sear the wound, or even to stitch it up."

Once when checking Mr. Boswell for boasting too frequently of himself in company, he said, "Boswell, you often vaunt so much as to provoke ridicule. You put me in mind of a man who was standing in the kitchen of an inn with his back to the fire, and thus accosted the person next him: 'Do you know, Sir, who I am?' 'No, Sir, (said the other), I have not that advantage.'—'Sir, (said he), I am the *great Twalmley*, who invented the new floodgate box-iron.'—The Bishop of Killaloe, on hearing the story, defended Twalmley, by observing, that he was entitled to the epithet of *great;* for Virgil, in his groupe of worthies in the Elysian Fields—

Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi, &c.

mentions,

Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes."

Mr. Boswell mentioned a young man who

was going to Jamaica with his wife and children, in expectation of being provided for by two of her brothers settled in that island, one a clergyman, and the other a physician. "It is (said Johnson) a wild scheme, Sir, unless he has a positive and deliberate invitation. There was a poor girl, who used to come about me, who had a cousin in Barbadoes, that, in a letter to her, expressed a wish she would come out to that island, and expatiated on the comforts and happiness of her situation. The poor girl went out: her cousin was much surprised, and asked her how she could think of coming. 'Because (said she) you invited me.'—'Not I,' answered the cousin. The letter was then produced. 'I see it is true (said she) that I did invite you; but I did not think you would come.' They lodged her in an out-house, where she passed her time miserably: and as soon as she had an opportunity, she returned to England. Always tell this, when you hear of people going abroad to relations, upon a notion of being well received. In the case which you mention, it is probable the clergyman spends all he gets, and the physician does not know how much he is to get."

On another occasion Johnson observed, "A man is very apt to complain of the ingratitude of those who have risen far above him. A man

when he gets into a higher sphere, into other habits of life, cannot keep up all his former connections. Then, Sir, those who knew him formerly upon a level with themselves, may think that they ought still to be treated as on a level, which cannot be; and an acquaintance in a former situation may bring out things which it would be very disagreeable to have mentioned before higher company, though, perhaps, every body knows of them."—He placed this subject in a new light, and shewed that a man who has risen in the world must not be condemned too harshly for being distant to former acquaintance, even though he may have been much obliged to them. It is no doubt to be wished, (as Mr. B. justly remarks), that a proper degree of attention should be shewn by great men to their early friends; but if either from obtuse insensibility to difference of situation, or presumptuous forwardness, which will not submit even to an exterior observance of it, the dignity of high place cannot be preserved, when they are admitted into the company of those raised above the state in which they once were, encroachment must be repelled, and the kinder feelings sacrificed.

A question was started, how far people who disagree in a capital point, can live in friendship

together? Johnson said they might. Goldsmith said they could not, as they had not the *idem velle atque idem nolle*—the same likings and the same aversions.—*J.* "Why, Sir, you must shun the subject as to which you disagree. For instance, I can live very well with Burke; I love his knowledge, his genius, his diffusion, and affluence of conversation; but I would not talk to him of the Rockingham party."—*G.* "But, Sir, when people live together who have something as to which they disagree, and which they want to shun, they will be in the situation mentioned in the story of Bluebeard, 'you may look into all the chambers but one;' but we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber; to talk of that subject."—*J.* (with a loud voice) "Sir, I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom you differ as to some point; I am only saying that *I* could do it."

On the casuistical question, whether it was allowable at any time to depart from *Truth?* Johnson observed, "The general rule is, that truth should never be violated, because it is of the utmost importance to the comfort of life, that we should have a full security by mutual faith; and occasional inconveniences should be willingly suffered that we may preserve it.

There must, however, be some exceptions.—If, for instance, a murderer should ask you which way a man is gone, you may tell him what is not true, because you are under a previous obligation not to betray a man to a murderer."—*Boswell:* "Supposing the person who wrote *Junius* were asked whether he was the author, might he deny it?"—*J.* "I don't know what to say to this. If you were *sure* that he wrote *Junius*, would you, if he denied it, think as well of him afterwards? Yet it may be urged, that what a man has no right to ask, you may refuse to communicate; and there is no other effectual mode of preserving a secret, and an important secret, the discovery of which may be very hurtful to you, but by a flat denial; for if you are silent, or hesitate, or evade, it will be held equivalent to a confession. But stay, Sir: here is another case. Supposing the author had told me confidentially that he had written *Junius*, and I were asked if he had, I should hold myself at liberty to deny it, as being under a previous promise, express or implied, to conceal it. Now what I ought to do for the author, may I not do for myself? But I deny the lawfulness of telling a lie to a sick man, for fear of alarming him. You have no business with consequences; you are to tell the truth.

Besides, you are not sure what effect your telling him that he is in danger may have. It may bring his distemper to a crisis, and that may cure him. Of all lying, I have the greatest abhorrence of this, because I believe it has been frequently practised on myself."

Johnson's notion of the duty of a Member of Parliament, sitting upon an election-committee, was very high; and when he was told of a gentleman upon one of those committees, who read the newspapers part of the time, and slept the rest, while the merits of a vote were examined by the counsel, and as an excuse, when challenged by the chairman for such behaviour, bluntly answered, "I had made up my mind upon that case;"—Johnson, with an indignant contempt, said, "If he was such a rogue as to make up his mind upon a case without hearing it, he should not have been such a fool as to tell it." —"I think (said a gentleman present) the Doctor has pretty plainly made him out to be both rogue and fool."

Talking of publick speaking, Johnson said, "We must not estimate a man's powers by his being able or not able to deliver his sentiments in public. Isaac Hawkins Browne, one of the first wits of the country, got into Parliament, and never opened his mouth. For my own part,

I think it is more disgraceful never to try to speak, than to try it, and fail; as it is more disgraceful not to fight, than to fight and be beaten."—This argument appeared to Mr. Boswell to be fallacious; for if a man has not spoken, it may be said that he would have done very well, if he had tried; whereas, if he has tried and failed, there is nothing to be said for him. "Why then, (he asked), is it thought disgraceful for a man not to fight, and not disgraceful not to speak in public?"—*J.* "Because there may be other reasons for a man's not speaking in public than want of resolution: he may have nothing to say (laughing). Whereas, Sir, you know courage is reckoned the greatest of all virtues; because, unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other."

The conversation turned upon war. Johnson said, 'Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier, or not having been at sea."—*Boswell:* "Lord Mansfield does not."—*Johnson:* "Sir, if Lord Mansfield were in a company of General Officers and Admirals who have been in service, he would shrink; he'd wish to creep under the table."—*B.* "No; he'd think he could *try* them all."—*J.* "Yes, if he could catch them; but they'd

try him much sooner. No, Sir, were Socrates and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden both present in any company, and Socrates to say, 'Follow me, and hear a lecture in philosophy;' and Charles, laying his hand on his sword, to say, 'Follow me, and dethrone the Czar;' a man would be ashamed to follow Socrates. Sir, the impression is universal: yet it is strange. As to the sailor, when you look down from the quarter-deck to the space below, you see the utmost extremity of human misery; such crowding, such filth, such stench!"—*B.* "Yet sailors are happy."—*J.* "They are happy, as brutes are happy, with a piece of fresh meat, with the grossest sensuality. But, Sir, the profession of soldiers and sailors has the dignity of danger. Mankind reverence those who have got over fear, which is so general a weakness."—*Scott:* "But is not courage mechanical, and to be acquired?"—*J.* "Why, yes, Sir, in a collective sense. Soldiers consider themselves only as parts of a great machine."—*S.* "We find people fond of being sailors."—*J.* "I cannot account for that any more than I can account for other strange perversions of imagination."

His abhorrence of the profession of a sailor was uniformly violent; but in conversation he always exalted the profession of a soldier.

Talking of fame, for which there is so great a desire, Mr. Boswell observed how little there was of it in reality, compared with the other objects of human attention. "Let every man recollect, and he will be sensible how small a part of his time is employed in talking or thinking of Shakespear, Voltaire, or any of the most celebrated men that have ever lived, or are now supposed to occupy the attention and admiration of the world. Let this be extracted and compressed; into what a narrow space will it go!" He then slily introduced Mr. Garrick's fame, and his assuming the airs of a great man.—*Johnson:* "Sir, it is wonderful how *little* Garrick assumes. No, Sir, Garrick *fortunam reverenter habet*. Consider, Sir: celebrated men, such as you have mentioned, have had their applause at a distance; but Garrick had it dashed in his face, sounded in his ears, and went home every night with the plaudits of a thousand in his *cranium*. Then, Sir, Garrick did not *find*, but *made* his way to the tables, the levees, and almost the bed-chambers of the great. Then, Sir, Garrick had under him a numerous body of people; who, from fear of his power, hopes of his favour, and admiration of his talents, were constantly submissive to him. And here is a man who has advanced the dignity of his profession.

Garrick has made a player a higher character.—*Scott:* "And he is a very sprightly writer too."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; and all this supported by great wealth of his own acquisition. If all this had happened to me, I should have had a couple of fellows with long poles walking before me, to knock down every body that stood in the way. Consider, if all this had happened to Cibber or Quin, they'd have jumpt over the moon. Yet Garrick speaks to *us* (smiling)."—*B.* "And Garrick is a very good man, a charitable man."—*J.* "Sir, a liberal man. He has given away more money than any man in England. There may be a little vanity mixed; but he has shewn that money is not his first object."—*B.* "Yet Foote used to say of him, that he walked out with an intention to do a generous action; but, turning the corner of a street, he met with the ghost of a halfpenny, which frightened him."—*J.* "Why, Sir, that is very true, too; for I never knew a man of whom it could be said with less certainty to-day, what he will do to-morrow, than Garrick; it depends so much on his humour at the time."—*S.* "I am glad to hear of his liberality. He has been represented as very saving."—*J.* "With his domestic saving we have nothing to do. I remember drinking tea with him long ago, when Peg Woffing-

ton made it, and he grumbled at her for making it too strong. He had then begun to feel money in his purse, and did not know when he should have enough of it."

Talking of employment being absolutely necessary to preserve the mind from wearying and growing fretful, especially in those who have a tendency to melancholy, a saying was mentioned of an American savage, who, when an European was expatiating on all the advantages of money, put this question, 'Will it purchase *occupation?*'—*Johnson:* "Depend upon it, Sir, this saying is too refined for a savage. And, Sir, money *will* purchase occupation; it will purchase all the conveniences of life; it will purchase variety of company; it will purchase all sorts of entertainment."

Mr. Boswell spoke of the difficulty of rising in the morning. Dr. Johnson told him, "that the learned Mrs. Carter, at that period when she was eager in study, did not awake as early as she wished; and she therefore had a contrivance, that, at a certain hour, her chamber-light should burn a string to which a heavy weight was suspended, which then fell with a strong sudden noise; this roused her from sleep, and then she had no difficulty in getting up." But Mr. B. said, *that* was his difficulty; and wished there

could be some medicine invented which would make one rise without pain, which he never did unless after lying in bed a very long time. Perhaps there might be something in the stores of nature which could do this. He would have something that could dissipate the *vis inertiæ*, and give elasticity to the muscles.

Johnson observed, "that a man should take a sufficient quantity of sleep, which Dr. Mead says is between seven and nine hours." He was told that Dr. Cullen had said, that a man should not take more sleep than he can take at once.—"This rule, Sir, (remarked Johnson), cannot hold in all cases; for many people have their sleep broken by sickness; and surely, Cullen would not have a man to get up after having slept but an hour. Such a regimen would soon end in a *long sleep*."—Dr. Taylor remarked, that "a man who does not feel an inclination to sleep at the ordinary time, instead of being stronger than other people, must not be well; for a man in health has all the natural inclinations to eat, drink, and sleep in a strong degree."

At a supper once, Johnson talked of good eating with uncommon satisfaction. "Some people (said he) have a foolish way of not minding, or pretending not to mind, what they eat. For my part, I mind my belly very studiously, and

very carefully, for I look upon it, that he who does not mind his belly will hardly mind any thing else." He now appeared *Jean Bull Philosophe*, and was, for the moment, not only serious but vehement. "Yet, (adds Mr. Boswell), I have heard him, upon other occasions, talk with great contempt of people who were anxious to gratify their palates; and the 206th number of his Rambler is a masterly essay against gulosity.—His practice, indeed, I must acknowledge, may be considered as casting the balance of his different opinions upon this subject; for I never knew any man who relished good eating more than he did. When at table, he was totally absorbed in the business of the moment: his looks seemed rivetted to his plate; nor would he, unless when in very high company, say one word, or even pay the least attention to what was said by others, till he had satisfied his appetite, which was so fierce, and indulged with such intenseness, that while in the act of eating, the veins of his forehead swelled, and generally a strong perspiration was visible. To those whose sensations were delicate, this could not but be disgusting; and it was doubtless not very suitable to the character of a philosopher, who should be distinguished by self-command. But it must be owned that

Johnson, though he could be rigidly *abstemious*, was not a *temperate* man either in eating or drinking. He could refrain, but he could not use moderately. He told me, that he had fasted two days without inconvenience, and that he had never been hungry but once. They who beheld with wonder how much he ate upon all occasions when his dinner was to his taste, could not easily conceive what he must have meant by hunger; and not only was he remarkable for the extraordinary quantity which he ate, but he was, or affected to be, a man of very nice discernment in the science of cookery. He used to descant critically on the dishes which had been at table where he had dined or supped, and to recollect very minutely what he had liked. I remember, when he was in Scotland his praising '*Gordon's palates*,' (a dish of palates at the Honourable Alexander Gordon's) with a warmth of expression which might have done honour to more important subjects. 'As for Maclaurin's imitation of a *made dish*, it was a wretched attempt.' He about the same time was so much displeased with the performances of a nobleman's French cook, that he exclaimed with vehemence, 'I'd throw such a rascal into the river;' and he then proceeded to alarm a lady at whose house he was to sup, by the following

manifesto of his skill: 'I, Madam, who live at a variety of good tables, am a much better judge of cookery than any person who has a very tolerable cook, but lives much at home; for his palate is gradually adapted to the taste of his cook; whereas, Madam, in trying by a wider range, I can more exquisitely judge.' When invited to dine, even with an intimate friend, he was not pleased if something better than a plain dinner was not prepared for him. I have heard him say on such an occasion, 'This was a good dinner enough, to be sure; but it was not a dinner to ask a man to.' On the other hand, he was wont to express, with great glee, his satisfaction when he had been entertained quite to his mind.—One day when he had dined with his neighbour and landlord in Bolt-court, Mr. Allen, the printer, whose old house-keeper had studied his taste in every thing, he pronounced this eulogy, "Sir, we could not have had a better dinner had there been a *Synod of Cooks.*"

He usually defended luxury: "You cannot (said he) spend money in luxury without doing good to the poor. Nay, you do more good to them by spending it in luxury than by giving it; for by spending it in luxury you make them exert industry, whereas by giving it you keep them idle. I own, indeed, there may be more virtue

in giving it immediately in charity than in spending it in luxury, though there may be pride in that too. Miss Seward, who was present, asked if this was not Mandeville's doctrine of "private vices public benefits."—*Johnson:* "The fallacy of that book is, that Mandeville defines neither vices nor benefits. He reckons among vices every thing that gives pleasure. He takes the narrowest system of morality, monastic morality, which holds pleasure itself to be a vice; such as eating salt with our fish, because it makes it eat better; and he reckons wealth as a public benefit, which is by no means always true. Pleasure of itself is not a vice. Having a garden, which we all know to be perfectly innocent, is a great pleasure. At the same time, in this state of being, there are many pleasures vices, which however are so immediately agreeable, that we can hardly abstain from them. The happiness of Heaven will be, that pleasure and virtue will be perfectly consistent. Mandeville puts the case of a man who gets drunk at an alehouse; and says it is a public benefit, because so much money is got by it to the public. But it must be considered, that all the good gained by this, through the gradation of alehouse-keeper, brewer, maltster, and farmer, is overbalanced by the evil caused to the man and his family by his getting

drunk. This is the way to try what is vicious, by ascertaining whether more evil than good is produced by it upon the whole, which is the case in all vice. It may happen that good is produced by vice, but not as vice; for instance, a robber may take money from its owner, and give it to one who will make a better use of it. Here is good produced; but not by the robbery as robbery, but as translation of property. I read Mandeville forty, or, I believe, fifty years ago. He did not puzzle me; he opened my views into real life, very much. No, it is clear that the happiness of society depends on virtue. In Sparta theft was allowed by a general consent; theft, therefore, was *there* not a crime, but then there was no security; and what a life must they have had when there was no security. Without truth there must be a dissolution of society. As it is, there is so little truth, that we are almost afraid to trust our ears; but how should we be if falsehood were multiplied ten times? Society is held together by communication and information; and I remember this remark of Sir Thomas Brown's, 'Do the devils lie? No; for then Hell could not subsist.'

"Many things which are false are transmitted from book to book, and gain credit in the world. One of these is the cry against the evil

of luxury. Now the truth is, that luxury produces much good. Take the luxury of buildings in London: does it not produce real advantages, in the conveniency and elegance of accommodation, and this all from the exertion of industry? People will tell you, with a melancholy face, how many builders are in gaol. It is plain they are in gaol, not for building; for rents are not fallen. A man gives half a guinea for a dish of green pease. How much gardening does this occasion? how many labourers must the competition to have such things early in the market, keep in employment? You will hear it said, very gravely, 'Why was not the half-guinea, thus spent in luxury, given to the poor?' To how many might it have afforded a good meal. Alas! has it not gone to the industrious poor, whom it is better to support than the idle poor? You are much surer that you are doing good, when you *pay* money to those who work, as the recompense of their labour, than when you *give* money merely in charity. Suppose the ancient luxury of a dish of peacock's brains were to be revived, how many carcasses would be left to the poor at a cheap rate? And as to the rout that is made about people who are ruined by extravagance, it is no matter to the nation that some individuals suffer. When so much general

productive exertion is the consequence of luxury, the nation does not care though there are debtors in gaol; nay, they would not care though their creditors were there too."

MARRIAGE.

To Mr. Boswell on the eve of marriage, Johnson said, "Now that you are going to marry, do not expect more from life than life will afford. You may often find yourself out of humour, and you may often think your wife not studious enough to please you; and yet you may have reason to consider yourself as upon the whole very happily married."

Of marriage in general, he observed, "Our marriage service is too refined: it is calculated only for the best kind of marriages; whereas we should have a form for matches of convenience, of which there are many."

At General Paoli's, a question was one day started, whether the state of marriage was natural to man.—*Johnson:* "Sir, it is so far from being natural for a man and woman to live in a state of marriage, that we find all the motives

which they have for remaining in that connection, and the restraints which civilized society imposes to prevent separation, are hardly sufficient to keep them together." The General said, that in a state of nature a man and woman uniting together, would form a strong and constant affection, by the mutual pleasure each would receive; and that the same causes of dissention would not arise between them, as occur between husband and wife in a civilized state.—*J.* "Sir, they would have dissentions enough, though of another kind. One would choose to go a hunting in this wood, the other in that; one would choose to go a fishing in this lake, the other in that; or, perhaps, one would choose to go a hunting when the other would choose to go a fishing; and so they would part. Besides, Sir, a savage man and a savage woman meet by chance; and when the man sees another woman that pleases him better, he will leave the first."

Yet he well observed, "Marriage is the best state for a man in general; and every man is a worse man, in proportion as he is unfit for the married state.

"Marriage is much more necessary to a man than to a woman; for he is much less able to supply himself with domestic comforts. You

(addressing Mr. Boswell) will recollect my saying to some ladies the other day, that I had often wondered why young women should marry, as they have so much more freedom, and so much more attention paid to them while unmarried, than when married."

He one day remarked, that it was commonly a weak man who married for love. Some one then talked of marrying a woman of fortune; and mentioned a common remark, that a man may be, upon the whole, richer by marrying a woman with a very small portion, because a woman of fortune will be proportionally expensive; whereas a woman who brings none will be very moderate in expences.—*Johnson:* "Depend upon it, Sir, this is not true. A woman of fortune, being used to the handling of money, spends it judiciously; but a woman who gets the command of money for the first time upon her marriage, has such a gust in spending it, that she throws it away with great profusion."

A person was mentioned as having resolved never to marry a pretty woman. Johnson said, "Sir, it is a very foolish resolution not to marry a pretty woman. Beauty is of itself very estimable. No, Sir, I would prefer a pretty woman, unless there were objections to her. A pretty woman may be foolish; a pretty woman

may be wicked; a pretty woman may not like me. But there is no such danger in marrying a pretty woman as is apprehended; she will not be persecuted if she does not invite persecution. A pretty woman, if she has a mind to be wicked, can find a readier way than another; and that is all."

Being asked if he did not suppose that there were fifty women in the world, with any one of whom a man might be as happy, as with any one woman in particular, he said, "Aye, Sir, fifty thousand."—*Boswell:* "Then, Sir, you are not of opinion with some, who imagine that certain men and certain women are made for each other; and that they cannot be happy if they miss their counterparts."—*J.* "To be sure not, Sir. I believe marriages would in general be as happy, and often more so, if they were all made by the Lord Chancellor upon a due consideration of characters and circumstances, without the parties having any choice in the matter."

A gentleman being censured for marrying a second time, as it shewed a disregard of his first wife, he said, "Not at all. On the contrary, were he not to marry again, it might be concluded that his first wife had given him a disgust to marriage; but by taking a second wife he

pays the highest compliment to the first, by shewing that she made him so happy as a married man, that he wishes to be so a second time." —So ingenious a turn did he give to this delicate question. And yet, on another occasion, he owned, that he once had almost asked a promise of Mrs. Johnson that she would not marry again, but he checked himself.

He observed upon the marriage of some one, "He has done a foolish thing; he has married a widow, when he might have had a maid."

A gentleman, who had been very unhappy in marriage, married immediately after his wife died: Johnson said, it was the triumph of hope over experience.

He observed, that a man of sense and education should meet a suitable companion in a wife. It was a miserable thing when the conversation could only be such as, whether the mutton should be boiled or roasted, and probably a dispute about that.

He did not approve of late marriages, observing, that more was lost in point of time, than compensated for by any possible advantages.—Even ill assorted marriages were preferable to cheerless celibacy.

One remark he made, of such moment to the rational conduct of a man in the decline of life,

that it deserves to be imprinted on every mind: "There is nothing against which an old man should be so much upon his guard as putting himself to nurse. Innumerable have been the melancholy instances of men once distinguished for firmness, resolution, and spirit, who in their latter days have been governed like children by interested female artifice."

When a gentleman one day told him he had bought a suit of lace for his lady, he said, "Well, Sir, you have done a good thing and a wise thing."—"I have done a good thing, (said the gentleman), but I do not know that I have done a wise thing."—*Johnson:* "Yes, Sir; no money is better spent than what is laid out for domestic satisfaction. A man is pleased that his wife is drest as well as other people; and a wife is pleased that she is drest."

Talking of a young gentleman's marriage with an eminent singer, and his determination that she should no longer sing in public, though his father was very earnest she should, because her talents would be liberally rewarded, so as to make her a good fortune, it was questioned whether the young gentleman, who had not a shilling in the world, but was blest with very uncommon talents, was not foolishly delicate, or foolishly

proud, and his father truly rational without being mean. Johnson, with all the high spirit of a Roman senator, exclaimed, " He resolved wisely and nobly to be sure. He is a brave man. Would not a gentleman be disgraced by having his wife singing publicly for hire? No, Sir, there can be no doubt here. I know not if I should not prepare myself for a public singer, as readily as let my wife be one."

A young lady who had married a man much her inferior in rank, being mentioned, a question arose how a woman's relations should behave to her in such a situation. While one contended that she ought to be treated with an inflexible steadiness of displeasure, Mrs. Thrale was all for mildness and forgiveness, and, according to the vulgar phrase, " making the best of a bad bargain." Johnson said, " Madam, we must distinguish. Were I a man of rank, I would not let a daughter starve who had made a mean marriage; but having voluntarily degraded herself from the station which she was originally entitled to hold, I would support her only in that which she herself had chosen; and would not put her on a level with my other daughters. You are to consider, Madam, that it is our duty to maintain the subordination of civilized so-

ciety; and when there is a gross and shameful deviation from rank, it should be punished so as to deter others from the same perversion."

A gentleman talked to him of a lady whom he greatly admired and wished to marry, but was afraid of her superiority of talents. "Sir, (said he), you need not be afraid; marry her. Before a year goes about, you'll find her reason much weaker, and her wit not so bright." Yet the gentleman may be justified in his apprehension by one of Dr. Johnson's admirable sentences in his life of Waller: "He doubtless praised many whom he would have been afraid to marry; and perhaps married one whom he would have been ashamed to praise. Many qualities contribute to domestic happiness, upon which poetry has no colours to bestow; and many airs and sallies may delight imagination, which he who flatters them can never approve."

"Supposing (said he) a wife to be of a studious or argumentative turn, it would be very troublesome; for instance—if a woman should continually dwell upon the subject of the Arian heresy."

He expressed his opinion, that "a man has a very bad chance for happiness in that state, unless he marries a woman of very strong and fixed principles of religion."

He maintained, contrary to the common notion, that a woman would not be the worse wife for being learned.

Talking of the heinousness of the crime of adultery, by which the peace of families was destroyed, he said, "Confusion of progeny constitutes the essence of the crime; and therefore a woman who breaks her marriage vows is much more criminal than a man who does it. A man, to be sure, is criminal in the sight of GOD; but he does not do his wife a very material injury, if he does not insult her; if, for instance, from mere wantonness of appetite, he steals privately to her chamber-maid. Sir, a wife ought not greatly to resent this. I would not receive home a daughter who had run away from her husband on that account. A wife should study to reclaim her husband by more attention to please him. Sir, a man will not, once in a hundred instances, leave his wife and go to a harlot, if his wife has not been negligent of pleasing."

Here he discovered that acute discrimination, that solid judgment, and that knowledge of human nature, for which he was upon all occasions remarkable. Taking care to keep in view the moral and religious duty, as understood in our nation, he shewed clearly, from reason and

good sense, the greater degree of culpability in the one sex deviating from it than the other: and, at the same time, inculcated a very useful lesson, as to *the way to keep him.*

Being asked, if it was not hard that one deviation from chastity should absolutely ruin a young woman?—*Johnson:* "Why, no, Sir; it is the great principle which she is taught. When she has given up that principle, she has given up every notion of female honour and virtue, which are all included in chastity."

"I mentioned to him (says Mr. Boswell) a dispute between a friend of mine and his lady, concerning conjugal infidelity, which my friend had maintained was by no means so bad in the husband as in the wife. "Your friend was in the right, Sir, (said Johnson). Between a man and his Maker it is a different question; but between a man and his wife, a husband's infidelity is nothing. They are connected by children, by fortune, by serious considerations of community. Wise married women don't trouble themselves about the infidelity of their husbands."—*Boswell:* "To be sure there is a great difference between the offence of infidelity in a man and that of his wife."—*J.* "The difference is boundless. The man imposes no bastards upon his wife."

" Here (Mr. B. observes) it may be questioned, whether Johnson was entirely in the right. It will hardly be controverted, that the difference in the degree of criminality is very great on account of the consequences; but still it may be maintained, that, independent of moral obligation, infidelity is by no means a light offence in a husband, because it must hurt a delicate attachment, in which a mutual constancy is implied, with such refined sentiments as Massinger has exhibited in his play of 'The Picture.' Johnson probably at another time would have admitted this opinion. And let it be kept in remembrance, that he was very careful not to give any encouragement to irregular conduct."

He praised the ladies of the present age, insisting that they were more faithful to their husbands, and more virtuous in every respect, than in former times; because their understandings were better cultivated. It was an undoubted proof of his good sense and good disposition, that he was never querulous, never prone to inveigh against the present times, as is so common when superficial minds are on the fret.

He disapproved of the Royal Marriage Bill; " Because, (said he), I would not have the people think that the validity of marriage depends

on the will of man, or that the right of a King depends on the will of man. I should not have been against making the marriage of any of the royal family, without the approbation of the King and Parliament, highly criminal."

MUSIC.

JOHNSON once, in a musical party, desired to have 'Let Ambition fire thy Mind,' played over again, and appeared to give a patient attention to it; though he owned that he was very insensible to the power of music. "I told him, (says Mr. Boswell), that it affected me to such a degree, as often to agitate my nerves painfully, producing in my mind alternate sensations of pathetic dejection, so that I was ready to shed tears; and of daring resolution, so that I was inclined to rush into the thickest part of the battle. "Sir, (said he), I should never hear it, if it made me such a fool."

Another time, after having talked slightingly of music, he was observed to listen very attentively while Miss Thrale played on the harpsichord, and with eagerness he called to her, "Why don't you dash away like Burney?" Dr.

Burney upon this said to him, "I believe, Sir, we shall make a musician of you at last." Johnson with candid complacency replied, "Sir, I shall be glad to have a new sense given to me."

Mr. Langton and Johnson having gone to see a Freemason's funeral procession at Rochester, and some solemn music being played on French horns, he said, "This is the first time that I have ever been affected by musical sounds;" adding, that the impression made upon him was of a melancholy kind.—Mr. Langton said, that this effect was a fine one.—*Johnson:* "Yes, if it softens the mind so as to prepare it for the reception of salutary feelings, it may be good; but inasmuch as it is melancholy, *per se* it is bad."

Talking of sounds, a gentleman in the company said there was no beauty in a simple sound, but only in an harmonious composition of sounds. Mr. Boswell differed from this opinion, and mentioned the soft and sweet sound of a fine woman's voice.—*Johnson:* "No, Sir, if a serpent or a toad uttered it, you would think it ugly."—*Boswell:* "So you would think, Sir, were a beautiful tune to be uttered by one of those animals."—*J.* "No, Sir, it would be admired. We have seen fine fiddlers whom we liked as little as toads" (laughing).

ŒCONOMY.

On the subject of wealth, the proper use of it, and the effects of that art which is called œconomy, Johnson once observed, "It is wonderful to think how men of very large estates not only spend their yearly income, but are often actually in want of money. It is clear, they have not value for what they spend. Lord Shelburne told me, that a man of high rank, who looks into his own affairs, may have all that he ought to have, all that can be of any use, or appear with any advantage, for five thousand pounds a year. Therefore a great proportion must go in waste; and indeed this is the case with most people, whatever their fortune is."—*Boswell:* "I have no doubt, Sir, of this; but how is it? What is waste?"—*Johnson:* "Why, Sir, breaking bottles, and a thousand other things. Waste cannot be accurately told, though we are sensible how destructive it is. Œconomy on the one hand, by which a certain income is made to maintain a man genteelly, and waste on the other, by which, on the same income,

another man lives shabbily, cannot be defined. It is a very nice thing; as one man wears his coat out much sooner than another, we cannot tell how."

On the right employment of wealth he remarked thus: "A man cannot make a bad use of his money so far as regards society, if he does not hoard it; for if he either spends it, or lends it out, society has the benefit. It is in general better to spend money than to give it away; for industry is more promoted by spending money than by giving it away. A man who spends his money is sure he is doing good with it; he is not so sure when he gives it away. A man who spends ten thousand a year, will do more good than a man who spends two thousand, and gives away eight."

His Ofellus, in the 'Art of living in London,' he has been heard to relate, was an Irish painter, whom he knew at Birmingham, and who had practised his own precepts of œconomy for several years in the British capital. He assured Johnson, who perhaps was then meditating to try his fortune in London, but was apprehensive of the expence, "that thirty pounds a year was enough to enable a man to live there without being contemptible. He allowed ten pounds for clothes and linen. He said a man might

live in a garret at eighteen-pence a week; few people would enquire where he lodged; and if they did, it was easy to say, 'Sir, I am to be found at such a place.' By spending three-pence in a coffee-house, he might be for some hours every day in very good company; he might dine for sixpence, breakfast on bread and milk for a penny, and do without supper. On *clean-shirt day* he went abroad, and paid visits."—Johnson would often talk of this frugal friend, whom he recollected with esteem and kindness, and did not like to have any one smile at the recital.—"This man (said he gravely) was a very sensible man, who perfectly understood common affairs; a man of a great deal of knowledge of the world, fresh from life, not strained through books. He borrowed a horse and ten pounds at Birmingham. Finding himself master of so much money, he set off for West Chester, in order to get to Ireland. He returned the horse, and probably the ten pounds too, after he got home."

To Mr. Boswell Johnson once said, "Get as much force of mind as you can. Live within your income. Always have something saved at the end of the year. Let your imports be more than your exports, and you'll never go far wrong."

A gentleman praised the accuracy of an account-book of a lady whom he mentioned. Johnson said, " Keeping accounts, Sir, is of no use when a man is spending his own money, and has nobody to whom he is to account. You won't eat less beef to-day, because you have written down what it cost yesterday."—Another lady was mentioned, who thought as he did, so that her husband could not get her to keep an account of the expences of the family, as she thought it enough that she never exceeded the sum allowed her.—*Johnson:* " Sir, it is fit she should keep an account, because her husband wishes it; but I do not see its use."—Mr. Boswell maintained, that keeping an account had this advantage, that it satisfied a man that his money had not been lost or stolen, which he might sometimes be apt to imagine, were there no written state of his expences; and besides that, a calculation of œconomy, so as not to exceed one's income, could not be made without a view of the different articles in figures, that one might see how to retrench in some particulars less necessary than others. This Johnson did not attempt to answer.

At another time, speaking of œconomy, he remarked, that it was hardly worth while to save anxiously twenty pounds a year. If a man

could save to such a degree as to enable him to assume a different rank in society, then, indeed, it might answer some purpose.

"I told him, (says Mr. Boswell), that at a gentleman's house where there was thought to be such extravagance or bad management, that he was living much beyond his income, his lady had objected to the cutting of a pickled mango, and that I had taken an opportunity to ask the price of it, and found it was only two shillings; so here was a very poor saving."—"Sir, (said Johnson), that is the blundering œconomy of a narrow understanding. It is stopping one hole in a sieve."

Talking of a penurious gentleman of his acquaintance, Johnson said, "He is narrow, not so much from avarice, as from impotence to spend his money. He cannot find in his heart to pour out a bottle of wine; but he would not much care if it should sour."

His friend Edward Cave having been on some occasion mentioned, he said, "Cave used to sell ten thousand of 'The Gentleman's Magazine;' yet such was then his minute attention and anxiety that the sale should not suffer the smallest decrease, that he would name a particular person who he heard had talked of leaving off the Magazine, and would say, 'Let us have something good next month.'"

It was observed, that avarice was inherent in some dispositions. "No man (said Johnson) was born a miser, because no man was born to possession. Every man is born *cupidus*—desirous of getting; but not *avarus*—desirous of keeping."—*Boswell:* "I have heard old Mr. Sheridan maintain, with much ingenuity, that a complete miser is a happy man; a miser who gives himself wholly to the one passion of saving."—*Johnson:* "That is flying in the face of all the world, who have called an avaricious man *a miser*, because he is miserable. No, Sir; a man who spends and saves money is the happiest man, because he has both enjoyments."

The following Account of the admirable system of Domestic Œconomy adopted by Mr. Peregrine Langton, was communicated by his Nephew, Mr. Bennet Langton, to Mr. Boswell.

"The circumstances of Mr. Peregrine Langton were these: He had an annuity for life of two hundred pounds per annum. He resided in a village in Lincolnshire; the rent of his house, with two or three small fields, was twenty-eight pounds; the county he lived in was not more than moderately cheap; his family consisted of a sister, who paid him eighteen pounds annually for her board, and a niece. The servants were two maids, and two men in livery. His com-

mon way of living, at his own table, was three or four dishes; the appurtenances to his table were neat and handsome; he frequently entertained company at dinner, and then his table was well served with as many dishes as were usual at the tables of the other gentlemen in the neighbourhood. His own appearance, as to clothes, was genteelly neat and plain. He had always a post-chaise, and kept three horses.

"Such, with the resources I have mentioned, was his way of living, which he did not suffer to employ his whole income; for he had always a sum of money lying by him for any extraordinary expences that might arise. Some money he put into the stocks; at his death, the sum he had there amounted to one hundred and fifty pounds. He purchased out of his income his household furniture and linen, of which latter he had a very ample store; and as I am assured by those who had very good means of knowing, not less than the tenth part of his income was set apart for charity: at the time of his death, the sum of twenty-five pounds was found, with a direction to be employed in such uses.

"He had laid down a plan of living proportioned to his income, and did not practise any extraordinary degree of parsimony, but endeavoured that in his family there should be plenty

without waste; as an instance that this was his endeavour, it may be worth while to mention a method he took in regulating a proper allowance of malt liquor to be drunk in his family, that there might not be a deficiency, nor any intemperate profusion: on a complaint made, that his allowance of a hogshead in a month was not enough for his own family, he ordered the quantity of a hogshead to be put into bottles, had it locked up from the servants, and distributed out, every day, eight quarts, which is the quantity each day, at one hogshead in a month; and told his servants, that if that did not suffice, he would allow them more: but, by this method, it appeared at once, that the allowance was much more than sufficient for his small family; and this proved a clear conviction, that could not be answered, and saved all future dispute. He was in general very diligently and punctually attended and obeyed by his servants; he was very considerate as to the injunctions he gave, and explained them distinctly; and, at their first coming to his service, steadily exacted a close compliance with them, without any remission; and the servants, finding this to be the case, soon grew habitually accustomed to the practice of their business, and then very little further attention was necessary. On extraordinary instances of

good behaviour or diligence, he was not wanting in particular encouragements and presents above their wages: it is remarkable, that he would permit their relations to visit them, and stay at his house two or three days at a time.

"The wonder, with most that hear an account of his œconomy, will be how he was able, with such an income, to do so much, especially when it is considered that he paid for every thing he had. He had no land, except the two or three small fields which I have said he rented; and instead of gaining any thing by their produce, I have reason to think he lost by them; however, they furnished him with no further assistance towards his housekeeping, than grass for his horses (not hay, for that I know he bought), and for two cows. Every Monday morning he settled his family accounts, and so kept up a constant attention to the confining his expences within his income; and to do it more exactly, compared those expences with a computation he had made, how much that income would afford him every week and day of the year. One of his œconomical practices was, as soon as any repair was wanting in or about his house, to have it immediately performed. When he had money to spare, he chose to lay in a provision of linen or clothes, or any other necessaries; as

then, he said, he could afford it, which he might not be so well able to do when the actual want came; in consequence of which method, he had a considerable supply of necessary articles lying by him, beside what was in use.

"But the main particular that seems to have enabled him to do so much with his income was, that he paid for every thing as soon as he had it, except, alone, what were current accounts, such as rent for his house, and servants' wages; and these he paid at the stated times with the utmost exactness. He gave notice to the tradesmen of the neighbouring market-towns, that they should no longer have his custom, if they let any of his servants have any thing without their paying for it. Thus he put it out of his power to commit those imprudences to which those are liable, that defer their payments by using their money some other way than where it ought to go. And whatever money he had by him, he knew that it was not demanded elsewhere, but that he might safely employ it as he pleased.

"His example was confined, by the sequestered place of his abode, to the observation of few, though his prudence and virtue would have made it valuable to all who could have known it. These few particulars, which I knew myself, or have obtained from those who lived with him,

may afford instruction, and may be an incentive to that wise art of living, which he so successfully practised."

PLAYERS.

Dr. Johnson had thought more upon the subject of acting than might be generally supposed. Talking of it one day to Mr. Kemble, he said, "Are you, Sir, one of those enthusiasts who believe yourself transformed into the very character you represent?" Upon Mr. Kemble's answering, that he had never felt so strong a persuasion himself; "To be sure not, Sir, (said Johnson); the thing is impossible. And if Garrick really believed himself to be that monster Richard the Third, he deserved to be hanged every time he performed it."

He gave the following, as his opinion upon the merits of some of the principal performers whom he remembered to have seen upon the stage: "Mrs. Porter, in the vehemence of rage, and Mrs. Clive in the sprightliness of humour, I have never seen equalled. What Clive did best,

she did better than Garrick; but could not do half so many things well; she was a better romp than any I ever saw in nature."

Mrs. Pritchard being mentioned, he said, "Her playing was quite mechanical. It is wonderful how little mind she had. Sir, she had never read the tragedy of Macbeth all through. She no more thought of the play out of which her part was taken, than a shoemaker thinks of the skin out of which the piece of leather, of which he is making a pair of shoes, is cut. Pritchard, in common life, was a vulgar idiot; she would talk of her *gowud;* but, when she appeared upon the stage, seemed to be inspired by gentility and understanding."—He thought Colley Cibber ignorant of the principles of his art.

"Colley Cibber (said he) once consulted me as to one of his birth-day Odes, a long time before it was wanted. I objected very freely to several passages. Cibber lost patience, and would not read his Ode to an end. When we had done with criticism, we walked over to Richardson's, the author of 'Clarissa,' and I wondered to find Richardson displeased that I 'did not treat Cibber with more *respect.*' "Now, Sir, to talk of *respect* for a *player!*" (smiling disdainfully).—*Boswell:* "There, Sir, you are

always heretical; you never will allow merit to a player."—*Johnson:* "Merit, Sir; what merit? Do you respect a rope-dancer, or a ballad-singer?" —*B.* "No, Sir; but we respect a great player, as a man who can conceive lofty sentiments, and can express them gracefully."—*J.* "What, Sir, a fellow who claps a hump on his back, and a lump on his leg, and cries, '*I am Richard the Third?*' Nay, Sir, a ballad-singer is a higher man, for he does two things; he repeats and he sings; there is both recitation and music in his performance: the player only recites."—*B.* "My dear Sir! you may turn any thing into ridicule. I allow that a player of farce is not entitled to respect; he does a little thing: but he who can represent exalted characters, and touch the noblest passions, has very respectable powers; and mankind have agreed in admiring great talents for the stage. We must consider, too, that a great player does what very few are capable of doing; his art is a very rare faculty. *Who* can repeat Hamlet's soliloquy, 'To be, or not to be,' as Garrick does it?"—*J.* "Any body may. Jemmy there (a boy about eight years old, who was in the room) will do it as well in a week."—*B.* "No, no, Sir; and as a proof of the merit of great acting, and of the value which mankind set upon it, Garrick has got a hundred

thousand pounds."—*J.* "Is getting a hundred thousand pounds a proof of excellence? That has been done by a scoundrel commissary. Garrick was no declaimer; there was not one of his own scene-shifters who could not have spoken 'To be, or not to be,' better than he did; yet he was the only actor I ever saw, whom I could call a master both in tragedy and comedy; though I liked him best in comedy. A true conception of character, and natural expression of it, were his distinguishing excellences." Having expatiated with his usual force and eloquence on Garrick's extraordinary eminence as an actor, he concluded with this compliment to his social talents: "And after all, I thought him less to be envied on the stage than at the head of a table."

POLITICS.

JOHNSON arraigned the modern politics of this country, as entirely devoid of all principle, of whatever kind.—"Politics, (said he), are now nothing more than means of rising in the world. With this sole view do men engage in politics, and their whole conduct proceeds upon

it. How different in that respect is the state of the nation now from what it was in the time of Charles the First, during the Usurpation, and after the Restoration, in the time of Charles the Second. Hudibras affords a strong proof how much old political principles had then upon the minds of men. There is in Hudibras a great deal of bullion which will always last. But to be sure, the brightest strokes of his wit owed their force to the impression of the characters which was upon men's minds at the time; to their knowing them, at table and in the street: in short, being familiar with them; and above all, to his satire being directed against those whom a little while before they had hated and feared. The nation in general has ever been loyal, has been at all times attached to the monarch, though a few daring rebels have been wonderfully powerful for a time. The murder of Charles the First was undoubtedly not committed with the approbation or consent of the people. Had that been the case, Parliament would not have ventured to consign the regicides to their deserved punishment. And we know what exuberance of joy there was when Charles the Second was restored. If Charles the Second had bent all his mind to it, had made it his sole object, he might have been as absolute

as Louis the Fourteenth."—A gentleman observed, he would have done no harm if he had.—*Johnson:* "Why, Sir, absolute Princes seldom do any harm. But they who are governed by them are governed by chance. There is no security for good government."—Mr. *Cambridge* said, "There have been many sad victims to absolute government."—*J.* "So, Sir, have there been to popular factions."—*B.* "The question is, which is worst, one wild beast or many?"

Talking of different governments, Johnson said, "The more contracted a power is, the more easily it is destroyed. A country governed by a despot is an inverted cone. Government there cannot be so firm as when it rests upon a broad basis gradually contracted, as the government of Great Britain, which is founded on the parliament, then is in the privy council, then in the king."—*Boswell:* "Power, when contracted into the person of a despot, may be easily destroyed, as the prince may be cut off. So Caligula wished that the people of Rome had but one neck, that he might cut them off at a blow."—*General Oglethorpe:* "It was of the Senate he wished that. The Senate, by its usurpation, controuled both the Emperor and the people."

At another time Johnson said, "The mode of government by one may be ill adapted to a small society, but is best for a great nation.—The characteristic of our own government at present is imbecility. The magistrate dare not call the guards for fear of being hanged.—The guards will not come, for fear of being given up to the blind rage of popular juries."

Patriotism having become one of the topics, Johnson suddenly uttered, in a strong determined tone, an apophthegm, at which many will start:—"Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel."—But let it be considered, that he did not mean a real and generous love of our country, but that pretended patriotism which so many, in all ages and countries, have made a cloak for self-interest.—"I maintained, (says Mr. B.), that certainly all patriots were not scoundrels." Being urged (not by Johnson) to name one exception, I mentioned an eminent person, whom we all greatly admired.—*Johnson:* "Sir, I do not say that he is *not* honest; but we have no reason to conclude, from his political conduct, that he is honest. Were he to accept of a place from this ministry, he would lose that character of firmness which he has, and might be turned out of his place in a year. This ministry is neither stable, nor grateful to

their friends, as Sir Robert Walpole was; so that he may think it more for his interest to take the chance of his party coming in."

He said, "Lord Chatham was a Dictator; he possessed the power of putting the state in motion; now there is no power, all order is relaxed."—*Boswell:* "Is there no hope of a change to the better?"—*Johnson:* "Why, yes, Sir, when we are weary of this relaxation. So the City of London will appoint its Mayors again by seniority."—*B.* "But is not that taking a mere chance for having a good or a bad Mayor?" —*J.* "Yes, Sir; but the evil of competition is greater than that of the worst Mayor that can come: besides, there is no more reason to suppose that the choice of a rabble will be right, than that chance will be right."

Of a person who differed from him in politics, he said, "In private life he is a very honest gentleman; but I will not allow him to be so in public life. People *may* be honest, though they are doing wrong: that is between their Maker and them. But *we*, who are suffering by their pernicious conduct, are to destroy them. We are sure that ******** acts from interest. We know what his genuine principles were.—They who allow their passions to confound the distinctions between right and wrong, are crimi-

nal. They may be convinced; but they have not come honestly by their conviction."

Talking of the accusation against a gentleman for supposed delinquencies in India, Johnson said, "What foundation there is for accusation I know not; but they will not get at him. Where bad actions are committed at so great a distance, a delinquent can obscure the evidence till the scent becomes cold; there is a cloud between, which cannot be penetrated;—therefore all distant power is bad. I am clear that the best plan for the government of India, is a despotic governor; for if he be a good man, it is evidently the best government; and supposing him to be a bad man, it is better to have one plunderer than many. A governor whose power is checked, lets others plunder, that he himself may be allowed to plunder; but if despotic, he sees that the more he lets others plunder, the less there will be for himself, so he restrains them; and though he himself plunders, the country is a gainer, compared with being plundered by numbers."

Of the distinctions of Tory and Whig, he said, "A wise Tory and a wise Whig, I believe, will agree. Their principles are the same, though their modes of thinking are different. A high Tory makes Government unintelligible; it

is lost in the clouds. A violent Whig makes it impracticable; he is for allowing so much liberty to every man, that there is not power enough to govern any man. The prejudice of the Tory is for establishment; the prejudice of the Whig is for innovation. A Tory does not wish to give more real power to Government, but that Government should have more reverence. Then they differ as to the Church. The Tory is not for giving more legal power to the Clergy, but wishes they should have a considerable influence, founded on the opinion of mankind; the Whig is for limiting and watching them with a narrow jealousy."

At a time when fears of an invasion were circulated, Mr. Spottiswoode observed, that Mr. Fraser the engineer, who had lately come from Dunkirk, said, that the French had the same fears of us. "It is thus (said Johnson) that mutual cowardice keeps us in peace. Were one half of mankind brave, and one half cowards, the brave would be always beating the cowards. Were all brave, they would lead a very uneasy life; all would be continually fighting: but being all cowards, we go on very well."

Lord Graham commended Dr. Drummond at Naples, as a man of extraordinary talents;—and

added, that he had a great love of liberty.—*Johnson:* "He is *young* my Lord, (looking to his Lordship with an arch smile); all *boys* love liberty, till experience convinces them that they are not so fit to govern themselves as they imagined. We are all agreed as to our own liberty; we would have as much of it as we can get; but we are not agreed as to the liberty of others; for in proportion as we take, others must lose. I believe we hardly wish that the mob should have liberty to govern us. When that was the case some time ago, no man was at liberty not to have candles in his windows."—*Ramsay:* "The result is, that order is better than confusion."—*J.* "The result is, that order cannot be had but by subordination."

On another occasion, petitions being mentioned, he said, "This petitioning is a new mode of distressing Government, and a mighty easy one. I will undertake to get petitions either against quarter guineas or half guineas, with the help of a little hot wine. There must be no yielding to encourage this. The object is not important enough. We are not to blow up half a dozen palaces, because one cottage is burning."

He had great compassion for the miseries and distresses of the Irish nation, particularly the

Papists; and severely reprobated the debilitating policy of the British Government, which, he said, was the most detestable mode of persecution. To a gentleman who hinted that such policy might be necessary to support the authority of the English Government, he replied by saying, "Let the authority of the English Government perish, rather than be maintained by iniquity. Better would it be to restrain the turbulence of the natives by the authority of the sword, and to make them amenable to law and justice by an effectual and vigorous police, than to grind them to powder by all manner of disabilities and incapacities. Better (said he) to hang or drown people at once, than by an unrelenting persecution to beggar and starve them."

"The notion of liberty, (he observed), amuses the people of England, and helps to keep off the *tædium vitæ*. When a butcher tells you that his heart bleeds for his country, he has, in fact, no uneasy feeling."

He said, he was glad Lord George Gordon had escaped, rather than that a precedent should be established for hanging a man for *constructive treason;* which he considered would be a dangerous engine of arbitrary power.

He would not admit the importance of the question concerning the legality of general war-

rants. "Such a power (he observed) must be vested in every government, to answer particular cases of necessity; and there can be no just complaint but when it is abused, for which those who administer government must be answerable. It is a matter of such indifference, a matter about which the people care so very little, that were a man to be sent over Britain, to offer them an exception from it for an halfpenny a piece, very few would purchase it." This perhaps was a specimen of that laxity of talking which he has often been heard fairly to acknowledge.

He said, "The duration of Parliament, whether for seven years or the life of the King, appears to me so immaterial, that I would not give half a crown to turn the scale one way or the other. The *habeas corpus* is the single advantage which our Government has over that of other countries."

Speaking of the national debt, he said, it was an idle dream to suppose that the country could sink under it. "Let the public creditors be ever so clamorous, the interest of millions must ever prevail over that of thousands."

To Mr. Boswell (who had thoughts of getting into Parliament) he said, "You are entering upon a transaction, which requires much

prudence. You must endeavour to oppose without exasperating; to practise temporary hostility, without producing enemies for life.—This is, perhaps, hard to be done; yet it has been done by many, and seems most likely to be effected by opposing merely upon general principles, without descending to personal or particular censures or objections. One thing I must enjoin you, which is seldom observed in the conduct of elections: I must entreat you to be scrupulous in the use of strong liquors.—One night's drunkenness may defeat the labours of forty days well employed. Be firm, but not clamorous; be active, but not malicious; and you may form such an interest, as may not only exalt yourself, but dignify your family."

Lord Newhaven and Johnson carried on an argument for some time, concerning the Middlesex election. Johnson said, "Parliament may be considered as bound by law, as a man is bound where there is nobody to tie the knot. As it is clear that the House of Commons may expel, and expel again and again, why not allow of the power to incapacitate for that parliament, rather than have a perpetual contest kept up between Parliament and the People."—Lord Newhaven took the opposite side, but respect-

fully said, "I speak with great deference to you, Dr. Johnson; I speak to be instructed." This had its full effect on the Doctor. He bowed his head almost as low as the table to a complimenting nobleman; and called out, "My Lord, my Lord, I do not desire all this ceremony; let us tell our minds to one another quietly." After the debate was over, he said, "I have got lights on the subject to-day which I had not before." This was a great deal from him, especially as he had written a pamphlet upon it.

He observed, "The House of Commons was originally not a privilege of the people, but a check for the Crown on the House of Lords. I remember Henry the Eighth wanted them to do something: they hesitated in the morning, but did it in the afternoon. He told them, 'It is well you did; or half your heads should have been upon Temple Bar.' But the House of Commons is now no longer under the power of the Crown, and therefore must be bribed."—He added, "I have no delight in talking of public affairs."

Mr. B. was once engaged as Counsel at the Bar of the House of Commons, to oppose a road bill in the county of Stirling, and asked Johnson what mode he would advise him to follow,

in addressing such an audience.—*J.* "Why, Sir, you must provide yourself with a good deal of extraneous matter, which you are to produce occasionally, so as to fill up the time; for you must consider, that they do not listen much.—If you begin with the strength of your cause, it may be lost before they begin to listen. When you catch a moment of attention, press the merits of the question upon them." He said, as to one point of the merits, that he thought "it would be a wrong thing to deprive the small landholders of the privilege of assessing themselves for making and repairing the high roads; *it was destroying so much liberty without a good reason, which was always a bad thing.*" When Mr. B. mentioned this observation next day to Mr. Wilkes, he pleasantly said, "What! does *he* talk of liberty? *Liberty* is as ridiculous in *his* mouth as *Religion* in *mine.*" Mr. Wilkes's advice as to the best mode of speaking at the Bar of the House of Commons, was not more respectful towards the Senate, than that of Dr. Johnson. "Be as impudent as you can, as merry as you can, and say whatever comes uppermost. Jack Lee is the best heard there of any Counsel; and he is the most impudent dog, and always abusing us." Mr. Boswell censured the coarse invectives which were become fashion-

able in the House of Commons, and said, that if members of parliament must attack each other personally in the heat of debate, it should be done more genteelly.—*J.* "No, Sir; that would be much worse. Abuse is not so dangerous when there is no vehicle of wit or delicacy, no subtle conveyance. The difference between coarse and refined abuse, is as the difference between being bruised by a club, and wounded by a poisoned arrow. This position is elegantly expressed by Dr. Young:

'As the soft plume gives swiftness to the dart,
'Good breeding sends the satire to the heart.'"

A gentleman observed to a Member of Parliament, "Mr. E. I don't mean to flatter, but when posterity reads one of your speeches in Parliament, it will be difficult to believe that you took so much pains, knowing with certainty that it could produce no effect, that not one vote would be gained by it."—*E.* "Waving your compliment to me, I shall say in general, that it is very well worth while for a man to take pains to speak well in parliament. A man who has vanity speaks to display his talents; and if a man speaks well, he gradually establishes a certain reputation and consequence in the general opinion, which sooner or later will

have its political reward. Besides, though not one vote is gained, a good speech has its effect. —Though an act which has been ably opposed passes into a law, yet in its progress it is modelled, it is softened in such a manner, that we see plainly the Minister has been told, that the members attached to him are so sensible of its injustice or absurdity from what they have heard, that it must be altered."—*Johnson:* "And, Sir, there is a gratification of pride.—Though we cannot out-vote them we will out-argue them. They shall not do wrong without its being shewn both to themselves and to the world."—*E.* "The House of Commons is a mixed body. (I except the minority, which I hold to be pure [smiling]; but I take the whole House). It is a mass by no means pure; but neither is it wholly corrupt, though there is a large proportion of corruption in it. There are many members who generally go with the Minister, who will not go all lengths. There are many honest well-meaning country gentlemen, who are in parliament only to keep up the consequence of their families. Upon most of these a good speech will have influence."—*J.* "We are all more or less governed by interest. But interest will not make us do every thing. In a case which admits of doubt, we

try to think on the side which is for our interest, and generally bring ourselves to act accordingly. But the subject must admit of diversity of colouring, it must receive a colour on that side. In the House of Commons there are members enough who will not vote what is grossly unjust or absurd. No, Sir, there must always be right enough, or appearance of right, to keep wrong in countenance."—*Boswell:* "There is surely always a majority in parliament who have places, or who want to have them, and who therefore will be generally ready to support Government without requiring any pretext."—*E.* "True, Sir; that majority will always follow

'Quo clamor vocat et turba faventium.'"—

B. "Well now, let us take the common phrase, place-hunters. I thought they had hunted without regard to any thing, just as their huntsman, the Minister, leads, looking only to the prey."—*J.* "But, taking your metaphor, you know that in hunting there are few so desperately keen as to follow without reserve. Some do not choose to leap ditches and hedges, and risk their necks, or gallop over steeps, or even to dirty themselves in bogs and mire."—*B.* "I am glad there are some good, quiet, moderate, political hunters."—*E.* "I believe in any body of men in England I should have been in the

minority; I have always been in the minority." —A gentleman present said, "The House of Commons resembles a private company. How seldom is any man convinced by another's argument! passion and pride rise against it."—Another asked, "What would be the consequence, if a Minister, sure of a majority in the House of Commons, should resolve that there should be no speaking at all upon his side?"—*E.* "He must soon go out. That has been tried; but it was found it would not do."

Russia being mentioned as likely to become a great empire, by the rapid increase of population, Johnson said, "Why, Sir, I see no prospect of their propagating more. They can have no more children than they can get. I know of no way to make them breed more than they do. It is not from reason and prudence that people marry, but from inclination. A man is poor; he thinks, 'I cannot be worse, and so I'll e'en take Peggy.'"—*B.* "But have not nations been more populous at one period than another?"—*J.* "Yes, Sir; but that has been owing to the people being less thinned at one period than another, whether by emigrations, war, or pestilence, not by their being more or less prolific. Births at all times bear the same proportion to the same number of

people."—*B.* "But, to consider the state of our own country; does not throwing a number of farms into one hand hurt population?"—*J.* "Why no, Sir; the same quantity of food being produced, will be consumed by the same number of mouths, though the people may be disposed of in different ways. We see, if corn be dear, and butchers' meat cheap, the farmers all apply themselves to the raising of corn, till it becomes plentiful and cheap, and then butchers' meat becomes dear; so that an equality is always preserved. No, Sir, let fanciful men do as they will, depend upon it, it is difficult to disturb the system of life."—*B.* "But, Sir, is it not a very bad thing for landlords to oppress their tenants, by raising their rents?"—*J.* "Very bad. But, Sir, it never can have any general influence; it may distress some individuals. For, consider this: landlords cannot do without tenants. Now tenants will not give more for land, than land is worth. If they can make more of their money by keeping a shop, or any other way, they'll do it, and so oblige landlords to let land come back to a reasonable rent, in order that they may get tenants. Land, in England, is an article of commerce. A tenant who pays his landlord his rent, thinks himself no more

obliged to him than you think yourself obliged to a man in whose shop you buy a piece of goods. He knows the landlord does not let him have his land for less than he can get from others, in the same manner as the shopkeeper sells his goods. No shopkeeper sells a yard of ribband for sixpence, when sevenpence is the current price."—*B.* "But, Sir, is it not better that tenants should be dependent on landlords?" —*J.* "Why, Sir, as there are many more tenants than landlords, perhaps, strictly speaking, we should wish not. But if you please you may let your lands cheap, and so get the value, part in money and part in homage. I should agree with you in that."—*B.* "So, Sir, you laugh at schemes of political improvement."— *J.* "Why, Sir, most schemes of political improvement are very laughable things."

He strongly censured the licensed stews at Rome. Mr. Boswell said, "So then, Sir, you would allow of no irregular intercourse whatever between the sexes?"—*Johnson:* "To be sure I would not, Sir. I would punish it much more than it is done, and so restrain it. In all countries there has been fornication, as in all countries there has been theft; but there may be more or less of the one, as well as of the other, in proportion to the force of law. All men will

naturally commit fornication, as all men will naturally steal. And, Sir, it is very absurd to argue, as has been often done, that prostitutes are necessary, to prevent the violent effects of appetite from violating the decent order of life; nay, should be permitted, in order to preserve the chastity of our wives and daughters. Depend upon it, Sir, severe laws, steadily enforced, would be sufficient against those evils, and would promote marriage."

On another occasion Johnson said, "It may be questioned, whether there is not some mistake as to the methods of employing the poor, seemingly on a supposition that there is a certain portion of work left undone for want of persons to do it; but if that is otherwise, and all the materials we have are actually worked up, or all the manufactures we can use or dispose of are already executed, then what is given to the poor who are to be set at work, must be taken from some who now have it; as time must be taken for learning, according to Sir William Petty's observation, a certain part of those very materials that, as it is, are properly worked up, must be spoiled by the unskilfulness of novices. We may apply to well-meaning, but misjudging persons, in particulars of this nature, what Giannone said to a monk, who wanted what he

called to *convert* him: '*Tu sei Santo, ma Tu non sei Filosofo.*'—It is an unhappy circumstance, that one might give away five hundred pounds in a year to those that importune in the streets, and not do any good."

He said, the poor in England were better provided for than in any other country of the same extent; he did not mean little Cantons or petty Republics. "Where a great proportion of the people (said he) are suffered to languish in helpless misery, that country must be ill policed, and wretchedly governed; a decent provision for the poor, is the true test of civilization. Gentlemen of education, (he observed), were pretty much the same in all countries; the condition of the lower orders, the poor especially, was the true mark of national discrimination."

"Raising the wages of day-labourers (said he) is wrong; for it does not make them live better, but only makes them idler, and idleness is a very bad thing for human nature."

Observing some beggars in the street, a gentleman remarked, that there was no civilized country in the world, where the misery of want in the lowest classes of the people was prevented. —*Johnson:* "I believe, Sir, there is not; but it is better that some should be unhappy, than

that none should be happy, which would be the case in a general state of equality."

"At dinner one day at Mr. Hoole's with Dr. Johnson (says Mr. Boswell), when Mr. Nicol, the King's bookseller, and I, attempted to controvert the maxim, 'better that ten guilty should escape, than one innocent person suffer;' we were answered by Dr. Johnson with great power of reasoning and eloquence. He ably shewed, that unless civil institutions insured protection to the innocent, all the confidence which mankind should have in them would be lost."

Talking on the subject of Toleration, one day when some friends were with him in his study, he made a remark, that the State has a right to regulate the religion of the people, who are the children of the State. A clergyman having readily acquiesced in this, Johnson, who loved discussion, observed, "But, Sir, you must go round to other States than our own. You do not know what a Bramin has to say for himself. In short, Sir, I have got no further than this: Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. Martyrdom is the test."

At another time, when in a literary conversation at Mr. Dilly's, one of the company intro-

duced the subject of Toleration, Johnson said, "Every society has a right to preserve public peace and order, and therefore has a good right to prohibit the propagation of opinions which have a dangerous tendency. To say the *magistrate* has this right, is using an inadequate word: it is the *society* for which the magistrate is agent. He may be morally or theologically wrong in restraining the propagation of opinions which he thinks dangerous, but he is politically right."—*Dr. Mayo:* "I am of opinion, Sir, that every man is entitled to liberty of conscience in religion; and that the magistrate cannot restrain that right."—*Johnson:* "Sir, I agree with you. Every man has a right to liberty of conscience, and with that the magistrate cannot interfere. People confound liberty of thinking with liberty of talking; nay, with liberty of preaching. Every man has a physical right to think as he pleases, for it cannot be discovered how he thinks. He has not a moral right, for he ought to inform himself, and think justly. But, Sir, no member of a society has a right to *teach* any doctrine contrary to what the society holds to be true. The magistrate, I say, may be wrong in what he thinks; but while he thinks himself right, he may and ought to enforce what he thinks."—*M.* "Then, Sir, we are are to remain always

in error, and truth never can prevail; and the magistrate was right in persecuting the first christians."—*J.* "Sir, the only method by which religious truth can be established is by martyrdom. The magistrate has a right to enforce what he thinks; and he who is conscious of the truth, has a right to enforce what he thinks; and he who is conscious of the truth has a right to suffer. I am afraid there is no other way of ascertaining the truth, but by persecution on the one hand, and enduring it on the other."—*Goldsmith:* "But how is a man to act, Sir? Though firmly convinced of the truth of his doctrine, may he not think it wrong to expose himself to persecution? Has he a right to do so? Is it not, as it were, committing voluntary suicide?"—*J.* "Sir, as to voluntary suicide, as you call it, there are twenty thousand men in an army who will go without scruple to be shot at, and mount a breach for fivepence a day."—*G.* "But have they a moral right to do this?"—*J.* "Nay, Sir, if you will not take the universal opinion of mankind, I have nothing to say. If mankind cannot defend their own way of thinking, I cannot defend it. Sir, if a man is in doubt, whether it would be better for him to expose himself to martyrdom or not, he should not do it. He must be convinced that he has a delegation from Heaven."—

G. "I would consider whether there is a greater chance of good or evil upon the whole. If I see a man who has fallen into a well, I would wish to help him out; but if there was a greater probability that he shall pull me in, than that I should pull him out, I would not attempt it. So were I to go to Turkey, I might wish to convert the Grand Signior to the Christian Faith; but when I considered that I should probably be put to death without effectuating my purpose in any degree, I should keep myself quiet."—*J.* "Sir, you must consider that we have perfect and imperfect obligations. Perfect obligations, which are generally not to do something, are clear and positive; as 'thou shalt not kill.' But charity, for instance, is not definable by limits. It is a duty to give to the poor; but no man can say how much another should give to the poor, or when a man has given too little to save his soul. In the same manner, it is a duty to instruct the ignorant, and of consequence to convert infidels to christianity; but no man in the common course of things is obliged to carry this to such a degree as to incur the danger of martyrdom, as no man is obliged to strip himself to the shirt in order to give charity. I have said, that a man must be persuaded that he has a particular delegation from Heaven."—*G.* "How is this to be

known? Our first reformers, who were burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ—" *J.* (interrupting him), "Sir, they were not burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ, but for insulting those who did believe it. And, Sir, when the first reformers began, they did not intend to be martyred; as many of them ran away as could."—*Boswell:* "But, Sir, there was your countryman, Elwal, who you told me once, challenged King George with his black-guards, and his red-guards."—*J.* "My countryman, Elwal, Sir, should have been put in the stocks; a proper pulpit for him; and he'd have a numerous audience. A man who preaches in the stocks will always have hearers enough." —*B.* "But Elwal thought himself in the right." —*J.* "We are not providing for mad people; there are places for them in the neighbourhood:" (meaning Moorfields).—*M.* "But, Sir, is it not very hard that I should not be allowed to teach my children what I really believe to be the truth?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, you might contrive to teach your children *extra scandalum;* but, Sir, the magistrate, if he knows it, has a right to restrain you. Suppose you teach your children to be thieves?"—*M.* "This is making a joke of the subject."—*J.* "Nay, Sir, take it thus: that you teach them the community of goods,

for which there are as many plausible arguments as for most erroneous doctrines. You teach them, that all things at first were in common, and that no man had a right to any thing but as he laid his hands upon it; and that this still is, or ought to be, the rule amongst mankind. Here, Sir, you sap a great principle in society—property. And don't you think the magistrate would have a right to prevent you? Or suppose you should teach your children the notion of the Adamites, and they should run naked in the streets, would not the magistrate have a right to flog them into their doublets?"—*M.* "I think the magistrate has no right to interfere till there is some overt act."—*B.* "So, Sir, though he sees an enemy to the State charging a blunderbuss, he is not to interfere till it is fired off."—*M.* "He must be sure of its direction against the State."—*J.* "The magistrate is to judge of that. He has no right to restrain your thinking because the evil centers in yourself. If a man were sitting at this table, and chopping off his fingers, the magistrate, as guardian of the community, has no authority to restrain him, however he might do it from kindness as a parent. Though, indeed, upon more consideration, I think he may; as it is probable, that he who is chopping off his own fingers, may soon proceed

to chop off those of other people. If I think it right to steal Mr. Dilly's plate, I am a bad man; but he can say nothing to me. If I make an open declaration that I think so, he will keep me out of his house. If I put forth my hand, I shall be sent to Newgate. This is the gradation of thinking, preaching, and acting: if a man thinks erroneously, he may keep his thoughts to himself, and nobody will trouble him; if he preaches erroneous doctrine, society may expel him; if he acts in consequence of it, the law takes place, and he is hanged."—*M.* "But, Sir, ought not Christians to have liberty of conscience?"—*J.* "I have already told you so, Sir. You are coming back to where you were."—*B.* "Dr. Mayo is always taking a return post-chaise, and going the stage over again. He has it at half-price."—*J.* "Dr. Mayo, like other champions for unlimited toleration, has got a set of words. Sir, it is no matter, politically, whether the magistrate be right or wrong. Suppose a club were to be formed to drink confusion to King George the Third, and a happy restoration to Charles the Third; this would be very bad with respect to the State; but every member of that club must either conform to its rules, or be turned out of it. Old Baxter, I remember, maintains, that the magistrate should 'to-

lerate all things that are tolerable.' This is no good definition of Toleration upon any principle; but it shews that he thought some things were not tolerable."—*Toplady:* "Sir, you have untwisted this difficult subject with great dexterity."

RELIGION.

Mr. Boswell one day stated an anxious thought, by which a sincere Christian might be disturbed, even when conscious of having lived a good life, so far as consistent with human infirmity; he might fear that he should afterwards fall away, and be guilty of such crimes as would render all his former religion vain. Could there be, he asked, upon this awful subject, such a thing as balancing of accounts? Suppose a man who has led a good life for seven years, commits an act of wickedness, and instantly dies; will his former good life have any effect in his favour? "Sir, (said Johnson), if a man has led a good life for seven years, and then is hurried by passion to do what is wrong, and is suddenly carried off, depend upon it he will have the re-

ward of his seven years' good life; God will not take a catch of him. Upon this principle Richard Baxter believes that a suicide may be saved. If (said he) it should be objected, that what I maintain may encourage suicide, I answer, I am not to tell a lie to prevent it."—*B.* "But does not the text say, 'As the tree falls, so it must lie?"—*J.* "Yes, Sir; as the tree falls: but (after a little pause)—that is meant as to the general state of the tree, not what is the effect of a sudden blast." In short, (as Mr. B. observes), he interpreted the expression as referring to condition, not to position. The common notion, therefore, seems to be erroneous; and Shenstone's witty remark on Divines trying to give the tree a jerk upon a death-bed, to make it lie favourably, is not well-founded.

While Johnson and Mr. Boswell stood in calm conference by themselves in a garden, at a pretty late hour, one serene autumn night, looking up to the heavens, the discourse turned on the subject of a future state.—"Sir, (said Johnson), I do not imagine that all things will be made clear to us immediately after death; but that the ways of Providence will be explained to us very gradually."—Mr. B. asked, whether, although the words of some texts of Scripture seemed strong in support of the dreadful doc-

trine of an eternity of punishment, we might not hope that the denunciation was figurative, and would not literally be executed.—Johnson replied, "Sir, you are to consider the intention of punishment in a future state. We have no reason to be sure that we shall then be no longer liable to offend against God. We do not know that even the angels are quite in a state of security; nay, we know that some of them have fallen. It may, therefore, perhaps be necessary, in order to preserve both men and angels in a state of rectitude, that they should have continually before them the punishment of those who have deviated from it; but we may hope, that by some other means a fall from rectitude may be prevented. Some of the texts of Scripture upon this subject are, as you observe, indeed strong, but they may admit of a mitigated interpretation." He talked upon this aweful and delicate question in a gentle tone, and as if afraid to be decisive.

At another time, speaking of the *inward light* to which some Methodists pretended, he said, it was a principle utterly incompatible with social or civil security. "If a man (said he) pretends to a principle of action of which I can know nothing, nay, not so much as that he has it, but only that he pretends to it; how can I tell what

that person may be prompted to do? When a person professes to be governed by a written ascertained law, I can then know where to find him."

Mrs. Knowles once mentioned, as a proselyte to Quakerism, Miss ——, a young lady well known to Dr. Johnson, for whom he had shewn much affection; while she ever had, and still retained, a great respect for him. Mrs. Knowles at the same time took an opportunity of letting him know, "that the amiable young creature was sorry at finding that he was offended at her leaving the Church of England, and embracing a simpler faith;" and, in the gentlest and most persuasive manner, solicited his kind indulgence for what was sincerely a matter of conscience. Johnson said (frowning very angrily), "Madam, she is an odious wench. She could not have any proper conviction that it was her duty to change her religion, which is the most important of all subjects, and should be studied with all care, and with all the helps we can get. She knew no more of the Church which she left, and that which she embraced, than she did of the difference between the Copernican and Ptolemaick systems."—*Mrs. Knowles:* "She had the New Testament before her."—*Johnson:* "Madam, she could not understand the New Testament,

the most difficult book in the world, for which the study of a life is required."—*Mrs. K.* "It is clear as to essentials."—*J.* "But not as to controversial points. The heathens were easily converted, because they had nothing to give up; but we ought not, without very strong conviction indeed, to desert the religion in which we have been educated. That is the religion given you, the religion in which it may be said Providence has placed you. If you live conscientiously in that religion, you may be safe; but error is dangerous indeed, if you err when you choose a religion for yourself."—*Mrs. K.* "Must we then go by implicit faith?"—*J.* "Why, Madam, the greatest part of our knowledge is implicit faith; and as to religion, have we heard all that a disciple of Confucius, all that a Mahometan can say for himself?" He then rose again into passion, and attacked the young proselyte in the severest terms of reproach. Mr. Boswell observed, that the essential part of religion was piety, a devout intercourse with the Divinity; and that many a man was a quaker without knowing it.

A Quaker having objected to the "observance of days, and months, and years," Johnson answered, "The Church does not superstitiously observe days, merely as days, but as memorials

of important facts. Christmas might be kept as well upon one day of the year as another; but there should be a stated day for commemorating the birth of our Saviour, because there is danger, that what may be done on any day, will be neglected."

In a party one day, consisting only of Mr. Seward, Mr. Boswell, and the Doctor, Horace having been mentioned, Mr. Boswell said, "There is a great deal of thinking in his works. One finds there almost every thing but religion." —*Seward:* "He speaks of his returning to it in his Ode, *Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens.*"— *Johnson:* "Sir, he was not in earnest; this was merely poetical."—*Boswell:* "There are, I am afraid, many people who have no religion at all." —*S.* "And sensible people too."—*J.* "Why, Sir, not sensible in that respect. There must be either a natural or moral stupidity, if one lives in a total neglect of so very important a concern."—*S.* "I wonder that there should be people without religion."—*J.* "Sir, you need not wonder at this, when you consider how large a proportion of almost every man's life is passed without thinking of it. I myself was for some years totally regardless of religion; it had dropped out of my mind. It was at an early part of my life. Sickness brought it back, and I

hope I have never lost it since."—*B.* "My dear Sir, what a man must you have been without religion! Why you must have gone on drinking, and swearing, and—"—*J.* (with a smile) "I drank enough, and swore enough, to be sure."—*S.* "One should think that sickness, and the view of death, would make more men religious."—*J.* "Sir, they do not know how to go about it; they have not the first notion. A man who has never had religion before, no more grows religious when he is sick, than a man who has never learnt figures can count when he has need of calculation."

A gentleman was mentioned as being too ready to introduce religious discourse upon all occasions. Johnson observed, "Why, yes, Sir, he will introduce religious discourse, without seeing whether it will end in instruction and improvement, or produce some prophane jest. He would introduce it in the company of ******, and twenty more such."

Mr. Boswell mentioned the Doctor's excellent distinction between liberty of conscience and liberty of teaching. Johnson said, "Consider, Sir; if you have children, whom you wish to educate in the principles of the Church of England, and there comes a Quaker who tries to pervert them to his principles, you would drive

away the Quaker. You would not trust to the predomination of right, which you believe is in your opinions; you would keep wrong out of their heads. Now the vulgar are the children of the State. If any one attempts to teach them doctrines contrary to what the State approves, the magistrate may and ought to restrain him." —*S.* "Would you restrain private conversation, Sir?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, it is difficult to say where private conversation begins, and where it ends. If we three should discuss even the great question concerning the existence of a Supreme Being by ourselves, we should not be restrained; for that would be to put an end to all improvement; but if we should discuss it in the presence of ten boarding-school girls, and as many boys, I think the magistrate would do well to put us in the stocks, to finish the debate there."

A gentleman once expressed a wish to go and live three years at Otaheite or New Zealand, in order to obtain a full acquaintance with people so totally different from all that we have ever known, and be satisfied what pure nature can do for man.—*Johnson:* "What could you learn, Sir? What can savages tell, but what they themselves have seen? Of the past, or the invisible, they can tell nothing. The inhabitants of Otaheite and New Zealand are not in a state

of pure nature; for it is plain they broke off from some other people. Had they grown out of the ground, you might have judged of a state of pure nature. Fanciful people may talk of a mythology being amongst them, but it must be invention. They have once had religion, which has been gradually debased; and what account of their religion can you suppose to be learnt from savages? Only consider, Sir, our own state: our religion is in a book; we have an order of men whose duty it is to teach it; we have one day in the week set apart for it, and this is in general pretty well observed; yet ask the first ten gross men you meet, and hear what they can tell of their religion."

Mr. Murray one day praised the ancient philosophers, for the candour and good humour with which those of different sects disputed with each other. "Sir, (said Johnson), they disputed with good humour, because they were not in earnest as to religion. Had the ancients been serious in their belief, we should not have had their gods exhibited in the manner we find them represented in the Poets. The people would not have suffered it. They disputed with good humour upon their fanciful theories, because they were not interested in the truth of them; when a man has nothing to lose, he may be in good

humour with his opponent. Accordingly, you see in Lucian that the Epicurean, who argues only negatively, keeps his temper; the Stoick, who has something positive to preserve, grows angry. Being angry with one who controverts an opinion which you value, is a necessary consequence of the uneasiness which you feel. Every man who attacks my belief, diminishes in some degree my confidence in it, and therefore makes me uneasy; and I am angry with him who makes me uneasy. Those only who believed in revelation, have been angry at having their faith called in question, because they only had something upon which they could rest, as matter of fact."—*Mr. Murray:* "It seems to me that we are not angry at a man for controverting an opinion which we believe and value; we rather pity him."—*Johnson:* "Why, Sir, to be sure when you wish a man to have that belief which you think is of infinite advantage, you wish well to him; but your primary consideration is your own quiet. If a madman were to come into this room with a stick in his hand, no doubt we should pity the state of his mind; but our primary consideration would be to take care of ourselves. We should knock him down first, and pity him afterwards. No, Sir; every man will dispute with great good humour upon a subject

in which he is not interested. I will dispute very calmly upon the probability of another man's son being hanged; but if a man zealously enforces the probability that my own son will be hanged, I shall certainly not be in a very good humour with him."—Mr. Boswell added this illustration, "If a man endeavours to convince me that my wife, whom I love very much, and in whom I place great confidence, is a disagreeable woman, and is even unfaithful to me, I shall be very angry, for he is putting me in fear of being unhappy."—*Murray:* "But, Sir, truth will always bear an examination."—*Johnson:* "Yes, Sir, but it is painful to be forced to defend it. Consider, Sir, how should you like, though conscious of your innocence, to be tried before a jury for a capital crime, once a week?"

Talking of devotion, he said, "Though it be true that 'God dwelleth not in temples made with hands,' yet in this state of being, our minds are more piously affected in places appropriated to divine worship, than in others. Some people have a particular room in their house, where they say their prayers; of this I do not disapprove, as it may animate their devotion."

He said also, "that to find a substitution for

violated morality, was the leading feature in all perversions of religion."

A sectary being mentioned, who was a very religious man, and not only attended regularly on public worship with those of his communion, but made a particular study of the Scriptures, and even wrote a commentary on some parts of of them, yet was known to be very licentious in indulging himself with women; maintaining that men are to be saved by faith alone, and that the Christian religion had not prescribed any fixed rule for the intercourse between the sexes;" Johnson said, "Sir, there is no trusting to that crazy piety."

At another time he said, "The morality of an action depends on the motive from which we act. If I fling half a crown to a beggar with intention to break his head, and he picks it up and buys victuals with it, the physical effect is good; but with respect to me, the action is very wrong. So religious exercises, if not performed with an intention to please God, avail us nothing. As our Saviour says of those who perform them from other motives, 'Verily they have their reward.'"

A question being introduced as having been much agitated in the Church of Scotland, whe-

ther the claim of lay-patrons to present ministers to parishes be well founded; and supposing it to be well founded, whether it ought to be exercised without the concurrence of the people? Johnson said, the subject was well treated in the 'Defence of Pluralities;' and although he thought that a patron should exercise his right with tenderness to the inclinations of the people of a parish, he was very clear as to his right. He then proceeded to dictate an argument at large on the subject, as supposing the question to be agitated before the general assembly.

On another occasion Mr. Boswell introduced a common subject of complaint, the very small salaries which many curates have, and maintained, "that no man should be invested with the character of a clergyman, unless he has a security for such an income as will enable him to appear respectable; that therefore a clergyman should not be allowed to have a curate, unless he gives him a hundred pounds a year; if he cannot do that, let him perform the duty himself."—Johnson observed, "To be sure, Sir, it is wrong that any clergyman should be without a reasonable income; but as the church revenues were sadly diminished at the Reformation, the clergy who have livings cannot afford, in many instances, to give salaries to curates, with-

out leaving themselves too little; and if no curate were to be permitted, unless he had a hundred pounds a year, their number would be very small, which would be a disadvantage, as then there would be no such choice in the nursery for the church, curates being candidates for the higher ecclesiastical offices, according to their merit and good behaviour." He explained the system of the English Hierarchy exceedingly well. "It is not thought fit (said he) to trust a man with the care of a parish, till he has given proof as a curate that he shall deserve such a trust." This is an excellent *theory;* and if the *practice* were according to it, the Church of England would be admirable indeed. However, as Dr. Johnson once observed as to the Universities, bad practice does not infer that the *constitution* is bad.

The subject of the inequality of the livings of the clergy of England, and the scanty provisions of some of the curates, was resumed at another time, when Johnson said, "It cannot be helped. You must consider, that the revenues of the clergy are not at the disposal of the State, like the pay of the army. Different men have founded different churches; and some are better endowed, some worse. The State cannot interfere, and make an equal division of what has been parti-

cularly appropriated. Now when a clergyman has but a small living, or even two small livings, he can afford very little to a curate."

Johnson's old fellow-collegian Mr. Edwards, who has been mentioned before, once expressed a wish that he had continued at college. Johnson asked, "Why do you wish that, Sir?"—*Edwards:* "Because I think I should have had a much easier life than mine has been. I should have been a parson, and had a good living, like Bloxam and several others, and lived comfortably."—*Johnson:* "Sir, the life of a parson, of a conscientious clergyman, is not easy. I have always considered a clergyman as the father of a larger family than he is able to maintain. I would rather have chancery suits upon my hands than the cure of souls. No, Sir, I do not envy a clergyman's life, as an easy life, nor do I envy the clergyman who makes it an easy life."

In one of his Journals was found the following scheme of life for Sunday: "Having lived (as he with tenderness of conscience expresses himself), not without an habitual reverence for the Sabbath, yet without that attention to its religious duties which Christianity requires;

"To rise early, and in order to it, to go to sleep early on Saturday.

2. "To use some extraordinary devotion in the morning.

3. "To examine the tenour of my life, and particularly the last week; and to mark my advances in religion, or recession from it.

4. "To read the Scripture methodically with such helps as are at hand.

5. "To go to church twice.

6. "To read books of Divinity, either speculative or practical.

7. "To instruct my family.

8. "To wear off by meditation any worldly soil contracted in the week."

From another of his Journals was transcribed what follows:

"At church, Oct.—65.

"To avoid all singularity.

"To come in before service, and compose my mind by meditation, or by reading some portions of Scripture.

"If I can hear the sermon, to attend to it, unless attention be more troublesome than useful.

"To consider the act of prayer as a reposal of myself upon God, and a resignation of all into his holy hand."

He said he would not have Sunday kept with

rigid severity and gloom, but with a gravity and simplicity of behaviour.

Johnson and Mr. Boswell were once at Southill church together, and it being the first Sunday of the month, and the holy sacrament administered, Mr. B. staid to partake of it. When he came afterwards into Dr. Johnson's room, the Doctor said, "You did right to stay and receive the communion; I had not thought of it." This seemed to imply that he did not choose to approach the altar without a previous preparation; as to which good men entertain different opinions, some holding that it is irreverent to partake of that ordinance without considerable premeditation; others, that whoever is a sincere christian, and in a proper frame of mind to discharge any other ritual duty of our religion, may without scruple discharge this most solemn one. A middle notion Mr. Boswell seems to believe to be the just one, which is, that communicants need not think a long train of preparatory forms indispensably necessary; but neither should they rashly and lightly venture upon so awful and mysterious an institution. Christians must judge each for himself, what degree of retirement and self-examination is necessary upon each occasion.

Being once (says Mr. B.) in a frame of mind

which, I hope for the felicity of human nature, many experience—in fine weather,—at the country-house of a friend,—consoled and elevated by pious exercises, I expressed myself with an unrestrained fervour to my 'Guide, Philosopher, and Friend.' "My dear Sir, I would fain be a good man; and I am very good now. I fear God and honour the King, I wish to do no ill, and to be benevolent to all mankind." He looked at me with a benignant indulgence; but took occasion to give me wise and salutary caution. "Do not, Sir, accustom yourself to trust to *impressions*. There is a middle state of mind between conviction and hypocrisy, of which many are conscious. By trusting to impressions, a man may gradually come to yield to them, and at length be subject to them, so as not to be a free agent. A man who is in that state should not be suffered to live; if he declares he cannot help acting in a particular way, and is irresistibly impelled, there can be no confidence in him, no more than in a tyger. But, Sir, no man believes himself to be impelled irresistibly; we know that he who says he believes it, lies. Favourable impressions at particular moments, as to the state of our souls, may be deceitful and dangerous. In general, no man can be sure of his acceptance with God; some, indeed, may

have had it revealed to them. St. Paul, who wrought miracles, may have had a miracle wrought on himself, and may have obtained supernatural assurance of pardon, and mercy, and beatitude; yet St. Paul, though he expresses strong hope, also expresses fear, lest having preached to others, he himself should be a cast-away."

The opinion of a learned Bishop, as to there being merit in religious faith, being mentioned, Johnson said, " Why, yes, Sir, the most licentious man, were hell open before him, would not take the most beautiful strumpet to his arms. We must, as the Apostle says, live by faith, not by sight."

Mr. Boswell talking of original sin in consequence of the fall of man, and of the atonement made by our Saviour; " With respect to original sin, (said Johnson), the enquiry is not necessary; for whatever is the cause of human corruption, men are evidently and confessedly so corrupt, that all the laws of heaven and earth are insufficient to restrain them from crimes."

" Whatever difficulty there may be in the conception of vicarious punishments, it is an opinion which has had possession of mankind in all ages. There is no nation that has not used the practice of sacrifices. Whoever, therefore,

denies the propriety of vicarious punishments, holds an opinion which the sentiments and practice of mankind have contradicted from the beginning of the world. The great sacrifice for the sins of mankind was offered at the death of the Messiah, who is called in Scripture, 'The Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.' To judge of the reasonableness of the scheme of redemption, it must be considered as necessary to the government of the Universe, that God should make known his perpetual and irreconcileable detestation of moral evil. He might indeed punish, and punish only the offenders; but as the end of punishment is not revenge of crimes, but propagation of virtue, it was more becoming the Divine clemency to find another manner of proceeding, less destructive to man, and at least equally powerful to promote goodness. The end of punishment is, to reclaim and warn. *That* punishment will both reclaim and warn, which shews evidently such abhorrence of sin in God, as may deter us from it, or strike us with dread of vengeance when we have committed it: this is effected by vicarious punishment. Nothing could more testify the opposition between the nature of God and moral evil, or more amply display his justice to men and angels, to all orders and

successions of beings, than that it was necessary for the highest and purest nature, even for Divinity itself, to pacify the demands of vengeance, by a painful death; of which the natural effect will be, that when justice is appeased, there is a proper place for the exercise of mercy; and that such propitiation shall supply, in some degree, the imperfections of our obedience, and the efficacy of our repentance; for obedience and repentance, such as we can perform, are still necessary. Our Saviour has told us, that he did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil: to fulfil the typical law, by the performance of what those tpyes had foreshewn; and the moral law, by precepts of greater purity and higher exaltation.

"The peculiar doctrine of Christianity is that of an universal sacrifice, and perpetual propitiation. Other prophets only proclaimed the will and the threatenings of God. Christ satisfied his justice."

He said at another time, that the holidays observed by our church were of great use in religion.

It was told Johnson, that Goldsmith had said that he had come too late into the world, for that Pope and other poets had taken up the places in the Temple of Fame; so that as but a

few at any period could possess poetical reputation, a man of genius could now hardly acquire it. "That (said Johnson) is one of the most sensible things I have ever heard of Goldsmith. It is difficult to get literary fame, and it is every day growing more difficult. Ah, Sir, that should make a man think of securing happiness in another world, which all who try sincerely for it may attain. In comparison of that, how little are all other things! The belief of immortality is impressed upon all men, and all men act under an impression of it, however they may talk, and though perhaps they may be scarcely sensible of it."

When Johnson paid a visit at Oxford, he surprised the company not a little, by acknowledging, with a look of horror, that he was much oppressed by the fear of death. The amiable Dr. Adams suggested, that God was infinitely good. —*Johnson:* "That he is infinitely good, as far as the perfection of his nature will allow, I certainly believe; but it is necessary for good upon the whole, that individuals should be punished. As to an *individual* therefore he is not infinitely good; and as I cannot be *sure* that I have fulfilled the conditions on which salvation is granted, I am afraid I may be one of those who shall be damned."—*Dr. Adams:* "What do you mean

by damned?"—*J.* (passionately and loudly) "Sent to Hell, Sir, and punished everlastingly." —*Dr. A.* "I don't believe that doctrine."—*J.* "Hold, Sir; do you believe that some will be punished at all?"—*Dr. A.* "Being excluded from Heaven will be a punishment; yet there may be no great positive suffering."—*J.* "Well, Sir; but if you admit any degree of punishment, there is an end of your argument for infinite goodness, simply considered; for infinite goodness would inflict no punishment whatever. There is not infinite goodness, physically considered; morally there is."—*Boswell:* "But may not a man attain to such a degree of hope as not to be uneasy from the fear of death?"—*J.* "A man may have such a degree of hope as to keep him quiet. You see I am not quiet, from the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not despair."—*Mrs. Adams:* "You seem, Sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer."—*J.* "Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has said, that he will set some on his right hand and some on his left." He was in gloomy agitation, and said, "I'll have no more on't."—If what has now been stated should be urged by the enemies of Christianity, as if its influence on the mind were not benignant, let it be remembered, that Johnson's temperament

was melancholy, of which such direful apprehensions of futurity are often a common effect. When he approached nearer to this awful change, we have seen that his mind became tranquil, and he exhibited as much fortitude as becomes a thinking man in that situation.

From the subject of death they passed to discourse of life, whether it was upon the whole more happy or miserable. Johnson was decidedly for the balance of misery.

They then talked of the recent expulsion of six students from the University at Oxford, who were methodists, and would not desist from publicly praying and exhorting. Johnson said, "Sir, that expulsion was extremely just and proper. What have they to do at an University, who are not willing to be taught, but will presume to teach? Where is religion to be learnt, but at an University? Sir, they were examined, and found to be mighty ignorant fellows."—*Boswell:* "But was it not hard, Sir, to expel them, for I am told they were good beings?"—*Johnson:* "Sir, I believe they might be good beings; but they were not fit to be in the University of Oxford. A cow is a very good animal in the field; but we turn her out of a garden." This was an uncommonly happy illustration.

Of preaching, and of the great success which

those called Methodists have, Johnson said, "It is owing to their expressing themselves in a plain and familiar manner, which is the only way to do good to the common people, and which clergymen of genius and learning ought to do from a principle of duty, when it is suited to their congregations; a practice for which they will be praised by men of sense. To insist against drunkenness as a crime, because it debases Reason, the noblest faculty of man, would be of no service to the common people; but to tell them that they may die in a fit of drunkenness, and shew them how dreadful that would be, cannot fail to make a deep impression. When the Scotch clergy shall give up their homely manner, religion will soon decay in that country."

He at another time repeated, that the established clergy in general did not preach plain enough; and that polished periods and glittering sentences flew over the heads of the common people, without any impression upon their hearts. Something might be necessary, he observed, to excite the affections of the common people, who were sunk in languor and lethargy, and therefore he supposed that the new concomitants of methodism might probably produce so desirable an effect. The mind, like the body, he observed, delighted in change and novelty,

and even in religion itself courted new appearances and modifications. Whatever might be thought of some methodist teachers, he said, he could scarcely doubt the sincerity of that man who travelled nine hundred miles in a month, and preached twelve times a week; for no adequate reward, merely temporal, could be given for such indefatigable labour.

Mr. Boswell once told him, that having objected to keeping company with a notorious infidel, a friend of his said to him, "I do not think that men who live laxly in the world, as you and I do, can with propriety assume such an authority. Dr. Johnson may, who is uniformly exemplary in his conduct. But it is not very consistent to shun an infidel to-day, and get drunk to-morrow."—*Johnson:* "Nay, Sir, this is sad reasoning. Because a man cannot be right in all things, is he to be right in nothing? Because a man sometimes gets drunk, is he therefore to steal? This doctrine would very soon bring a man to the gallows."

After all, however, Mr. Boswell seems to think it a difficult question, how far sincere Christians should associate with the avowed enemies of religion; for, in the first place, almost every man's mind may be more or less 'corrupted by evil communications;' secondly, the world may

very naturally suppose that they are not really in earnest in religion, who can easily bear its opponents; and thirdly, if the profane find themselves quite well received by the pious, one of the checks upon an open declaration of their infidelity, and one of the probable chances of obliging them seriously to reflect, which their being shunned would do, is removed.

A gentleman one day said, that in his opinion the character of an infidel was more detestable than that of a man notoriously guilty of an atrocious crime. Another differed from him, because we are surer of the odiousness of the one, than of the error of the other.—*Johnson:* "Sir, I agree with him; for the infidel would be guilty of any crime, if he were inclined to it."—A General Officer asked him, what he thought of the spirit of infidelity, which was so prevalent?—*J.* "Sir, this gloom of infidelity, I hope, is only a transient cloud passing through the hemisphere, which will soon be dissipated, and the sun break forth with his usual splendour."—"You think then (said the General) that they will change their principles like their clothes."—*J.* "Why, Sir, if they bestow no more thought on principles than on dress, it must be so." The General said, "that a great part of the fashionable infidelity was owing to a desire of

shewing courage. Men who have no opportunity of shewing it as to things in this life, take death and futurity as objects on which to display it."—*J.* "That is mighty foolish affectation. Fear is one of the passions of human nature, of which it is impossible to divest it."

Mr. B. mentioned to Dr. Johnson, that David Hume's persisting in his infidelity when he was dying, shocked him much.—*Johnson:* "Why should it shock you, Sir? Hume owned he had never read the New Testament with attention. Here then was a man who had been at no pains to enquire into the truth of religion, and had continually turned his mind the other way. It was not to be expected that the prospect of death would alter his way of thinking, unless God should send an angel to set him right."—Mr. B. said, he had reason to believe that the thought of annihilation gave Hume no pain.—*J.* "It was not so, Sir. He had a vanity in being thought easy. It is more probable that he should assume an appearance of ease, than that so very improbable a thing should be, as a man not afraid of going (as, in spite of his delusive theory, he cannot be sure but he may go) into an unknown state, and not being uneasy at leaving all he knew. And you are to consider, that

upon his own principle of annihilation he had no motive to speak the truth."

At another time Mr. B. expressed a wish to have the arguments for Christianity always in readiness, that his religious faith might be as firm and clear as any proposition whatever, so that he need not be under the least uneasiness when it should be attacked. Johnson said, "Sir, you cannot answer all objections. You have demonstration for a First Cause: you see he must be good as well as powerful, because there is nothing to make him otherwise, and goodness of itself is preferable. Yet you have against this, what is very certain, the unhappiness of human life. This, however, gives us reason to hope for a future state of compensation, that there may be a perfect system. But of that we were not sure till we had a positive revelation."—"I told him (adds Mr. B.) that his 'Rasselas' had often made me unhappy; for it represented the misery of human life so well, and so convincingly to a thinking mind, that if at any time the impression wore off, and I felt myself easy, I began to suspect some delusion."

His profound adoration of the Great First Cause was such as to set him above that "phi-

losophy and vain deceit," with which men of narrower conceptions have been infected. He used strongly to maintain, that "what is right, is not so from any natural fitness, but because God wills it to be right."

Of a gentleman who was mentioned, he said, "I have not met with any man for a long time who has given me such general displeasure. He is totally unfixed in his principles, and wants to puzzle other people."—Mr. B. said, his principles had been poisoned by a noted infidel writer; but that he was, nevertheless, a benevolent good man.—*Johnson:* "We can have no dependence upon that instinctive, that constitutional goodness which is not founded upon principle. I grant you, that such a man may be a very amiable member of society. I can conceive him placed in such a situation, that he is not much tempted to deviate from what is right: and as every man prefers virtue, when there is not some strong incitement to transgress its precepts, I can conceive him doing nothing wrong. But if such a man stood in need of money, I should not like to trust him; and I should certainly not trust him with young ladies, for *there* there is always temptation. Hume and other sceptical innovators are vain men, and will gratify themselves at any expence. Truth will not

afford sufficient food to their vanity; so they have betaken themselves to error. Truth, Sir, is a cow which will yield such people no more milk, and so they are gone to milk the bull. If I could have allowed myself to gratify my vanity at the expence of truth, what fame might I have acquired. Every thing which Hume has advanced against Christianity, had passed through my mind long before he wrote. Always remember this, that after a system is well settled upon positive evidence, a few partial objections ought not to shake it. The human mind is so limited, that it cannot take in all the parts of a subject, so that there may be objections raised against any thing. There are objections against a *plenum*, and objections against a *vacuum*; yet one of them must certainly be true."

Hume's argument against the belief of miracles being mentioned, 'that it is more probable the witnesses to the truth of them are mistaken, or speak falsely, than that the miracles should be true,' Johnson said, "Why, Sir, the great difficulty of proving miracles should make us very cautious in believing them. But let us consider; although God has made Nature to operate by certain fixed laws, yet it is not unreasonable to think that he may suspend those laws, in order to establish a system highly advantageous to

mankind. Now the Christian religion is a most beneficial system, as it gives us light and certainty where we were before in darkness and doubt. The miracles which prove it are attested by men who had no interest in deceiving us; but who, on the contrary, were told that they should suffer persecution, and did actually lay down their lives in confirmation of the truth of the facts which they asserted. Indeed, for some centuries the heathens did not pretend to deny the miracles; but said they were performed by the aid of evil spirits. This is a circumstance of great weight. Then, Sir, when we take the proofs derived from prophecies which have been so exactly fulfilled, we have most satisfactory evidence. Supposing a miracle possible, as to which, in my opinion, there can be no doubt, we have as strong evidence for the miracles in support of Christianity as the nature of the thing admits."

Talking of those who denied the truth of Christianity, he said, " It is always easy to be on the negative side. If a man were now to deny that there is salt upon the table, you could not reduce him to an absurdity. Come, let us try this a little further. I deny that Canada is taken, and I can support my denial by pretty good arguments. The French are a much more numerous people than we; and it is not likely

that they would allow us to take it.—' But the ministry have assured us, in all the formality of the Gazette, that it is taken.'—Very true. But the ministry have put us to an enormous expence by the war in America, and it is their interest to persuade us that we have got something for our money.—' But the fact is confirmed by thousands of men who were at the taking of it.' —Ay, but these men have still more interest in deceiving us. They don't want you should think the French have beat them, but that they have beat the French. Now suppose you should go over and find that it is really taken, that would only satisfy yourself; for when you come home we will not believe you. We will say you have been bribed. Yet, Sir, notwithstanding all these plausible objections, we have no doubt that Canada really is ours. Such is the weight of common testimony. How much stronger are the evidences of the Christian religion?"

Mr. B. once acknowledged to Johnson, that though educated very strictly in the principles of religion, he had for some time been misled into a certain degree of infidelity; but that he was come now to a better way of thinking, and was fully satisfied of the truth of the Christian revelation, though he was not clear as to every point considered to be orthodox. Being at all times

a curious examiner of the human mind, and pleased with an undisguised display of what had passed in it, Johnson called to him with warmth, and said, "Give me your hand; I have taken a liking to you." He then began to descant upon the force of testimony, and the little we could know of final causes; so that the objections of, Why was it so? or, Why was it not so? ought not to disturb us; adding, that he himself had at one period been guilty of a temporary neglect of religion; but that it was not the result of argument, but mere absence of thought.

After having given credit to reports of his bigotry, the reader will be agreeably surprized at hearing Johnson expressing the following very liberal sentiment, which has the additional value of obviating an objection to our holy religion, founded upon the discordant tenets of Christians themselves: "For my part, Sir, I think all Christians, whether Papists or Protestants, agree in the essential articles, and that their differences are trivial, and rather political than religious."

At another time he observed, "The Christian religion has very strong evidences. It, indeed, appears in some degree strange to reason; but in History we have undoubted facts, against which, in reasoning *à priori*, we have more arguments than we have for them; but then, tes-

timony has great weight, and casts the balance. I would recommend to every man whose faith is yet unsettled, Grotius, Dr. Pearson, and Dr. Clarke."

Again: "As to the Christian religion, besides the strong evidence which we have for it, there is a balance in its favour from the number of great men who have been convinced of its truth, after a serious consideration of the question. Grotius was an acute man, a lawyer, a man accustomed to examine evidence, and he was convinced. Grotius was not a recluse, but a man of the world, who certainly had no bias to the side of religion. Sir Isaac Newton set out an infidel, and came to be a very firm believer."

Johnson said, "No honest man could be a Deist; for no man could be so after a fair examination of the proofs of Christianity." Hume was mentioned—*Johnson:* "No, Sir, Hume owned to a Clergyman in the bishopric of Durham, that he had never read the New Testament with attention."

Talking of the Roman Catholic religion, Johnson said, "In the barbarous ages, Sir, priests and people were equally deceived; but afterwards there were gross corruptions introduced by the Clergy, such as indulgencies to priests

to have concubines, and the worship of images, not, indeed, inculcated, but knowingly permitted."

Talking one day of Dr. Johnson's unwillingness to believe extraordinary things, Mr. B. ventured to say, "Sir, you come near Hume's argument against miracles, "That it is more probable witnesses should lie, or be mistaken, than that they should happen." — *Johnson:* "Why, Sir, Hume, taking the proposition simply, is right. But the Christian revelation is not proved by the miracles alone, but as connected with prophecies, and with the doctrines in confirmation of which the miracles were wrought."

He repeated his observation, that the differences among Christians are really of no consequence. For instance, (said he), if a Protestant objects to a Papist, 'You worship images;' the Papist can answer, 'I do not insist on *your* doing it; you may be a very good Papist without it: I do it only as a help to my devotion." It was observed, that the great article of Christianity was the revelation of immortality. Johnson admitted it.

Mr. Boswell had hired a Bohemian as his servant while he remained in London, and being much pleased with him, asked Dr. Johnson

whether his being a Roman Catholic ought to prevent his taking him with him to Scotland?—"Why no, Sir, (said Johnson): if *he* has no objection, you can have none."—*Boswell:* "So, Sir, you are no great enemy to the Roman Catholic religion."—*Johnson:* No more, Sir, than to the Presbyterian religion."—*B.* "You are joking."—*J.* "No, Sir, I really think so. Nay, Sir, of the two, I prefer the Popish."—*B.* "How so, Sir?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, the Presbyterians have no church, no apostolical ordination."—*B.* "And do you think that absolutely essential, Sir?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, as it was an apostolical institution, I think it is dangerous to be without it. And, Sir, the Presbyterians have no public worship: they have no form of prayer in which they know they are to join.—They go to hear a man pray, and are to judge whether they will join with him."—*B.* "But, Sir, their doctrine is the same with that of the Church of England. Their Confession of Faith, and the Thirty-nine Articles, contain the same points, even the doctrine of predestination."—*J.* "Why, yes, Sir; predestination was a part of the clamour of the times, so it is mentioned in our Articles, but with as little positiveness as could be."—*B.* "Is it necessary, Sir, to believe all the Thirty-nine Articles?"—*J.* "Why, Sir,

that is a question which has been much agitated. Some have thought it necessary that they should all be believed; others have considered them to be only articles of peace, that is to say, you are not to preach against them."—*B.* "It appears to me, Sir, that predestination, or what is equivalent to it, cannot be avoided, if we hold an universal prescience in the Deity."—*J.* "Why, Sir, does not God every day see things going on, without preventing them?"—*B.* "True, Sir; but if a thing be certainly foreseen, it must be fixed, and cannot happen otherwise; and if we apply this consideration to the human mind, there is no free will, nor do I see how prayer can be of any avail."—Dr. Johnson mentioned Dr. Clarke, and Bishop Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity, and bid Mr. B. read South's Sermons on Prayer, but avoided the question which has excruciated philosophers and divines beyond any other. "I did not (says Mr. B.) press it further, when I perceived that he was displeased, and shrunk from any abridgement of an attribute usually ascribed to the Divinity, however irreconcilable in its full extent with the grand system of moral government. His supposed orthodoxy here cramped the vigorous powers of his understanding. He was confined by a chain which early imagination and

long habit made him think massy and strong, but which, had he ventured to try, he could at once have snapt asunder." Mr. B. proceeded : " What do you think, Sir, of purgatory, as believed by the Roman Catholics ?"—*J.* " Why, Sir, it is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment, nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits ; and therefore that God is graciously pleased to allow of a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see, Sir, there is nothing unreasonable in this."—*B.* " But then, Sir, their masses for the dead ?"—*J.* " Why, Sir, if it once be established that there are souls in purgatory, it is as proper to pray for them, as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life."—*B.* " The idolatry of the mass ?" —*J.* " Sir, there is no idolatry in the mass. They believe God to be there, and they adore him."—*B.* " The worship of Saints ?"—*J.* " Sir, they do not worship Saints ; they invoke them ; they only ask their prayers. I am talking all this time of the *doctrines* of the church of Rome. I grant you, that in *practice*, purgatory is made a lucrative imposition, and that the people do become idolatrous as they recommend themselves

to the tutelary protection of particular saints. I think their giving the sacrament only in one kind is criminal, because it is contrary to the express institution of Christ, and I wonder how the Council of Trent admitted it."—*B.* "Confession?"—*J.* "Why, I don't know but that is a good thing. The Scripture says, 'Confess your faults one to another;' and the priests confess as well as the laity. Then it must be considered, that their absolution is only upon repentance, and often upon penance also. You think your sins may be forgiven without penance, upon repentance alone." I thus ventured to mention all the common objections against the Roman Catholic Church, that I might hear so great a man upon them. What he said is here accurately recorded. But it is not improbable that if one had taken the other side, he might have reasoned differently.

It must however be mentioned, that he had a respect for "*the old religion,*" as the mild Melancthon called that of the Roman Catholic Church, even while he was exerting himself for its reformation in some particulars. Sir William Scott tells, that he heard Johnson say, "A man who is converted from Protestantism to Popery, may be sincere: he parts with nothing: he is only superadding to what he already had.

But a convert from Popery to Protestantism, gives up so much of what he has held as sacred as any thing that he retains; there is so much *laceration of mind* in such a conversion, that it can hardly be sincere and lasting." The truth of this reflection may be confirmed by many and eminent instances, some of which will occur to most readers.

Again, talking of the Roman Catholic religion, and how little difference there was in essential matters between ours and it, Johnson said, "True, Sir: all denominations of Christians have really little difference in point of doctrine, though they may differ widely in external forms. There is a prodigious difference between the external form of one of our Presbyterian churches in Scotland, and a church in Italy; yet the doctrine taught is essentially the same."

The petition to Parliament for removing the subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, was mentioned. Johnson observed, "It was soon thrown out. Sir, they talk of not making boys at the University subscribe to what they do not understand: but they ought to consider, that our Universities were founded to bring up members for the Church of England, and we must not supply our enemies with arms from our arsenal.

No, Sir, the meaning of subscribing is, not hat they fully understand all the Articles, but that they will adhere to the Church of England. Now take it in this way, and suppose that they should only subscribe their adherence to the Church of England, there would be still the same difficulty; for still the young men would be subscribing to what they do not understand. For if you should ask them, what do you mean by the Church of England? Do you know in what it differs from the Presbyterian Church? from the Romish Church? from the Greek Church? from the Coptic Church? they could not tell you. So, Sir, it comes to the same thing." —*B.* "But would it not be sufficient to subscribe the Bible?"—*J.* "Why, no, Sir; for all sects will subscribe the Bible, nay, the Mahometans will subscribe the Bible; for the Mahometans acknowledge Jesus Christ, as well as Moses; but maintain that God sent Mahomet as a still greater prophet than either."

Johnson's profound reverence for the Hierarchy made him expect from Bishops the highest degree of decorum; he was offended even at their going to taverns: "A Bishop (said he) has nothing to do at a tipling house. It is not indeed immoral in him to go to a tavern; neither would it be immoral in him to whip a top in Grosvenor

square; but if he did, I hope the boys would fall upon him, and apply the whip to him. There are gradations in conduct; there is morality, decency, propriety. None of these should be violated by a bishop. A bishop should not go to a house where he may meet a young fellow leading out a wench."

He also disapproved of bishops going to routs, at least of their staying at them longer than their presence commanded respect. He mentioned a particular bishop. "Poh! (said Mrs. Thrale) the Bishop of —— is never minded at a rout." —*Boswell:* "When a bishop places himself in a situation where he has no distinct character, and is of no consequence, he degrades the dignity of his order."—*Johnson:* "Mr. Boswell, Madam, has said it as correctly as it could be."

Nor was it only in the dignitaries of the Church that Johnson required a particular decorum and delicacy of behaviour: he justly considered that the Clergy, as persons set apart for the sacred office for serving at the altar, and impressing the minds of men with the aweful concerns of a future state, should be somewhat more serious than the generality of mankind, and have a suitable composure of manners. A due sense of the dignity of their profession, independent of higher motives, will ever prevent them from losing

their distinction in an indiscriminate sociality; and did such as affect this, know how much it lessens them in the eyes of those whom they think to please by it, they would feel themselves much mortified.

Johnson and his friend Beauclerk were once together in company with several clergymen, who thought that they should appear to advantage by assuming the lax jollity of *men of the world;* which, as it may be observed in similar cases, they carried to a noisy excess. Johnson, who they expected would be *entertained,* sat grave and silent for some time; at last, turning to Beauclerk, he said, by no means in a whisper, "This merriment of parsons is mightily offensive."

Even the dress of a clergyman should be in character, and nothing can be more despicable than conceited attempts at avoiding the appearance of the clerical order; attempts, which are as ineffectual as they are pitiful. Dr. Porteus, now Bishop of London, in his excellent charge, when presiding over the diocese of Chester, justly animadverts upon this subject; and observes of a reverend fop, that he "can be but half a beau."

Addison, in "The Spectator," has given a fine portrait of a clergyman, who is supposed to

be a member of his Club; and Johnson has exhibited a model, in the character of Mr. Mudge, which has escaped the collectors of his works, but which he owned to Mr. Boswell, and which indeed he shewed to Sir Joshua Reynolds at the time when it was written. It bears the genuine marks of Johnson's best manner, and is as follows:

"The Reverend Mr. Zachariah Mudge, Prebendary of Exeter, and Vicar of St. Andrews in Plymouth; a man equally eminent for his virtues and abilities, and at once beloved as a companion, and reverenced as a pastor. He had that general curiosity to which no kind of knowledge is indifferent or superfluous; and that general benevolence by which no order of men is hated or despised.

"His principles both of thought and action were great and comprehensive. By a solicitous examination of objections, and judicious comparison of opposite arguments, he attained what enquiry never gives but to industry and perspicuity, a firm and unshaken settlement of conviction. But his firmness was without asperity; for knowing with how much difficulty truth was sometimes found, he did not wonder that many missed it.

"The general course of his life was deter-

mined by his profession: he studied the sacred volumes in the original languages; with what diligence and success, his 'Notes upon the Psalms' give sufficient evidence. He once endeavoured to add the knowledge of Arabic to that of Hebrew; but finding his thoughts too much diverted from other studies, after some time, desisted from his purpose.

"His discharge of parochial duties was exemplary. How his Sermons were composed, may be learned from the excellent volume which he has given to the public; but how they were delivered, can be known only to those who heard them; for as he appeared in the pulpit, words will not easily describe him. His delivery, though unconstrained, was not negligent, and though forcible, was not turbulent; disdaining anxious nicety of emphasis, and laboured artifice of action, it captivated the hearer by its natural dignity, it roused the sluggish, and fixed the volatile, and detained the mind upon the subject, without directing it to the speaker.

"The grandeur and solemnity of the preacher did not intrude upon his general behaviour; at the table of his friends, he was a companion communicative and attentive, of unaffected manners, of manly cheerfulness, willing to please, and easy to be pleased. His acquaintance was universally

solicited, and his presence obstructed no enjoyment which religion did not forbid. Though studious he was popular; though argumentative he was modest; though inflexible he was candid; and though metaphysical yet orthodox."

Johnson speaking of religious seclusion, said, "If convents should be allowed at all, they should only be retreats for persons unable to serve the public, or who have served it. It is our first duty to serve society, and after we have done that, we may attend wholly to the salvation of our own souls. A youthful passion for abstracted devotion should not be encouraged. It is as unreasonable for a man to go into a Carthusian convent for fear of being immoral, as for a man to cut off his hands for fear he should steal. There is indeed great resolution in the immediate act of dismembering himself; but when that is once done, he has no longer any merit; for though it is out of his power to steal, yet he may all his life be a thief in his heart. So when a man has once become a Carthusian, he is obliged to continue so, whether he chooses it or not. Their silence too is absurd. We read in the Gospel, of the Apostles being sent to preach, but not to hold their tongues. All severity that does not tend to increase good, or prevent evil, is idle. I said to the Lady Abbess of a convent, 'Ma-

dam, you are here not for the love of virtue, but the fear of vice.' She said, she should remember this as long as she lived." It was, perhaps, hard to give her this view of her situation, when she could not help it; and, indeed, we may wonder at the whole of what he said on this subject, because, both in his "Rambler" and "Idler," he treats religious austerities with much solemnity of respect.

To a young clergyman in the country, Dr. Johnson gave the following valuable advice, which may be not unuseful, we think, to Divines in general:

"You are afraid of falling into some improprieties in the daily service, by reading to an audience that requires no exactness. Your fear, I hope, secures you from danger. They who contract absurd habits, are such as have no fear. It is impossible to do the same thing very often, without some peculiarity of manner; but that manner may be good or bad, and a little care will at least preserve it from being bad: to make it good, there must, I think, be something of natural or casual felicity, which cannot be taught.

"Your present method of making your sermons seems very judicious. Few frequent preachers can be supposed to have sermons more their own than yours will be. Take care to register

somewhere or other, the authors from whom your several discourses are borrowed; and do not imagine that you shall always remember, even what perhaps you now think it impossible to forget.

" My advice, however, is, that you attempt, from time to time, an original sermon; and in the labour of composition, do not burthen your mind with too much at once; do not exact from yourself at one effort of excogitation, propriety of thought, and elegance of expression. Invent first, and then embellish. The production of something, where nothing was before, is an act of greater energy, than the expansion or decoration of the thing produced. Set down diligently your thoughts as they rise in the first words that occur; and, when you have matter, you will easily give it form: nor, perhaps, will this method be always necessary; for by habit your thoughts and diction will flow together.

"The composition of sermons is not very difficult: the divisions not only help the memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer; they supply sources of invention, and keep every part in its proper place.

" What I like least, is your account of manners in your parish; from which I find, that it has been long neglected by the parson. The Dean of

Carlisle, when he was a little rector in Northamptonshire, told me, that it might be discerned whether or no there was a clergyman resident in a parish, by the civil or savage manner of a people. Such a congregation as yours stands in need of much reformation, and I would not have you think it impossible to reform them. A very savage parish was civilized by a decayed gentlewoman, who came among them to teach a petty school. My learned friend Dr. Wheeler of Oxford, when he was a young man, had the care of a neighbouring parish for fifteen pounds a year, which he was never paid; but he counted it a convenience, that it compelled him to make a sermon weekly. One woman he could not bring to the communion; and when he reproved or exhorted her, she only answered, that she was no scholar. He was advised to set some good woman or man of the parish, a little wiser than herself, to talk to her in a language level to her mind.—Such honest, I may call them holy artifices, must be practised by every clergyman; for all means must be tried by which souls may be saved. Talk to your people, however, as much as you can; and you will find, that the more frequently you converse with them upon religious subjects, the more willingly they will

attend, and the more submissively they will learn. A clergyman's diligence always makes him venerable."

TRADE.

TALKING of trade, Johnson observed, "It is a mistaken notion, that a vast deal of money is brought into a nation by trade. It is not so. Commodities come from commodities; but trade produces no capital accession of wealth. However, though there should be little profit in money, there is a considerable profit in pleasure, as it gives to one nation the productions of another; as we have wines and fruits, and many other foreign articles, brought to us."—*Boswell:* "Yes, Sir, and there is a profit in pleasure, by its furnishing occupation to such numbers of mankind."—*Johnson:* "Why, Sir, you cannot call that pleasure to which all are averse, and which none begin but with the hope of leaving off; a thing which men dislike before they have tried it, and when they have tried it."—*B.* "But, Sir, the mind must be employed, and we grow weary when idle."—*J.* "That is, Sir, because others being busy, we want com-

pany; but if we were all idle, there would be no growing weary; we should all entertain one another. There is, indeed, this in trade: it gives men an opportunity of improving their situation. If there were no trade, many who are poor would always remain poor; but no man loves labour for itself."—*B.* "Yes, Sir, I know a person who does. He is a very laborious judge, and he loves the labour."—*J.* "Sir, that is because he loves respect and distinction. Could he have them without labour he would like it less."—*B.* He tells me he likes it for itself."—*J.* "Why, Sir, he fancies so, because he is not accustomed to abstract."

The company got into an argument, whether the Judges who went to India might with propriety engage in trade. Johnson warmly maintained that they might. "For why (he urged) should not Judges get riches, as well as those who deserve them less?" Mr. Boswell said, they should have sufficient salaries, and have nothing to take off their attention from the affairs of the public.—*Johnson:* "No Judge, Sir, can give his whole attention to his office; and it is very proper that he should employ what time he has to himself, to his own advantage, in the most profitable manner."—"Then, Sir, (said Mr. Davies, who enlivened the dispute by making it

somewhat dramatic), he may become an insurer, and when he is going to the bench, he may be stopped—'Your Lordship cannot go yet; here is a bunch of invoices; several ships are about to sail.'"—*J.* "Sir, you may as well say a Judge should not have a house; for they may come and tell him, 'Your Lordship's house is on fire;' and so, instead of minding the business of his court, he is to be occupied in getting the engine with the greatest speed. There is no end of this. Every Judge, who has land, trades to a certain extent in corn or in cattle; and in the land itself undoubtedly. His steward acts for him, and so do clerks for a great merchant. A Judge may be a farmer, but he is not to castrate his own pigs. A Judge may play a little at cards for his amusement; but he is not to play at marbles, or at chuck-farthing in the Piazza. No, Sir; there is no profession to which a man gives a very great proportion of his time. It is wonderful, when a calculation is made, how little the mind is actually employed in the discharge of any profession. No man would be a Judge, upon the condition of being totally a Judge. The best employed lawyer has his mind at work but for a small portion of his time: a great deal of his occupation is merely mechanical. —I once wrote for a Magazine: I made a

calculation, that if I should write but a page a day, at the same rate, I should in ten years write nine volumes in folio of an ordinary size and print."—*Boswell:* "Such as Carte's History." —*J.* "Yes, Sir. When a man writes from his own mind he writes very rapidly. The greatest part of a writer's time is spent in reading, in order to write; a man will turn over half a library to make one book."

Talking of expence, Johnson observed with what munificence a great merchant will spend his money, both from his having it at command, and from his enlarged views by calculation of a good effect upon the whole. "Whereas (said he) you will hardly ever find a country gentleman who is not a good deal disconcerted at an unexpected occasion for his being obliged to lay out ten pounds."

Upon a visit to Mr. Boswell, at a country lodging near Twickenham, he asked what sort of society he had there. Mr. B. told him but indifferent; as they chiefly consisted of opulent traders, retired from business. Johnson said, he never much liked that class of people; "For (said he) they have lost the civility of tradesmen, without acquiring the manners of gentlemen."

Being once solicited to compose a funeral

sermon for the daughter of a tradesman, he naturally enquired into the character of the deceased; and being told she was remarkable for her humility and condescension to inferiors, he observed, that those were very laudable qualities, but it might not be so easy to discover who the lady's inferiors were.

He made the common remark, on the unhappiness which men who have led a busy life experience, when they retire in expectation of enjoying themselves at ease, and that they generally languish for want of their habitual occupation, and wish to return to it. He mentioned as strong an instance of this as can well be imagined. "An eminent tallow-chandler in London, who had acquired a considerable fortune, gave up the trade in favour of his foreman, and went to live at a country-house near town. He soon grew weary, and paid frequent visits to his old shop, where he desired they might let him know their *melting-days*, and he would come and assist them; which he accordingly did. Here, Sir, was a man, to whom the most disgusting circumstance in the business to which he had been used, was a relief from idleness."

TRAVELLING.

JOHNSON once talked with uncommon animation of travelling into distant countries; that the mind was enlarged by it, and that an acquisition of dignity of character was derived from it. He expressed a particular enthusiasm with respect to visiting the wall of China. Mr. Boswell caught it for the moment, and said he really believed he should go and see the wall of China, had he not children, of whom it was his duty to take care.—"Sir, (said Johnson), by doing so, you would do what will be of importance in raising your children to eminence. There would be a lustre reflected upon them from your spirit and curiosity. They would be at all times regarded as the children of a man who had gone to view the wall of China. I am serious, Sir."

A journey to Italy was once in his thoughts. He said, "A man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority, from his not having seen what it is expected a man should see. The grand object of travelling is to see the shores of the Mediterranean. On those shores were the four great empires of the world;

the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. All our religion, almost all our law, almost all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean." It was observed, that 'The Mediterranean would be a noble subject for a poem.'

He upon all occasions shewed an aversion to go to Ireland, where Mr. B. proposed to him that they should make a tour.—*Johnson:* "It is the last place where I should wish to travel." —*Boswell:* "Should you not like to see Dublin, Sir?"—*J.* "No, Sir; Dublin is only a worse capital."—*B.* "Is not the Giant's Causeway worth seeing?"—*J.* "Worth seeing, yes; but not worth going to see."

Yet he had a kindness for the Irish nation, and thus generously expressed himself to a gentleman from that country, on the subject of an Union, which artful politicians often had in view:—"Do not make an union with us, Sir. We should unite with you only to rob you.—We should have robbed the Scotch, if they had had any thing of which we could have robbed them."

It was his opinion, that the information we have from modern travellers, is much more au-

thentic than what we had from ancient travellers.—" Ancient travellers (said he) guessed; modern travellers measure. The Swiss admit that there is but one error in Stanyan. If Brydone were more attentive to his Bible, he would be a good traveller."

Mr. Boswell once asked him if modesty was not natural?—*Johnson:* "I cannot say, Sir, as we find no people quite in a state of nature;—but I think the more they are taught, the more modest they are. The French are a gross, ill-bred, untaught people; a lady there will spit on the floor and rub it with her foot. What I gained by being in France was, learning to be better satisfied with my own country. Time may be employed to more advantage from nineteen to twenty-four, almost in any way than in travelling; when you set travelling against mere negation, against doing nothing, it is better, to be sure; but how much more would a young man improve, were he to study during those years?—Indeed, if a young man is wild, and must run after women and bad company, it is better this should be done abroad, as, on his return, he can break off such connections, and begin at home a new man, with a character to form, and acquaintances to make. How little does travelling supply to the conversation of any man who

has travelled; how little to Beauclerk?"—*B.* "What say you to Lord ——?"—*J.* "I never but once heard him talk of what he had seen, and that was of a large serpent in one of the pyramids of Egypt."—*B.* "Well, I happened to hear him tell the same thing, which made me mention him."

Of a young female tourist, he said, "Miss Nancy has doubtless kept a constant and copious journal. Let her review her journal often, and set down what she knows herself to have omitted, that she may trust to memory as little as possible, for memory is soon confused by a quick succession of things; and she will grow every day less conscious of the truth of her own narratives, unless she can recur to some written memorials. If she has satisfied herself with hints, instead of full representations, let her supply the deficiencies now, while her memory is yet fresh, and while her father's memory may help her. If she observes this direction, she will not have travelled in vain; for she will bring home a book with which she may entertain herself to the end of life. If it were not now too late, I would advise her to note the impression which the first sight of any thing new and wonderful made upon her mind. Let her now set her thoughts down as she can recollect them;

for faint as they already may be, they will grow every day fainter."

One day dining at an excellent inn, he expatiated on the felicity of England in its taverns and inns, and triumphed over the French for not having, in any perfection, the tavern life.— "There is no private house (said he) in which people can enjoy themselves so well, as at a capital tavern. Let there be ever so great plenty of good things, ever so much grandeur, ever so much elegance, ever so much desire that every body should be easy; in the nature of things it cannot be: there must always be some degree of care and anxiety. The master of the house is anxious to entertain his guests; the guests are anxious to be agreeable to him: and no man, but a very impudent dog indeed, can as freely command what is in another man's house, as if it were his own. Whereas, at a tavern, there is a general freedom from anxiety. You are sure you are welcome; and the more noise you make, the more trouble you give, the more good things you call for, the welcomer you are. No servants will attend you with the alacrity which waiters do, who are incited by the prospect of an immediate reward in proportion as they please. No, Sir; there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so

much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn. He then repeated, with great emotion, Shenstone's lines:

"Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
"Where'er his stages may have been,
"May sigh, to think he still has found
"The warmest welcome at an inn."

Sir John Hawkins (says Mr. B.) has preserved very few *Memorabilia* of Johnson. There is, however, to be found in his bulky tome, a very excellent one upon this subject. "In contradiction to those who, having a wife and children, prefer domestic enjoyment to those which a tavern affords, I have heard him assert, *that a tavern chair was the throne of human felicity.*—'As soon (said he) as I enter the door of a tavern, I experience an oblivion of care, and a freedom from solicitude; when I am seated, I find the master courteous, and the servants obsequious to my call; anxious to know, and ready to supply my wants: wine there exhilarates my spirits, and prompts me to free conversation and an interchange of discourse with those whom I most love: I dogmatise, and am contradicted, and in this conflict of opinions and sentiments I find delight.'"

WOMEN.

JOHNSON thought portrait-painting an improper employment for a woman. "Public practice of any art, (he observed), and staring in men's faces, is very indelicate in a female."

He remarked once, at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, "that a beggar in the street will more readily ask alms from a *man*, though there should be no marks of wealth in his appearance, than from even a well-dressed *woman;* which he accounted for, from the greater degree of carefulness as to money, that is to be found in women: saying farther upon it, that the opportunities in general that they possess, of improving their condition, are much fewer than men have; and adding, as he looked round the company, which consisted of men only, there is not one of us who does not think he might be richer if he would use his endeavour."

He talked with serious concern of a certain female friend's "laxity of narration, and inattention to truth."—"I am as much vexed (said he) at the ease with which she hears it mentioned to her, as at the thing itself. I told her, 'Madam, you are contented to hear every day

said to you, what the highest of mankind have died rather than bear.'—You know, Mr. Boswell, the highest of mankind have died rather than bear to be told they have uttered a falsehood. Do talk to her of it : I am weary."

The wife of one of his acquaintance had fraudulently made a purse for herself out of her husband's fortune. Feeling a proper compunction in her last moments, she confessed how much she had secreted; but before she could tell where it was placed, she was seized with a convulsive fit, and expired. Her husband said, he was more hurt by her want of confidence in him than by the loss of his money. "I told him, (said Johnson), that he should console himself; for *perhaps* the money might be *found*, and he was *sure* that his wife was *lost*."

Mr. Boswell once stated to him this case:—"Suppose a man has a daughter, who he knows has been seduced, but her misfortune is concealed from the world, should he keep her in his house? Would he not, by doing so, be accessary to imposition? And, perhaps, a worthy unsuspecting man might come and marry this woman, unless the father inform him of the truth."—Johnson replied, "Sir, he is accessary to no imposition. His daughter is in his house; and if a man courts her, he takes his chance.—

If a friend, or, indeed, if any man asks his opinion whether he should marry her, he ought to advise him against it, without telling why, because his real opinion is then required. Or, if he has other daughters who know of her frailty, he ought not to keep her in his house. You are to consider, the state of life is this: we are to judge of one another's characters as well as we can; and a man is not bound, in honesty or honor, to tell us the faults of his daughter or of himself. A man who has debauched his friend's daughter is not obliged to say to every body—'Take care of me; don't let me into your houses without suspicion. I once debauched a friend's daughter. I may debauch your's."

As Johnson was a zealous friend of subordination, he was at all times watchful to repress the vulgar cant against the manners of the great. —"High people, Sir, (said he), are the best.—Take a hundred ladies of quality, you'll find them better wives, better mothers, more willing to sacrifice their own pleasure to their children, than a hundred other women. Tradeswomen (I mean the wives of tradesmen) in the city, who are worth from ten to fifteen thousand pounds, are the worst creatures upon the earth: grossly ignorant, and thinking viciousness fashionable. Farmers, I think, are often worthless fellows.—

Few lords will cheat; and if they do, they'll be ashamed of it; farmers cheat, and are not ashamed of it: they have all the sensual vices, too, of the nobility, with cheating into the bargain. There is as much fornication and adultery amongst farmers as amongst noblemen."—*B.* "The notion of the world, Sir, however, is, that the morals of women of quality are worse than those in lower stations."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; the licentiousness of one woman of quality makes more noise than that of a number of women in lower stations. Then, Sir, you are to consider the malignity of the women in the city against women of quality, which will make them believe any thing of them, such as that they call their coachmen to their bed. No, Sir; so far as I have observed, the higher in rank, the richer ladies are, they are the better instructed, and the more virtuous."

THE END.

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