LECTURES

ON

MORAL PHILOSOPHY,

AND

ELOQUENCE.

BY THE

REV. JOHN WITHERSPOON, D. D. L. L. D.
Late President of the College at Princeton, NEW-JERSEY.

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IN JUSTICE to the memory of Dr. Witherspoon, it ought to be stated that he did not intend these lectures for the press, and that he once compelled a printer, who without his knowledge, had undertaken to publish the: to desist from the design, by threatening a prosecution as the consequence of persisting in it. The Doctor's lectures on morals, notwithstanding they assume the form of regular discourses, were in fact, viewed by himself as little more than a syllabus or compend, on which he might enlarge before a class at the times of recitation; and not intending that they should go further, or be otherwise considered, he took freely and without acknowledgment from writers of character such ideas, and perhaps expressions, as he found suited to his purpose. But though these causes would not permit the Dr. himself to give to the public these sketches of moral philosophy, it is believed that they ought not to operate so powerfully on those into whose hands his papers have fallen since his death. Many of his pupils whose eminence in literature and distinction in society give weight to their opinions, have thought that these lectures, with all their imperfections, contain one of the best and most perspicuous exhibitions of the radical principles of the science on which they treat that has ever been made; and they have very importunately demanded their publication in an edition of his works: Nor is it conceived that a compliance with this demand, after the explanation here given, can do any injury to the Dr's. reputation. And to the writer of this note it does not seem a sufficient reason that a very valuable work should be consigned to oblivion, because it is in some measure incomplete, or because it is partly a selection from authors to whom a distinct reference cannot now be made.

servation, which will greatly add to their beauty and force.

The noble and eminent improvements in natural philosophy, which have been made since the end of the last century, have been far from hurting the interest of religion; on the contrary, they have greatly promoted it. Why should it not be the same with moral philosophy, which is indeed nothing else but the knowledge of human nature? It is true, that infidels do commonly proceed upon pretended principles of reason. But as it is impossible to hinder them from reasoning on this subject, the best way is to meet them upon their own ground, and to show from reason itself, the fallacy of their principles. I do not know any thing that serves more for the support of religion than to see, from the different and opposite systems of philosophers, that there is nothing certain in their schemes, but what is coincident with the word of God.

Some there are, and perhaps more in the present than any former age, who deny the law of nature, and say, that all such sentiments as have been usually ascribed to the law of nature are from revelation and tradition.

We must distinguish here between the light of nature and the law of nature: by the first is to be understood what we can or do discover by our own powers, without revelation or tradition: by the second, that which, when discovered, can be made appear to be agreeable to reason and nature.

There have been some very shrewd and able writers of late, viz. Dr. Willson, of New Castle, and Mr. Riccalton, of Scotland, who have written

against the light of nature, shewing that the first principles of knowledge are taken from information. That nothing can be supposed more rude and ignorant, than man without instruction. That when men have been brought up so, they have scarcely been superior to brutes. It is very difficult to be precise upon this subject, and to distinguish the discoveries of reason from the exercise of it. Yet I think, admitting all, or the greatest part, of what such contend for, we may, notwithstanding, consider how far any thing is consonant to reason, or may be proven by reason; though perhaps reason, if left to itself, would never have discovered it.

Dr. Clark was one of the greatest champions for the law of nature; but it is only since his time that the shrewd opposers of it have appeared. The Hutchinsonians (so called from Hutchinson of England) insist that not only all moral, but also all natural knowledge comes from revelation, the true system of the world, true chronology, all human arts, &c. In this, as is usual with most other classes of men, they carry their nostrum to extravagance. I am of opinion, that the whole Scripture is perfectly agreeable to sound philosophy; yet certainly it was never intended to teach us every thing. The political law of the Jews contains many noble principles of equity, and excellent examples to future lawgivers; yet it was so local and peculiar, that certainly it was never intended to be immutable and universal.

It would be more just and useful to say that all simple and original discoveries have been the production of Providence, and not the invention of

man. On the whole, it seems reasonable to make moral philosophy, in the sense above explained, a subject of study. And indeed let men think what they will of it, they ought to acquaint themselves with it. They must know what it is, if they mean even to show that it is false.

The Division of the Subject.

Moral philosophy is divided into two great branches, Ethics and Politics, to this some add Jurisprudence, though this may be considered as a part of politics.

Ethics relate to personal duties, Politics to the constitution, government, and rights of societies, and Jurisprudence to the administration of justice in constituted states.

It seems a point agreed upon, that the principles of duty and obligation must be drawn from the nature of man. That is to say, if we can discover how his Maker formed him, or for what he intended him, that certainly is what he ought to be.

The knowledge of human nature, however, is either perplexed and difficult of itself, or hath been made so, by the manner in which writers in all ages have treated it. Perhaps this circumstance itself, is a strong presumption of the truth of the Scripture doctrine of the depravity and corruption of our nature. Supposing this depravity, it must be one great cause of difficulty and confusion in giving an account of human nature as the work of God.

This I take to be indeed the case with the greatest part of our moral and theological knowledge.

Those who deny this depravity, will be apt to plead for every thing, or for many things as dictates of nature, which are in reality propensities of nature in its present state, but at the same time the fruit and evidence of its departure from its original purity. It is by the remaining power of natural conscience that we must endeavour to detect and oppose these errors.

(1.) We may consider man very generally in his species as distinct from and superior to the other creatures, and what it is, in which the difference truly consists. (2.) As an individual, what are the parts which constitute his nature.

1. Philosophers have generally attempted to assign the precise distinction between men and the other animals; but when endeavouring to bring it to one peculiar incommunicable characteristic, they have generally contradicted one another, and sometimes disputed with violence, and rendered the thing more uncertain.

The difficulty of fixing upon a precise criterion, only serves to show that in man we have an example of what we see also every where else, viz. a beautiful and insensible gradation from one thing to another, so that the highest of the inferior is, as it were, connected and blended with the lowest of the superior class. Birds and beasts are connected by some species, so that you will find it hard to say whether they belong to the one or the other—So indeed it is in the whole vegetable as well as animal kingdom. (1.) Some say *men* are distinguished from brutes by reason, and certainly this, either in kind or degree, is the most honourable of our distinctions. (2.) Others say that

many brutes give strong signs of reason, as dogs, horses and elephants. But that man is distinguished by memory and foresight: but I apprehend that these are upon the same footing with reason, if there are some glimmerings of reason in the brute creation, there are also manifest proofs of memory, and some of foresight. (3) Some have thought it proper to distinguish man from the inferior creatures by the use of speech, no other creatures having an articulate language. Here again we are obliged to acknowledge that our distinction is chiefly the excellence and fulness of articulate discourse; for brutes have certainly the art of making one another understand many things by sound.—(4) Some have said that man is not completely distinguished by any of these, but by a sense of religion. And I think it must be admitted that of piety or a sense of a supreme Being, there is not any trace to be seen in the inferior creatures. The stories handed about by weak-minded persons, or retailed by credulous authors, of respect in them to churches, or sacred persons, are to be disdained as wholly fabulous and visionary. (5) There have been some who have said that man is distinguished from the brutes by a sense of *ridicule*.

The whole creation (says a certain author) is grave except man, no one laughs but himself. There is something whimsical in fixing upon this as the criterion, and it does not seem to set us in a very respectable light. Perhaps it is not improper to smile upon the occasion, and to say, that if this sentiment is embraced, we shall be obliged to confess kindred with the apes, who are certainly themselves possessed of a risible faculty, as well

as qualified to excite laughter in us. On the whole there seems no necessity of fixing upon some one criterion to the exclusion of others.

There is a great and apparent distinction between man and the inferior animals, not only in the beauty of his form, which the poet takes notice of, Os homini sublime dedit, &c. but also in reason, memory, reflection, and the knowledge of God and a future state.

A general distinction, which deserves particularly to be taken notice of in moral disquisitions, is, that man is evidently made to be guided, and protected from dangers, and supplied with what is useful more by reason, and brutes more by instinct.

It is not very easy and perhaps not necessary to explain instinct. It is something previous to reason and choice. When we say the birds build their nests by instinct, and man builds his habitation by reflection, experience or instruction, we understand the thing well enough, but if we attempt to give a logical definition of either the one or the other, it will immediately be assaulted by a thousand arguments.

Though man is evidently governed by something else than instinct, he also has several instinctive propensities, some of them independent of, and some of them intermixed with his moral dispositions. Of the first kind are hunger, thirst, and some others; of the last is the *storge*, or parental tenderness towards offspring.

On instinct we shall only say farther, that it leads more immediately to the appointment of the Creator, and whether in man, or in other creatures,

operates more early and more uniformly than reason.

LECTURE II.

2d. CONSIDERING man as an individual, we discover the most obvious and remarkable circumstances of his nature, that he is a compound of body and spirit. I take this for granted here, because we are only explaining the nature of man. When we come to his sentiments and principles of action, it will be more proper to take notice of the spirituality and immortality of the soul, and how they are proved.

The body and spirit have a great reciprocal influence one upon another. The body on the temper and disposition of the soul, and the soul on the state and habit of the body. The body is properly the minister of the soul, the means of conveying perceptions to it, but nothing without it.

It is needless to enlarge upon the structure of the body; this is sufficiently known to all, except we descend to anatomical exactness, and then, like all the other parts of nature, it shows the infinite wisdom of the Creator. With regard to morals, the influence of the body in a certain view may be very great in enslaving men to appetite, and yet there does not seem any such connexion with morals as to require a particular description. I think there is little reason to doubt that there are great and essential differences between man and man, as to the spirit and its proper powers; but it seems plain that such are the laws of union be-

tween the body and spirit, that many faculties are weakened and some rendered altogether incapable of exercise, merely by an alteration of the state of the body. Memory is frequently lost and judgment weakened by old age and disease. Sometimes, by a confusion of the brain in a fall, the judgment is wholly disordered. The instinctive appetites of hunger, and thirst, seem to reside directly in the body, and the soul to have little more than a passive perception. Some passions, particularly fear and rage, seem also to have their seat in the body, immediately producing a certain modification of the blood and spirits.—This indeed is perhaps the case in some degree with all passions whenever they are indulged; they give a modification to the blood and spirits, which make them easily rekindled; but there are none which do so instantaneously arise from the body, and prevent deliberation, will and choice, as these now named. To consider the evil passions to which we are liable, we may say those that depend most upon the body, are fear, anger, voluptuousness; and those that depend least upon it, are ambition, envy, covetousness.

The faculties of the mind are commonly divided into these three kinds, the understanding, the will, and the affections; though perhaps it is proper to observe, that these are not three qualities wholly distinct, as if they were three different beings, but different ways of exerting the same simple principle. It is the soul or mind that understands, wills, or is affected with pleasure and pain. The understanding seems to have truth for its ob-

ject, the discovering things as they really are in themselves, and in their relations one to another. It has been disputed whether good be in any degree the object of the understanding. On the one hand it seems as if truth, and that only, belonged to the understanding; because we can easily suppose persons of equal intellectual powers and opposite moral characters. Nay, we can suppose malignity joined to a high degree of understanding, and virtue or true goodness to a much lower. On the other hand, the choice made by the will seems to have the judgment or deliberation of the understanding as its very foundation. How can this be, it will be said, if the understanding has nothing to do with good or evil? A considerable opposition of sentiments among philosophers has arisen from this question. Dr. Clark, and some others, make understanding or reason the immediate principle of virtue. Shaftsbury, Hutchinson, and others, make affection the principle of it. Perhaps neither the one nor the other is wholly right. Probably both are necessary.

The connexion between truth and goodness, between the understanding and the heart, is a subject of great moment, but also of great difficulty. I think we may say with certainty, that infinite perfection, intellectual and moral, are united and inseparable in the Supreme Being. There is not however in inferior natures an exact proportion between the one and the other; yet I apprehend that truth naturally and necessarily promotes goodness, and falsehood the contrary; but as the influence is reciprocal, malignity of disposition, even with the greatest natural powers, blinds the und-

standing, and prevents the perception of truth itself.

Of the will it is usual to enumerate four acts; desire, aversion, joy, and sorrow. The two last, Hutchinson says are superfluous, in which he seems to be right. All the acts of the will may be reduced to the two great heads of desire and aversion, or in other words, choosing and refusing.

The affections are called also passions, because often excited by external objects. In as far as they differ from a calm deliberate decision of the judgment, or determination of the will, they may be called strong propensities, implanted in our nature, which of themselves contribute not a little to bias the judgment, or incline the will.

The affections cannot be better understood, than by observing the difference between a calm deliberate general inclination, whether of the selfish or benevolent kind, and particular violent inclinations. Every man deliberately wishes his own happiness; but this differs considerably from a passionate attachment to particular gratifications, as a love of riches, honors, pleasures. A good man will have a deliberate fixed desire of the welfare of mankind; but this differs from the love of children, relations, friends, country.

The passions are very numerous and may be greatly diversified, because every thing, however modified, that is the object of desire or aversion, may grow by accident or indulgence, to such a size, as to be called, and deserve to be called, a passion. Accordingly we express ourselves thus in the English language. A passion for horses, dogs, play, &c.

However, all the passions may be ranged under the two great heads of *love* and *hatred.* To the first belong esteem, admiration, good-will, and every species of approbation, delight, and desire; to the other, all kinds of aversion, and ways of expressing it, *envy*, *malice*, *rage*, *revenge*, to whatever objects they may be directed.

Hope and fear, joy and sorrow, though frequently ranked among the passions, seem rather to be states or modifications of the mind, attending the exercise of every passion, according as its object is probable or improbable, possest or lost.

Jealousy seems to be a passion of a middle nature, which it is not easy to say whether it should be ranked under the head of love or hatred. It is often said of jealousy between the sexes, that it springs from love; yet, it seems plainly impossible, that it can have place without forming an ill opinion of its object, at least in some degree. The same thing may be said of jealousy and suspicion in friendship.

The passions may be ranged in two classes in a different way, viz. as they are selfish or benevolent, public or private. There will be great occasion to consider this distinction afterwards, in explaining the nature of virtue, and the motives that lead to it. What is observed now, is only to illustrate our nature as it really is. There is a great and real distinction between passions, selfish and benevolent. The first point directly, and immediately, at our own interest in the gratification; the others point immediately at the happiness of others. Of the first kind, is the love of fame, power, property, pleasure. And of the second, is fam-

ily and domestic affection, friendship and patriotism. It is to no purpose to say, that, ultimately, it is to please ourselves, or because we feel a satisfaction in seeking the good of others; for it is certain, that the direct object in view in many cases, is to promote the happiness of others; and for this many have been willing to sacrifice every thing, even life itself.

After this brief survey of human nature, in one light, or in one point of view, which may be called its capacity, it will be necessary to return back, and take a survey of the way, in which we become acquainted with the objects about which we are to be conversant, or upon which the above faculties are to be exercised.

On this it is proper to observe in general, that there are but two ways in which we come to the knowledge of things, viz. 1st, Sensation, 2d, Reflection.

The first of these must be divided again into two parts, external and internal.

External arises from the immediate impression of objects from without. The external senses in number are five; seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling.

In these are observable the impression itself, or the sensation we feel, and the supposition inseparable from it, that it is produced by an external object. That our senses are to be trusted in the information they give us, seems to me a first principle, because they are the foundation of all our after reasonings. The few exceptions of accidental irregularity in the senses can found no just

objection to this, as there are so many plain and obvious ways of discovering and correcting it.

The reality of the material system, I think, may be easily established, except upon such principles as are subversive of all certainty, and lead to universal scepticism; and persons who would maintain such principles do not deserve to be reasoned with, because they do not pretend to communicate knowledge, but to take all knowledge from us.

The Immaterialists say, that we are conscious of nothing but the impression or feeling of our own mind; but they do not observe that the impression itself implies and supposes something external that communicates it, and cannot be separated from that supposition. Sometimes such reasoners tell us, that we cannot shew the substance separate from its sensible qualities; no more can any man shew me a sensible quality separate from a particular subject. If any man will shew me whiteness, without shewing me any thing that is white, or roundness, without any thing that is round, I will shew him the substance without either colour or shape.

Immaterialism takes away the distinction between truth and falsehood. I have an idea of a house or tree in a certain place, and I call this true, that is, I am of opinion, there is really a house or tree in that place. Again, I form an idea of a house or tree, as what may be in that place; I ask what is the difference, if after all, you tell me, there is neither tree, house nor place any where existing. An advocate for that system says, that truth consists in the liveliness of the idea, than which no-

thing can be more manifestly false. I can form as distinct an idea of any thing that is not, as any thing that is, when it is absent from my sight. I have a much more lively idea of Jupiter and Juno, and many of their actions, from Homer and Virgil, though I do not believe that any of them ever existed, than I have of many things that I know happened within these few mothns.

The truth is, the immaterial system is a wild and ridiculous attempt to unsettle the principles of common sense by metaphysical reasoning, which can hardly produce any thing but contempt in the generality of persons who hear it, and which, I verily believe, never produced conviction even on the persons who pretend to espouse it.

LECTURE III.

INTERNAL sensation is what Mr. Hutchinson calls the finer powers of perception. It takes its rise from external objects, but, by abstraction, considers something farther than merely the sensible qualities——

1. Thus with respect to many objects, there is a sense of beauty in the appearance, structure or composition, which is altogether distinct from mere colour, shape and extension. How then is this beauty perceived? It enters by the eye, but it is perceived and relished by what may be well enough called an internal sense, quality or capacity of the mind.

2. There is a sense of pleasure in imitation, whence the arts of painting, sculpture, poetry,

are often called the imitative arts. It is easy to see that the imitation itself gives the pleasure, for we receive much pleasure from a lively description of what would be painful to behold

3. A sense of harmony.

4. A sense of order or proportion.

Perhaps, after all, the whole of these senses may be considered as belonging to one class, and to be the particulars which either singly, or by the union of several of them, or of the whole, produce what is called the pleasures of the imagination. If so, we may extend these senses to every thing that enters into the principles of beauty and gracefulness.—Order, proportion, simplicity, intricacy, uniformity, variety—especially as these principles have any thing in common that is equally applicable to all the fine arts, painting, statuary, architecture, music, poetry, oratory.

The various theories upon the principles of beauty, or what it is that properly constitutes it, are of much importance on the subject of taste and criticism, but of very little in point of morals. Whether it be a simple perception that cannot be analysed, or a Je ne scai quoi, as the French call it, that cannot be discovered, it is the same thing to our present purpose, since it cannot be denied, that there is a perception of beauty, and that this is very different from the mere colour or dimensions of the object. This beauty extends to the form and shape of visible, or to the grace and motion of living objects; indeed, to all works of art, and productions of genius.

These are called the reflex senses sometimes, and it is of moment to observe both that they really

belong to our nature, and that they are very different from the grosser perceptions of external sense.

It must also be observed, that several distinguished writers have added as an internal sense, that of morality, a sense and perception of moral excellence, and our obligation to conform ourselves to it in our conduct.

Though there is no occasion to join Mr. Hutchinson or any other, in their opposition to such as make reason the principle of virtuous conduct, yet I think it must be admitted, that a sense of moral good and evil is as really a principle of our nature, as either the gross external or reflex senses, and as truly distinct from both, as they are from each other.

This moral sense is precisely the same thing with what, in Scripture and common language, we call conscience. It is the law which our Maker has written upon our hearts, and both intimates and enforces duty, previous to all reasoning. The opposers of innate ideas, and of the law of nature, are unwilling to admit the reality of a moral sense, yet their objections are wholly frivolous. The necessity of education and information to the production and exercise of the reflex senses, or powers of the imagination, is every whit as great as to the application of the moral sense. If therefore any one should say, as is often done by Mr. Locke, if there are any innate principles what are they? enumerate them to me; if they are essential to man, they must be in every man; let me take any artless clown and examine him, and see if he can tell me what they are.—I would say, if the principles

of taste are natural, they must be universal. Let me try the clown then, and see whether he will agree with us, either in discovering the beauty of a poem or picture, or being able to assign the reasons of his approbation.

There are two senses which are not easily reducible to any of the two kinds of internal senses, and yet certainly belong to our nature. They are allied to one another—A sense of ridicule, and a sense of honor and shame. A sense of the ridiculous is something peculiar; for though it be admitted that every thing that is ridiculous is at the same time unreasonable and absurd; yet it is as certain the terms are not convertible, for any thing that is absurd is not ridiculous. There are an hundred falsehoods in mathematics and other sciences, that do not tempt any body to laugh.

Shaftsbury has, through his whole writings, endeavoured to establish this principle, that ridicule is the test of truth; but the falsehood of that opinion appears from the above remark, for there is something really distinct from reasoning in ridicule. It seems to be putting imagination in the place of reason.—See Brown's Essays on the Characteristics.

A sense of honour and shame seems, in a certain view, to subject us to the opinions of others, as they depend upon the sentiments of our fellow-creatures. Yet, perhaps we may consider this sentiment as intended to be an assistant or guard to virtue, by making us apprehend reproach from others for what is in itself worthy of blame. This sense is very strong and powerful in its effects, whether it be guided by true or false principles.

After this survey of human nature, let us consider how we derive either the nature or obligation of duty from it.

One way is to consider what indications we have from our nature, of the way that leads to the truest happiness. This must be done by a careful attention to the several classes of perceptions and affections, to see which of them are most excellent, delightful, or desirable.

They will then soon appear to be of three great classes, as mentioned above, easily distinguishable from one another, and gradually rising above one another.

1. The gratification of the external senses. This affords some pleasure. We are led to desire what is pleasing, and to avoid what is disgustful to them.

2. The finer powers of perception give a delight which is evidently more excellent, and which we must necessarily pronounce more noble. Poetry, painting, music, &c, the exertion of genius, and exercise of the mental powers in general, give a pleasure, though not so tumultuous, much more refined, and which does not so soon satiate.

3. Superior to both these, is a sense of moral excellence, and a pleasure arising from doing what is dictated by the moral sense.

It must doubtless be admitted that this representation is agreeable to truth, and that to those who would calmly and fairly weigh the delight of moral action, it must appear superior to any other gratification, being most *noble*, *pure* and *durable*. Therefore we might conclude, that it is to be preferred before all other sources of pleasure—that

they are to give way to it when opposite, and to be no otherwise embraced than in subserviency to it.

But though we cannot say there is any thing false in this theory, there are certainly very essential defects.—As for example, it wholly confounds or leaves entirely undistinguished, acting virtuously from seeking happiness: so that promoting our own happiness will in that case be the essence or definition of virtue, and a view to our own interest will be the sole and complete obligation to virtue. Now there is good ground to believe not only that reason teaches us, but that the moral sense dictates to us, something more on both heads, viz. that there are disinterested affections that point directly at the good of others, and that these are so far from meriting to be excluded from the notion of virtue altogether, that they rather seem to claim a preference to the selfish affections. I know the friends of the scheme of self-interest have a way of colouring or solving this. They say, men only approve and delight in benevolent affections, as pleasing and delightful to themselves. But this is not satisfying, for it seems to weaken the force of public affection very much, to refer it all to self-interest, and when nature seems to be carrying you out of yourself, by strong instinctive propensities or implanted affections, to turn the current and direction of these into the stream of self-interest, in which experience tells us we are most apt to run to a vicious excess.

Besides it is affirmed, and I think with good reason, that the moral sense carries a good deal more in it than merely an approbation of a certain class

of actions as beautiful, praise worthy or delightful, and therefore finding our interest in them as the most noble gratification. The moral sense implies also a sense of obligation, that such and such things are right and others wrong; that we are bound in duty to do the one, and that our conduct is hateful, blameable, and deserving of punishment, if we do the contrary; and there is also in the moral sense or conscience, an apprehension or belief that reward and punishment will follow, according as we shall act in the one way, or in the other.

It is so far from being true, that there is no more in virtuous action than a superior degree of beauty, or a more noble pleasure, that indeed the beauty and sweetness of virtuous action arises from this very circumstance—that it is a compliance with duty or supposed obligation. Take away this, and the beauty vanishes as well as the pleasure. Why is it more pleasant to do a just or charitable action, than to satisfy my palate with delightful meat, or to walk in a beautiful garden, or read an exquisite poem? only because I feel myself under an obligation to do it, as a thing useful and important in itself. It is not duty because pleasing, but pleasing because duty.—The same thing may be said of beauty and approbation. I do not approve of the conduct of a plain, honest, industrious, pious man, because it is more beautiful than that of an idle profligate, but I say it is more beautiful and amiable, because he keeps within the bounds of duty. I see a higher species of beauty in moral action: but it arises from a sense of obligation. It may be said, that my interest and duty are the same, because they are inseparable, and the one arises from

the other; but there is a real distinction and priority of order. A thing is not my duty, because it is my interest, but it is a wise appointment of nature, that I shall forfeit my interest, if I neglect my duty.

Several other remarks might be made to confirm this. When any person has by experience found that in seeking pleasure he embraced a less pleasing enjoyment, in place of one more delightful, he may be sensible of mistake or misfortune, but he has nothing at all of the feeling of blame or self-condemnation; but when he hath done an immoral action, he has an inward remorse, and feels that he has broken a law, and that he ought to have done otherwise.

LECTURE IV.

THIS therefore lays under the necessity of searching a little further for the principle of moral action. In order to do this with the greater accuracy, and give you a view of the chief controversies on this subject, observe, that there are really three questions upon it, which must be inquired into, and distinguished. I am sensible, they are so intimately connected, that they are sometimes necessarily intermixed; but at others, not distinguishing, leads into error. The questions relate to

1. The nature of virtue.
2. The foundation of virtue.
3. The obligation of virtue.

When we inquire into the nature of virtue, we do enough, when we point out what it is, or show

how we may come to the knowledge of every particular duty, and be able to distinguish it from the opposite vice. When we speak of the foundation of virtue, we ask or answer the question, Why is it so? Why is this course of action preferable to the contrary? What is its excellence? When we speak of the obligation of virtue, we ask by what law we are bound, or from what principles we ought to be obedient to the precepts which it contains or prescribes.

After speaking something to each of these—to the controversies that have been raised upon them—and the propriety or importance of entering far into these controversies, or a particular decision of of them, I shall proceed to a detail of the moral laws, or the several branches of duty, according to the division first laid down.

1. As to the nature of virtue, or what it is; or, in other words, what is the rule by which I must try every disputed practice—that I may keep clear of the next question, you may observe, that upon all the systems they must have recourse to one or more of the following, viz. Conscience, reason, experience. All who found virtue upon affection, particularly Hutchinson, Shaftsbury and their followers, make the moral sense the rule of duty, and very often attempt to exclude the use of reason on this subject. These authors seem also to make benevolence and public affection the standard of virtue, in distinction from all private and selfish passions.

Doctor Clark, and most English writers of the last age, make reason the standard of virtue, particularly as opposed to inward sentiment or affec-

tion. They have this to say particularly in support of their opinion, that reason does in fact often controul and alter sentiment; whereas sentiment cannot alter the clear decisions of reason. Suppose my heart dictates to me any thing to be my duty, as for example, to have compassion on a person detected in the commission of crimes; yet if, upon cool reflection, I perceive that suffering him to go unpunished will be hurtful to the community, I counteract the sentiment from the deductions of reason.

Again: Some take in the aid of experience, and chiefly act upon it. All particularly who are upon the selfish scheme, find it necessary to make experience the guide, to show them what things are really conducive to happiness and what not.

We shall proceed to consider the opinions upon the nature of virtue, the chief of which are as follow:

1. Some say that virtue consists in acting agreeably to the nature and reason of things. And that we are to abstract from all affection, public and private, in determining any question upon it. Clark.

2. Some say that benevolence or public affection is virtue, and that a regard to the good of the whole is the standard of virtue. What is most remarkable in this scheme is, that it makes the sense of obligation in particular instances give way to a supposed greater good. Hutchinson.

3. One author (Wollston Rel. of Nat. delineated) makes truth the foundation of virtue, and he reduces the good or evil of any action to the truth or falsehood of a proposition. This opinion dif-

fers not in substance, but in words only, from Dr. Clark's.

4. Others place virtue in self-love, and make a well regulated self-love the standard and foundation of it. This scheme is best defended by Dr. Campbell, of St. Andrews.

5. Some of late have made sympathy the standard of virtue, particularly Smith, in his Theory of Moral Sentiments. He says we have a certain feeling, by which we sympathize, and as he calls it, go along with what appears to be right. This is but a new phraseology for the moral sense.

6. David Hume has a scheme of morals that is peculiar to himself. He makes every thing that is *agreeable* and *useful* virtuous, and vice versa, by which he entirely annihilates the difference between natural and moral qualities, making health, strength, cleanliness, as really virtues as integrity and truth.

7. We have an opinion published in this country, that virtue consists in the love of being as such.

Several of these authors do easily and naturally incorporate piety with their system, particularly Clark, Hutchinson, Campbell and Edwards.

And there are some who begin by establishing natural religion, and then found virtue upon piety. This amounts to the same thing in substance; for reasoners upon the nature of virtue only mean to show what the Author of nature has pointed out as duty. And after natural religion is established on general proofs, it will remain to point out what are its laws, which, not taking in revelation, must

bring us back to consider our own nature, and the rational deductions from it.

2. The opinions on the foundation of virtue may be summed up in the four following:

1. The will of God. 2. The reason and nature of things. 3. The public interest. 4. Private interest.

1. The will of God. By this is not meant what was mentioned above, that the intimations of the divine will point out what is our duty; but that the reason of the difference between virtue and vice is to be sought no where else than in the good pleasure of God. That there is no intrinsic excellence in any thing but as he commands or forbids it. They pretend that if it were otherwise, there would be something above the Supreme Being; something in the nature of things that would lay him under the law of necessity or fate. But notwithstanding the difficulty of our forming clear conceptions on this subject, it seems very harsh and unreasonable to say that the difference between virtue and vice is no other than the divine will. This would be taking away the moral character even of God himself. It would not have any meaning then to say he is infinitely holy and infinitely perfect. But probably those who have asserted this, did not mean any more than that the divine will is so perfect and excellent, that all virtue is reduced to conformity to it——and that we ought not to judge of good and evil by any other rule. This is as true as that the divine conduct is the standard of wisdom.

2. Some found it in the reason and nature of things. This may be said to be true, but not

sufficiently precise and explicit. Those who embrace this principle succeed best in their reasoning, when endeavoring to show that there is an essential difference between virtue and vice. But when they attempt to show wherein this difference doth or can consist, other than public or private happiness, they speak with very little meaning.

3. Public happiness. This opinion is, that the foundation of virtue, or that which makes the distinction between it and vice, is its tendency to promote the general good; so that utility at bottom is the principle of virtue, even with the great patrons of disinterested affection.

4. Private happiness. Those who choose to place the foundation of virtue here, would have us to consider no other excellence in it than what immediately conduces to our own gratification.

Upon these opinions I would observe, that there is something true in every one of them, but that they may be easily pushed to an error by excess.

The nature and will of God is so perfect as to be the true standard of all excellence, natural and moral: and if we are sure of what he is or commands, it would be presumption and folly to reason against it, or put our views of fitness in the room of his pleasure; but to say that God, by his will, might have made the same temper and conduct virtuous and excellent, which we now call vicious, seems to unhinge all our notions of the supreme excellence even of God himself.

Again, there seems to be in the nature of things an intrinsic excellence in moral worth, and an indelible impression of it upon the conscience, dis-

tinct from producing or receiving happiness, and yet we cannot easily illustrate its excellence, but by comparing one kind of happiness with another.

Again, promoting the public or general good seems to be so nearly connected with virtue, that we must necessarily suppose that universal virtue could be of universal utility. Yet there are two excesses to which this has sometimes led.—One the fatalist and necessitarian schemes, to which there are so many objections; and the other, the making the general good the ultimate practical rule to every particular person so, that he may violate particular obligations with a view to a more general benefit.

Once more, it is certain that virtue is as really connected with private as with public happiness, and yet to make the interest of the agent the only foundation of it seems so to narrow the mind, and to be so destructive to the public and generous affections, as to produce the most hurtful effects.

If I were to lay down a few propositions on the foundation of virtue, as a philosopher, they should be the following:

1. From reason, contemplation, sentiment and tradition, the Being and infinite perfection and excellence of God may be deduced; and therefore what he is, and commands, is virtue and duty. Whatever he has implanted in uncorrupted nature as a principle is to be received as his will. Propensities resisted and contradicted by the inward principle of conscience are to be considered as inherent or contracted vice.

2. True virtue certainly promotes the general

good, and this may be made use of as an argument in doubtful cases, to determine whether a particular principle is right or wrong, but to make the good of the whole our immediate principle of action, is putting ourselves in God's place, and actually superseding the necessity and use of the particular principles of duty which he hath impressed upon the conscience. As to the whole, I believe the universe is faultless and perfect, but I am unwilling to say it is the *best* possible system, because I am not able to understand such an argument, and because it seems to me absurd that infinite perfection should exhaust or limit itself by a created production.

3. There is in the nature of things a difference between virtue and vice, and however much virtue and happiness are connected by the divine law, and in the event of things, we are made so as to feel towards them, and conceive of them, as distinct. We have the simple perceptions of duty and interest.

4. Private and public interest may be promoted by the same means, but they are distinct views; they should be made to assist, and not destroy each other.

The result of the whole is, that we ought to take the rule of duty from conscience, enlightened by reason, experience, and every way by which we can be supposed to learn the will of our Maker, and his intention in creating us such as we are. And we ought to believe that it is as deeply founded as the nature of God himself, being a transcript of his moral excellence, and that it is productive of the greatest good.

LECTURE V.

3. IT remains only that we speak of the obligation of virtue, or what is the law that binds us to the performance, and from what motives or principles we ought to follow its dictates.

The sentiments upon this subject differ, as men have different views of the nature and foundation of virtue, yet they may be reduced within narrower bounds.

The obligation of virtue may be easily reduced to two general kinds, duty and interest. The first, if real, implies that we are under some law, or subject to some superior, to whom we are accountable. The other only implies that nature points it out to us as our own greatest happiness, and that there is no other reason why we ought to obey.

Now I think it is very plain that there is more in the obligation of virtue, than merely our greatest happiness. The moral sentiment itself implies that it is duty, independent of happiness. This produces remorse and disapprobation, as having done what is blameable and of ill desert. We have two ideas very distinct, when we see a man mistaking his own interest and not obtaining so much happiness as he might, and when we see him breaking through every moral obligation. In the first case we consider him as only accountable to himself, in the second we consider him as accountable to some superior, and to the public. This sense of duty is the primary notion of law and of rights, taken in their most extensive sig-

nification, as including every thing we think we are entitled to expect from others, and the neglect or violation of which we consider as wrong, unjust, vicious, and therefore blameable. It is also affirmed with great apparent reason by many, particularly Butler in his Analogy and his sermons, that we have a natural feeling of ill desert, and merited punishment in vice. The patrons of the selfish ideas, alone, are those who confine the obligation of virtue to happiness.

But of those who are, or would be thought of the opposite sentiment, there are some who differ very considerably from others. Some who profess great opposition to the selfish scheme, declare also great aversion to founding the obligation of virtue in any degree on the will of a superior, or looking for any sanction of punishment, to corroborate the moral laws. This they especially treat with contempt, when it is supposed to be from the deity. Shaftsbury speaks with great bitterness against taking into view a future state of what he calls more extended self-interest. He says men should love virtue for its own sake, without regard to reward or punishment. In this he has been followed by many reasoners, as far as their regard to religion would permit them.

If, however, we attend to the dictates of conscience, we shall find evidently, a sense of duty, of self-approbation and remorse, which plainly show us to be under a law, and that law to have a sanction: what else is the meaning of the fear and terror, and apprehension of guilty persons? Quorum mentes si recludantur, &c. says Cicero.

Nor is this all, but we have all certainly a natural sense of dependance. The belief of a divine being is certainly either innate and necessary, or has been handed down from the first man, and can now be well supported by the clearest reason. And our relation to him not only lays the foundation of many moral sentiments and duties, but completes the idea of morality and law, by subjecting us to him, and teaching us to conceive of him, not only as our Maker, preserver and benefactor, but as our righteous governor and supreme judge. As the being and perfections of God are irrefragably established, the obligation of duty must ultimately rest here.

It ought not to be forgotten, that the belief or apprehension of a future state of rewards and punishments has been as universal as the belief of a deity, and seems inseparable from it, and therefore must be considered as the sanction of the moral law. Shaftsbury inveighs severely against this, as making man virtuous from a mercenary view; but there are two ways in which we may consider this matter, and in either light his objections have little force. (1.) We may consider the primary obligations of virtue as founded upon a sense of its own excellence, joined with a sense of duty and dependance on the Supreme being, and rewards and punishments as a secondary motive, which is found, in fact, to be absolutely necessary to restrain or reclaim men from vice and impiety. Or (2.) We may consider that by the light of nature, as well as by revelation, the future reward of virtue is considered as a state of perfect virtue, and the happiness is represented

as arising from this circumstance. Here there is nothing at all of a mercenary principle, but only an expectation that true goodness, which is here in a state of imperfection and liable to much opposition, shall then be improved to the highest degree, and put beyond any possibility of change.

We may add to these obligations the manifest tendency of a virtuous conduct to promote even our present happiness: this, in ordinary cases, it does, and when joined with the steady hope of futurity, does in all cases produce a happiness superior to what can be enjoyed in the practice of vice. Yet, perhaps, the stoics of old, who denied pain to be any evil, and made the wise man superior to all the vicissitudes of fortune, carried things to a romantic and extravagant height. And so do some persons in modern times, who, setting aside the consideration of a future state, teach that virtue is its own reward. There are many situations in which, if you deprive a good man of the hope of future happiness, his state seems very undesirable. On the contrary, sometimes the worst of men enjoy prosperity and success to a great degree, nor do they seem to have any such remorse, as to be an adequate punishment of their crimes. If any should insist, that a good man has always some comfort from within, and a bad man a self-disapprobation and inward disquiet, suited to their characters, I would say that this arises from the expectation of a future state, and a hope on the one side, and fear on the other, of their condition there.

Those who declaim so highly of virtue being its own reward in this life, take away one of the

most considerable arguments, which, from the dawn of philosophy, has always been made use of as a proof of a future state, viz. the unequal distribution of good and evil in this life. Besides they do not seem to view the state of bad men properly. When they talk of remorse of conscience as a sufficient punishment, they forget that this is seldom to a high degree, but in the case of some gross crimes. Cruelty and murder, frequent acts of gross injustice, are sometimes followed with deep horror of conscience; and a course of intemperance or lust is often attended with such dismal effects upon the body, fame and fortune, that those who survive it a few years, are a melancholy spectacle, and a burden to themselves and others. But it would be very loose morality, to suppose none to be bad men, but those who were under the habitual condemnation of conscience. On the contrary, the far greater part are blinded in their understandings, as well as corrupt in their practice. —They deceive themselves, and are at peace. Ignorance and inattention keep the multitude at peace. And false principles often produce self-justification and ill-founded peace, even in atrocious crimes. Even common robbers are sometimes found to justify themselves, and say—I must live—I have a right to my share of provision, as well as that proud fellow that rolls in his chariot.

The result of the whole is, that the obligation to virtue ought to take in all the following particulars: A sense of its own intrinsic excellence—of its happy consequences in the present life—a sense of duty and subjection to the Supreme Being—

and a hope of future happiness, and fear of future misery from his decision.

Having considered the reasonings on the nature, foundation and obligation of virtue, I now proceed to a more particular detail of the moral laws, and shall take them under the three heads formerly mentioned, Ethics, Politics, and Jurisprudence.

LECTURE VI.

AS to the first, we must begin with what is usually called the states of man, or the several lights or relations in which he may be considered, as laying a foundation for duty. These states may be divided into two kinds—(1.) Natural. (2.) Adventitious.

The natural states may be enumerated thus: (1.) His state with regard to God, or natural relation to him. (2.) To his fellow-creatures. (3.) Solitude or society. (4.) Peace or war. Perhaps we may add to these (5.) His outward provision, plenty or want.

These are called natural states, because they are necessary and universal. All men and at all times are related to God. They were made by him, and live by his providence. We must also necessarily know our fellow-creatures, and their state to be similar to ours in this respect and many others. A man must at all times be independent or connected with society—at peace with others, or at war—well provided, or in want.

The other states are called adventitious, because

they are the effect of choice and the fruit of industry, as marriage—family—master and servant—particular voluntary societies—callings or professions—characters or abilities, natural and acquired—offices in a constituted society—property, and many particular modifications of each of these.

In prosecuting the subject farther, and giving an analysis of the moral duties founded upon these states, I shall first take notice of our relation to God, with the proofs of his being and perfections, and then consider the moral laws under three heads; our duty to God, to our neighbour, and to ourselves.

1. Our duty to God. To this place I have reserved what was to be said upon the proof of the being of God, the great foundation of all natural religion; without which the moral sense would be weak and insufficient.

The proofs of the being of God are generally divided into two kinds. (1.) A priori. (2.) A posteriori. The first is, properly speaking, metaphysical reasoning downward from the first principles of science or truth, and inferring by just consequence the being and perfections of God. Clark's Demonstration, &c. (if there be any thing that should be called a priori, and if this is a conclusive method of reasoning) is as complete as any thing ever published; perhaps he has carried the principle as far as it will go.

This way of arguing begins by establishing our own existence from consciousness. That we are not necessarily existent, therefore must have a cause; that something must have existed from all

eternity, or nothing ever could have existed; that this being must exist by an internal necessity of nature; that what exists necessarily must exist alike every where; must be perfect; act every where; be independent, omnipotent, omniscient, infinitely good, just, true--Because, as all these are evidently perfections or excellencies, that which exists by a necessity of nature must be possessed of every perfection. And the contrary of these virtues implying weakness or insufficiency, cannot be found in the infinite Being.

The other medium of proof, commonly called a posteriori, begins with contemplating the universe in all its parts; observing that it contains many irresistible proofs that it could not be eternal, could not be without a cause; that this cause must be intelligent; and from the astonishing greatness, the wonderful adjustment and complication of things, concludes that we can set no bounds to the perfection of the Maker, because we can never exhaust the power, intelligence and benignity that we see in his works. In this way of arguing we deduce the moral perfections of the Deity from the faint resemblances of them that we see in ourselves. As we necessarily conceive justice, goodness, truth, &c. to be perfections or excellencies, we are warranted by the plainest reason to ascribe them to the Divine Being in an infinite degree.

There is perhaps at bottom no difference between these ways of reasoning, because they must in some degree rest upon a common principle, viz. that every thing that exists must have a cause. This is equally necessary to both the chains of

reasoning, and must itself be taken for an original sentiment of nature, or an impression necessarily made upon us from all that we see and are conversant with. About this and some other ideas great stir has been made by some infidel writers, particularly David Hume, who seems to have industriously endeavoured to shake the certainty of our belief upon cause and effect, upon personal identity and the idea of power. It is easy to raise metaphysical subtleties, and confound the understanding on such subjects. In opposition to this, some late writers have advanced, with great apparent reason, that there are certain first principles or dictates of common sense, which are either simple perceptions, or seen with intuitive evidence. These are the foundation of all reasoning, and without them, to reason is a word without a meaning. They can no more be proved than you can prove an axiom in mathematical science. These authors of Scotland have lately produced and supported this opinion, to resolve at once all the refinements and metaphysical objections of some infidel writers.

There is a different sort of argument often made use of, or brought in aid of the others, for the being of God, viz. the consent of all nations, and the universal prevalence of that belief. I know not whether we must say that this argument rests also upon the principle that nothing can exist without a cause, or upon the plan just now mentioned. If it is an universal dictate of our nature, we must take it as true immediately, without further examination.

An author I formerly mentioned has set this

argument in a peculiar light (Dr. Wilson of Newcastle). He says that we receive all our knowledge, as philosophers admit, by sensation and reflection. Now, from all that we see, and all the reflection and abstraction upon it we are capable of, he affirms it is impossible we could ever form the idea of a spirit or a future state. They have, however, been early and universal, and therefore must have been communicated at first, and handed down by information and instruction from age to age. So that unless upon the supposition of the existence of God and his imparting the knowledge of himself to men, it is impossible that any idea of him could ever have entered into the human mind. There is something ingenious and a good deal of probability in this way of reasoning.

As to the nature of God, the first thing to be observed is the unity of God. This is sufficiently established upon the reasonings both a priori and posteriori. If these reasonings are just for the being of God, they are strictly conclusive for the unity of God. There is a necessity for the existence of one supreme Being, the first cause, but no necessity for more; nay, one supreme independent being does not admit any more. And when we view the harmony, order and unity of design in the created system, we must be led to the belief of the unity of God.

Perhaps it may be thought an objection to this (especially if we lay any stress on the universal sentiments of mankind,) that all nations have been so prone to the belief and worship of a plurality of gods. But this argument is rather specious than solid; as however prone men were to worship lo-

cal inferior deities, they seem to have considered them only as intermediate divinities and intercessors between them and the supreme God.

The perfections of God may be divided into two kinds, *Natural*, and *Moral*.

1. The natural perfections of God are spirituality, immensity, wisdom and power.

We call these natural perfections, because they can be easily distinguished, and in idea at least separated, from goodness of disposition. It is highly probable indeed that supreme excellence, natural and moral, must always reside in the same subject, and are truly inseparable; yet we distinguish them not only because the ideas are distinct, but because they are by no means in proportion to one another in inferior natures. Great powers of mind and perfection of body are often joined to malignity of disposition. It is not so however in God; for as his natural perfections are founded on reason, so his moral excellence is evidently founded in the moral sense or conscience which he hath implanted in us.

Spirituality is what we may call the *very nature* of God. It must be admitted that we cannot at present form any complete or adequate idea of a spirit. And some, as you have heard formerly, insist that without revelation we could never have acquired the idea of it that we have. Yet there are many who have reasoned in a very strong and seemingly conclusive manner, to show that mind or intelligence must be a substance altogether distinct from matter. That all the known properties of matter are incapable of producing thought, as being wholly of a different kind—that matter

as such, and universally, is inert and divisible; thought or intelligence, active and uncompounded. See the best reasoning on this subject in Baxter's Immateriality of the Soul.

Immensity in the Divine Being is that by which he is every where, and equally present. Metaphysicians, however, differ greatly upon this subject. The Cartesians will not admit that place is at all applicable to spirits. They say it is an idea wholly arising from extension, which is one of the peculiar and essential qualities of matter. The Newtonians, however, who make so much use of the idea of infinite space, consider place as essential to all substance, spirit as well as matter. The difficulties are great on both sides. It is hard to conceive of spirit at all, separating from it the qualities of matter, and after we have attempted to do so, it seems to be bringing them back to talk of place. And yet it seems not only hard, but impossible, to conceive of any real being without supposing it in some place, and particularly upon the immensity of the Deity, it seems to be putting created spirits too much on a level with the infinite spirit to deny his immensity. It is I think certain they are either confined to a place, or so limited in their operations, as is no way so well expressed as by saying we are here and no where else. And in this sense both parties must admit the divine immensity— that his agency is equal, universal and irresistible.

Wisdom is another natural attribute of God, implying infinite knowledge—that all things in all their relations, all things existing, and all things possible, are the objects of the divine knowledge.

Wisdom is usually considered as respecting some end to be attained, and it implies the clear discovery of the best and most effectual means of attaining it.

Power is the being able to do all things without limit or restraint. The omnipotence of God is always considered as an essential perfection, and seems to arise immediately from creation and providence. It is common to say that God can do all things, except such as imply a contradiction—such as to make a thing to be and not to be at the same time; but this is unnecessary and foolish in the way of an exception, for such things are not the objects of power at all. They are mere absurdities in our conception, and indeed we may say, of our own creation. All things are possible with God—nothing can withstand his power.

LECTURE VII.

2d. THE moral perfections of God are holiness, justice, truth, goodness and mercy.

Holiness is sometimes taken in a general and comprehensive sense, as being the aggregate, implying the presence of all moral excellence; yet it is sometimes used, and that both in the scripture revelation and by heathen writers, as a peculiar attribute. In this limited sense it is extremely difficult to define or explain. Holiness is that character of God to which veneration, or the most profound reverence in us, is the correspondent affection. It is sometimes also expressed by purity, and when we go to form an idea of it, perhaps we

can scarce say any thing better, than that it is his being removed at an infinite distance from the grossness of material indulgence.

Justice is an invariable determination to render to all their due. Justice seems to be founded on the strong and unalterable perception we have of right and wrong, good and evil, and particularly that the one deserves reward, and the other punishment. The internal sanction, or the external and providential sanction of natural laws, point out to us the Justice of God. The chief thing that merits attention upon this subject is the controversy about what is called the vindictive justice of God. That is to say, is there in God, or have we a natural sense of the propriety of, a disposition to inflict punishment, independently of the consequences, viz. the reformation of the offender, or the example of others. This loose moralists often declaim against. Yet it seems plain, that the sense in our minds of good and ill desert makes guilt the proper object of punishment simply in itself. This may have a relation to general order and the good of the whole, which however is out of our reach.

The truth of God is one of his perfections, greatly insisted upon in Scripture, and an essential part of natural religion. It is inseparable from infinite perfection; for any departure from truth must be considered as arising from weakness or necessity. What end could be served to a self-sufficient and all-sufficient being by falsehood or deception?

Goodness in God is a disposition to communicate happiness to others. This is easily understood. The creation is a proof of it—Natural and

moral evil no just objection to it, because of the preponderancy of happiness.

Mercy, as distinguished from goodness or benignity, is his being of a placable nature—Ready to forgive the guilty, or to remit deserved punishment. It has been disputed how far mercy or placability is discoverable by reason. It is not mercy or forgiveness, unless it would have been just at the same time to have punished. There are but two ways by which men from reason may infer the attribute of mercy to belong to the Deity. (1) Because we ourselves are sensible of this disposition, and see in it a peculiar beauty. (2.) From the forbearance of Providence, that sinners are not immediately overtaken with punishment, but have space given them to repent.—Yet as all the conclusions drawn from these principles must be vague and general, the expectations of the guilty, founded upon them, must be very uncertain. We must conclude therefore, that however stable a foundation there is for the other attributes of God in nature and reason, the way in which, and the terms on which, he will shew mercy, can be learned from Revelation only.

Having considered the being and perfections of God, we proceed to our duty to him.

This may be considered in two views, as general and special. 1. By the first I understand our duty to obey him and submit to him in all things. This you see includes every branch of moral duty to our neighbour and ourselves, as well as to God, and so the particular parts of it will be considered afterwards. But in this place, considering every good action as an act of obedience to God, we will

a little attend to the divine sovereignty, and the foundation of it.

In speaking of the foundation of virtue, I took in a sense of dependence and subjection to God.—But as men are not to be deterred from bold inquiries, a further question is raised by some—what is properly the foundation of the divine dominion? (1) Some found it directly upon Omnipotence. It is impossible to resist his power. This seems to lay us under a necessity, rather than to convince us of duty. We ought, however, to think and speak of this subject with reverence, and certainly Omnipotence seems to oblige us to actual, if it should not bring us to willing obedience. It is somewhat remarkable, that in the book of Job, composed on purpose to resolve some difficulties in providence, where God is brought in as speaking himself out of the whirlwind, he makes use of no other argument than his tremendous majesty and irresistible power. Yet to rest the matter wholly upon this, seems much the same as founding virtue on mere will;—therefore (2) some found the divine dominion on his infinite excellence, they say it is the law of reason that the wisest should rule, and therefore that infinite perfection is entitled to universal sway. Even this, taken separate and alone, does not seem wholly to satisfy the mind. If one person is wiser than another, it seems reasonable that the other should learn of him and imitate him; but it scarcely seems a sufficient reason that the first should have absolute authority. But perhaps the weakness of the argument, taken in this view, may arise from the inconsiderable difference between man and man, when compared to the su-

periority of universal and unchangeable perfection. (3.) Some found it upon creation. They say, that God has an absolute property in all his creatures, he may therefore do what he will with his own. This no doubt, goes a good way, and carries considerable force with it to the mind, the rather that, as you will afterwards see, it is something similar to this in us that lays the foundation of our most perfect rights, viz. That the product of our own industry is properly at our own disposal.

As upon the foundation of virtue I thought it necessary to unite the principles of different writers, so upon this subject, I think that all the three particulars mentioned ought to be admitted, as the grounds of the divine dominion. Omnipotence, infinite excellence, and the original production and continual preservation of all creatures.

2. Our duty to God may be considered more specially, as it points out the duties we owe immediately to himself.

These may be divided into internal and external.—1st. The internal are all included under the three following, love, fear, and trust.

The love of God, which is the first and great duty both of natural and revealed religion, may be explained in a larger and more popular, or in a more precise and stricter way.

In the first, love may be resolved into the four following acts, (1) esteem, (2) gratitude, (3) benevolence, (4) desire.

These four will be found inseparable from true love; and it is pretty much in the same order, that the acts succeed one another. Love is founded on esteem, on the real or supposed good qualities of

the object. You can no more love that which you you despise, than that which you hate. Gratitude is also inseparable from it, to have a lively sense of favours received, and to esteem them for the sake of the person from whom they came. Benevolence, or rejoicing in the happiness and wishing well to the object. And lastly, a desire of a place in his esteem. Whatever we love, we desire to possess, as far as it is suited to our faculties.

The stricter and more precise method of considering the love of God, is to divide it into two branches, benevolence and desire. And indeed our affections to God seem to be capable of the same division as our affection to our fellow-creatures, benevolent and selfish. I think it undeniable, that there is a disinterested love of God, which terminates directly upon himself, without any immediate view to our own happiness—as well as a discovery of our great interest in his favour.

The second great duty to God is fear; but here we must carefully distinguish this affection from one which bears the name, and is different from it—at least in a moral view it is altogether opposite.—Dutiful fear is what may be otherwise called veneration, and hath for its object the infinity of the divine perfection in general, but particularly his majesty and greatness. The other is merely a fear of evil or punishment from him: these are called sometimes a filial and a servile fear. The first increases, as men improve in moral excellence, and the other is destroyed. Perfect love casteth out fear. Perhaps, however opposite, as they have the same name, they may be said to be

the same natural affection, only as it takes place in innocent or holy, and in guilty creatures. The same majesty of God, which produces veneration in the upright, produces horror and apprehension of punishment in the guilty.

The third great duty is trust. This is a continual dependence on God for every thing we need, together with an approbation of, and absolute resignation to his providence.

2. The external duties to God I shall briefly pass over, being only, all proper and natural expressions of the internal sentiments.

It may be proper, however, to take notice in general of the worship due to God, that whether we consider the nature of things, or the universal practice of mankind, in all ages, worship, and that not only private, but public and social worship, is a duty of natural religion.

Some of the enemies of revealed religion have spoken with great virulence against this, as unreasonable, and even dishonourable to the Divine Being. The substance of what they say is this, that as it would be no part of the character of an eminent and good man, to desire and take pleasure in others praising him, and recounting his good qualities, so it is absurd to suppose, that the Supreme Being is pleased with incense, sacrifices and praises. But it ought to be observed, that he does not require these acts and exercises as any gratification to himself, but as in themselves just and necessary, and suited to the relation we stand in to him, and useful for forming our temper and universal practice. We ought also to remember, that we must not immediately and without dis-

crimination, reason from what would be praise and blame-worthy among men, to what would be just or unjust in God, because the circumstances are very different. Besides, though for any man to desire the applause of his fellow-creatures, or be pleased with adulation, would be a mean and contemptible character, because indeed there is such unspeakable imperfection in the best of men, yet when any duty or sentiment is fully and manifestly due from man to man, there is nothing improper or dishonourable in requiring or expecting it. Thus a parent requires respect and submission from his children, a master from his servants; and though the injury is merely personal, he thinks himself entitled to punish every expression of contempt or disregard. Again, every man who has bestowed signal favours upon another expects to see evidence of a grateful and sensible mind, and severely condemns every sentiment or action that indicates a contrary disposition.

On the whole, then, we see that if the worship of God be what is due from us to him, in consequence of the relation we stand in to him, it is proper and necessary that he should require it. To honour God is to honour supreme excellence; for him not to expect and demand it, would be to deny himself.

One other difficulty I shall touch upon a little. It respects the duty of prayer; and the objections lie equally against it on the footing of natural religion and revealed. The objections are two. (1.) Why does God, who perfectly knows all our wants, require and expect prayer before he will supply them? To this I would answer, that he supplies

great multitudes of our wants without our asking it; and as to his requiring the duty of prayer, I say the same thing as of worship in general; it is reasonable and necessary to express, and to increase upon our minds, a sense of dependance, and thereby lay us under an obligation of properly improving what we receive. (2.) The other obligation is with regard to the force or efficacy of prayer. Why, it is said, should we pray, when the whole system of Divine Providence is fixed and unalterable? Can we possibly suppose that God will change his purposes, from a regard to our cries or tears? To this some answer no otherwise than as before, that without having any effect upon the event, it has only an effect upon our minds, in bringing us to a right temper. Dr. Leechman of Glasgow, in his discourse on prayer, makes no other answer to this difficulty. But I think, to rest it here, and admit that it has no influence in the way of causality upon the event, would in a great measure break the force and fervency of prayer. I would therefore say further, that prayer has a real efficacy on the event, and just as much as any other second cause. The objection arises from going beyond our depth, and reasoning from the unchangeable purpose of God to human actions, which is always unjust and fallacious.—However unable we may be to explain it, notwithstanding the fixed plan of Providence, there is a real influence of second causes, both natural and moral, and I apprehend the connexion between cause and effect is similar in both cases. If it is fixed from eternity that there shall be a plentiful crop upon a certain field, I know that nothing whatsoever

can prevent it, if otherwise, the efforts of the whole creation cannot produce it; yet I know as certainly, that, hypothetically, if it is not ploughed and sown, there will be no grain upon it, and that if it be properly manured and dressed, it will probably be fruitful. Thus, in moral matters, prayer has as real an influence in procuring the blessing, as ploughing and sowing has in procuring the crop; and it is as consistent with the established order of nature and the certainty of events in the one case, as in the other: for this reason the stoical fate of old was called the *ignava ratio* of the stoics, as they sometimes made use of the above fallacious reasoning.

LECTURE VIII.

2. WE come now to our duty to man. This may be reduced to a short sum, by ascending to its principle. Love to others, sincere and active, is the sum of our duty.

Benevolence, I formerly observed, ought not to be considered as the whole of virtue, but it certainly is the principle and sum of that branch of duty which regards others.

We may distinguish between (1) particular kind affection, and (2) a calm and deliberate good-will to all.—The particular kind affections, as to family, friends, country, seem to be implanted by nature, to strengthen the general principle, for it is only or chiefly by doing good to those we are particularly related to, that we can promote the general happiness.

Particular kind affections should be restrained and directed by a calm good-will to all. Wherever our attachments to private persons prevent a greater good, they become irregular and excessive.

Some think that a calm and settled good will to others is an improvement of the particular affections, and arises from the more narrow to the more extensive; from family, friends, country, to all our fellow-creatures. But it seems more reasonable to say, that the general affection is a dictate of our conscience of a superior kind. If it were only an increase and extension of the private affection, it would grow more weak, as the distance from ourselves increased, whereas in fact the more enlarged affections are intended to be more powerful than the confined.

When we are speaking of kind affections, it will not be improper to observe that some unbelievers have objected against the gospel, that it does not recommend private friendship and the love of our country. But if fairly considered, as the Scripture, both by example and precept, recommends all particular affections, so it is to its honor that it sets the love of mankind above them every one, and by so much insisting on the forgiveness of injuries and the love of enemies, it has carried benevolence to its greatest perfection. The parable of the Samaritan in answer to the question, who is my neighbour? is one of the greatest beauties in moral painting any where to be seen.

The love of our country, to be sure, is a noble and enlarged affection; and those who have sacrificed private ease and family relations to it, have

become illustrious; yet the love of mankind is still greatly superior. Sometimes attachment to country appears in a littleness of mind, thinking all other nations inferior, and foolishly believing that knowledge, virtue and valour are all confined to themselves. As the Romans long ago made the *Punica fides* to mean deceit, so there are not wanting among us those who think that all the French are interested, treacherous and cowardly.

On the great law of love to others, I shall only say further, that it ought to have for its object their greatest and best interest, and therefore implies wishing and doing them good in soul and body.

It is necessary now to descend to the application of this principle to particular duties, and to examine what are the rights or claims that one man has upon another. Rights and obligations are corelative terms. Whatever others have a just right or title to claim from me, that is my duty, or what I am obliged to do to them.

Right in general may be reduced, as to its source, to the supreme law of moral duty; for whatever men are in duty obliged to do, that they have a claim to, and other men are considered as under an obligation to permit them. Again, as our own happiness is a lawful object or end, we are supposed to have each a right to prosecute this; but as our prosecutions may interfere, we limit each other's rights, and a man is said to have a right or power to promote his own happiness only by those means which are not in themselves criminal or injurious to others.

Rights may be divided or classed in several different ways; an attention to all of which is of

use on this subject. Rights may be (1) natural or acquired. Natural rights are such as are essential to man, and universal—acquired are those that are the fruits of industry, the effects of accident or conquest. A man has a natural right to act for his own preservation, and to defend himself from injury, but not a natural right to domineer, to riches (comparatively speaking) or to any particular office in a constituted state.

(2.) Rights are considered as perfect and imperfect. Those are called perfect rights which can be clearly ascertained in their circumstances, and which we may make use of force to obtain, when they are denied us. Imperfect rights are such as we may demand, and others ought to give us, yet we have no title to compel them. Self-preservation is a perfect right, but to have a grateful return for a favour is not a perfect right.

All the duties of justice are founded on the perfect rights; those of mercy generally on the imperfect rights.

The violation of an imperfect right is often as great an act of immorality as that of a perfect right. It is often as immoral, or more so, to refuse to supply the necessitous, or to do it sparingly, as to commit a small injury against a man's person or fortune. Yet the last is the breach of a perfect right, and the other of an imperfect.

Human laws reach only, in ordinary cases, to the perfect rights. Sometimes imperfect rights, by being carried far, become perfect, as humanity and gentleness in a parent to a child may be so grossly violated, as to warrant the interposition of human authority.

(3.) Rights are alienable and unalienable. The first we may, according to justice and prudence, surrender or give up by our own act; the others we may not. A man may give away his own goods, lands, money. There are several things which he cannot give away, as a right over his own knowledge, thoughts, &c. Others, which he ought not, as a right to judge for himself in all matters of religion, his right to self-preservation, provision, &c. Some say that liberty is unalienable, and that those who have even given it away may lawfully resume it.

The distinction between rights as alienable and unalienable is very different from that of natural and acquired. Many of the rights which are strictly natural and universal, may be alienated in a state of society for the good of the whole, as well as of private persons; as for example, the right of self-defence; this is in a great measure given up in a state of civil government into the hands of the public—and the right of doing justice to ourselves or to others in matters of property is wholly given up.

(4.) Rights may be considered as they differ with regard to their object. 1. Rights we have over our own persons and actions. This class is called liberty. 2. Rights over things or goods which belong to us. This is called property. 3. Rights over the persons and actions of other men. This is called authority. 4. Rights in the things which are the property of others, which are of several sorts.

When we come to the second great division of moral philosophy, politics, the above distinctions

will be more fully explained—at present it is sufficient to point at them, in order to show what are the great lines of duty from man to man.

Our duty to others, therefore, may be all comprehended in these two particulars, justice and mercy.

Justice consists in giving or permitting others to enjoy whatever they have a perfect right to—and making such an use of our own rights as not to encroach upon the rights of others. There is one writer, David Hume, who has derided the duty of justice, resolving it wholly into power and conveniency, and has affirmed that property is common, than which nothing can be more contrary to reason; for if there is any thing clear as a dictate of reason, it is, that there are many rights which men severally possess, which others ought not to violate. The foundation of property in goods, I wil lafterwards show you, is plainly laid in the social state.

Another virtue which this author ridicules is chastity. This however will be found to be included in justice, and to be found in the sentiments of all nations, and to have the clearest foundation both in nature and public utility.

Mercy is the other great branch of our duty to man, and is the exercise of the benevolent principle in general, and of the several particular kind affections. Its acts, generally speaking, belong to the class of imperfect rights, which are strongly binding upon the conscience, and absolutely necessary to the subsistence of human society; yet such as cannot be enforced with rigor and precision by human laws.

Mercy may be generally explained by a readi-

ness to do all the good offices to others that they stand in need of, and are in our power, unless they are opposed to some perfect right, or an imperfect one of greater moment.

LECTURE IX.

3. THE third class of moral duties is what contains our duty to ourselves.

This branch of duty is as real and as much founded in the moral principle, as any of the former—Conscience as clearly testifies the evil of neglecting it— and vicious conduct in this respect does generally lead us directly not only to misery, but to shame.

We may, I think, divide our duties to ourselves into two heads, which will be both distinct and comprehensive. (1.) Self-government. (2.) Self-interest.

The first of these is to keep our thoughts, desires and affections, in due moderation. If it be asked what is due moderation? I answer, it may be discovered three ways. (1.) When the indulgence interferes with our duty to God, (2.) To ourselves, and (3.) to our neighbour.

When our thoughts or desires are such as to be contrary to the love, fear, or trust we owe to God, then they are to be restrained and brought into subjection—Thus are generated the virtues of *humility*, *contentment*, *patience*, and such as are allied to them.

When our thoughts and inward temper are such as to be any way injurious to others, they

must be governed and restrained; hence arises the obligation to guard against all the immoral passions, which will produce meekness and composure of spirit.

And when we have got but a little experience, we shall speedily find that an excessive indulgence of any passion, *love*, *hatred*, *anger*, *fear*, discomposes us exceedingly, and is an evil instead of a blessing. We shall therefore perceive the necessity of continence, self-denial, fortitude, restraint, and moderation in every thing, how good soever. (2.) The other general branch of duty to ourselves may be called self-interest. This, taking in natural religion, includes our relation to the Divine Being, and attending particularly to that of procuring his favour. Therefore it is a prime part of our duty to ourselves, to guard against any thing that may be hurtful to our moral character or religious hopes.

2. We ought to be active and diligent in acquiring every thing necessary for life and comfort. Most of our duties to ourselves resemble the duties of justice and mercy to others. If there are certain offices due to them, and if they have rights and claims in consequence of their state and relations, the same is the case with ourselves. We are therefore to take all proper methods to preserve and acquire the goods both of mind and body. To acquire knowledge, to preserve health, reputation, possessions.

The whole must be kept within some limits; chiefly we must guard against interfering with the rights of others.

It will be proper, before concluding this part

of the subject, to take notice of the opinions of the ancients, particularly their enumeration of what are called the cardinal virtues.

Their cardinal virtues were *justice*, *temperance*, *prudence* and *fortitude*. Justice included the whole of our duty to our neighbour. Humanity or benevolence you see is kept out of view, though a virtue of the first class; but all its exercises are with them ranked under the heads of justice; temperance was by them considered as much more extensive, than being moderate in the use of meats and drink, to which the English word is chiefly confined. The *Egkrateia* of the Greeks signified, not only abstinence in meats and drink, but continence or purity, and a moderation of all our desires, of whatever kind, of fame and riches, as well as pleasures. Prudence, even in the way they generally explain it, seems scarcely to be a moral, or so much as a natural quality. Prudence, they say, is taking the wisest course to obtain some good end. The placing this among the cardinal virtues will show how matters stood among them. Great parts or talents were in high esteem. They did not very fully distinguish between a good man and a great man. Prudence seems rather an embellishment of an illustrious character, than a moral virtue. Another reason why Prudence seems to have held such a place among the ancients was, that their chief foundation for virtue was interest, or what will produce happiness. The inquiry upon this subject was, what is the summum bonum. Now to this, prudence is very necessary. Agreeably to all this, they commonly called the virtuous man, the *wise man*, and he was always an hero.

Fortitude is easily understood, and may be considered in two lights, as active and passive, which gives the two great virtues of patience and valour.

One of the most remarkable qualities in morals, among the ancents was the debate upon the Stoical position, that pain is no evil, nor pleasure any good. This arises from comparing external things with the temper of the mind, when it appears without doubt that the latter is of much more consequence to happiness than the former. They used to reason thus,—Outward possessions, when bestowed upon a bad man, make him no better, but worse, and finally more miserable. How then can these be goods in themselves, which become good or evil, according to the state of him that uses them. They were therefore called the things indifferent. There was something strained and extravagant in some of their writings, and perhaps ostentatious, yet a great deal of true and just reasoning. The most beautiful piece of antiquity, in the moral way, is the Tablature of Cebes.

Let us now recapitulate what we have gone through, and then add some observations or corollaries on the morality of actions. We have considered,

1. The nature of man.

2. The nature, foundation, and obligation of virtue.

3. Have given a sort of general analysis of the moral laws, as pointing out our duty to God, to our neighbour, and ourselves.

We must now consider all morality in general as conformity to a law. We have seen above

whence this law is collected, and derives its authority. Men may differ, not only as to the foundation, but as to the import or meaning of the law in some particulars, but it is always supposed that the law exists.

The morality of actions may be considered in two different lights, but these very nearly related to each other. (1) As they are ranked and disposed of by the law itself. (2) in the conformity or opposition of the actions to the law.

Under the first view an action is either commanded, forbidden, or permitted.

Commanded duties oblige absolutely, and as casuists used to say, *semper non vero ad semper*, that is to say, they are obligatory upon all persons, at the seasons that are proper for them, but not upon every person at every time; because then there could be but one moral duty; all men are obliged to worship God, but this only at certain times, other duties have also their place and season.

Prohibitions oblige *semper et ad semper*, all persons at all times.—We must not lie—this obliges every man at every moment, because no time or circumstances can make it lawful.

On permission we may observe several things.

1. There is (as some say,) a two-fold permission, the one full and absolute, which not only gives us a right to certain things with impunity, but implies a positive approbation of the legislator, and the other implies only that the action is left at large, being neither commanded nor forbidden.

2. Permission in natural laws always implies the approbation of the legislator, and whatever is

done in consequence of it, is innocently done, for God and conscience do not permit, or pass uncondemned, any bad action.

3. It is otherwise in human laws, if they leave any action open, it may be done with impunity, and yet by no means with approbation. I may have a right by human laws to say things in a covered or couched manner, which yet may carry in them the highest degree of malignity.

4. The truth is, when we consider the morality of action in a strict or proper manner, the whole class of permitted actions vanishes. They become by their intention and application either good or bad.

Considering actions in their conformity to the laws, a distinction arises similar to the former, into *good* or just, *bad* and indifferent.

A good action must be wholly conformable to the law in its substance, and in all its circumstances. It is not enough that it be materially good, the time must be proper, and the intention laudable.

A bad action is that, which, either in substance or in any circumstance, is contrary to the law.

In consequence of this, strictly and properly speaking, all truly good or just actions are equally so, arising from a perfect conformity to the law, as all straight lines are equally straight, but all bad actions are not equally bad, as lines may be bent in a different degree from the straight direction.

Indifferent actions, if there are any truly such, are those that are permitted, and neither commanded nor forbidden by the law, but when we consider the spirit and principles of true morality, we

shall find no actions wholly indifferent, because we are under an obligation to promote the happiness of ourselves and others, to which every action may be applied immediately or remotely; and subjection to the Divine will may make a part of our design, in doing or forbearing any thing whatever.

In estimating the morality of actions several circumstances must be considered, (1) the good done (2) the principle from which it flows,—self-interest of the contracted kind, benevolence, or hope of reward. (3) The hindrances or opposition that must be surmounted, as interest, inclination, difficulty. An objection seems to arise from this, not easily solved. If an action is the more virtuous, the more opposition, internal and external, that is overcome, then the longer a man has had the habit of virtue, and the more completely it is formed, the less merit in his actions. It seems also to take away all moral excellence from the Deity, who cannot be supposed to have the least opposition to encounter, either from within or without. This objection cannot be easily removed, but by saying, that the opposition is in no other respect an evidence of the good moral temper, but as it shows the strength of that inclination that overcomes it, and therefore, when a moral habit is so strong as to overcome and annihilate all opposition, it is so much the more excellent.

An action, good in itself, may be made criminal by an evil intention.

But no action, in itself evil, can be made lawful or laudable by a good intention.

A man is obliged to follow the dictates of con

science: yet a mistaken conscience does not wholly absolve from guilt, because he ought to have been at more pains to obtain information.

An action is not virtuous in proportion to its opposite being vicious. It is no high degree of virtue to love our offspring or provide for a family; but to neglect either is exceedingly vicious.

One phenomenon in human nature, nearly connected with the moral feelings, has been particularly considered by some writers, viz. that there is such a disposition in the generality of men to croud to see objects of distress, as an extraordinary public execution. What is the desire that prompts to it? Is the sight of misery a pleasant feeling? Some resolve it merely into curiosity, which they consider as a natural and original impression. But there seems to be something in it different from novelty. Others say it arises from benevolence, and is an exercise of compassion, and that we have a strong natural impulse to the affection of pity, and really feel a pleasure in indulging it. But though every well disposed mind is highly susceptible of pity, at least of all the benevolence and help that pity suggests when the object presents itself, we can scarcely say that the feeling is pleasant, or that we have a desire after such objects, in order to the gratification.

They who reason on the selfish scheme, as usual, resolve all into private interest; they say we delight to see objects of distress, because it gives us a secret satisfaction in reflecting upon our own different situation. I believe there is such a satisfaction in narrow and contracted minds; but to those tolerably disposed it has an opposite effect;

it makes them rather consider the calamities which they themselves are subject to, than those from which they are free.

Perhaps it would be best to take more than one principle to account for this effect—curiosity must make a part, and probably humanity and compassion also contribute to it. It seems to be thought some little alleviation to the sufferer's misery when others pity him—Yet prudent persons, knowing how unavailing this pity is, often choose to be absent.

Sympathy is a particular affection in aid of benevolence—Yet like all other private affections, when it is not moderated, it prevents its own effect— One deeply affected with the view of an object of distress, is often thereby incapacitated to assist him.

Another question is sometimes subjoined to the above, why men have pleasure in seeing Tragedy, which is a striking representation of a melancholy catastrophe. As far as the subject differs from comedy, it may be accounted for on the same principles with the desire to see objects of distress—But one powerful principle leads both to Comedy and Tragedy—a pleasure in the imitative arts, an exact portrait of any object whatever gives the highest pleasure, even though the object itself were originally terrible or disgusting.

We see plainly, that an indulgence of the pleasure given by a fine performance is what crouds the theatre. Unhappily, to give greater pleasure to a corrupt mind, they often invent such scenes, and conduct the matter so, as to make the stage the greatest enemy to virtue and good morals.

LECTURE X.

Of Politics.

POLITICS contain the principles of social union, and the rules of duty in a state of society.—This is but another and more complete view of the same things, drawn out more fully, and applied to particular cases. Political law is the authority of any society stampt upon moral duty.

The first thing to be considered, in order to see upon what principles society is formed, is the state immediately previous to the social state. This is called the state of nature—Violent and unneccessary controversies have been made on that subject. Some have denied that any such thing ever existed, that since there were men, they have always been in a social state. And to be sure, this is so far true, that in no example or fact could it ever last long. Yet it is impossible to consider society as a voluntary union of particular persons, without supposing those persons in a state somewhat different, before this union took place—There are rights therefore belonging to a state of nature, different from those of a social state.

And distinct societies or states independent, are at this moment in a state of nature, or natural liberty, with regard to each other.

Another famous question has been, Is the state of nature as tate of war or peace? Hobbes, an author of considerable note, but of very illiberal sentiments in politics, is a strenuous advocate for a

state of nature being a state of war. Hutchinson and Shafstbury plead strongly, that a state of nature is a state of society. However opposite and hostile their opinions seems to be with regard to each other, it seem no hard matter to reconcile them. That the principles of our nature lead to society—that our happiness and the improvement of our powers are only to be had in society, is of the most undoubted certainty—and that in our nature, as it is the work of God, there is a real good-will and benevolence to others: but on the other hand, that our nature as it is now, when free and independent, is prone to injury, and consequently to war, is equally manifest, and that in a state of natural liberty, there is no other way but force, for preserving security and repelling injury. The inconveniences of the natural state are very many.

One class of the above-mentioned writers say, that nature prompts to society, and the other, that necessity and interest obliges to it—both are equally true.

Supposing then the state of natural liberty antecedent to society to be a reality, let us consider the perfect and imperfect rights belonging to that state, that we may see more distinctly how, and why, they differ in a social state.

The perfect rights in a state of natural liberty, are, (1.) a right to life. (2.) A right to employ his faculties and industry for his own use. (3.) A right to things that are common and necessary, as air, water, earth. (4.) A right to personal liberty. (5.) A power over his own life, not to throw it away unnecessarily, but for a good reason. (6.) A right of private judgment in matters of opinion

(7.) A right to associate, if he so incline, with any person or persons, whom he can persuade (not force,—Under this is contained the right to marriage. (8.) A right to character, that is to say, innocence (not fame)—It is easy to perceive that all these rights belong to a state of natural liberty, and that it would be unjust and unequal for any individual to hinder or abridge another in any one of them, without consent, or unless it be in just retaliation for injury received.

The imperfect natural rights are very numerous, but they are nearly the same in a state of nature as in a state of society, as gratitude, compassion, mutual good offices—if they will be no injury to the person performing them—Indeed they must be the same in a natural and in a social state, because the very definition of an imperfect right is such as you cannot use force to obtain. Now, what you ought not to use force to obtain in a state of natural liberty, human laws in a well constituted state will not give you.

Society I would define to be an association or compact of any number of persons, to deliver up or abridge some part of their natural rights, in order to have the strength of the united body, to protect the remaining, and to bestow others.

Hobbes and some other writers of the former age treat with great contempt, this which is generally called the social compact.—He insists that monarchy is the law of nature. Few are of his sentiments now, at least in Britain, yet it is proper to trace them to the foundation.

It is to be admitted, that society began first insensibly by families, and almost necessarily. Hence

parental authority was the first law, and perhaps it extended for two or three generations in the early ages. Though the patrons of monarchy use this as an argument, it does not favor their scheme —This which they call the patriarchal government, could not extend far; or supposing it could, there would be but one rightful king in all the earth, the lineal descendant of Adam's eldest son, not to mention that the very order of succession in hereditary right has never been uniform, and is but of late settled in the European nations.

The truth is, though man for wise reasons, afterwards to be noticed, continues longer in a family dependance, than other animals, yet in time he becomes sui juris, and when their numbers are increased, when they either continue together, or remove and form distinct societies, it is plain that there must be supposed an expressed or implied contract.

Some say there is no trace or record of any such contract in the beginning of any society. But this is no argument at all, for things insepera-ble from, and essential to any state, commonly take place so insensibly, that their beginning is not observed.

When persons believe themselves, upon the whole, rather oppressed than protected in any society, they think they are at liberty, either to rebel against it, or fly from it; which plainly implies that their being subject to it arose from a tacit consent.

Besides, in migrations and planting of colonies, in all ages, we see evident traces of an original

contract and consent taken to the principles of union.

From this view of society as a voluntary compact, results this principle, that men are originally and by nature equal, and consequently free.

Liberty either cannot, or ought not to be given up in the social state--The end of the union should be the protection of liberty, as far as it is a blessing. The definition of liberty in a constituted government, will be afterwards explained.

Some observe, that few nations or societies in the world have had their constitutions formed on the principles of liberty: perhaps not one twentieth of the states that have been established since the beginning of the world have been settled upon principles altogether favorable to liberty. This is no just argument against natural liberty and the rights of mankind; for it is certain, that the public good has always been the real aim of the people in general, in forming and entering into any society. It has also constantly been at least the professed aim of legislators. Therefore the principle seems to have been admitted, only they have failed or been disappointed in practice, by mistake or deceit. Though perhaps not one twentieth part of mankind have any tolerable skill in the fine arts, it does not follow that there are no such arts, or that the principles of them are not founded in nature.

Reason teaches natural liberty, and common utility recommends it. Some nations have seen this more clearly than others, or have more happily found the means of establishing it.

Here perhaps we should consider a little the

question, whether it is lawful to make men or to keep them slaves, without their consent? This will fall afterwards to be considered more fully: in the mean time, observe that in every state there must be some superior and others inferior, and it is hard to fix the degree of subjection that may fall to the lot of particular persons. Men may become slaves, or their persons and labour be put wholly in the power of others by consent. They may also sometimes, in a constituted state, be made slaves by force, as a punishment for the commission of crimes. But it is certainly unlawful to make inroads upon others, unprovoked, and take away their liberty by no better right than superior power.

It has sometimes been doubted, whether it is lawful to take away the liberty of others for life, even on account of crimes committed. There can be no strong reason given against this, except that which is supposed to operate in Great Britain against making malefactors slaves, that it would be unfavorable to rational liberty to see any rank of men in chains. But setting this aside, it seems plain, that if men may forfeit their lives to the society, they may also forfeit their liberty, which is a less precious blessing. It seems also more agreeable both to equity and public utility to punish some sort of crimes with hard labour, than death. Imprisonment for life has been admitted and practised by all nations—Some have pleaded for making slaves of the barbarous nations, that they are actually brought into a more eligible state, and have more of the comforts of life, than they would have had in their own country. This

argument may alleviate, but does not justify the practice. It cannot be called a more eligible state, if less agreeable to themselves.

Upon the whole, there are many unlawful ways of making slaves, but also some that are lawful—And the practice seems to be countenanced in the law of Moses, where rules are laid down for their treatment, and an estimation of injuries done to them, different from that of free men. I do not think there lies any necessity on those who found men in a state of slavery, to make them free to their own ruin. But it is very doubtful whether any original cause of servitude can be defended, but legal punishment for the commission of crimes. Humanity in the manner of treating them is manifestly a dictate of reason and nature, and I think also of private and public utility, as much as of either.

The next step in opening the principles of the social state, is to consider the foundation, establishment and extent of *Property*. Some begin this by considering the property of man in general, in the inferior creatures. Has he any right to use the lower irrational animals for labour, or food, or both?

It is needless to refine too much upon this subject. To use them for labour seems evidently lawful, as they are inferior, with strength fitted for it, and strength which they could not employ for the improvement and cultivation of the earth without the direction of man. They seem to be to man, some how as the body to the mind. They help to produce food for themselves, and so increase their number and receive much more sensual plea-

sure, sharing in all respects with their masters the fruit of their toil.

To use them for food is thus argued to be lawful.—If suffered all to live, they would become too numerous, and could not be sustained, so that death to many of them in a much worse way must be the certain consequence. Further, nature seems to dictate the use of them for food in the plainest manner, for they are food for one another in a regular gradation, the insect to the birds and fishes, many of them to the beasts, and the smaller to the greater, or the tamer to the more rapacious of every order.

If we take tradition or Revelation for our guide, the matter is plain, that God made man lord of the works of his hands, and put under him all the other creatures. Only it appears that the grant of animal food was made no earlier than to Noah, after the flood.

Let us next consider the establishment of private property. Private property is every particular person's having a confessed and exclusive right to a certain portion of the goods which serve for the support and conveniency of life.

In a very imperfect state of society community of goods may subsist in a great degree, and indeed its subsisting is one of the surest signs of an imperfect state of society. Some attempts have been made in civilized states to introduce it, but without any considerable effect, except in Sparta, the constitution of which was very singular. In small voluntary societies, especially of the religious kind, it may be established, and will continue so long as the morals of the society are pure. But

in civil society fully formed, especially if the state is at all extensive, or intended to be so, private property is essentially necessary, and founded upon the reason of things and public utility. The reasons of it are (1) without private property no laws would be sufficient to compel universal industry. There never was such a purity of manners and zeal for the public, in the individuals of a great body, but that many would be idle and slothful, and maintain themselves upon the labour of others.

2. There is no reason to expect, in the present state of human nature, that there would be a just and equal distribution to every one according to his necessity, nor any room for distinction according to merit.

3. There would be no place for the exercise of some of the noblest affections of the human mind, as charity, compassion, beneficence, &c.

4. Little or no incitement to the active virtues, labour, ingenuity, bravery, patience, &c.

Some have laid down schemes for making property common, as Sir Thomas Moore in his Utopia; but in general they are chimerical and impracticable. There is no instance in fact where any state that made a figure in the social life had their goods wholly in common. Sparta had the most of it, but it was a very small state, and limited in its views; besides there was something so singular in the whole constitution of the Spartan government, that its subsisting so long, remains a phenomenon for politicians and reasoners yet to account for.

Supposing private property to be essential, or at least useful in the social state, the next question is, how does this property take its rise, or by what ways is it acquired.

The original ways of acquiring property may be reduced to these two (1) Prior occupation (2) our own industry.

As to the first of these, it may be analysed thus. Of the things that lay in common for the use of man, I have a right to take what is convenient for me, and after I have taken it, no body can have a better right, nor consequently any title to take it from me.

But many questions difficult to be resolved arise from the application of this principle. How far does this right extend? Must I take only what is sufficient for the present moment, or may I provide for future necessities and enjoyment. In vacant lands must I take only what I and my present followers can sufficiently occupy, or may I touch a continent and call it mine, though I shall not be able to fill it in many ages. I answer, common utility must be the rule in all these cases, and any thing more particular must be reserved till we come to the law of nations.

Some say that the water in large bays and rivers ought to be common to all, because it is inexhaustible, and one's using it cannot waste or spoil it for the use of others. But the security of societies will point out the measure of property that must be in all those things.

The extent or object of property contains three particulars (1) a right to the fullest use. Whatever is a person's property, he has a right to do

with it as he pleases, with this single exception, if it may be called so, that he may not use it to the injury of others. Full property has no other exception, unless you call this an exception, that if any man would wantonly destroy the fruits of the earth, or his habitation; in that case though they were his own, people would hinder him, as supposing him to be mad, and deprive him not only of that liberty, but of all others.

2. Property implies a right of exclusion. We may hinder others from any way intermeddling with what is our property. This seems essential to the idea. Giving a full right to one, implies that others have none.

3. It implies a power to alienate. That is to say, a right of alteration, commutation, donation, during life, and disposal at death. Thus property is said to be perpetual.

There are certain things called by Civilians Res nullius, such as temples, public edifices, gates, and walls of cities, &c. Temples used to be said to be given to God, and in the laws of civilized states, attention is paid to this circumstance. But as to the property or use, the case of them, and of all the other things mentioned, is very clear. They are under the inspection of the magistrate, or such persons as represent the community, and are by them kept for common use.

LECTURE XI.

IN the social life in general we may consider, (1) domestic, (2) civil society.

The first of these we must consider as implying and made up of several relations, the chief of which are (1) the relation of marriage, (2) that of parents and children, (3) that of master and servant.

In marriage we ought to observe, that though all creatures may be said to be propagated in a way in a great degree similar, yet there is something peculiarly distinguished, dignified and solemn, in marriage among men. This distinction is necessary, and founded in reason and nature.

Human creatures at their birth are in a state weaker and more helpless than any other animals. They also arrive much more slowly at maturity, and need by far most assistance and cultivation. Therefore a particular union of the parents is absolutely necessary, and that upon such powerful principles as will secure their common care. Marriage is a relation expressly founded upon this necessity, and must be so conducted as to ascertain the property of the offspring, and to promise the most assiduous, prudent and extensive care.

This is the foundation of marriage drawn from the public good. But we ought also to observe, that man is manifestly superior in dignity to the other animals, and it was intended that all his enjoyments, and even his indulgence of instinctive propensities, should be of a more exalted and rational kind than theirs. Therefore the propensity of the sexes to one another is not only reined in by modesty, but is so ordered as to require that reason and friendship, and some of the noblest affections, should have place. And it is certain that they have, if not a more violent, at least

a more lasting and uniform influence, in the married state, than sensual desire.

It is further observed by moral writers, that though beauty and personal attraction may be considered as the first motives, yet these are always supposed to be indications of something excellent in the temper within. So that even love of beauty, in man, is an attachment to moral excellence. Let a person attend with seriousness, and he will find that the utmost perfection of form in an idiot, or one thoroughly known to be of a very bad temper, is really no object of desire. Though in those who are little known, it is apt to prejudice the ignorant and unwary to judge favourably of the person.

The particulars which reason and nature point out, relating to the marriage contract, are as follow:

1. That it be between one man and one woman. Polygamy is condemned by nature; for it is found that the males born are to the females, as 13 to 12, or as some say, as 20 to 19, the overplus being to supply the greater waste of the male part of the species by war and dangerous occupations, hard labour, and travelling by land and sea.

2. The fundamental and essential part of the contract is fidelity and chastity. This must immediately appear to be essential to the purpose of the union. Some writers say that this is especially binding upon the woman, in order to ascertain the offspring; but every body must see the absurdity of any distinction, because the contract would neither be equal, nor likely to be steadily observed, if it were not mutual. Besides, as a late au-

thor has well observed, if chastity be a female virtue, how can men be unchaste without infringing upon it?

3. The contract should be for life—otherwise it would be short, uncertain, and mutual love and industry greatly weakened.

4. If superiority and authority be given to the man, it should be used with so much gentleness and love as to make it a state of as great equality as possible. Hutchinson and some other writers say there should be no superiority, and that their property, being common, should not be alienated by the one without the other. Others think that perfect equality of power in two persons is not consistent with order, and the common interest, and therefore give authority to the man, and the laws of most nations give the man the disposal of property, with the reservation of particular rights to the woman.

Some heathen writers gave the man power of life and death over the woman, a thing evidently barbarous and unjust.

5. Marriages are sometimes dissolved by divorces, which our law permits only on three accounts—adultery, wilful and obstinate desertion, and incapacity. The first two of these founded on the New Testament, and the last on reason, being not so properly a dissolution of a marriage, as a declaration that it was void from the beginning, and never took place.

Some writers of moral philosophy add, as causes of divorce, contrariety of temper, incurable diseases, and such as would infect the offspring. But none of them seem of sufficient moment. The

first would be an evident temptation to causeless and wanton separations—and all the three may be guarded against by previous caution.

Hutchinson observes that in all nations, marrying in near degrees of consanguinity or affinity has been avoided and abhorred; and he adds, that the natural and general abhorrence of it has been greater than reason seems to dictate. Hence it has been conjectured to have been early tradition or revelation—and men have exercised their invention in finding out the true reason or ground of the prohibition.

One reason assigned is, because if marriage were lawful to near relations, their frequent intercourse would be a strong temptation to uncleanness.

Another; that if permitted, it would frequently confound or invert the duties of relations, by setting some above others whom they formerly used to obey.

A third reason, and perhaps the best is, that abstaining from blood relations in this voluntary contract extends the social ties, and produces a greater number of family relations.

Whatever be the moral reasons, it seems to have a strong sanction in nature; for it is observed that marriage between near relations, especially if repeated, greatly weakens the human race.

As to the extent of this prohibition, it has been various in different nations, but the most prevailing has been to forbid all within three degrees. The degrees are reckoned by the steps of descent between the parties and the common parent. Parent and child is the first—child and child the se-

cond—child and grand-child the third—and tw grand-children or first cousins the fourth—when it becomes lawful.

Relation of Parents and Children.

The first thing to be observed is, that this relation is distinguished by the strongest instinct of parental affection. This seems necessary, as the education of children is a duty requiring so much time, care and expence, which nothing but the most rooted affection would submit to.

The rights of the parent may be summed up in these two: 1. Authority, which requires subjection in the children. 2. A right to a grateful return in due time from the children. The first is a perfect right, as far as it extends, but must be limited.

Some nations have given parents the power of life and death over their children, and Hobbes insists that children are the goods and absolute property of their parents, and that they may alienate them and sell them either for a time or for life. But both these seem ill founded, because they are contrary to the end of this right, viz. instruction and protection. Parental right seems in most cases to be limited by the advantage of the children.

Children are no doubt to judge for themselves in matters of religion when they come to years; though the parents are under the strongest obligation to instruct them carefully to the best of their judgment. Those who insist, that to leave them their judgment free they ought not to be taught any principles, ought to consider that their scheme is impracticable and absurd. If the parents do

t instruct them, they will imbibe prejudices nd contract habits, perhaps of the worst kind, from others.

Children in most nations are considered as having a right, exclusive of their parents, to property given them by others.

Many nations have given the parents a right to dispose of their children in marriage; but this seems to be carrying parental authority too far, if it be made absolute, because it puts in the power of the parent to dispose of what is most essential to their happiness through the whole of their future life. Yet it seems very contrary to reason and nature, that children in early life should dispose of themselves in marriage without consulting their parents.

Since we have denied the power of life and death to parents, it will be asked, what is the sanction of their authority? I answer, moderate correction in early life, and, as the very highest punishment, expulsion from their family, or a forfeiture of the privileges which they despise.

As to the right to a grateful return, it is an imperfect right, but of the strongest kind—sometimes the civil authority interposes, and obliges children to maintain their aged parents.

To the disgrace of human nature it is often observed, that parental affection is much stronger than filial duty. We must indeed acknowledge the wisdom of Providence in making the instinctive impulse stronger in parents towards their children, than in children towards their parents; because the first is more necessary than the other to the public good; yet when we consider both as im-

proved into a virtuous disposition, by reason and a sense of duty, there seems to be every whit as much baseness in filial ingratitude, as in want of natural affection.

Relation of Master and Servant.

This relation is first generated by the difference which God hath permitted to take place between man and man. Some are superior to others in mental powers and intellectual improvement—some by the great increase of their property through their own, or their predecessors industry, and some make it their choice, finding they cannot live otherwise better, to let out their labour to others for hire.

Let us shortly consider (1.) How far this subjection extends. (2.) The duties on each side.

As to the first it seems to be only that the master has a right to the labours and ingenuity of the servant, for a limited time, or at most for life. He can have no right either to take away life, or to make it insupportable by excessive labour. The servant therefore retains all his other natural rights.

The practice of ancient nations, of making their prisoners of war slaves, was altogether unjust and barbarous; for though we could suppose that those who were the causes of an unjust war deserved to be made slaves; yet this could not be the case of all who fought on their side; besides, the doing so in one instance, would authorise the doing it in any other; and those who fought in defence of their country, when unjustly invaded, might be taken as well as others. The practice was

also impolitic, as slaves never are so good or faithful servants, as those who become so for a limited time by consent.

LECTURE XII.

OF CIVIL SOCIETY.

CIVIL SOCIETY is distinguished from domestic, in the union of a number of families in one state, for their mutual benefit.

We have before affirmed, that society always supposes an expressed or implied contract or agreement. Let us now see what this agreement necessarily implies.

(1.) The consent of every individual to live in, and be a member of that society. (2.) A consent to some particular plan of government. (3.) A mutual agreement between the subjects and rulers; of subjection on the one hand, of protection on the other—These are all implied in the union of every society, and they complete the whole.

Any objections that may be raised against this, are easily solved. Ex. Gr. Though every individual has not given an actual consent, yet his determination to live with any society implies it. Again, if it be asked how children come to be members of a society; it is answered, they receive the benefits and partake of the rights of the society during the whole time of their education, and as they come to the use of reason, they both claim the privilege, and acquiesce in the duty of citizens—And

if they find any thing insupportable in their condition, they may alter it at their pleasure.

Have then all subjects a right, when they see fit, to remove from the society in which they are? I answer, that in all ordinary cases they ought to have, at least in time of peace. Perhaps it may be affirmed with justice, that they who have enjoyed the privileges of any society in time of peace, if war or danger to the public should arise, they may be hindered from emigrating at that time, and compelled to contribute their share in what is necessary to the common defence.

Whatever is the form of government in any society, the members may be divided into two classes, the *rulers* and the *ruled*, the magistrates and subjects.

The rights of rulers may be divided into essential and accidental: the essential, such as in general must be vested in rulers of every society; the accidental, such as may be given to the rulers in some societies, but not in others.

The essential rights of rulers are what require most to be enumerated, and these again by some good writers are divided into greater and lesser essentials.

Of the first kind are, (1.) Legislation. (2.) Taxation for the public expense. (3.) Jurisdiction, or the administration of Justice. (4.) Representation, or appearing and acting in name of the whole, in all transactions, with adjacent independent states, chiefly for the purposes of making war or peace.

The less essential rights of rulers are many, and they are called less essential, because they

may be more varied than the others; such as, coining of money—possessing or managing public edifices—conferring honours on officers, &c.

The rights of subjects in a social state cannot be enumerated, but they may be all summed up in *protection*, that is to say, those who have surrendered part of their natural rights expect the strength of the public arm to defend and improve what remains.

It has been often said, that government is carried on by rewards and punishments; but it ought to be observed, that the only reward that a state can be supposed to bestow upon good subjects in general, is protection and defence. Some few, who have distinguished themselves in the public service, may be distinguished by particular rewards; but to reward the whole is impossible, because the reward must be levied from those very persons to whom it is to be given.

After what has been said on the foundation of society, viz. consent, perhaps it may be necessary to mention two exceptions.

1. It is said by some with apparent reason, that a few persons, if accidentally armed with power, may constrain a large ignorant rabble to submit to laws which will be for their good. This I would admit in some cases, when there is an evident madness and disorder in the multitude, and when there is a moral certainty that they will afterwards be pleased with the violence done them. But in general it is but a bad maxim, that we may force people for their good. All lovers of power will be disposed to think that even a violent use of it is for the public good.

2. Though people have actually consented to any form of government, if they have been essentially deceived in the nature and operation of the laws, if they are found to be pernicious and destructive of the ends of the union, they may certainly break up the society, recall their obligation, and resettle the whole upon a better footing.

Of the different forms of government.

As soon as men began to consider and compare forms of government, they divided them into three general and simple kinds, (1) monarchy, (2) aristocracy, (3) democracy. These are called simple, because they are clearly distinguishable from each other in their nature and effects. The ancients generally divided the forms of government in this manner, because most of their governments were of one or other of these kinds, with very little mixture.

Monarchy is when the supreme power is vested in a single person. Mr. Hutchinson says, monarchy may be either absolute or limited; but this is an inaccuracy, for limited monarchy is one of the mixed kinds of government.

But monarchy may be either temporary or for life. The Roman dictators were absolute for a time, and so long as they continued, the government was purely monarchical, all other powers being dormant.

Monarchy may also be either hereditary or elective.

Aristocracy is that form of government, in which the supreme power is lodged with a small number of nobles. This is capable of the same variations

as monarchy, and it may be either temporary or perpetual, hereditary or elective, with this difference, that a temporary or elective aristocracy always puts some power in the hands of the people. The most complete aristocracy is when the ruling party have the power of cooptation within themselves, and can fill up, as they please, the vacancies made by deaths or resignations.

Democracy is when the supreme power is left in the multitude. But as in large governments the people in a collective body cannot well meet together, nor could they transact business with any convenience if they did, they may meet by representatives, chosen either by the whole, or by particular districts.

From those simple forms are generated many complex forms; two of them may be compounded together, either in equal or in different proportions, or all these may be united, as in the British government.

After pointing out the simple forms of government, it will be proper to make some general observations upon government, and apply them to the various forms, to show whether any of them is preferable to the other, and the advantages and defects of each in particular.

1. There are four things that seem to be requisite in a system of government, and every form is good in proportion as it possesses or attains them. (1) Wisdom to plan proper measures for the public good. (2) Fidelity to have nothing but the public interest in view. (3) Secrecy, expedition, and dispatch, in carrying measures into execution; and (4) Unity and concord, or that one branch of the

government may not impede, or be a hindrance to another.

Monarchy has plainly the advantage in unity, secrecy, and expedition. Many cannot so easily nor so speedily agree upon proper measures, nor can they expect to keep their designs secret; therefore, say some, if a man could be found wise enough, and just enough for the charge, monarchy would be the best form of government. Accordingly we find that in the command of a ship, fleet or army, one person is commonly intrusted with supreme power; but this does not apply to states, for many reasons. No man can be found, who has either skill sufficient, or, if he had, could give attention to the whole departments of a great empire. Besides, in hereditary monarchies there is no security at all for either wisdom or goodness, and an elective monarchy, though it may seem to promise ability, has been always found in experience worse than the other, because there is no reason to expect that an elected monarch will have the public good at heart; he will probably mind only private or family interest.

Aristocracy has the advantage of all the others for *wisdom* in deliberations, that is to say, a number of persons of the first rank must be supposed by their consultations to be able to discover the public interest. But it has very little or no prospect of fidelity or union. The most ambitious projects, and the most violent and implacable factions, often prevail in such states.

Democracy has the advantage of both the others for fidelity; the multitude collectively always are true in attention to the interest of the public,

because it is their own. They are the public. But at the same time it has very little advantage for wisdom, or union, and none at all for secrecy, and expedition. Besides, the multitude are exceeding apt to be deceived by demagogues and ambitious persons. They are very apt to trust a man who serves them well with such power, as that he is able to make them serve him.

If the true notion of liberty is the prevalence of law and order, and the security of individuals, none of the simple forms are favourable to it.

Monarchy every one knows is but another name for tyranny, where the arbitary will of one capricious man disposes of the lives and properties of all ranks.

Aristocracy always makes vassals of the inferior ranks, who have no hand in government, and the great commonly rule with greater severity than absolute monarchs. A monarch is at such a distance from most of his subjects, that he does them little injury; but the lord of a petty seignory is a rigorous task-master to his unhappy dependants. The jealousy with which the members of an aristocratical state defend their own privileges is no security at all for humanity and easy treatment to their inferiors. Example—the Spartans; their treatment of the Helots—and the barons in all the feudal governments, in their treatment of their vassals.

Pure democracy cannot subsist long, nor be carried far into the departments of state—it is very subject to caprice and the madness of popular rage. They are also very apt to chuse a favorite,

and vest him with such power as overthrows their own liberty,--examples, Athens and Rome.

Hence it appears that every good form of government must be complex, so that the one principle may check the other. It is of consequence to have as much virtue among the particular members of a community as possible; but it is folly to expect that a state should be upheld by integrity in all who have a share in managing it. They must be so balanced, that when every one draws to his own interest or inclination, there may be an over-poise upon the whole.

II. The second observation upon the forms of government is, that where there is a balance of different bodies, as in all mixed forms, there must be always some *nexus imperii*, something to make one of them necessary to the other. If this is not the case, they will not only draw different ways, but will often separate altogether from each other. In order to produce this *nexus*, some of the great essential rights of rulers must be divided and distributed among the different branches of the legislature. Example in the British government, the king has the power of making war and peace,—but the parliament have the levying and distribution of money, which is a sufficient restraint.

III. The third observation is, that the ruling part of any state must always have considerable property, chiefly of lands. The reason is, property has such an invariable influence, that whoever possesses property must have power. Property in a state is also some security for fidelity, because interest then is concerned in the public welfare.

For this reason, did men in every state live entirely by agriculture, an agrarian law would be necessary to liberty, because if a vast proportion of property came into a few hands, they would soon take all power to themselves. But trade and commerce supersede the necessity of this, because the great and sudden fortunes accumulated by trade cause a rotation of property.

IV. In a well formed state the subjects should not be too numerous, nor too few. If very numerous, the principles of government cannot exert their force over the whole. The Roman empire fell by its own weight. If the subjects are too few, they are not sufficient to suppress internal insurrections, or repel attacks from without.

V. It is frequently observed, that in every government there is a supreme irresistible power lodged somewhere, in king, senate, or people. To this power is the final appeal in all questions. Beyond this we cannot go. How far does this authority extend? We answer, as far as authority in a social state can extend; it is not accountable to any other tribunal, and it is supposed in the social compact that we have agreed to submit to its decision. There is however an exception, if the supreme power, wherever lodged, come to be exercised in a manifestly tyrannical manner, the subjects may certainly, if in their power, resist and overthrow it. But this is only when it becomes manifestly more advantageous to unsettle the government altogether, than to submit to tyranny. This resistance to the supreme power, however, is subverting the society altogether, and is not to be attempted till the government is so corrupt, as that

anarchy and the uncertainty of a new settlement is preferable to the continuance as it is.

This doctrine of resistance even to the supreme power is essentially connected with what has been said on the social contract, and the consent necessary to political union. If it be asked, who must judge when the government may be resisted? I answer, the subjects in general, every one for himself. This may seem to be making them both judge and party, but there is no remedy. It would be denying the privilege altogether, to make the oppressive ruler the judge.

It is easy to see that the meaning of this is not that any little mistake of the rulers of any society will justify resistance. We must obey and submit to them always, till the corruption becomes intolerable, for to say that we might resist legal authority every time we judged it to be wrong, would be inconsistent with a state of society, and to the very first idea of subjection.

The once famous controversy on passive obedience and non-resistance seems now in our country to be pretty much over; what the advocates for submission used to say was, that to teach the lawfulness of resisting a government in any instance, and to make the rebel the judge, is subversive of all order, and must subject a state to perpetual sedition; to which I answer, to refuse this inherent right in every man is to establish injustice and tyranny, and leave every good subject without help, as a tame prey to the ambition and rapacity of others. No doubt men may abuse the privilege, yet this does not make it void. Besides, it is not till a whole people rise, that re-

sistance has any effect, and it is not easy to suppose that a whole people would rise against their governors, unless when they have really received very great provocation. Whereas, on the other hand, nothing is more natural than for rulers to grasp at power, and their situation enables them to do it successfully by slow and insensible encroachments. In experience there are many instances of rulers becoming tyrants, but, comparatively, very few of causeless and premature rebellions. There are occasional and partial insurrections in every government. These are easily raised by interested persons, but the great majority continues to support order.

VI. Dominion, it is plain from all that has been said, can be acquired justly only one way, viz. by consent. There are two other ways commonly mentioned, both of which are defective, inheritance and conquest. Hereditary power, which originally rose from consent, and is supposed to be founded upon the continuance of consent, (as that of the hereditary power in a limited monarchy) is as lawful as any, but when they pretend such a right from nature is independent of the people, it is absurd.

That which is called the right of conquest ought to be exploded altogether. We shall see by and by what is the right of a conqueror in a just war. It was his right before, and he obtains possession of it by conquest. But to found any claim merely on conquest is not a right, but robbery.

Upon the whole, I will conclude with a few re-

marks upon the spirit and tendency of different forms of government.

1. Monarchical government has a tendency to politeness and elegance of manners, and generally to luxury. The submission and obsequiousness practised at the court of a monarch diffuses itself through the whole state.

2. Aristocracy narrows the mind exceedingly, and indeed cannot long subsist in a large state. A small aristocracy, however, may subsist as a form of government, as long as any other method, or longer.

3. Democracy tends to plainness and freedom of speech, and sometimes to a savage and indecent ferocity. Democracy is the nurse of eloquence, because when the multitude have the power, persuasion is the only way to govern them.

Let us now ask this short question, what is the value and advantage of civil liberty?

Is it necessary to virtue? This cannot be supposed. A virtuous mind and virtuous conduct is possible, and perhaps equally possible, in every form of government.

Is it necessary to personal private happiness? It may seem so. We see the subjects of arbitrary governments however not only happy, but very often they have a greater attachment to their form of government than those of free states have to their's. And if contentment be necessary to happiness, there is commonly more impatience and discontent in a free state than in any other. The tyranny even of an absolute monarch does not affect with personal injury any of his subjects but a few, and chiefly those who make it their choice

to be near him. Perhaps in free governments the law and the mob do more mischief to private property, than is done in any absolute monarchy.

What then is the advantage of civil liberty? I suppose it chiefly consists in its tendency to put in motion all the human powers. Therefore, it promotes industry, and in this respect happiness, —produces every latent quality, and improves the human mind.—Liberty is the nurse of riches, literature and heroism.

LECTURE XIII.

OF THE LAW OF NATURE AND NATIONS.

THE next thing in order, is to treat of what is called the law of *nature* and *nations*. It has been before observed, that separate and independent states are with regard to one another in a state of natural liberty, or as man to man before the commencement of civil society. On this several questions arise. (1) Is there any such law? (2) What is the law? (3) What is its sanction, or how is it to be enforced?

That there is such a law is plain, from the reasons that show the obligation which one man lies under to another. If there are natural rights of men, there are natural rights of nations. Bodies politic, in this view, do not differ in the least from individuals. Therefore, as before, reason, conscience and common utility, show that there is a law of nature and nations.

The question what it is, must be considered in the same manner. I am not able to recollect any perfect or imperfect right that can belong to one man, as distinguished from another, but what belongs to nations, save that there is usually less occasion for the imperfect rights. If we read over the perfect rights, in a state of natural liberty, (page 71) we shall see they all apply to nations.

It will also appear that the imperfect rights apply; but the occasions of exerting them are much more rare. For example, it is more rare to see a nation in a state of general indigence, so as to require a supply. Yet this sometimes happens. It did so in the case of Portugal, at the time of the great earthquake at Lisbon. And the other nations of Europe lent them assistance. It is also from this principle that ships of different nations, meeting at sea, will do acts of humanity to one another. Sometimes also there are national favours that deserve national gratitude. But this is seldom merited, and, I believe, still seldomer paid.

As to the sanction of the law of nature and nations, it is no other than a general sense of duty, and such a sense of common utility, as makes men fear that if they notoriously break these laws, reproach and infamy among all nations will be the effect, and probably resentment and indignation by common consent.

The violation of the natural rights of mankind being a transgression of the law of nature, and between nations as in a state of natural liberty, there being no method of redress but force, the law of nature and nations has as its chief or only object the manner of making *war* and *peace*.

In war it is proper to consider distinctly, (1) The causes for which a just war may be carried on. (2) The time of commencing. (3) The duration. (4) The means by which it may be carried on.

As to the first, the causes of commencing war are according to the principles above laid down, the violation of any perfect right—as taking away the property of the other state, or the lives of its subjects, or restraining them in their industry, or hindering them in the use of things common, &c. There is only one perfect right, the violation of which does not seem to be the cause of war; I mean that by which we have a right to character. National calumny is scarcely a cause of war, because it cannot be frequent or of great effect. The violation of imperfect rights cannot usually be a cause of war between nations; yet a case may be supposed, in which even these would be a just cause of war. Suppose a ship of any nation should go into a port of another, in the greatest distress, and not only the people in general, but the governing part of the society, should deny them all assistance—This would be an act of such notorious inhumanity, and of such evil example, that it may justify national resentment; and yet even here, I think there should first be a demand of justice upon the offending persons, before vengeance should be taken upon the state.

These are the just and legitimate causes of making war. Some add to them, that when a nation is seen to put itself in such a situation as to defence, or as to the means of annoying others, that it seems to threaten hostilities, then we are not obliged to

wait till it hath committed actual injury, but may put it in a state of incapacity: but there is no other truth in this, but what is founded upon the other; for the preservation of our property implies, that if others take such measures as are not to be accounted for but upon the supposition of an intention of wronging me, it is often easier and safer to prevent and disarm the robber, than to suffer him to commit the violence, and then to strip him and rob him of his prey.

One thing more is to be added, that every nation has a right to join which it pleases of two contending parties. This is easily resolved into the general principles; for the injured party may be supposed to go to war in defence of some perfect right; and the cause being just, the imperfect right of humanity, as well as general and common utility, calls for assistance to the oppressed. So that if we have a right to associate with any nation, we may be entitled to protect their property and rights.

2. As to the time of commencing war, it seems to be no way contrary to natural law to say it is at any time the injured party pleases, after having received an injury; but accident or utility, or a desire in each party to manifest the equity of their cause, has introduced universally the custom of declaring war. This begun very early, and though not of absolute right, having been generally introduced, must be continued, though there is often more of form than of substance in it; for nations do often begin both attack and defence before declaration, as well as make all the necessary preparations for striking the most effectual blow. The

meaning of a declaration of war seems to be, to call upon the injuring party to prevent it by reparation—Likewise to manifest to all other states the justice of the cause.

3. The duration of a war should be, according to natural equity, till the injury be completely redressed, and reasonable security given against future attacks: therefore the practice, too common, of continuing a war for the acquisition of empire, is to be condemned. Because one state has done some injury to another, it seems quite unreasonable that they should not only repair the injury, but subvert and ruin the offending state altogether—this would be unreasonable between man and man, if one had wronged another, not only to repair the wrong, but to take all the rest that he had, and reduce his family to beggary. It is even more unreasonable in states, because the offenders in states are not to be supposed to be the whole people, but only the rulers, or perhaps only some individuals.

Perhaps it may be asked, what is *reasonable* security against future injury. I answer, between equal independent nations, solemn treaties ought to be considered as security, but if faith has been often broken, perhaps something more may be required. The mutual complaints of nations against each other for breach of faith makes conquerors often demand such a degree of security, as puts the conquered altogether in their power.

4. As to the legitimate means of carrying on the war, in general, it may be said in one word, by force or open violence. It is admitted on all hands, that this force may be used against the

person and goods, not only of the rulers, but of every member of the hostile state. This may seem hard, that innocent subjects of the state should suffer for the folly and indiscretion of the rulers, or of other members of the same state, but it is unavoidable. The whole individuals that compose a state are considered but as one body; it would be impossible for an enemy to distinguish the guilty from the innocent; and when men submit to a government, they risk their own possessions on the same bottom with the whole, in return for the benefits of society.

Open violence may be said to have no bounds, and therefore every method that can be invented, and the most deadly weapons of annoyance may seem to be permitted—But from what has been said above, and upon the principles of general equity, all acts of cruelty and inhumanity are to be blamed,—and all severity, that has not an immediate effect in weakening the national strength of the enemy, is certainly inhumanity—Such as killing prisoners whom you can keep safely—killing women and children—burning and destroying every thing that could be of use in life.

The use of poisoned weapons has been also generally condemned—the poisoning of springs or provisions.

To the honor of modern times, and very probably, I think, to the honor of christianity, there is much more humanity in the way of carrying on war than formerly.

To aim particularly at the life of a leader or person of chief note seems to have nothing in it unjust or improper, because the more important the

life, it does more toward the finishing of the war; but what many seem to admit, the bribing of his own people to assassinate him privately, I cannot think honorable or fair.

A question is often moved in morals, how far it is lawful to deceive an enemy, especially if we hold the general and universal obligation of truth. To this it may be answered, in the first place, that we may certainly with great justice conceal our own designs from an enemy—as indeed we may generally from friends, by silence, and guarding against every circumstance that may betray them. Neither do I think there is any thing at all blameworthy in a general of an army using ambiguous signs, as feigned marches of a part or the whole, putting up lights or such things, because after a declaration of war he does not pretend to give information to his enemy of his motions, nay it is expected on both sides that they will do the best they can to over-reach one another in point of prudence. Yet I can scarce think it right to employ people to go to the enemy, and professing to be sincere, tell direct falsehoods, and deceive them by that false intelligence.

It is the custom of all to send spies to discover the enemy's designs, and also to bribe some of the enemies themselves to discover the designs of their leaders—The last of which is, I think, at least of a doubtful nature, or rather unjust—Though sending spies is by all approved, yet (what may seem a little unaccountable) such spies are always punished with instant death by the opposite side when detected. The reason probably is, that pretending friendship they have a right to

consider them as traitors—Or as they are in an act of hostility, they kill them, as they would do an enemy in battle when in their power.

These circumstances apply to all war in general: but there is a distinction of wars by civilians into two kinds, *solemn* and *civil.* The first includes all wars between states formerly independent, the other internal insurrections of a part of one government against another.

There has generally been a great difference in the behaviour of the opposite parties in these different wars. In solemn wars there is a presumption of integrity in the plurality on both sides, each believes his own cause to be just. On this account they are to be treated with the more humanity. In civil wars the insurgents are considered as making unjust resistance to the ruling part of the society, and therefore guilty of the greatest crimes against society. Therefore they are often treated with great rigour, and when taken in battle, reserved to solemn trial and public execution. There is some reason for this in many cases, when it is indeed an unreasonable or unprovoked insurrection of disorderly citizens; but there are many cases in which the pretences on both sides are so plausible, that the war should be in all respects considered as solemn.

It should be observed, notwithstanding the hostile disposition, there are occasions, both in a treaty for peace and during the continuance of the war, when enemies are under the strongest obligations to sincerity in their behaviour to each other. —When proposals are made for accommodating

the differences, for a suspension of arms, for an exchange of prisoners, or any thing similar.

It is worth while to inquire, whether the greatest honor and candour in war, with a strict adherence to all the laws above laid down, would give any party a great advantage, who should take the liberty of transgressing them—as for example, who should use poisoned weapons—should send people to tell false stories—should bribe subjects to assassinate a hostile prince—I answer, that they would have no advantage at all, but probably the contrary. There is something powerful in magnanimity, which subdues the hearts of enemies; nay, sometimes terrifies them, and particularly inspires a general's army with invincible courage. Besides these, sinister arts are not so terrible as may be imagined—telling false news is as easily discovered as any trick whatsoever.

Prudence and integrity have no need of any assistance from fraud—acts even of generosity, from enemy to enemy, are often as useful as any acts of hostility. There was something very handsome in the Roman general, who refused to avail himself of the treachery of a school-master, as well as whimsical, in the way in which he punished the traitor.

Of Making Peace.

As already hinted, all proposals tending to this purpose ought to be made with the utmost sincerity. Of all deceits in war, the most infamous is that of making a treaty, or seeking a conference, only to take advantage of the security of one

party to destroy him—by assassination, or by breaking a truce, to fight with advantage.

The terms of peace ought to be agreeable to the end of making war. Damages should be repaired, and security given against future injury.

We have often said that nation to nation is as man to man in a state of natural liberty; therefore treaties of peace between nations should in general proceed upon the same principles as private contracts between man and man. There is however an exception, that contracts between individuals are (at least by law) always void, when they are the effect of constraint upon one side. Now this must not hold in treaties between nations, because it would always furnish a pretext for breaking them. On the side of the conquered, a treaty is always in a great degree the effect of necessity.

It is generally, however, laid down in most authors as a principle, that the terms imposed and submitted to may be sometimes so rigorous and oppressive, as to justify the injured party in revolting when they are able. This seems to me to be very lax in point of morals. It would be better I think to say, that the people who made the treaty should not recede from it. Their posterity, however, at some distance, cannot be supposed bound to unjust servitude by the deeds of their fathers.

Let us conclude this subject by a few remarks on the situation of neutral states.

1. Every state has a right, when others are contending, to remain neuter, and assist neither party.

2. They have a right to all their former privileges with both the contending parties—may carry on their traffic with both, and may show all the usual marks of friendship to both—only it has been generally agreed upon, that they are not to trade with any of them in certain articles supposed to be of consequence in carrying on war, particularly provisions and arms.

3. Neutral powers should keep their harbours alike open to both for common refreshment, and as an asylum to fly to. And it is held necessary that the contending powers must not carry on their quarrel, nor exercise any hostilities, within the territories of a neutral state.

4. Neutral states may purchase moveable goods from any of the contending parties, which have been taken from the other. But not so with respect to lands or forts, because if the other party are able, they will re-take their possessions.

5. Deeds of a violent possessor are held to be valid, that is to say, if a conqueror prevails for a time, and levies tribute from any country, and afterwards the rightful possessor prevails, it would be unjust to demand the tribute again, because the true owner was not able to give protection to the subjects, and what was paid was lost through his weakness. The same thing may be said of a dependent state; if it owes any money and service to a supreme state, and an enemy exact it by force, the proper creditor cannot justly demand it again.

On the whole, those things that have been generally received as the law of nature and nations,

are founded on the principles of equity, and, when well observed, do greatly promote general utility.

LECTURE XIV.

JURISPRUDENCE.

JURISPRUDENCE is the method of enacting and administering civil laws in any constitution.

We cannot propose to go through a system of civil laws, and therefore what I have in view is to make some preliminary remarks, and then to point out the *object* of civil laws, and the manner of their operation.

1. The first preliminary remark is, that a constitution is excellent, when the spirit of the civil laws is such as to have a tendency to prevent offences and make men good, as much as to punish them when they do evil.

This is necessary in some measure; for when the general disposition of a people is against the laws, they cannot long subsist, even by a strict and rigorous execution on the part of the rulers. There is however more of this in some constitutions than in others. Solon and Xenophon, as well as Lycurgus, seem to have formed their plan very much with this view, to direct the manners of the people in the first place, which will always make the observation of particular laws easy.

But how shall the magistrate manage this matter, or what can be done by law to make the people of any state virtuous? If, as we have seen above, virtue and piety are inseparably connected,

then to promote true religion is the best and most effectual way of making a virtuous and regular people. Love to God, and love to man, is the substance of religion; when these prevail, civil laws will have little to do.

But this leads to a very important disquisition, how far the magistrate ought to interfere in matters of religion. Religious sentiments are very various —and we have given it as one of the perfect rights in natural liberty, and which ought not to be alienated even in society, that every one should judge for himself in matters of religion.

What the magistrate may do on this subject seems to be confined to the three following particulars

(1.) The magistrate (or ruling part of any society) ought to encourage piety by his own example, and by endeavoring to make it an object of public esteem. Whenever the general opinion is in favour of any thing, it will have many followers. Magistrates may promote and encourage men of piety and virtue, and they may discountenance those whom it would be improper to punish.

(2.) The magistrate ought to defend the rights of conscience, and tolerate all in their religious sentiments that are not injurious to their neighbours. In the ancient heathen states there was less occasion for this, because in the system of polytheism the different gods and rites were not supposed to be opposite, but co-ordinate and consistent; but when there is believed to be but one God, the sentiments about his nature and worship will often be considered as essentially repugnant one to another.

The pretence of infidels, that persecution only

belongs to the Christian religion, is absurd; for the Christian was the first religion that was persecuted, and it was the necessary consequence of saying, that the gods of the heathens were no gods.

At present, as things are situated, one of the most important duties of the magistracy is to protect the rights of conscience.

It is commonly said, however, that in case any sect holds tenets subversive of society and inconsistent with the rights of others, that they ought not to be tolerated. On this footing Popery is not tolerated in Great Britain; because they profess entire subjection to a foreign power, the see of Rome; and therefore must be in opposition to the proper interest of their own state; and because violence or persecution for religion is a part of their religion, which makes their prosperity threaten ruin to others—as well as the principle imputed to them, which they deny, that faith is not to be kept with heretics. But however just this may be in a way of reasoning, we ought in general to guard against persecution on a religious account as much as possible, because such as hold absurd tenets are seldom dangerous. Perhaps they are never dangerous, but when they are oppressed. Papists are tolerated in Holland without danger to liberty. And though not properly tolerated, they are now connived at in Britain.

In ancient times, in great states, the sensorial power was found necessary to their continuance, which inspected the manners of men. It seems probable, that supporting the religious sects in modern times answers this end, for the particular

discipline of each sect is intended for the correction of manners.

(3.) The magistrate may enact laws for the punishment of acts of profanity and impiety. The different sentiments of men in religion ought not by any means to encourage or give a sanction to such acts as any of them count profane.

Many are of opinion that, besides all this, the magistrate ought to make public provision for the worship of God, in such manner as is agreeable to the great body of the society; though at the same time all who dissent from it are fully tolerated. And indeed there seems to be a good deal of reason for it, that so instruction may be provided for the bulk of common people, who would, many of them, neither support nor employ teachers, unless they were obliged. The magistrate's right, in this case, seems to be something like that of the parent, they have a right to instruct, but not to constrain.

2. The second preliminary remark is, that laws should be so framed as to promote such principles in general, as are favourable to good government, and particularly that principle, if there be one, that gave rise to the constitution, and is congenial to it.

Such a principle as I have in view, is generally the point of honour in a country, and this lawgivers and administrators of law should endeavour to preserve in its full vigour, for whenever it is under mined, the constitution goes to ruin.

Of these principles, sobriety, industry, and public spirit are the chief. Some states are formed to subsist by sobriety and parsimony, as the Lacedemonians.

Industry is the prevailing principle in others, as in Holland. Public spirit in others, as in Greece, ancient Rome, and Britain. Only public spirit may be diversified; sometimes it is a passion for acquiring glory and dominion, as in Rome, and sometimes for preserving liberty, as in Greece and Britain.

When I say, that in the management of a state the utmost attention should be given to the principle of the constitution, to preserve it in its vigour, I mean that though all other crimes are bad, and in part tend to the ruin of a state, yet this is much more the case with crimes against that principle than any other. Any act of immorality was bad at Sparta, but to make poverty and parsimony reproachful, and to introduce fine houses and furniture, and delicate entertainments, would have been instant ruin.

Any act of immorality would be hurtful in Holland, but to make fraudulent bankruptcy less infamous than it is would immediately destroy them.

Sobriety, industry, and public spirit, are nearly allied, and have a reciprocal influence upon one another. Yet there may be a great degree of some of them, in the absence of the others. In Sparta, there was much sobriety and public spirit, but little industry. In Athens, industry and public spirit, with very little parsimony.

In opposition to the whole of this, Mandeville wrote a book, called *The Fable of the Bees*, which seems to be levelled against sobriety, industry and public spirit, all at once; his position is, *that private vices are public benefits*, and that the waste

and luxury of one man supplies the wants of another; but it is easy to overthrow his reasoning, for though sober and industrious persons spend each less than a profuse person, yet sobriety and industry tend much more to population, and by that means they are mutually serviceable to each other. Luxury and vice only waste and destroy, they add nothing to the common stock of property or of happiness. Experience fully justifies this, for though from the luxury of one man another may reap some gain, the luxury of a nation always tends to the ruin of that nation.

3. A third preliminary remark is, that laws may be of two kinds, either written, or in the breasts of magistrates. In every constitution of note, there is something of each of these kinds. It is uncertain whether it is better to have many or few special laws. On the one hand, it seems to be the very spirit of a free constitution, to have every thing as strictly defined as possible, and to leave little in the power of the judge. But on the other hand, a multiplicity of laws is so apt to lead to litigation, and to end in ambiguity, that perhaps judges of equity, chosen by the district in which they live and are to act, and chosen but for a time, would be a more just and equitable method of ending differences. But the difficulty of settling a constitution so as always to secure the election of impartial judges, has made modern states, where there is liberty, prefer a multiplicity of written laws.

4 The last preliminary remark is, that no human constitution can be so formed, but that there must be exceptions to every law. So that there

may be in every nation oppression under form of law, according to the old maxim, summum jus summa injuria. This further shews the necessity of forming the manners of a people.

After having laid down these preliminaries, we may observe that the object of civil laws may be divided into the three following particulars.

1. To ratify the moral laws by the sanction of the society. The transgression of such laws are called *crimes*, as profanity, adultery, murder, calumny, &c. And they are prosecuted and punished by order of the public, according to the spirit of every constitution.

2. To lay down a plan for all contracts in the commerce or intercourse between man and man. To show when a contract is valid, and how to be proved. The transgressions of such laws are called *frauds*. They chiefly regard the acquisition, transmission, or alienation of property.

3. To limit and direct persons in the exercise of their own rights, and oblige them to show respect to the interfering rights of others. This contains the whole of what is called the police of a country.—And the transgression of such laws are called *trespasses*. A number of things in this view may become illegal, which before were not immoral.

Of the Sanction of the Moral Laws.

In all polished nations, there are punishments annexed to the transgression of the moral laws, whether against God, our neighbour, or ourselves; in the doing of which, the three following things are chiefly necessary.

(1.) To determine what crimes, and what degree of the same crime, are to be inquired into by the civil magistrate. It is of necessity that in a free state crimes should be precisely defined, that men may not be ignorantly or rashly drawn into them. There are degrees of every crime—profanity, impurity, violence, slander, that are blameable in point of morals, nay, even such as may fall under the discipline of a religious society—that if they were made cognizable by the civil magistrate, would multiply laws and trials beyond measure.

(2.) To appoint the methods of ascertaining the commission of crimes. This is usually by testimony, in which we are to consider the number and character of the witnesses. Generally through Christendom, and indeed most other parts of the world, two witnesses have been esteemed necessary to fix crimes upon an accused person; not but that the positive evidence of one person of judgment and untainted character is, in many cases, sufficient to gain belief, and often stronger than two of unknown or doubtful credit, but it was necessary to lay down some rule, and two are required to guard against the danger of hired evidence, and to give an opportunity of trying how they agree together. To have required more would have made a proof difficult or impossible in many cases.

It seems to be a maxim in law, and founded on reason, that in the case of what are called occult crimes, such as murder, adultery, forgery, and some others, where the nature of the thing shows that there must be a penury of evidence, they sometimes content themselves with fewer

witnesses, if there are corroborating circumstances to strengthen their testimony.

It seems to be a matter not easily decided, whether it be agreeable to reason and justice, in the case of very atrocious crimes, that on account of the *atrocity*, *less* evidence should be sufficient for conviction, or that *more* should be required. On the one hand, the more atrocious the crime, the greater the hurt to society, and the more need of public vengeance. On the other hand, the more atrocious the crime, and the heavier the punishment, it seems agreeable to justice that the conviction should be upon the more unquestioned evidence. Lawyers are seen to take their common places, sometimes the one way, sometimes the other. It is often thought that in practice, less evidence is sufficient to convict a man of murder, forgery, rape, and other crimes of a deep dye. But I am persuaded that the appearance is owing to the greater and more general eagerness to discover the perpetrators of such crimes. Others are suffered to escape more easily, not that more evidence is necessary, but that it is more difficult to get at the evidence.

Evidence may be distinguished into two kinds, *direct* and *circumstantial*. Direct evidence is when the witnesses swear to their sight or knowledge of the accused committing the crime. Circumstantial, when they only swear to certain facts, which cannot be supposed to have existed unless the crime had been committed. As a man found dead —another found near the place—with a weapon bloody,—or clothes bloody, &c. Some have affirmed that circumstantial evidence is stronger than

direct, but it must be taken with very great caution and judgment.

(3.) The law is to proportion and appoint the punishment due to every crime when proven.

Punishment in all regular states is taken wholly out of the hands of the injured persons, and committed to the magistrate, though in many or most cases the injured party is suffered to join the magistrate in the prosecution, and to have a certain claim, by way of reparation, as far as that is practicable.

Therefore the punishment in general must consist of two parts, (1.) reparation to the sufferer, (2.) the vindicta publica, which has sometimes two ends in view, to be an example to others, and to reclaim and reform the offender, as in corporal punishment less than death. Sometimes but one, the good of others in the example, as in capital punishments, and banishment.

The kind of punishment, and the degree, is left wholly to different lawgivers, and the spirit of different constitutions. Public utility is the rule. Punishment is not always proportioned to the atrociousness of the crime in point of morals, but to the frequency of it, and the danger of its prevailing.

Some nations require, and some will bear greater severity in punishments than others.

The same or similar conduct often produces opposite effects. Severe laws and severe punishments, sometimes banish crimes but very often the contrary. When laws are very sanguinary, it often makes the subjects hate the law more than they fear it, and the transition is very easy, from hating the law to hating those who are entrusted

with the execution of it. Such a state of things threatens insurrections and convulsions, if not the dissolution of a government.

Another usual effect of excessive severity in laws is, that they are not put in execution. The public is not willing to lend its aid to the discovery and conviction of offenders; so that in time the law itself becomes a mere brutum fulmen, and loses its authority.

I may make one particular remark, that though many things are copied from the law of Moses into the laws of the modern nations, yet, so far as I know, none of them have introduced the lex talionis in the case of injuries, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, &c. and yet perhaps there are many instances in which it would be very proper. The equity of the punishment would be quite manifest, and probably it would be as effectual a restraint from the commission of injury, as any that could be chosen.

The concluding remark shall be, that it is but seldom that very severe and sanguinary laws are of service to the good order of a state; but after laws have been fixed with as much equity and moderation as possible, the execution of them should be strict and rigorous. Let the laws be *just*, and the magistrate *inflexible*.

LECTURE XV.

THE second object of civil laws being to regulate the making of contracts, and the whole

intercourse between man and man, relating to the acquisition, possession and alienation of property, we must consider carefully the nature of

Contracts.

A contract is a stipulation between two parties, before at liberty, to make some alteration of property, or to bind one or both parties to the performance of some service.

Contracts are absolutely necessary in social life. Every transaction almost may be considered as a contract, either more or less explicit.

The principal thing which constitutes a contract is, *consent*. But in some kinds of contracts, viz. the gratuitous, the consent of the receiver is presumed. In the transmission of estates by donation or testament this is presumed—and those who are incapable of giving their consent, through infancy, may notwithstanding acquire property and rights. When a man comes into a settled country and purchases property, he is supposed, besides every other part of the bargain, to purchase it under such conditions, and subject himself to such laws, as are in force in that country.

Contracts are said to be of three degrees in point of fulness and precision—(1.) A simple affirmation of a design as to futurity—as when I say to any one that I shall go to such a place to-morrow: this is not properly binding, and it is supposed that many things may occur to make me alter my resolution—yet a frequent alteration of professed purposes gives the character of levity; therefore a prudent man will be cautious of de-

claring his purposes till he is well determined. (2.) A gratuitous promise of doing some favour to me. This is not made binding in law, nor does it usually convey a perfect right, because it supposes that the person who was the object of goodwill may, by altering his behaviour, forfeit his title to it, or that the person promising may find it much more inconvenient, costly, or hurtful to himself, than he supposed; or, lastly, that what was intended as a service, if performed, appears plainly to be an injury. In the last case every one must see, that it cannot be binding; but in the two former, I apprehend that in all ordinary cases a distant promise is binding in conscience, though it may not be necessary to make it binding in law. I say all ordinary cases, because it is easy to figure a case in which I may make a promise to another, and such circumstances may afterwards occur as I am quite confident, if the person knew, he would not hold me to my promise.

3. The third degree is a complete contract, with consent on both sides, and obligation upon one or both.

The essentials of a contract, which render it valid, and any of which being wanting, it is void, are as follow:

That it be, (1.) Free. (2.) Mutual. (3.) Possible. (4.) Careful. (5.) With a capable person. (6.) Formal.

First. It must be free. Contracts made by unjust force are void always in law, and sometimes in conscience. It must however be unjust force, because in treaties of peace between nations, as we have seen before, force does not void the con-

tract; and even in private life sometimes men are forced to enter into contracts by the order of a magistrate, sometimes by the threatening of legal prosecution, which does not make them void.

2. They must be mutual, that is, the consent of the one as well as that of the other must be had. Contracts in this view become void, either by fraud on one side, or by essential error. If any man contrives a contract so as to bind the other party, and keep himself free, this fraud certainly nullifies the agreement—or if there is an essential error in the person or the thing, as if a person should oblige himself to one man, supposing him to be another.

3. Contracts should be of things evidently possible, and probably in our power. Contracts, by which men oblige themselves to do things impossible, are no doubt void from the beginning; but if the impossibility was known to the contracting party, it must have been either absurd or fraudulent. When things engaged for become impossible by the operation of Providence, without a man's own fault, the contract is void, and he is guiltless—as if a man should covenant to deliver at a certain place and time a number of cattle, and when he is almost at the place of destination they should be killed by thunder, or any other accident, out of his power.

4. Contracts must be of things lawful. All engagements to do things unlawful are from the beginning void; but by unlawful must be understood the violation of perfect rights. If a man oblige himself for a reward to commit murder, or any kind of fraud, the engagement is void; but it was criminal in the transacting, and the reward

ought to be returned, or given to public uses. There are many contracts, however, which are very blameable in making, that must, notwithstanding, be kept, and must not be made void in law—as rash and foolish bargains, where there was no fraud on the other side. If such were to be voided, great confusion would be introduced. The cases of this kind are numerous, and may be greatly diversified.

5. Contracts must be made with a capable person, that is to say, of age, understanding, at liberty, &c. It is part of the civil law, or rather municipal law, of every country, to fix the time of life when persons are supposed capable of transacting their own affairs. Some time must be fixed, otherwise it would occasion numberless disputes, difficult to be decided. A man at the age of fourteen, and a woman at twelve, may choose guardians, who can alienate their property, and at the age of twenty-one they have their estates wholly in their own hand.

6. Contracts must be formal.

The laws of every country limit a great many circumstances of the nature, obligation, extent, and duration of contracts.

Having pointed out something of the essential characters of all lawful contracts; I observe, they may be divided two different ways, (1) contracts are either absolute or conditional. The absolute are such as are suspended upon no condition, but such as are essential to every contract, which have been mentioned above. Such as when a person makes a settlement upon another, without reserve, then, whether he behave well or ill, whether it be

convenient or inconvenient, it must be fulfilled. Conditional contracts are those that are suspended on any uncertain future contingency, or some performance by the opposite party. Of this last sort are almost all transactions in the way of commerce,—which leads to the (2) way of dividing contracts, into beneficent and onerous. The first is when one freely brings himself under an obligation to bestow any favour or do any service, as donations or legacies, and undertaking the office of guardian of another person's estate.

The onerous contract is when an equal value is supposed to be given on both sides, as is the case for the most part in the alienation of property—and the transactions between man and man, and between society and society.

To this place belongs the question about the lawfulness of lending money upon interest. If we consider money as an instrument of commerce, and giving an opportunity of making profit, there seems plainly to be nothing unjust, that the lender should share in the advantage arising from his own property.

The chief thing necessary is, that the state or governing part of the society should settle the rate of interest, and not suffer it to depend upon the necessity of the poor or the covetousness of the rich. If it is not settled by law, usury will be the certain consequence.

The law of Moses does not seem to have admitted the taking of interest at all from an Israelite. It is thought, however, that the main reason of this must have been drawn from something in their

constitution, as a state that rendered it improper, for if it had been in itself immoral, they would not have been permitted to take it of strangers.

Of the Marks or Signs of Contracts.

All known and intelligent marks of consent are the signs and means of compleating contracts. The chief of these however are words and writing, as being found the most easy and useful. Words are of all others the most natural and proper for giving immediate consent, and writing to perpetuate the memory of the transaction. There are however many other signs that may be made use of, and wherever there is a real purpose of signifying our intention, by which others are brought to depend upon it, the engagement is real, and we are bound in conscience, though the law in every country must of necessity be more limited. The whole rests ultimately on the obligation to sincerity in the social life.

This obligation arises from the testimony of conscience, and from the manifest utility and even necessity of sincerity to social intercourse.

Signs are divided into *natural*, *instituted*, and *customary*. Natural signs are those which have either a real likeness to the thing signified, or such a known and universal relation to it, that all men must naturally be led from the one to the other—as a picture is a natural sign, because a representation of the thing painted. An inflamed sullen countenance and fiery eyes are natural signs of anger, because they are the universal effects of that passion.

Instituted signs are those that have no other

connexion with the thing signified, than what has been made by agreement; as if two persons shall agree between themselves, that if the one wants to signify to the other at a distance, that he wishes him to come to his assistance, he will kindle a fire upon a certain hill, or hang out a flag upon a certain pinnacle of his house, or some part of his ship. Words and writing are properly instituted signs, for they have no relation to the thing signified but what original agreement and long custom has given them.

Customary signs are no other than instituted signs which have long prevailed, and whose institution has either been accidental or has been forgotten. It is also usual to apply the word customary to such signs as depend upon the mode and fashion of particular countries. There are some signs and postures, which though they may seem perfectly arbitrary, have obtained very generally, perhaps universally, as bending down the body, or prostration, as a sign of respect and reverence; kneeling, and lifting up the hands, as a sign of submission and supplication.—Perhaps both these are natural, as they put the person into the situation least capable of resistance.

Sometimes there is a mixture of natural and instituted signs, as if a man sends a pair of wings, or the figure of them, to a friend, to intimate his danger and the necessity of flying.

In the use of signs, the great rule of sincerity is, that wherever we are bound, and wherever we profess to communicate our intention, we ought to use the signs in the least ambiguous manner possible. When we have no intention, and are

under no obligation to communicate any thing to others, it is of small moment what appearances are; it is their business not to make any unnecessary or uncertain inferences. A light in a house, in the middle of the night, will perhaps suggest most probably, to a traveller accidentally passing, that there is somebody sick in that house; yet perhaps it is extraordinary study or business that keeps some person awake.

Nay, when there is no obligation to give, nor any reason for the party to expect true information, it is held generally no crime at all, to use such signs as we have reason to suppose will be mistaken; as when one who does not desire to be disturbed keeps his chamber close shut, that people may conclude he is not there. When a general of an army puts a fire in the camp, to conceal his march or retreat. And probably none would think it faulty, when there was an apprehension of thieves, to keep a light burning in a chamber, to lead them to suppose the whole family is not at rest.

There are some who place in the same rank, evasive phrases, when there is an apparent intention to speak our mind, but no right in the other to obtain it. Such expressions may be strictly true, and yet there is all probability that the hearer will misunderstand them. As if one should ask if a person was in any house, and should receive for answer, he went away yesterday morning, when perhaps he returned the same evening. I look upon these evasions, however, as very doubtful, and indeed rather not to be chosen, because they seem to contain a profession of telling our real mind.

Some mention ironical speech as an exception to the obligation to sincerity. But it is properly no objection at all, because there is no deception. Truth lies not in the words themselves, but in the use of them as signs. Therefore, if a man speak his words in such a tone and manner as the hearer immediately conceives they are to be taken in an opposite sense, and does really take them in the sense the speaker means them, there is no falsehood at all.

Mr. Hutchinson, and some others, allow a voluntary intended departure from truth, on occasion of some great necessity for a good end. This I apprehend is wrong, for we cannot but consider deception as in itself base and unworthy, and therefore a good end cannot justify it. Besides, to suppose it were in men's power on a sufficient occasion to violate truth, would greatly destroy its force in general, and its use in the social life.

There are two sorts of falsehood, which, because no doubt they are less aggravated than malicious interested lies, many admit of, but I think without sufficient reason.

(1) Jocular lies, when there is a real deception intended, but not in any thing material, nor intended to continue long. However harmless these may seem, I reckon they are to be blamed, because it is using too much freedom with so sacred a thing as truth. And very often such persons, as a righteous punishment in Providence, are left to proceed further, and either to carry their folly to such excess, as to become contemptible, or to go beyond folly into malice.

(2) Officious lies, telling falsehoods to children or sick persons, for their good. These very seldom answer the end that is proposed. They lessen the reverence for truth; and, particularly with regard to children, are exceedingly pernicious, for as they must soon be discovered, they lose their force, and teach them to deceive. Truth and authority are methods infinitely preferable, in dealing with children, as well as with persons of riper years.

LECTURE XVI.

OF OATHS AND VOWS.

AMONG the signs and appendages of contracts, are oaths and vows.

An oath is an appeal to God, the searcher of hearts, for the truth of what we say, and always expresses or supposes an imprecation of his judgment upon us, if we prevaricate.

An oath therefore implies a belief in God, and his Providence, and indeed is an act of worship, and so accounted in Scripture, as in that expression, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt swear by his name.* Its use in human affairs is very great, when managed with judgment. It may be applied, and indeed has been commonly used (1) in the contracts of independent states, who have no common earthly superior. In ancient times it was usual always to close national treaties by mutual oaths. This form is not so common in modern times, yet the substance remains; for

an appeal is always supposed to be made to God, against the breach of public faith.

(2.) It has been adopted by all nations, in their administration of justice, in order to discover truth. The most common and universal application of it has been to add greater solemnity to the testimony of witnesses. It is, also sometimes made use of with the parties themselves, for conviction or purgation. The laws of every country point out the cases in which oaths are required or admitted in public judgment. It is, however, lawful and in common practice, for private persons, voluntarily, on solemn occasions, to confirm what they say, by oath. Persons entering on public offices are also often obliged to make oath, that they will faithfully execute their trust.

Oaths are commonly divided into two kinds, *assertory* and *promissory*—Those called *purgatory* fall under the first of these divisions. There is perhaps little necessity for a division of oaths, for they do not properly stand by themselves; they are confirmations and appendages of contracts, and intended as an additional security for sincerity, in the commerce between man and man.

Therefore oaths are subject to all the same regulations as contracts; or rather oaths are only lawful, when they are in aid or confirmation of a lawful contract. What therefore voids the one, will void the other, and nothing else. A contract otherwise unlawful, cannot be made binding by an oath: but there must be a very great caution used not to make any unlawful contract, much less to confirm it by an oath.

It is easy to see the extreme absurdity of our being obliged to fulfil a criminal engagement by oath, for it would imply, that out of reverence to God we ought to break his commands; but nothing can be more abominable, than the principle of those who think they may safely take an unlawful oath, because it is not binding: this is aggravating gross injustice by deliberate profanity.

I have said that oaths are appendages to all lawful contracts; but in assertory oaths, which are only confirmations of our general obligation to sincerity, it is necessary not only that what we say be true, but that the occasion be of sufficient moment to require or justify a solemn appeal to God. Swearing on common occasions is unnecessary, rash, profane, and destructive of the solemnity of an oath and its real use.

From the general rule laid down, that oaths are lawful when applied to lawful contracts, it will follow that they become unlawful only, when the fulfilling of them would be violating a perfect right; but perhaps an additional observation is necessary here. Contracts must be fulfilled, when they violate an imperfect right; whereas some oaths may be found criminal and void, though they are only contrary to imperfect rights: as for example, some persons bind themselves rashly by oath, that they will never speak to or forgive their children, who have offended them. This is so evidently criminal, that nobody will plead for its being obligatory, and yet it is but the violation of an imperfect right. The same persons, however, might in many ways alienate their property to the prejudice of their children, by contracts which the law would oblige them to fulfil.

In vows there is no party but God and the person himself who makes the vow: for this reason, Mr. Hutchinson relaxes their obligation very much.—Supposing any person had solemnly vowed to give a certain part of his substance to public, or pious uses, he says, if he finds it a great inconvenience to himself or family, he is not bound; this I apprehend is too lax. Men ought to be cautious in making such engagements; but I apprehend that when made, if not directly criminal, they ought to be kept.

Of the use of Symbols in Contracts.

Besides promises and oaths, there is sometimes in contracts a use of other visible signs called symbols; the most common among us are signing and sealing a written deed. There is also, in some places, the delivery of earth and stone in making over land—and sundry others. In ancient times it was usual to have solemn symbols in all treaties—mutual gifts—sacrifices—feasts—setting up pillars—The intention of all such things, whenever and wherever they have been practised, is the same. It is to ascertain and keep up the memory of the transaction. They were more frequent and solemn in ancient times than now, because before the invention of writing they were more necessary.

Of the Value of Property.

Before we finish the subject of contracts, it may be proper to say a little of the nature and value of property, which is the subject of them. Nothing has any real value unless it be of some use

in human life, or perhaps we may say, unless it is supposed to be of use, and so becomes the object of human desire—because at particular times, and in particular places, things of very little real importance acquire a value, which is commonly temporary and changeable. Shells and baubles are of great value in some places; perhaps there are some more baubles highly valued in every place.

But though it is their use in life that gives things their value in general, it does not follow that those things that are of most use and necessity, are therefore of greatest value as property, or in commerce. Air and water, perhaps we may add fire, are of the greatest use and necessity; but they are also in greatest plenty, and therefore are of little value as a possession or property. Value is in proportion to the plenty of any commodity, and the demand for it. The one taken in the inverse, and the other in the direct proportion.

Hence it follows that money is of no real value. It is not wealth properly, but the sign of it, and in a fixed state of society the certain means of procuring it. In early times, traffic was carried on by exchange of goods—but being large, not easily divided or transported, they became very troublesome. Therefore it soon became necessary to fix upon some sign of wealth, to be a standard by which to rate different commodities.

Any thing that is fit to answer the purpose of a common sign of wealth must have the following properties: It must be (1) valuable, that is, have an intrinsic commercial value, and rare, otherwise it could have no comparative value at all. (2.) Durable, otherwise it could not pass from

hand to hand. (3.) Divisible, so that it might be in larger or smaller quantities as are required. (4.) Portable, it must not be of great size, otherwise it would be extremely inconvenient.

Gold and silver were soon found to have all these properties, and therefore are fixed upon as the sign of wealth. But besides being the sign of the value of other commodities, they themselves are also matters of commerce, and therefore increase or decrease in their value by their plenty or scarceness.

It may seem to belong to the ruling part of any society to fix the value of gold and silver, as signs of the value of commodities—and no doubt they do fix it nominally in their dominions. But in this they are obliged to be strictly attentive to the value of these metals as a commodity, from their plenty or scarceness, otherwise their regulations will be of little force—other nations will pay no regard to the nominal value of any particular country, and even in internal commerce, the subject would fix a value upon the signs according to their plenty.

It is as prejudicial to commerce to make the nominal value of the coin of any country too small as too great.

We shall close this part of the subject by speaking a little of the

Rights of Necessity, and common Rights.

These are certain powers assumed both by private persons and communities, which are supposed to be authorised by the necessity of the

case, and supported by the great law of reason.

There will remain a great number of cases in which those rights of necessity are to be used, even in the best regulated civil society, and after the most mature deliberation and foresight of probable events, and provision for them by specific laws.

Were a man perishing with hunger, and denied food by a person who could easily afford it him, here the rights of necessity would justify him in taking it by violence. Were a city on fire, and the blowing up of an house would save the far greater part, though the owner was unwilling, men would think themselves justified in doing it, whether he would or not. Much more would men, in cases of urgent necessity, make free with the property of others, without asking their consent, but presuming upon it.

In our own government, where, by the love of liberty general among the people, and the nature of the constitutions, as many particulars have been determined by special laws as in any government in the world—yet instances of the rights of necessity occur every day. If I see one man rob another upon the highway, or am informed of it, if I have courage and ability I pursue the robber, and apprehend him without any warrant, and carry him before a magistrate, to get a warrant for what I have already done. Nothing is more common in Britain than to force people to sell their inheritance, or a part of it, to make a road or street strait or commodious. In this instance it is not so much necessity as great utility.

The question of the greatest moment here is, whether the establishing these rights of necessity does not derogate from the perfection and immutability of the moral laws. If it be true, that we may break in upon the laws of justice for the sake of utility, is not this admitting the exploded maxim, that we may do evil that good may come. I answer, that these rights of necessity have in general property as their object, or at most the life of particular persons—and it seems to be inseparable from the establishment of property in the social state, that our property is to be held only in such manner, and to such a degree, as to be both consistent with, and subservient to, the good of others. And therefore these extraordinary cases are agreeable to the tacit or implied conditions of the social contract.

In rights of necessity we are to consider not only the present good or evil, but for all time to come, and particularly the safety or danger of the example. Where the repetition of the thing in similar circumstances would have a fatal effect, it ought not to be done. If a city were under all the miseries of famine, and a ship or two should arrive with grain, the owner of which would not sell it but at a most exorbitant price, perhaps equity might admit that they should be compelled; but if any such thing were done, it would prevent others from going near that place again.

It would be of no consequence to determine these rights of necessity by law. If the law described circumstantially what might be done, it would be no longer a right of necessity, but a legal right. To forbid them by law would be either

ineffectual, or it would abolish them altogether, and deprive the society of the benefit of them when the cases should occur. Things done by the rights of necessity are by supposition illegal, and if the necessity does not excuse, the person who pretends them may be punished. If I am aiding in pulling down a man's house on pretence of stopping a fire, if he afterwards makes it appear that there was not the least occasion for it, or that I, being his enemy, took the opportunity of this pretence to injure him, he will obtain reparation.

As property, or at most life, is concerned in the rights of necessity—still the moral laws continue in force. Whatever expresses an evil disposition of mind does not fall under the rule, because it can never be necessary to the doing of any good. The pretence of its being necessary in some cases is generally chimerical, and even were it real, the necessity could not justify the crime—as suppose a robber very profane should threaten a man with death, unless he would blaspheme God or curse his parents, &c.

There are certain things called common rights, which the public is supposed to have over every member: the chief of them are (1) diligence. As a man must eat, the community have a right to compel him to be useful—and have a right to make laws against suicide. (2.) They have a right to the discovery of useful inventions, provided an adequate price be paid to the discoverer. (3.) They have a right to insist upon such things as belong to the dignity of human nature. Thus all nations pay respect to dead bodies, though there is no other reason for it but that we cannot help associ-

ating with the body, even dead, the ideas which arise from it, and belonged to the whole person when alive.

3. The third and last object of civil laws is, limiting citizens in the exercise of their rights, so that they may not be injurious to one another, but that the public good may be promoted.

This includes the giving directions in what way arts and commerce may be carried on, and in some states extends as far as the possessions of private persons.

It includes the whole of what is called the police of a community—the manner of travelling, building, marketing, time and manner of holding all sorts of assemblies—In arts and commerce, particularly, the police shows its power.

It will only be necessary here to make a few remarks on the nature and spirit of those laws.

1. Those things in themselves are arbitrary, and mutable, for there is no morality in them but what arises from common utility. We may sometimes do things in a way better than that appointed by law, and yet it is not allowed.

2. Men in general have but a very light sense of the malignity of transgressing these laws, such as running of goods, breaking over a fence, &c.

3. In the best constitutions some sanctions are appointed for the breach of these laws. Wherever a state is founded upon the principles of liberty, such laws are made with severity, and executed with strictness.

Finally, a man of real probity and virtue adopts these laws as a part of his duty to God and the society, and is subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

RECAPITULATION.

Having gone through the three general divisions of this subject, Ethics, Politics, and Jurisprudence, I shall conclude with a few remarks upon the whole, and mention to you the chief writers, who have distinguished themselves in this branch of science.

1. You may plainly perceive both how extensive and how important moral philosophy is. As to extent, each of the divisions we have gone through might have been treated at far greater length. Nor would it be unprofitable to enter into a fuller disquisition of many points; but this must be left to every scholar's inclination and opportunities in future life. Its importance is manifest from this circumstance, that it not only points out personal duty, but is related to the whole business of active life. The languages, and even mathematical and natural knowledge, are but hard words to this superior science.

2. The evidence which attends moral disquisitions is of a different kind from that which attends mathematics and natural philosophy; but it remains as a point to be discussed, whether it is more uncertain or not. At first sight it appears that authors differ much more, and more essentially, on the principles of moral than natural philosophy. Yet perhaps a time may come when men, treating moral philosophy as Newton and his successors have done natural, may arrive at greater precision. It is always safer in our reasonings to trace facts upwards, than to reason downwards, upon metaphysical principles. An attempt has

been lately made by Beatty, in his Essay on Truth, to establish certain impressions of common sense as axioms and first principles of all our reasonings on moral subjects.

3. The differences about the nature of virtue are not in fact so great as they appear: they amount to nearly the same thing in the issue, when the particulars of a virtuous life come to be enumerated.

4. The different foundations of virtue are many of them not opposite or repugnant to each other, but parts of one great plan—as benevolence and self-love, &c. They all conspire to found real virtue: the authority of God—the dictates of conscience—public happiness and private interest, all coincide.

5. There is nothing certain or valuable in moral philosophy, but what is perfectly coincident with the scripture, where the glory of God is the first principle of action, arising from the subjection of the creature—where the good of others is the great object of duty, and our own interest the necessary consequence.

In the first dawn of philosophy, men began to write and dispute about virtue. The great inquiry among the ancients was, what was the *summum bonum?* by which it seems they took it for granted, that virtue and happiness were the same thing. The chief combatants here were the stoics and epicureans. The first insisted that virtue was the summum bonum, that pleasure was no good, and pain no evil: the other said that the summum bonum consisted in pleasure, or rather that pleasure was virtue: the academics and Platonists went a middle way between these.

I am not sensible that there is any thing among the ancients, that wholly corresponds with the modern dispute upon the foundation of virtue.

Since the disputes arose in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, some of the most considerable authors, chiefly British, are, Leibnitz, his Theodicee, and his letters. Clark's demonstration, and his letters. Hutchinson's inquiries into the ideas of beauty and virtue, and his system. Wollaston's religion of nature delineated. Collins on human liberty. Nettleton on virtue and happiness. David Hume's essays. Lord Kaims's essays. Smith's theory of moral sentiments. Reed's inquiry. Balfour's delineation of morality. Butler's analogy and sermons. Balguy's tracts. Theory of agreeable sensations, from the French. Beatty on truth. Essay on virtue and harmony.

To these may be added the whole deistical writers, and the answers written to each of them in particular, a brief account of which may be seen in Leland's view of the deistical writers.

Some of the chief writers upon government and politics are, Grotius, Puffendorf, Barberac, Cumberland, Selden, Burlamaqui, Hobbes, Machiavel, Harrington, Locke, Sydney, and some late books; Montesquieu's spirit of laws; Ferguson's history of civil society; Lord Kaims's political essays; Grandeur and decay of the Roman empire; Montague's rise and fall of ancient republics; Goguet's rise and progress of laws, arts and sciences.

John Aikin's

LECTURES

ON

ELOQUENCE.

GENTLEMEN,

WE are now to enter on the study of eloquence, or as perhaps it ought to be called, from the manner in which you will find it treated, Composition, Taste and Criticism.

Eloquence is undoubtedly a very noble art, and when possessed in a high degree, has been, I think, in all ages, one of the most admired and envied talents. It has not only been admired in all ages, but, if I am not mistaken, among all ranks. Its power is universally felt, and therefore probably the talent more universally esteemed, than either genius, or improvement in several other kinds of human excellence. Military skill and political wisdom, have their admirers, but far inferior in number to those who admire, envy, or would wish to imitate, him that has the power of persuasion.

Plato, in his republic, or idea of a well regulated state, has banished orators, under pretence that their power over the minds of men is dangerous

and liable to abuse. Some moderns have adopted the same sentiments.

Sir Thomas More, in his Utopia I believe, (though I am not certain) has embraced it. But this is a manner of thinking and reasoning altogether superficial. It would militate equally against all cultivation of the mind, and indeed against every human excellence, natural and acquired. They are, and have been, and may be abused, by men of vicious dispositions. But how shall this be prevented? It is impossible. How shall it be counteracted? Only by assisting the good in the cultivation of their powers, and then the same weapons will be used in defence of truth and virtue, with much greater advantage than they can be in support of falsehood and vice. Learning in general, possessed by a bad man, is unspeakably pernicious, and that very thing has sometimes made weak people speak against learning; but it is just as absurd, as if in the confines of a country exposed to hostile inroads the inhabitants should say, we will build no forts for protection, because if the enemy get into possession of them they will become the means of annoyance; we will use no arms for defence, for if the enemy take them from us, they will be turned against us.

Perhaps it may be proper to take notice of what the apostle Paul says, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, in several places, particularly from the beginning of the 2d chapter, "and I brethren," &c. and in the 4th chap. 11 verse, "And my speech, and my preaching was not," &c. I have mentioned this, to prevent any of you mistaking or being prejudiced against the subject, and shall

observe upon it, that the meaning of the apostle, in this and other similar passages, is fully comprehended in one or more of the following particulars. (1) That he came not to the Corinthians with an artful delusive eloquence, such as the sophists of these days made use of to varnish over their foolish sentiments. (2) That he came not to show his skill in speaking for and against any thing, as many of them did, not to discover or communicate truth, but to display their own talents. (3) That the truths he had to communicate needed no ornaments to set them off, and were not by any means adapted to the proud spirit of the world: and, (4) that he would use the greatest self-denial, and not by any means attempt to recommend himself as a man of ability and learning, but content himself with the humble and simple doctrine of the cross. And the truth is, after the highest improvement in the art of speaking, there must be the greatest reserve and self-denial in the use of it, otherwise it will defeat its own purpose. Rhetoricians do usually give it among the very precepts of the art, to appear to be in earnest, and to have the subject or the interest of the audience at heart, and not their own fame; and this can never be attained to so great perfection as when there is the humility of a true disciple, and the disinterested zeal of a faithful minister of Christ. That this is not contrary to the most diligent application for the improvement of our powers is manifest in itself, and appears from the many exhortations of the same apostle to his young disciples, Timothy and Titus, 1 Tim.

iv. 13. " till I come, give attendance," &c. and v. 15. " meditate," &c.

I know not whether any apology is necessary for my undertaking to speak on this subject, or the manner of treating it. Some may expect that discourses on eloquence should be distinguished examples of the art of which they treat. Such may just be pleased to observe, that a cool, plain, and simple manner of speaking is necessary in teaching this, as well as every other art. No doubt, a justness and precision of expression will be of great benefit in these discourses, but there will be no need of that high and complete polish, that might be expected in what is prepared for publication. Nor would the same brevity and conciseness be any advantage to discourses once delivered, that would be reckoned a beauty in what is in every body's hands, and therefore may be often read.

Before entering on the strict and methodical discussion of the subject, I have commonly begun the course by two or three preliminary discourses, containing such general observations as may be most intelligible, and may serve to prepare the way for what shall be afterwards introduced.

The subject of the first preliminary discourse shall be the following question; whether does art or nature contribute most to the production of a complete orator?

This is a question often asked, and many things have been said upon it; yet to discuss it as a matter of controversy, and adduce the arguments on each side, in order to a decision in favour of the one, and prejudice of the other, I take to be of ve-

ry little consequence, or rather improper and absurd. It seems to be just as if one should propose an inquiry, whether the soil, the climate, or the culture, contributes most to the production of the crop? Therefore, instead of treating the question as if one side of it were true, and the other false, I shall make a few observations on the mutual influence of nature and art, in order to your forming just apprehensions of the subject, and to direct you in your future conduct and studies.

1. Some degree of natural capacity is evidently necessary to the instruction or study of this art, in order to produce any effect. A skilful labourer may subdue a very stubborn, or meliorate a very poor soil; but when there is no soil at all, as on a bare and solid rock, his labour would be impossible or fruitless. There must therefore doubtless be some capacity, in general, and even some turn for this very branch of knowledge. In this sense it is true of every other art, as well as oratory, a man must be born to it.

There are some so destitute of oratorical powers, that nothing can possibly be made of them. It will be strange, however, if this is not easily discovered by themselves, and if it does not make the study as unpleasant as it is difficult, so that they will speedily give it over. I have known some examples, but very few, of ministers, whose principal defect was mere barrenness of invention. This is exceedingly rare, because the far greatest number of bad speakers have enough to say, such as it is, and generally the more absurd and incoherent, the greater the abundance.

When speaking on this observation, I must make one remark, that a total want of capacity for one branch of science is not inconsistent even with a great capacity for another. We sometimes see great mathematicians who make miserable orators. Nay it is reckoned by some of the best judges that this study is unfriendly to oratory. The definite precision of mathematical ideas, which may all be ultimately referred to mensuration, seems to be contrary to the freedom and boldness of imagination, in which the strength of oratory lies. There are, however, exceptions to this in fact. Dr. Clark and Dr. Barrow, two of the most eminent mathematicians of the last age, were also eminent orators, that is to say, the first was a very accurate writer, the other a very fervent preacher.

I have only further to observe, that many have thought academical teaching not to be favourable to oratory; that is to say, those who are accustomed to the cool dispassionate manner of speaking, usual and necessary in the instruction of youth, frequently lose a good deal of that fire and impetuosity which they might naturally possess, and which is of so much importance in speaking to a large and promiscuous assembly.

2. To make what is called a complete orator, very great natural powers are necessary, and great cultivation too. The truth is, when we speak of a complete orator, we generally form an idea of perfection superior to any thing that ever existed, by assembling together all the excellencies of every kind that have been seen in different persons, or that we are able, from what we have seen, to

form an imagination of. We can easily enumerate many of these; for example, great penetration of mind—great literature and extensive knowledge —a strong and lively imagination reined in by a correctness of judgment, a rich invention, and retentive memory, tenderness and sensibility of affection, an acquaintance with the world, and a thorough knowledge of the human heart. To these we must add all external perfections, an open countenance, a graceful carriage, a clear articulate strong melodious voice. There is not one of these but is capable of great improvement by application and study, as well as by much practice. In all the great orators of whom we read, there appears to have been an union of natural talents and acquired skill, Pericles, Demosthenes, Cicero, Hortentius. To these you may add all the speakers mentioned by Cicero and Quintilian, taking their talents and performances to have been as related by these authors.

3. Perhaps the most extraordinary appearances in this, as well as in other branches, have been from nature wholly, or but with little study. These spontaneous productions are as so many progies. It is commonly believed that the orators and sages, at the first formation of society, were more powerful in their elocution than in more polished times. This, however, I am apt to think, is in some degree founded on a mistake. There might be more extraordinary effects of eloquence, because the ignorant or superstitious herd were then more easily moved, but this was as much owing to the state of the audience, as the power of the speakers. The same fire, that would burn a heap of dry brush, would not make any impression upon

a heap of green logs. It might also be owing to another circumstance, which I shall have occasion afterwards to explain more fully, the narrowness of language, and the use of figures, which have so great an effect upon the imagination.

But allowing very great force to uncultivated prodigies of genius in every kind, I am apt to think it is less powerful, comparatively speaking, in oratory than in poetry. It has been an old saying, Poeta nascitur, & non fit. There are two reasons why the poetry of nature, without art, seems to be so much admired. 1. That in such a poet a strong unbounded fancy must be the prevailing character, and this is what chiefly captivates the mind. It must be a very strong inward impulse that induces a man to become a poet, without example, and without instruction. 2. It is found in fact that the knowledge of the rules of art some how cramps and deters the mind, and restrains that boldness, or happy extravagance, that gives such general delight. It is an observation of an ingenious author, that in no polished nation, after the rules of criticism were fully settled and generally understood, was there ever any great work of genius produced. This, however, must be understood chiefly of what are called the higher species of poetry, epic poetry, and tragedy, and for the reasons just now given, it must be so in them. Homer is the great poet of nature, and it is generally thought that there is greater fire in him than in Virgil, just because he lived at a time when the rules of writing were unknown. The same thing is said of Shakespear, of our own country, and perhaps the late discovered poems of Ossian may be consider-

ed as another example. After all, perhaps the comparison made between the effects of nature and art is at bottom wrong, and that they produce beauties of different kinds—A wild uncultivated forest, a vast precipice, or steep cataract or waterfall, is supposed to be an object more august and striking, than any ornaments produced by human skill. The order and symmetry, however, of architecture and gardening are highly pleasing, and ought not properly to be compared with the other, as pleasing the imagination in a different degree, so much as in a different kind.

The effects of the poetry of nature, therefore, in one view are very great, and continue to be so in all ages, because they touch the soul in one way, which continues to be universally felt: but I doubt much whether eloquence ever arrived at much excellence, without considerable study, or at least previous patterns, on which to form. The first great poets were before all criticism, and before even the polishing of human manners; but the first great orators appeared in improved, civilized states, and were the consequence of the knowledge of mankind, and the study of the human heart.

4. When persons are meanly qualified in point of natural capacity for any art, it is not very proper to attempt to instruct them in it. It is not only difficult to instruct those who have a radical incapacity for any study, but sometimes they are much the worse for application, just as fine clothes and a courtly dress upon a clown render him unspeakably ridiculous. Some, who are utterly void of taste for speaking, after long study, and sometimes even by great literature, become more

obscure, more tedious, and more given to swelling and bombast, than the most uncultivated person in the world. The want of a fund of good sense and genuine taste makes ignorant persons fools, and scholars pedants. A plain man will tell you of taking a purge or a dose of physic, and you neither mistake him nor laugh at him. A quack of a physician will tell you of a mucilaginous decoction, to smooth the acid particles, and carry off the acrimonious matter that corrodes and irritates the internal coats of the stomach.

5. In the middle regions of genius, there are often to be found those who reap the greatest benefit from education and study. They improve their powers by exercise, and it is surprising to think what advances are to be made by the force of resolution and application. I might give you many examples of this in the annals of literature; but the one most suited to our purpose is, that Demosthenes himself is said at first to have laboured under almost insuperable difficulties; it is said he could not even pronounce at first all the letters of the Greek alphabet, particularly the letter R, the first letter of his art, as the critics have called it.

Persons of the middle degrees of capacity do also, perhaps generally, fill the most useful and important stations in human life. A very great genius is often like a very fine flower, to be wondered at, but of little service either for food or medicine. A very great genius is also often accompanied with certain irregularities, so that we only consider with regret what he might have been, if the lively sallies of his imagination had been

adhered to truth and nature, we cannot tell, because we have no other way of knowing the manners and customs of his times but from what he has written.

The powers of mankind, however, are certainly the same in all ages, but change of circumstances may create diversity in the appearance and productions of genius. These circumstances tend to produce excellence of different kinds. The boldness, and almost excessive flights of imagination, in uncultivated times, give way to beauties of a different nature, to order, judgment and precision. A masterly judgment will endeavour to understand the reasons on both sides. It is certain, however, that there are great and excellent patterns to form upon both ancient and modern. And it is very proper for young persons to read authors, after they have heard criticisms and remarks made upon them. These criticisms you may take at first either from books or conversation. Try if you can observe the genius, or peculiar and characteristic turn of an author, not only his excellencies, but wherein they are peculiar to him, and different from those of others. Cicero is flowing, fervent, ornate—somewhat vain and ostentatious, but masterly in his way. Demosthenes is simple, close, nervous, rapid and irresistible. Livy has a bewitching knack of telling a story; he is so expressive and descriptive, that one cannot help being pleased with it, even after several times reading.

Sallust excels in giving characters, which he strikes off in single epithets, or very concise remarks. Tacitus is chiefly remarkable for judici-

ous and sagacious observations on human life; and Xenophon is superior to almost every author in dignity, elegance, and sweetness in the narration.

Of modern authors in our own language, Mr. Addison is a noble pattern of elegance, dignity and simplicity. Swift, in his political pieces, writes with great strength and force, and is perhaps a pattern of style, which has scarcely been exceeded since his time. Hervey, in his Meditations, has a great deal of very lively and animated description, but it is so highly ornamented, that it is somewhat dangerous in the imitation. Dr. Robertson, in his history, has as just a mixture of strength and elegance, as any other author I know in the English language. I cannot help here cautioning you against one modern author of some eminence, Johnson, the author of the Rambler. He is so stiff and abstracted in his manner, and such a lover of hard words, that he is the worst pattern for young persons that can be named.

It has been given sometimes as a rule, to form one's self upon a particular author, who may be most agreeable to a student's taste, and perhaps congenial (if I may speak so) to his capacity. It is pretty common to fall into this without design, by a natural propensity. It is said that Demosthenes wrote over the history of Thucydides eight times, that he might the more effectually form himself to his style and manner. I cannot say I would recommend this; it seems to be too much honour to give to any one person. I would not be guilty of idolatry of any kind. A comprehensive knowledge of many authors, or at least a

considerable number of the best, is certainly far preferable. If there be any advantage in particular imitation, it is, that it is the easiest way of coming to a fixed or formed style. One will soon run into an imitation of an author with whom he is much conversant, and of whom he is a great admirer, and in this view, to some persons of moderate capacity, it may not be an improper method. But persons of real and original genius should be rather above such a practice, as it will certainly make them fall short of what they would otherwise attain.

To this we may add, that particular imitation is liable to several very great dangers. (1) It leads to servility of imitation. Such person often may be said to borrow the piece, instead of imitating the pattern. When a servile imitation is perceived, which it always will be, it is certain to be despised. Even a manner ever so excellent, if merely a copy, brings no credit to a speaker. And if a writer retail the very sentiments and language of another, it is considered as an absurdity. (2) Servile imitation leads to copying defects. There neither is, nor ever was, any speaker or writer free from defects or blemishes of some kind. Yet servile imitators never fail to copy the defects as well as beauties. I should suppose that any one, who made Cicero his particular model, would very probably transfuse a proportion of his vanity and ostentation, and probably more of that than of his fire.

But of all sorts of imitation, the most dangerous is the imitation of living speakers, and yet to this young scholars are most prone, sometimes by design,

and sometimes quite insensibly. It is attended in the highest degree with the disadvantage of copying defects. In living speakers, there are not only peculiarities of style and blemishes in composition to copy, but in looks, tone and gesture. It is a matter of constant experience, that imitators catch the blemishes easiest, and retain them longest. And it is to be observed, that defects, when they are natural and undesigned, appear very inconsiderable; but when they are copied and adopted voluntarily, we cannot help depising the folly and absurdity of one that judges so ill. Further, when defects are occasional and undesigned, they are generally inconsiderable; but when they are copied, they are commonly aggravated and over-charged, and so appear quite monstrous. This must be so; for even the very best manner looks silly in the imitator, although just and graceful in the original.

2. An excellent general rule is to accustom yourselves early and much to composition, and exercise in pronunciation. Practice is necessary in order to learn any thing to perfection. There is something to be learned from practice, which no instruction can impart. It is so in every other art as well as this—mathematics, geometry, and in navigation; after you have learned the theory in the most perfect manner, there is still a nameless something, which nothing but experience can bestow. You must not wait till you are masters of the rules of art before you begin to put them in practice. Exercise must go hand in hand with instruction, that the one may give meaning, force and direction to the other. I do not mean that you should be fond of entering very soon upon real

life, but that you should be assiduous in preparatory exercises. This is a rule given by Cicero, in his book De Oratore, which he reckons of great importance—*Scribendum quam plurimum*, and he declares it to have been his own practice.

Since we are upon private exercise of composition, it may perhaps give you a clearer view of the matter to mention some of the various ways in which it may be separately tried. It may be tried in translation, perhaps it may be best to try it first here. Translation will accustom you to attend to the various idioms of language, and to understand the genius of your own language: for when translating you will speedily find, that to render out of any one language into another ad verbum, would be very sorry composition. It may be tried also in narration. This I think should be the next step to translation, to learn to give a naked account of facts with simplicity and precision. This, also, though certainly in itself more obvious and easier than some other kinds, yet it is by no means so easy as some imagine. Imitation of a particular passage or composition of some author, by writing upon something quite similar, may perhaps be the next in order. To understand what this is, you need only look into an admirable example of it in poetry, Mr. Pope's imitation of a satire in Horace, beginning Quæ virtus & quanta, &c. After this comes description, painting scenes, or drawing characters. Then argumentation. And, lastly, persuasion. I believe it would be a great improvement of the laudable practice in this college of daily orations, if they were chosen with more judgment, and better suited to the perform-

ers. Almost all the pieces we have delivered to us are of the last or highest kind, warm passionsionate declamations. It is no wonder that some should perform these ill, who have never tried the plainer manner of simple narration. Supposing a student to have tried all these ways of composition for his own improvement, would he not be by that means sensible in what way he is most able to excel? as also having made trial of them separately, he is more able to vary his diction, and give compass to his discourse upon a general subject. These are like an analysis or simple division of composition; and as persons read best, who have been first taught to resolve words into syllables, and syllables into letters, so the easiest and completest way of any to composition, is to begin it in this order.

In such exercises let me by all means recommend to you, early to acquire, and always to preserve, a certain patience and resolution of mind, which will enable you to apply with vigour, not only for a time, but to review and correct your pieces, and bring them to some degree of perfection, and your taste to some degree of accuracy. To explain this a little, there are three things equally contrary to it, and perhaps equally prejudicial. (1.) Mere weakness and want of courage, which, finding one attempt unsuccessful, will hardly be brought to make another. When a young person first goes to exercise himself in composition, he finds the thing so uncouth and difficult, that he is apt to consider it as altogether impossible. (2.) There is a fault contrary to this, a vanity of mind, which is so pleased with any thing it

does, as neither to see its own faults, nor be willing to hear them. There are some, who, from the beginning of life, think it a great pity that any of their productions should be blotted or erased. It is not to be supposed that they will make great progress in knowledge or taste. (3.) There is another sort, perhaps distinct from both, who are of a loose, desultory disposition, so unstaid that they cannot spend long enough time upon any thing to do it well, or sometimes even to bring it to a conclusion. They will begin an essay upon a subject, but are presently out of conceit with it, and therefore will do it very carelessly, or, before it is finished, must away to another, which struck their fancy more lately.

That steady application which I have recommended some of the ancients were very remarkable for. Some of them indeed seemed to carry it to an excess. They would sometimes spend as much time in polishing an epigram, or little trifling panygyric, as might have been sufficient for the production of a work of extensive utility. However, this is not the most common error; running over a great deal in a superficial way is the bane of composition. Horace, with his usual elegance, ridicules this disposition, when he says, *Detur nobis locus*, &c. and somewhere else he brings in a vain glorious poet, boasting how many verses he had made, or could make, while standing upon one foot.

LECTURE III.

IN this discourse I intend to finish what I began in the last, viz. laying down some general rules to form the taste and direct the conduct of a student.

3. Be careful to acquaint yourselves well, and to be as perfect as possible, in the branches that are subordinate to the study of eloquence. These, because they ought to be learned in the earliest stages, if they are then neglected, some are unwilling or ashamed to go back to them. What I have here in view chiefly, are the grammar, orthography, and punctuation of the English language. It is not uncommon to find orators of considerable name, both in the pulpit and at the bar, far from being accurate in point of grammar. This is evidently a very great blemish. Perhaps it may be occasioned in some measure by the English seldom or never being taught grammatically to children. But those who have learned the principles of grammar, in the Greek and Latin languages, should be more ready to attend to it. I am sensible that the grammar of every language is ultimately fixed by custom; with regard to which, Horace says, Quem penes arbitrium est, &c. But even here we must attend to the meaning of the sentiment. It is not the custom of the vulgar that establishes either the grammar or pronunciation of any language, but that which is received and established by the best writers. You will say, how do these writers determine them-

selves? Are not they also guided by practice? They are in a great measure, and it is generally said, that the practice of the capital of a nation, or of the court in that capital, settles the grammar. This must in substance be agreed to, yet judgment and analogy will frequently suggest improvements, and introduce a good, or abolish an ill custom. You must not suppose, that all the phrases of the vulgar in London are therefore agreeable to the grammar of the English, or even that at court, all the nobility, male and female, speak with perfect propriety. It is in the last resort, the men of literature, particularly the authors, who, taking custom as a general rule, give it all the direction they can, by their reasoning and example.

To make you understand this by some instances, you see Mr. Addison, Dean Swift, and Mr. Pope, have endeavoured to attend to the genius of the English language, to show where it was harsh and unpolished, and where improprieties might be corrected, and they have succeeded in a great measure. It was observed by all those great men, that the English, and all the northern languages, are harsh, by the numbers of consonants meeting without intervening vowels, therefore, that it is a great barbarism to strike out the vowels that we have, as in these words, don't, can't didn't, wouldn't, shouldn't, rebuk'd, drudg'd, fledg'd. Several of these words may yet be heard in some places, and I have even seen them in print in America; but no good speaker or tolerable writer would use them in Great Britain. I give another example, where the sense and analogy of the word suggests the improvement. Averse,

and aversion, were often formerly used with *to* or *at:* he is very averse to it: he has a great aversion at it. But as averse properly signifies turned away, it seems an evident improvement, to say averse from. What I mean by this observation, is to turn your attention to such remarks, when you meet with them in reading or conversation.

I will make an observation or two more. It is of some importance to attend to the use of words, nearly related, or in some degree synonymous. It is not uncommon to hear people say, a man is incident to such or such a thing—The evil is incident to the person—the person liable to the evil, or subject to it: this may be seen by the original meaning of the word, of Latin derivation, and signifies to fall upon. The word *notify* is often used wrong, particularly in America: they speak of notifying the public; that is to say, making known the public—Instead of this, we should say notify any thing, (or make it known) to the public. You advertise a person, or inform him of a thing—acquaint him with it. The verb *consist*, in English, has two distinct meanings, and two constructions: when it signifies to agree or correspond, it is joined to *with*. It consists *with* my knowledge. When it signifies to compose or make up a total, it is constructed either with *in* or *of;* as his estate consists *of*, or *in*, houses, lands, &c. *This* and *that*, and *these* and *those*, when together in a sentence, are used with distinction; *this* and *these* for the nearest, and *that* and *those* for the most remote antecedent; but otherwise, *these* and *those* are used indiscriminately, but *those* more

frequently—as, *those authors who are of different opinions.*

In all matters doubtful, you ought to observe how the current of good authors go. So far as I have been able to observe, collective words, in English, are indifferently constructed either with a verb singular or plural, as number, multitude, part—a great number were present, or was present, though I should prefer the last.—

As to orthography, it is of the utmost moment, not but that a man may be supposed to speak, though he cannot spell; but because a public speaker must be always in some degree conversant in public life, and then bad spelling is exceedingly reproachful. It is not only necessary to understand, in all ordinary cases, the orthography of our own language, but a scholar and critic, I think, should be able to observe the variations that have been made in spelling from time to time. Between thirty and forty years ago, an attempt was made to alter the spelling of the English language very considerably, by bringing it nearer to the way of pronouncing, but it did not succeed, being opposed by some of the greatest eminence, as likely to destroy or hide the etymology of words. There have some small alterations obtained a good deal in my remembrance, such as taking away the final k in public, ecclesiastic, &c. There is also, just now, an attempt making to change the spelling of several words—I have seen an example of it in a very late edition of Middleton's life of Cicero; such as revele, repete, explane—honor, favor, candor, &c. this seems upon the principle of bringing words nearer to their Latin derivation.

Punctuation is a thing that a scholar should strive to understand a little; though there are few gentlemen or scholars who use it much, either in letters or in their composition. The reason of this is, that it is looked upon as too formal, and unnecessary to use it in writing letters, except a full stop. It is always the best language, that has least need of points to be understood. Points are, I believe, a modern invention, subsequent to the invention of printing; very useful, however, in teaching young persons to read with proper pauses. Another reason why points are little used in private writing is, that such papers as are sent to the press, (in Britain) do not need them, the printers themselves understanding that matter at least as well, if not better, than any writer.

4. It is a good rule, to observe early, and study to guard against some of the most remarkable blemishes in writing and speaking, which are fallen into by design or accident, and continued by habit. It is not difficult for any person, as soon as he begins to observe and reflect, to discover these in others, and as he will perceive the absurdity clearly in them, let him be very careful to find out whether there is not something of the same kind in himself. That you may understand what I mean, I will mention some particulars.

1. *Peculiar phrases.*—Such as have nothing in them but what is just, and decent and proper, when used once, or now and then; but when a speaker falls so into any of them, that the practice is known for his own, and he is known by it, they become unspeakably ridiculous. It is very difficult to avoid something of this kind; there are few, if

any, but in common discourse use some phrases more than others. A cautious person, as soon as he perceives a habit of using any one coming upon him, will endeavour to alter or avoid it. Even the greatest men are not wholly free from this defect. It is observed of Cicero, that *esse videatur* occurs in almost every three or four sentences, be the subject what it will. I knew a preacher that used the word *sedate* so very frequently, that he was called generally where he was known by the name of the *sedate preacher*. I say the same thing of particular motions and gestures, which, if they be in any degree out of the way, are a great blemish in a speaker: both the one and the other of these are commonly, at first, taken up as graces, and retained so long in that view, that they acquire an irresistible power from habit.

2. Another blemish of this kind is, using improper epithets. This is very common: some, especially young persons, are apt to think a discourse lean and poor, unless there be a great number of epithets: and as they will let no substantive go without an adjective, it is a great chance that some of them are improper: they cannot say the sky, without the azure sky, or the lofty sky, or the wide expanded sky; and though all these epithets may belong to the sky, they may not be equally proper in the place where they are introduced. A certain gentleman of no mean rank in Great Britain, in drawing an address from a borough to his majesty, on the peace, told him, that the terror of his arms had spread to the most distant parts of the *terraqueous* globe: now, though it be certainly true that the globe is terraqueous,

it was exceedingly ridiculous to tell the king so; it looked as if his majesty were a boy, and the borough magistrates were teaching him; or they themselves were boys, who had just learned the first lesson in geography, that the globe consists of land and water, and therefore were desirous of letting it be known that they were so far advanced.

3. Another visible blemish is, a multitude of unnecessary words of any kind, particularly the vain repetition of synonymous phrases. Some do not think their sentences full and round enough, without a number of these phrases. But though it be true, that there is a fulness of a sentence and the clauses of a sentence which is necessary to please the ear, yet it is but an ill way to make up the shape with what is without sense or force. The most common of this kind are the double epithets, which men are led into by the introduction of words derived from the Latin or Greek into the English language. These words, differing in sound, are often coupled together, as if different in meaning also—As happiness and felicity,—fruition and enjoyment,—greatness and magnificence,—ease and facility,—way and manner,—end and conclusion,—small and minute,—bountiful and liberal, &c. Sometimes, from your lofty speakers, we hear a whole string of words, of so little difference in meaning, that it is almost impossible to perceive it. Thus I have lately heard, "This "grand, capital, important, and fundamental "truth."—All proper epithets, and though any one of them would have made the discourse ner-

vous, as well as just, by the addition of them all it becomes swelled and silly.*

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* *List of synonymous terms frequently to be met with.*

Speakers and writers,
Motives and arguments,
Benefit and advantage,
Small and minute,
Bountiful and liberal,
Right and title,
Order and method,
Sharp and acute,
Pain and anguish,
Moment and importance,
Delight and satisfaction,
Joy and pleasure,
Profit and advantage,
Resolution and purpose,
Justice and equity,
Truth and sincerity,
Wealth and riches,
Penury and want,
Worth and value,
Lasting and abiding,
Command and order,
Order and appoint,
Sin and guilt,
Cheerfulness and alacrity,
Greatness and magnificence,
Joy and delight,
Fruition and enjoyment,
Just and righteous,

4 Vulgarisms. I have been surprised to see some persons of education and character intro-

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End and design,
Open and explain,
Lasting and durable,
Clear and manifest,
Marks and signs,
Plain and perspicuous,
Ease and facility,
End and conclusion,
Odious and hateful,
Poor and indigent,
Order and regularity,
Rules and regulations,
Causes and reasons,
Useful and profitable,
Amiable and lovely,
Wise and prudent,
A final issue,
Motives and reasons,
Diminished and lessened,
Excellence and perfection,
Benevolence and good-will,
Demonstrate and prove,
Cover and conceal,
Foolish and unwise.

Terms and Phrases to be noted for remarks.

Happifying,—susceptive,—fellow-country-man —felicitos—to be found in the Monitor.
" Unsexed thy mind," in a poem.

duce the mere vulgarisms of discourse in the pulpit, or at the bar, such as, I an't, I can't, I shan't. An author who entitles his book Lexiphanes, and has very successfully exposed Johnson's long and hard words, let slip a vulgarism into his own discourse, for which he was severely handled by the reviewers. *Between you and I.* *I* there is a governed case, and if it were to be used, it should be, between you and me. But the truth is, the phrase is altogether a vulgarism, and therefore not to be used, except in particular circumstances, describing familiar chat. There are also certain cant phrases which come into repute or use in the course and the changes of fashion.

These have been sufficiently exposed by Swift and Addison, and therefore I shall say nothing at all further on them, at present, as an opportunity will afterwards occur of mentioning them to advantage.

5. The fifth and last general rule I shall just mention is, to follow nature. This is a rule often given, and greatly insisted on, by the ancients. Every body has heard of it, nay, sometimes those who have not heard of it, will speak as if they had, and say, "This was quite natural. This was altogether unnatural." But it is somewhat difficult

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"Sensibilities," Aikin's Magazine, Oct. vol. 1. 468—9.

"These commendations will not I am persuaded make you vain and *coxcomical.*

Knickknackically, simplify, domesticate, pultpitically.

to understand. Nature seems in this rule to be opposed to art. Is following nature, then, to do as untaught persons generally do? Will the most ignorant persons make the most plain and the best connected discourse? Will they tell a story with the most genuine simplicity, and at the same time with perspicuity? We find it is quite otherwise. Perhaps it would be best to say it is following truth, or following that which is easiest and plainest, and probably would be followed by all, but for affectation.

On this subject I can think of nothing so good as to say, realize and suppose you saw the thing you would describe, and put yourself in the very state of him whose sentiments you would speak. Clear conceptions make distinct expressions, and reality is a great assistant to invention. If you were bid to study a subject abstractly, it would be with great difficulty that things proper and suitable to it would come into your mind. But if you yourself were in the situation that is to be supposed, the sentiments pertinent to it would croud upon you immediately. Let me try to make this familar by an example: suppose I were to ask any of you just now, what are the circumstances that aggravate sin, or make it more heinous, and deserving of severe punishment: it is highly probable he would either be at a loss altogether, or at least would omit many of them. But if any of you had received an injury from another, in explaining of it, he would not fail to come over them every one. He would say it was unprovoked.—If he had done him service, he would not fail to upbraid him with it, and nothing would be

forgotten between the two, that could aggravate the crime.

Supposing the reality of every thing, also, serves particularly to deliver a speaker from affected ornaments, and every thing in language or carriage that is improper. If you were pleading the cause of one accused of a capital crime, it would be best to suppose that you yourself were the accused person, and that you were speaking for your own life. This would give an earnestness of spirit, and a justness and correctnes to the manner, infinitely distant from that theatrical pomp, which is so properly said to be a departure from the simplicity of nature.

LECTURE IV.

HAVING given you some preliminary discourses on such points as I thought would serve to prepare you for what might be afterwards said, I proceed to treat the subject more methodically and more fully. There are various ways of dividing the subject, which yet may each of them be said to take in the whole, in one way or other. Several of these must be combined together; as it is not sufficient to view a building only from one station. If you would understand it thoroughly, you must view it from different stations, and even take it in profile, and learn not only its outward appearance, but its inward structure. The method I have resolved to follow, and which seems to me as complete as any I could fall upon, is this—

I. To treat of language in general, its qualities, and powers—eloquent speech—and its history and practice, as an art.

II. To consider oratory as divided into its three great kinds, the sublime—simple—and mixed,—their characters—their distinction—their beauties—and their uses.

III. To consider it as divided into its constituent parts, invention, disposition, style, pronunciation and gesture.

IV. To consider it as its object is different, information, demonstration, persuasion, entertainment.

V. As its subject is different. The pulpit, the bar, and the senate, or any deliberative assembly.

VI. To consider the structure and parts of a particular discourse, their order, connexion, proportion and ends.

VII. Recapitulation, and an inquiry into the principles of taste, or of beauty and gracefulness, as applicable not only to oratory, but to all the other (commonly called) the fine arts.

In the first place then, I am to treat of language in general, its qualities and powers—eloquent speech— and its history and practice as an art.

Language is what in a great measure distinguishes man from the inferior creatures. Not but that almost all animals have certain sounds by which they can communicate something to one another. But these sounds are evidently only simple, and sometimes single exertions, differing in one creature from another, according to the different conformation of their organs. Articulate speech has a far greater compass, and is able to

express not only a vast multitude of complex, as well as simple ideas; perhaps we may even say that articulate speech is little less extensive than thought itself, there being hardly any idea that can be formed but it may be expressed, and by that means communicated. In this there is a wide and manifest distinction between the rational and irrational creatures.

Articulate language is intended to communicate our sentiments one to another. This may be considered as fully explained, by saying it includes information and persuasion. A conception in my mind, when spoken, its excellence consists in making another perceive what I perceive, and feel towards it as I feel. They may be afterwards amplified and extended; but these two particulars shew the true original purpose of speech. Eloquence is commonly called the art of persuasion, but the other must be taken in. We must inform before we can persuade, or if there be any such thing as persuasion without information, it is only a blind impulse.

Articulate speech is representing our ideas by arbitrary sounds. That is to say, there is no real or natural connexion between the sound and signification, but what is the effect of compact and use. In this articulate speech is distinguished from signs or natural sounds, as alphabetical writing (of which more afterwards) is distinguished from hieroglyphical. Natural sounds may signify joy, fear, anger, but language in general has no such natural connexion with its meaning. The words sun and moon might have had different meanings, and served the same purpose. The

word *beith* in Hebrew, *oikos* in Greek, *domus* in Latin, *maison* in French, and *house* in English, though all of them different, are equally proper for signifying the same thing, when once they are fixed by the custom of the several nations. Some have attempted to reduce the original words of a supposed original language, and even the letters of the alphabet, to a natural resemblance of the things to be signified; but their attempts have been fruitless and ridiculous. It was in ancient times a pretty general imagination, that there was a certain language that was original and natural to man; that this was the first languge in use; and that if men were not taught another language by example, they would all speak this language. But experience, after trial had been made by several curious persons, showed this imagination to be vain; for those who were brought up without any communication with men, were always dumb, and spoke none at all, except sometimes imitating the natural sounds of some beasts or birds which they might occasionally hear. Herodotus's story is either a fable, or it proves nothing, of a king of Egypt having two children nourished by goats, and pronouncing the word Bec, or Beecos, which they said signified bread in the Phrygian language. This was a thing merely accidental, if true; yet at any rate of very doubtful authority.

The words in articulate speech therefore are arbitrary, nor is there any possibility of their being otherwise; for words are only sounds, and though it is possible in some few particulars to fix upon words with a natural relation, as for example, perhaps the names of animals might sometimes be

given them with some resemblance of sound to the natural sounds which these animals utter, yet even this with disadvantages, as any body may perceive, by trying to make a word that shall resemble the neighing of a horse, the lowing of a bull, &c. But as to all inanimate visible objects, it is impossible to represent them by sound; light and sound, the eye and the ear, being totally different in kind. I can recollect nothing that makes any difficulty in this matter, unless that some may say, how then do you find place for that particular beauty of poetry and other descriptions, in making the sound an echo to the sense? But this is easily resolved. In some cases the passions give a modulation to sound, and in the quantity of the syllables, and ease or difficulty of pronouncing them, there may be a resemblance to slowness and labour, or their opposites, or both. As in the famous passage of Homer *Ton men Tissiphon;* or in Mr. Pope, who exemplifies the rule in giving it.

"'Tis not enough, no harshness gives offence," &c.

If words are arbitrary, it may be asked how language came first into use? in which the opinions are various, but the controversy is not of any great moment. Some think it was in the same way as other creatures exert their natural powers, that man, by practice, gradually came to the use of speech, and settled the meaning of words by custom. Others think that this would either never have happened, or have taken a very long time, and suppose that their Maker taught them at least some degree of practice, which should open the way to a more extensive use of the faculty. And

the consideration that sounds in language are arbitrary, in some degree favours this supposition, because it may be observed that as mankind are capable by instruction of the greatest and most multifarious improvement, so without instruction they are capable of doing least. A human infant, when first brought forth, is more helpless and longer helpless than any other animal that we know. It does not seem to be of much importance to form a determinate opinion of this question. It occurs in the very same way again, and may be reasoned upon the same principles, whether alphabetical writing was an invention and discovery of man, or revealed by God. Those who hold the last opinion observe, that hieroglyphic writing, or writing by signs or pictures, was before alphabetical, and that the improvement of hieroglyphics does not lead to, but from, alphabetical writing. That the one consists of natural emblems, and visible signs of sentiments, and the other of arbitrary or artificial signs for simple sounds, so that the more complex you make the hieroglyphic, you differ the more from the alphabet. It seems probable that this, and indeed the radical principles of all great discoveries, were brought out by accident, that is to say, by Providence: therefore it is probable that God gave to our first parents, who were found in a state of full growth, all the instruction necessary for proceeding upon and exercising the faculty of speech, the length that was necessary for the purposes of human life. It is also probable from the analogy of Providence, that he left as much to the exercise of the human powers as experience and application could conveniently supply.

I will not enter much into the formation and construction of language in general. It is formed by a certain number of simple sounds, which, when variously combined, produce that variety of words, which though certainly not strictly infinite, yet have been hitherto inexhausted by all the languages in the world. The letters are divided into vowels and consonants, the first having a sound of themselves, and the other giving only a sort of modification to that sound. Some great philologists are of opinion, that in the Hebrew and several other ancient languages, their whole letters are consonants, tending to mark the different configurations of the organs of sound at the beginning of pronunciation, and the vowels are the sounds themselves, which they say men were taught to adopt by habit, first in speaking, and then in writing, and afterwards were distinguished by marks or signs for the sake of readers. Hence the controversy about the Hebrew points, and indeed reading the dead languages in general, which is attended with great uncertainty, particularly from the following circumstances. Vowels have in general been but five or six in number, which should express all the simple sounds, and yet they do not, and perhaps there is not a language in which there is greater confusion in this matter, than our own, which makes the English so exceedingly difficult for a foreigner to attain. Several English vowels have three or four different sounds, and, as Sheridan says, some of them the length of five: *I* has three in one word, viz. *infinite*. These things not being necessary to my

main purpose, I only point at them, without enlarging.

It is plain that in whatever manner languages were first formed, we can easily see that they came slowly and by degrees to perfection. An eminent French author, father Lamy, says the Hebrew language was perfect in its original; but he advances no proof of this, but showing indeed by very just historical remarks and criticisms, that the Hebrew was anterior in point of time to the Greek, and that in writing, the letters were taken from the Hebrew and employed in the Greek. History says that Cadmus was a Phenician, and he has generally among the Greeks the honour of introducing letters. It is also observed, that as the letters of the alphabet were used in expressing numbers, the Greeks, after they had in process of time altered or left out the letter *vau* in Hebrew, which stands sixth in order, they put a new mark *s* for six, that the rest might retain their powers, which plainly shews that the Hebrew alphabet was older than the Greek, as it now stands.

But for my part, I do not understand the meaning of saying that the Hebrew language was perfect at first; it might be fitted for all the purposes of them that used it first, and is probably at this day as good as any other language, so far as it goes, but it is plain that this and all the other languages of the first ages were narrow, short and simple. They must have been so from the nature of the thing, most probably they consisted chiefly of monosyllables representing simple ideas. What occasion had they for complex or compound words, when they had few, if any, complex or com-

pounded ideas? This appears very plainly from the state of the Hebrew language, some of the other orientals, and the language of all uncultivated people. It holds likewise in the case of the Chinese language, which, though the people are not uncultivated, properly speaking, is yet in an unimproved state, from their having had little intercourse with other nations. All such languages have few adjectives, and when they do use words as adjectives, they are commonly figurative. There is an ingenious and probable deduction how a scanty narrow language might be first used in Shuckford's connexions. They might express qualities by the name of some animal remarkable for them—as a lion-man, for a valiant or fierce man. This is wholly agreeable to the genius of the Hebrew language. The Hebrews describe every thing that is very great, by adding the name of God to it, as, the trees of God—the river of God. It follows that in all uncultivated languages the figures are frequent and very strong. The Indians in America have a language full of metaphors. They take up the hatchet, for going to war, and they brighten the chain, when they confirm a peace.

Hence it appears that in the earliest times, if they used figures, it was the effect of necessity rather than choice. But what men did at first out of necessity, orators afterwards returned to from choice, in order to increase the beauty or force of their diction, or both. In fact, figures do make the greatest impression on men's minds. They are sensible, and therefore level to every person's capacity: for the same reason they make a strong

impression on the imagination. They likewise leave a great deal of room for the creative power of fancy to make additions. A sign or symbol seen by a multitude, on a subject that is understood, carries the contagion of enthusiasm or rage exceedingly far. In the 19th of Judges you see the Levite took his concubine, and cut her into twelve parts, and sent them to all the tribes of Israel. The Roman also holding up the stump of his hand which he had lost in the service of the public, pleaded for his brother with a power vastly superior to any language whatever.

LECTURE V.

HAVING given you a short view of language in general, if it were not too long, I would consider the structure of particular languages; instead of which, take the few following short remarks.

1. The nature of things necessarily suggests many of the ways of speaking which constitute the grammar of a language, and in every language there is nearly the same number of parts of speech, as they are enumerated in the Latin grammar; noun, pronoun, verb, participle, adverb, preposition, interjection, conjunction.

2. In the use of these, there is a very great variety. Nouns, to be sure, are declined nearly the same way in all, by cases and numbers, though the Greeks in this differ a little, using three numbers instead of two, having a particular inflection of the word, when there are but two persons meant; and another for the plural or more: but in the verbs,

there is a very great diversity; in the active and passive signification they generally agree, but some express the persons by terminations, and some by pronouns and nominatives expressed. Some have moods which others have not. The Greeks have an optative mood; the Latins have gerunds; the Hebrews, with fewer differences of moods, have conjugations that carry some variety of signification to the same word. In one word *maser*, he delivered, there is not only this and its passive, but another, he delivered diligently, and the passive; another, he made to deliver; another, he delivered himself. The Greeks, besides the active and passive, have a *media vox*, of which perhaps the use is not now fully understood; since some of the best grammarians say it signifies doing a thing to one's self; *Tupsomai*, I shall strike myself. Most of the modern languages decline their verbs, not by inflection of the termination, as the Greek and Latin, but by auxiliary verbs, as the English and French. The Chinese language is perhaps the least improved of any language that has subsisted for any time; this probably is owing to their want of alphabetical writing: every word among them had a character peculiar to it, so that letters and words were the same in number in their language; this rendered it of immense difficulty to understand their writing among themselves, and quite impossible to foreigners: but they were vastly surprised to find, that the Jesuits from Europe, that came among them, could easily write their language by our alphabet: and as they use the same word in different tones, for different meanings, these fathers also soon found a way of distin-

guishing these in writing by certain marks and accents placed over the word, differing as it was to be differently taken.

3. Some have amused themselves with inventing a language, with such a regular grammar as might be easily understood, and having this language brought into general use. We have a remark of this kind, in Father Lami's rhetorique, in French, and he says the grammar of the Tartar language comes nearest to it. We have also had some schemes and propositions of this kind in English, but it seems wholly chimerical. I shall only observe further, that some few have imagined that the Hebrew language itself was originally, and when compleat, a perfect language, and that we now have it only maimed, and but a small part of it. These suppose the language to be generated thus, by taking the letters of the alphabet, and first going through them regularly by two, and then by three, *ab*, *ag*, *ad*, &c. *aba*, *abb*, &c. All these schemes are idle, because no person can possibly lay down rules beforehand, for every thing that may hereafter be thought and spoken, and therefore, when they are brought out, they will be expressed as those to whom they first occur shall incline, and custom will finally fix them, and give them their authority.

Leaving these things, therefore, as matters of more curiosity than use, I proceed to speak of eloquent speech, and its history as an art. It is plain, that in the progress of society, and the commerce of human life, it would soon appear that some spoke with more grace and beauty, and so as more to incline the hearers to their senti-

ments, than others; neither is it hard to perceive that it would be early in repute. In the first associations of mankind, they must have been chiefly governed by those who had the power of persuasion. In uncultivated societies it is so still: In an Indian tribe, the sachem or wise man directs their councils. The Progress of oratory towards perfection must have been evidently, in fact, like the progress of all other human arts, gradual, and in proportion to the encouragement given to its exercise. It prevailed, where the state of things and constitution of government favoured it, but not otherwise.

It is to be observed here, that by the consent of all, and by the memorials of antiquity that are left, poetry was more ancient than oratory; or perhaps we may rather say, that the first exertions of genius in eloquent expression were in poetry, not in prose. It has frequently been made matter of critical inquiry, why poetry was prior to oratory, and why sooner brought to perfection? I do not perceive very clearly what great advantage there is in determining this question, supposing we should hit upon the true reasons: one reason I take to be, that the circumstance in poetry that gives generally the highest pleasure, viz. a strong and vigorous fancy, is least indebted to application, instruction or time, for its perfection: therefore poetical productions in general, and that species of them in particular which have most of that quality, must be as easily produced in uncultivated times, as any other; and for some reasons given in a former discourse, must appear then with the greatest effect. Whereas, to success in orato

ry, some knowledge of the human heart, and even some experience in the ways of men, is necessary. Another difference is plain; poetical productions having generally pleasure or immediate entertainment as their design, may produce that effect in any age; whereas the circumstances that rendered the orator's discourse interesting, are all gone.

Perhaps to this we may add, that the incitements to poetry are more general. A poet pleases and obtains fame from every single person who reads or hears his productions; but an assembly, business, and an occasion, are necessary to the orator. This last is likewise limited in point of place and situation. Oratory could not thrive in a state where arbitrary power prevails, because then there is nothing left for large assemblies and a diffusive public to determine; whereas poetry is pleasing to persons under any form of government whatever.

Those who have given the history of oratory have rather given us the history of the teachers of that art than its progress and effects. It must be observed, however, that in this, as well as in poetry, criticism is the child and not the father of genius. It is the fruit of experience and judgment, by reflection upon the spontaneous productions of genius. Criticism inquires what was the cause of things being agreeable, after the effect has been seen. Ward brings a citation from Cicero, to show that the orator's art was older than the Trojan war. The purport of this is, that Homer attributes force to Ulysses' speeches, and sweetness to Nestor's; perhaps also he has characterised Menelaus' manner as simple, short and unadorned. There is not, however, any

certainty in this art being much studied or explained in these early times from this citation; for though Homer is an excellent poet, of inimitable fire and great strength of natural judgment, it is not certain that he kept so perfectly to propriety, as to describe only the manner and style of things at the time of the Trojan war, which was 250 years before his own. I should be more apt to conclude that he had described manners, characters and speakers, as they were in his own time, with a little air of antiquity.

We are, however, told by Pausanias, that the first school of oratory in Greece was opened in the school of Theseus, the age preceding that war. If there be any certainty in this, its being taught in Greece has been very ancient indeed; but these being fabulous times, it is scarcely to be depended upon. However, it is certain that oratory flourished early, and was improved greatly in Greece. Many circumstances concurred to produce this effect. The spirit and capacity of the people—the early introduction of letters—but chiefly their political situation—the freedom of their states—the frequency of public assemblies—and the importance of their decisions. There is much said of the spirit and capacity of the Greeks for all the arts, and to be sure their climate, so serene and temperate, might have all the effect that a climate can have: but I reckon the two other causes much more considerable. The introduction of letters is necessary to the improvement and perfection of a language, and as they were early blessed with that advantage, they had the best opportunity of improving. However, the last cause of all is much

more powerful than both the former, though perhaps literature is necessary to be joined with it to produce any great effect. As to some of the other arts, particularly painting and statuary, an eminent modern critic says, the Greeks could not but excel, because they, of all others, had the best images from nature to copy. He says that the games in Greece, in which the best formed bodies for agility and strength in the whole country were seen naked, and striving and exerting themselves to the very utmost, must have presented to persons of genius originals to draw from, such as in most other nations never are to be seen. If this remark is just in the other arts, the influence of eloquence in the public assemblies of these free states must have had a similar effect in the art of speaking.

The art of speaking in Greece, however, does not seem to have risen high till the time of Pericles, and he is said to have been so powerful an orator that he kept up his influence in the city as much by his eloquence as tyrants did by their power. There is a passage of Cicero, which seems to say that he was the first who prepared his discourses in writing, and some have been simple enough to believe that he read them; but nothing can be a more manifest mistake, because action or pronunciation was by all the ancients considered as the great point in oratory. There were to be seen in Cicero and Quintilian's times, orations said to be of Pericles; but both these great orators seem to be of opinion that they were not his, because they did not at all seem to come up to the great fame of his eloquence. Mr. Bayle, a very eminent cri-

tic, says justly, that these great men might be mistaken in that particular; for a very indifferent composition may be the work of a very great orator. The grace of elocution and the power of action might not only acquire a man fame in speaking, but keep up his influence in public assemblies. Of this we have two very great British examples, Mr. Whitefield in the pulpit, and Mr. Pitt in the senate.

After Pericles there were many great orators in Greece, and indeed all their statesmen were orators till the time of Demosthenes, when the Grecian eloquence seems to have attained its perfection. The praises of this great speaker are to be so generally met with, that I shall not insist upon them at all, further than reminding you, that, though no doubt eminently qualified by nature, he needed and received great improvement from art.

The Roman eloquence was of much shorter duration. It is true that the Roman state being free, and the assemblies of the people having much in their power, it seems, according to the principles we have gone upon, that public speaking must have been in esteem; but there is something peculiar. The Romans were for many ages a plain, rough, unpolished people. Valour in war was their idol, and therefore, though to be sure from the earliest times the assemblies must have been managed in their deliberations by their speakers, yet they were concise and unadorned, and probably consisted more of telling them their story, and showing their wounds, which was of frequent practice among them, than any artful or passionate

harangues. The first speakers of any eminence we read of in the Roman history, were the Gracchi. Cicero I believe makes little mention even of them. Anthony and Crassus were the first celebrated orators among the Romans, and they were but in the age immediately before Cicero himself, and from his time it rather fell into decay.

I have said above that genius and excellence was before criticism. This is very plain; for though we read of schools and rhetoricians at different times and places, these are considered by the great masters as persons quite contemptible. Of this kind there is a remarkable passage in Cicero in his *Brutus*. At hunc (speaking of Pericles) non declamator, &c. The first just and truly eminent critic in Greece was Aristotle, who flourished as late as the time of Demosthenes. And Cicero himself was the first eminent critic among the Romans. Aristotle has laid open the principles of eloquence and persuasion as a logician and philosopher, and Cicero has done it in a still more masterly manner, as a philosopher, scholar, orator and statesman; and I confess, unless he has had many authors to consult that we know nothing of, his judgment and penetration are quite admirable, and his books de Oratore, &c. more finished in their kind, than any of his orations themselves.

As to the effects of oratory, they have been and are surely very great, but as things seen through a mist, or at a great distance, are apt to be mistaken in their size, I am apt to think many say things incredible, and make suppositions quite contrary to nature and reason, and therefore to probability. Some speak and write as if all the an-

cient orators had a genius more than human, and indeed by their whole strain seem rather to extinguish than excite an ardour to excel. Some also seem to me to go upon a supposition as if all the people in the ancient republics had been sages, as well as their statesmen orators.—There is a remark to be found in many critics upon a story of Theophrastus the philosopher, from which they infer the delicacy of the Athenians. That philosopher it seems went to buy something of an herb-woman, at a stall, and she in her answer to him it seems called him stranger. This, they say, shows that she knew him by his accent not to be a native of Athens, although he had lived there thirty years. But we are not even certain that her calling him stranger implied any more than that he was unknown to her. Besides, though it were true, that she discovered him not to be an Athenian born, this is no more than what happens in every populous country, that there is something in the accent which will determine a man to be of one country or province, rather than another, and I am somewhat of opinion that this would be more discernible in Greece than any where else. The different dialects of the Greek tongue were not reckoned reproachful, as many local differences are in Britain, which therefore people will endeavour to rid themselves of as well as they can. In short, I take it for granted, that an assembly of the vulgar in Athens was just like an assembly of common people among us, and a senate at Athens in understanding and taste was not superior to the senate of Great-Britian, and that some of them were but mere mobs; and that they were very disorderly is

plain from what we read of Plato being pulled down from the desk, when he went up to defend Socrates.

The most remarkable story of the effect of oratory is that told of Cicero's power over Cæsar in his oration for C. Ligarius. This is very pompously told by some critics, that Cæsar came to the judgment seat determined to condemn him, and even took the pen in his hand to sign his condemnation, but that he was interested by Cicero's eloquence, and at last so moved, that he dropped the pen and granted the orator's request. But supposing the facts to have happened, I am very doubtful of the justness of the remark. Cæsar was a great politician, and as we know he did attempt to establish his authority by mercy, it is not unlikely both that he determined to pardon Ligarius, and to flatter Cicero's vanity by giving him the honor of obtaining it. In short, oratory has its chief power in promiscuous assemblies, and there it reigned of old, and reigns still, by its visible effect.

LECTURE VI.

WE now proceed to consider eloquence as divided into its three great kinds—the sublime, the simple, and the mixed. This is very unhappily expressed by Ward, who divides style into the low, the middle, and the sublime. Low is a word, which, in its first and literal sense, signifies situation, and, when applied metaphorically, never is, in any instance, used in a good sense, but always

signifies what is either unhappy, or base and contemptible, as we say a man's or a state's finances are low. We say a man is in a low state of health. We say he is guilty of low, mean practices.—Has a low, mean, paltry style. It was therefore conveying a very wrong idea to make *low* one of the different kinds of style. You may observe that I have introduced this distinction in a manner somewhat different from him, and some other authors. They consider it as a division of style. I choose rather to say there are three different great kinds, into which eloquence and composition may be divided. The reason is, I believe the word *style*, which was used both by the Greeks and Romans, but especially the latter, has like many others gradually changed its meaning. At first it signified the manner of writing in general, and is even sometimes used so still, but more commonly now in English it is confined to the diction. Nothing is more common than to say, sublimity in sentiments and style, so as to distinguish the one from the other. I am sensible that even in this confined sense there is a sublimity, simplicity, and mediocrity in language itself, which will naturally enough fall to be explained, but it is better upon the whole to consider them as different kinds of eloquence, for several reasons.

Sublimity in writing consists with all styles, and particularly many of the highest and most admired examples of sublimity are in the utmost simplicity of style. Sometimes they are so far from losing by it, that they owe a great part of their beauty and their force to it. That remarkable example of sublimity in the Scripture is wholly

in the simple style. "Let there be light, and "there was light." There are also many others in Scripture, "The gods of the Gentiles are vanity "and lies."—"I am that I am."

Some of the other kinds also, even the simplest, do sometimes admit great force of expression, though more rarely, and there is a great danger in the simple manner of writing, by admitting lofty expressions to swell into bombast. The mixed kind frequently admits of sublimity of style, and indeed is called mixed, as consisting, as it were alternately, of the one and the other, or being made up of a proportion of each.

The sublime kind of writing chiefly belongs to the following subjects: epic poetry, tragedy, orations on great subjects, and then particularly the peroration. Nothing can be too great for these subjects, and unless they are treated with sublimity, they are not treated suitably. The simple kind of writing belongs to scientific writing, epistolary writing, essay and dialogue, and to the whole inferior species of poetry, pastorals, epigrams, epitaphs, &c. The mixed kind belongs to history, system, and controversy. The first sort must be always sublime in sentiment or language, or both. The second may be often sublime in sentiment: sometimes, but very rarely, in language. The mixed admits of both sorts with full propriety, and may be often sublime, both in sentiment and language.

Let us now consider these three great kinds of composition, separately, in the order in which I have named them.

1. Of the sublime manner of writing—This is very difficult to describe or treat of, in a critical manner. It is very remarkable, that all writers on this subject, not excepting those of the greatest judgment, accuracy and precision, when they come to explain it, have used nothing but metaphorical expressions. It is however certain, in general, that metaphor should be kept as much as possible out of definition or explication. These all agreeing therefore in this circumstance, seems to show that sublimity is a single or simple idea, that cannot be resolved, divided, or analysed, and that a taste for it is, in a good measure, a feeling of nature. The critics tell us, that sublimity is that which surprises, ravishes, transports: these are words frequently applied to its effects upon the hearers; and greatness, loftiness, majesty, are ascribed to the sentiments, to the character, to the person. An oration, or the sublime parts of a poem, have been compared to the voice of thunder, or penetration of lightning, to the impetuosity of a torrent; this last, is one of the best metaphorical expressions for sublimity in eloquence, because it carries in it, not only the idea of great force, but of carrying away every thing with it that opposes or lies in its way. That may be said to be sublime, that has an irresistible influence on the hearers, and when examined, carries in it the idea of great power and abilities in the speaker: yet even this is not sufficient, it has the character of greatness, as distinct from that of beauty, sweetness or use. Burke, on the sublime, has endeavoured to show that sublimity and beauty, though generally united in our apprehensions, are distinct

qualities, and to be traced to a different source. Of sublimity in particular, he says it is always allied to such things as raise the passion of terror: but of this I will speak more fully upon a head I have reserved for that purpose; in which I propose to inquire into the first principles of taste or approbation, common to this and all other arts.

Longinus mentions no less than five different sources of the sublime. (1) Greatness or elevation of mind. (2) Pathos or passion. (3) Figure. (4) Nobleness of language. (5) Composition or arrangement of words. But though the last two of these are of considerable moment, and greatly contribute to augment the force as well as beauty of a discourse, I do not think they are of that nature, as to be considered upon the same footing with the other three. Therefore leaving what is to be said upon them to the next head, when it will properly occur, I shall consider the others in their order.

1. Greatness or elevation of mind.—This is the first and radical source of sublimity indeed. It is quite impossible for a man to attain to sublimity of composition, unless his soul is great, and his conceptions noble: and on the other hand, he that possesses these, can hardly express himself meanly. Longinus gives it as an advice, that a man should accustom his mind to great thought. But if you ask me what are great thoughts, I confess myself unable to explain it, and unless the feeling is natural, I am afraid it is impossible to impart it; yet it seems to be pretty generally understood. It is common to say such a man has a great soul, or such another has a mean or little soul. A great

soul aspires in its hopes; is not easily terrified by enemies or discouraged by difficulties. It is worth while to consider a little the effect of a man's outward circumstances. The mind, to be sure, cannot be wholly made by any circumstances. Sentiments and state are different things. Many a great mind has been in narrow circumstances, and many a little rascal has been a king; yet education and manner have a sensible effect upon men in general. I imagine I have observed, that when persons of great rank have been, at the same time, men of real genius, they have generally excelled in majesty and dignity of sentiments and language. This was an advantage generally enjoyed by the ancients whose writings remain to us; having but their own language to study, and being early introduced into public life, and even into the conduct of the greatest affairs, they were led into nobleness of sentiment. Xenophon, Demosthenes, Cicero, Cæsar, were all of them great statesmen, and two of them great generals, as well as writers. In modern times, there is a more compleat partition of employments, so that the statesman, general and scholar, are seldom found united in the same person; yet I think it appears in fact, that when statesmen are also scholars, they make, upon the whole, greater orators and nobler writers, than those who are scholars merely, though of the greatest capacity. In every station, however, this remark has place, that it is of importance to sublimity in writing, to endeavour to acquire a large and liberal manner of thinking. Whilst I am making use of this language, I would caution you against thinking that pride and vani-

ty of mind are at all allied to greatness, in this respect. There is a set of men called free-thinkers, who are pleased to arrogate to themselves a large and liberal manner of thinking, and the generality of them, are as little creatures, as any on the face of the earth. Mr. Addison compares them to a fly, which, lighting upon a great building, and perceiving the small interstices between the stones, cries out of vast chasms and irregularities, which is wholly owing to the extreme littleness of his sight, that is not able to see the dignity and grandeur of the whole building.

When I am upon this subject of greatness and elevation of thought, as one source of the sublime, you will naturally expect that I should give some examples to illustrate it. I shall begin with some out of the scriptures, where indeed there is the greatest number, and these the noblest that can well be conceived. " I am God alone, and besides me there is no saviour—Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?—Who will set the briars and thorns against me in battle?" &c. See also two passages inimitably grand —Isa. 40. 12—and v. 21, and onwards.

To mention some of the sayings in heathen antiquity—Alexander's saying to Parmenio is certainly of the great kind, yet perhaps with a considerable mixture of pride as well as greatness. Parmenio told him, if he were Alexander, he would act in a certain manner. Answer. So would I, if I were Parmenio. That of Porus, the Indian king, to Alexander, however, was much greater. When he was Alexander's prisoner, and was asked by that prince how he expected to be treat-

ed? He answered, like a king. Cæsar's famous saying of veni, vidi, vici, has often been quoted as a concise and noble description of the rapidity of his conquests; yet I confess I think it very dubious; it has not only an air of improper vanity, but looks like an intended and silly play upon the words, and what we call alliteration. They are three words of the same length, the same tense, and the same beginning and ending. Cicero, in one of his orations, I believe in that for Marcellus, has a very noble compliment to Cæsar, when he says, the gods had given nothing to men so great as a disposition to shew mercy. But of all great sayings on record, there is none that ever made such an impression upon me as that of Ayliffe to king James the IIId. He had been detected in some of the plots, &c. The king said to him, Mr. Ayliffe, don't you know 'tis in my power to pardon you? Yes (says he) I know it is in your power, but it is not in your nature!

It is necessary to put you in mind in reading books of criticism, that when examples of greatness of sentiment are produced from Homer and the other ancient writers, that all circumstances must be taken in, in order to form a just opinion concerning them. We must remember his times, and the general belief of his countrymen with regard to theology, and many other subjects. There must be a probability to make a thing natural, otherwise it is not great or noble, but extravagant. Homer, in describing the goddess Discord, says, her feet were upon the earth, and her head was covered with the clouds. He makes Pluto look up and affirm, that Neptune would open hell it-

self, and make the light to shine into that dark abode. There are some of these that appear to me suspicious even in Homer himself; such as when he makes Jupiter brag, that if all the other gods were to hang at the bottom of a chain, and earth and sea, all along with them, he would toss them all up as easily as a ball. However it was with regard to him, who was taught to believe in Jupiter sitting upon Mount Olympus, or quaffing Nectar in the council of the gods, modern and Christian writers and speakers should be careful to avoid any thing that is extravagant and ridiculous, or even such affusions to the heathen theology, as could only be proper to those who believed in it.

There is the more reason to insist upon this, that as grandeur and sublimity is commonly a great object of ambition, particularly with young persons, they are very ready to degenerate into bombast. You ought always to remember, that the language ought to be no higher than the subject, or the part of the subject that is then immediately handled. See an example of the different ways of a simple and a turgid writer, upon the very same sentiment, where the Roman empire was extended to the western coast of Spain. Sextus Rufus simply tells it thus—Hispanias per Decimum Brutum obtinuimus et usque ad Gades et oceanum pervenimus. Florus, taking a more lofty flight, says—Decimus Brutus aliquanto totius, &c.

I have only further to observe, that in sublime descriptions great care should be taken that they be all of a piece, and nothing unsuitable brought into view. Longinus justly blamedt he poet Hesiod,

that after he had said every thing he could, to render the goddess of darkness terrible, he adds, that a stinking humour ran from her nose—a circumstance highly disgusting, but no way terrible.

LECTURE VII.

I COME now to the second source of the sublime, which is pathos, more commonly called in English the pathetic, that is, the power of moving the passions. This is a very important part of the subject: a power over the passions is of the utmost consequence to a poet, and it is all in all to an orator. This every one will perceive, if he only recollects what influence passion or sentiment has upon reason, or, in other words, inclination upon the practical judgment. He that possesses this power in a high degree has the highest capacity of usefulness, and is likewise able to do the greatest mischief. Sublime sentiments and language may be formed upon any subject, and they touch the heart with a sense of sympathy or approbation; but to move the passions of others so as to incline their choice, or to alter their purpose, is particularly the design of eloquence.

The chief passions eloquence is intended to work upon are, rage, terror, pity, and perhaps desire in general, though occasionally he may have occasion to introduce every affection. In a heroic poem every affection may be said to take its turn; but the different species of oratory, or the different objects and subjects of it, may be said to divide the passions. A speaker in political or de-

liberative assemblies may be said to have it in view to excite the passion of rage: he may naturally desire to incense his hearers against their enemies, foreign and domestic, representing the first as terrible and dangerous, to excite aversion and hatred, and the other as weak or worthless, to excite contempt. An example of this you have in the great subject of Demosthenes's orations, Philip, king of Macedon—another in Cicero's discourses against Cataline and Anthony. Pity is the chief passion attempted to be raised at the bar, unless in criminal cases, where indignation against villainy of every kind is the part of the accuser. Terror and its attendants belong very much to a speaker in the pulpit; rage he has nothing to do with, but in an improper sense, to raise a strong and steady, but uniform, indignation against evil. But even this a speaker from the pulpit should endeavour to convert into compassion for the folly and wretchedness of the guilty person. Pity seems to be the single object in tragedy.

One talent of great moment towards raising the passions is a strong and clear imagination, and a descriptive manner of speaking, to paint scenes and objects strongly, and set them before the eyes of the hearers. To select such circumstances as will have the most powerful effect, and to dwell only upon these. We have not any where in English a finer example of the pathetic, and the choice and use of circumstances, than the speech which Shakespeare has made for Anthony in the tragedy of Cæsar. It appears from the history, that Anthony did successfully raise the fury of the Romans against those who killed Cæsar, and I

think he could hardly select better images and language than those we have in the English poet.

But yesterday, &c.

1. To raising the passions with success, much penetration and knowledge of human nature is necessary. Without this every attempt must fail. In confirmation of this remark, though there are persons much better fitted for it by nature than others, the most powerful in raising the passions have generally been those who have had much acquaintance with mankind, and practice in life. Recluse students and professed scholars will be able to discover truth, and to defend it, or to write moral precepts with clearness and beauty; but they are seldom equal, for the tender and pathetic, to those who have been much in what is called the *world*—by a well known use of that word, though almost peculiar to the English language. There is perhaps a double reason for persons well versed in the ways of men having the greatest power upon the passions. They not only know others better, and therefore how to touch them, but their own hearts, it is likely, have been agitated by more passions than those whose lives have been more calm and even.

2. To raising the passions of others, it is necessary the orator or writer should feel what he would communicate. This is so well known a rule, that I am almost ashamed to mention it, or the trite quotation commonly attending it; "Si vis me flere dolendum, est primum ipsi tibi." You may as well kindle a fire with a piece of ice, as raise the passions of others while your own are

still. I suppose the reason of this, if we would critically examine it, is, that we believe the thing to be a pretence or imposition altogether, if we see that he who wishes us to be moved by what he says, is notwithstanding himself unmoved. The offence is even something more than barely negative in some cases. If we hear a man speaking with coldness and indifference, where we think he ought to be deeply interested, we feel a certain disappointment, and are filled with displeasure; as if an advocate was pleading for a person accused of a capital crime, if he should appear with an air of indifference and unconcern, let his language and composition be what they will, it is always faulty or disgusting: or let a minister, when speaking on the weighty subject of eternity, show any levity in his carriage, it must weaken the force of the most moving truths; whereas, when we see the speaker wholly engaged and possessed by his subject, feeling every passion he wishes to communicate, we give ourselves up to him without reserve, and are formed after his very temper by receiving his instructions.

3. It is a direction nearly allied to this, that a man should never attempt to raise the passions of his hearers higher than the subject plainly merits it. There are some subjects, that, if we are able, are of such moment as to deserve all the zeal and fire we can possibly bestow on them, of which we may say, as Dr. Young, "Passion is reason, "transport, temper here." A lawyer for his client, whom he believes to be innocent; a patriot for his country, which he believes to be in danger; but above all, a minister for his people's everlast-

ing welfare, may speak with as much force and vehemence, as his temper and frame are susceptible of; but in many other cases it is easy to transcend the bounds of reason, and make the language more lofty than the theme. We meet often, for example, with raised and laboured encomiums in dedications, a species of writing the most difficult to succeed in, of any almost, that can be named. The person honored by this mark of the author's esteem is very seldom placed in the same rank by the public, that he is by him. Besides, though he were really meritorious, it seldom comes fairly up to the representation: the truth is, to correspond to the picture, he should be almost the only meritorious person of the age or place in which he lives. Now, considering how cold a compliment this is to all the rest, and particularly to those who read it, there is little wonder that such rhapsodies are treated with contempt. I have often thought the same thing of funeral panegyrics: when a man dies, whose name perhaps was hardly ever heard of before, we have a splendid character of him in the news-papers, where the prejudice of relations or the partiality of friendship do just what they please. I remember, at the death of a person whom I shall not name, who was, it must be confessed, not inconsiderable for literature, but otherwise had not much that was either great or amiable about him, an elegiac poem was published, which began with this line, "Whence this astonishment in every face?" Had the thing been really true, and the public had been deeply affected with the loss, the introduction had been not inelegant; but on such

a pompous expression, when the reader recollected that he had seen no marks of public astonishment, it could not but tempt him to smile.

4. Another important remark to be made here, is, that a writer or speaker, in attempting the pathetic, should consider his own natural turn, as well as the subject. Some are naturally of a less warm and glowing imagination, and in themselves susceptible of a less degree of passion than others: these should take care not to attempt a flight that they cannot finish, or enter upon such sentiments and language as they will probably sink, as it were, and fall away from in a little time. Such should substitute gravity and solemnity, instead of fire, and only attempt to make their discourse clear to the understanding, and convincing to the conscience: perhaps, this is in general the best way in serious discourses and moral writings: because, though it may not produce so strong or ardent emotions, it often leaves a deeper and more lasting impression.

Of Figurative Speech.

It is common to meet with this expression; "The tropes and figures of rhetoric." This expression is not just; the terms are neither synonymous, nor are they two distinct species of one genus—Figure is the general expression; a trope is one of the figures, but there are many more. Every trope is a figure, but every figure is not a trope: perhaps we may say a trope is an expedient to render language more extensive and copious, and may be used in tranquillity; whereas a figure is the effect of passion. This distinction,

however, cannot be universally maintained; for tropes are oftentimes the effect of passion, as well as of the narrowness of language. Figures may be defined any departure from the plain direct manner of expression, and particularly such as are suggested by the passions, and differ, on that account, from the way in which we would have spoken, if in a state of perfect tranquility. Tropes are a species of figures, in which a word or phrase is made use of in a sense different from its first and proper signification, as, "The Lord is a sun and shield;" where the words "sun and shield" are used tropically. There are several different tropes.

1. Metonymy—This is a very general kind of trope, comprehending under it several others; the meaning of it is a change of name, or one name for another: this may be done several ways: (1) The cause may be put for the effect, or the effect for the cause: as when we say, cold death; because death makes cold: Old age kept him behind, that is, made him weak; &c. (2) The author, for his works. (3) The thing containing, for the thing contained: as drink the cup, that is, the liquor in the cup. (4) A part is taken for the whole, or the whole for a part; as my roof, for my house; my house is on fire, when only a small part of it burns—This is called synecdoche. (5) A general term for a particular; a hundred reasons may be given, that is, many reasons may be given. (6) A proper name for a characteristic name; as he is a Nero, for a cruel man; or a Sardanapalus, for a voluptuous monarch. All these and many more are metonymies.

2. Metaphor—this might as well have been the general term, as trope; for it also signifies change of expression: it is a species of trope, by which any term is applied in a sense different from its natural import, as when we say, a tide of pleasure, to express the impetuosity of pleasure: when the heavens are said to be over our heads as brass, and the earth under our feet as iron.

3. Allegory—This is continuing the metaphor, and extending it by a variety of expressions of the same kind, as the Lord is my shepherd, he maketh me to lie down in green pastures—he maketh me to feed beside the still waters.

4. Irony—In using words directly contrary to their meaning; as, "No doubt you are the peo-"ple, and wisdom shall die with you."

5. Hyperbole—When things are carried beyond their truth, to express our sentiments more strongly, as "Swifter than the wind, whiter than snow.

6. Catachresis—Is the first trope of all, when words are used in an opposite, and sometimes in an impossible sense, as when chains and shackles are called bracelets of iron.

Figures.

Figures cannot be fully enumerated, because they are without number; and each figure may be used several different ways. (1) Exclamation—This is nothing else than a way of expressing admiration or lamentation, as Oh! Alas! Heavens! &c. used by persons much moved. (2) Doubt—This is frequently the expression of a doubtful mind, in suspense what to do. This is described

by Virgil, in the distress of Dido, when Æneas left her; "Shall I go to the neighbouring kings "whom I have so often despised?" Sometimes it is a beautiful figure, and obliges persons to take notice of it, and sometimes of what they would otherwise have omitted: "Who is this that "cometh from Edom?" (3) Epanorthosis—This is a correction or improvement of what has been said: "You are not truly the son of a goddess, "nay you must have sucked a tygress." (4) Pleonasm—This is a redundancy, as, I have heard it with my ears, he spake it with his mouth." (5) Similitude—This is comparing one thing with another, as "he shall be like a tree planted, &c. (6) Distribution—This consists of a particular enumeration of several correspondent images; "Their throat is an open sepulchre, their tongues have used deceit." (7) Prosopopeia—When persons dead, or absent, or different from the speaker, are brought in speaking, as Cicero supposes his country or Italy, and all the public saying to him, "Marcus Tullius, what are you doing?" (8) Apostrophe—When persons dead or absent, or any inanimate things, are spoken to, as Cicero says, "O! vos, or hear O! Heavens, "and give ear O earth!" (9) Communication—When a speaker calls upon his hearers to say what advice they would give, or what they would have done, different from what he or the person whom he defends has done; What could you have done in this case? What should I do now? (10) Interrogation—Putting a thing home to the readers, as, "What fruit had you then in those "things of which you are now as hamed?"

LECTURE VIII.

I HAVE now gone through the account given in the systems, of the tropes and figures of rhetoric, by which you will sufficiently understand the meaning of both. The proper applications however of them is a matter of much greater moment, and of much greater difficulty. I will make a few remarks before I close the subject, in addition to what hath been already interspersed through the different parts of it.

1. Perhaps it will not be improper to consider what is the purpose intended by figures. I have introduced them here as a means of giving sublimity to a discourse, but may there not be some little analysis and resolution of that purpose; may we not inquire what are the particular effects of figures? Are the effects of figures in general, and of all figures, the same? It is certain that figurative speech is very powerful in raising the passions. And probaby different figures are proper to express or excite different passions; admiration, desire, pity, hatred, rage, or disdain. This appears from the explication of figures formerly given. But besides this, we may observe that there are some effects of figures that seem to be wholly unconnected with passion, of these I shall mention three; ornament, explication, conviction. Sometimes figure is made use of merely for ornament. Of this Rollin gives us an example, in which an author says, "The king, to give "an eternal mark of the esteem and friendship

" with which he honoured a great general, gave " an illustrious place to his glorious ashes amidst " those masters of the earth, who preserve on the " magnificence of their tombs an image of the " lustre of their thrones." Under this head may be reckoned all the examples of the use of figures, to raise things that are mean and low in themselves to some degree of dignity by the phraseology, or to give a greater dignity to any thing than the simple idea or the proper name would convey; as if one should say, looking round the scene and observing the bounteous gifts of Providence for the support of innumerable creatures, instead of the grass and corn every where growing in abundance. Perhaps also under the same head may be reckoned, the clothing in other terms any thing that might be supposed disagreeable or disgusting, as when Cicero confesses that the servants of Milo killed Clodius, he does not say intersecerunt, but he says, " They did that which " every good man would wish his servants to do " in like circumstances." I shall only observe, that the greatest delicacy and judgment imaginable is necessary in the use of figures with this view, because they are very apt to degenerate into bombast. Young persons, in their first compositions, and especially when they have a good deal of ancient literature fresh in their heads, are very apt to be faulty in this particular. A common word or sentiment which any body might use, and every body would understand, they think mean and below them, and therefore they have recourse to unnecessary figures, and hard or learned phrases. Instead of walking about the fields,

of expression of their own thoughts. They generally remark further, that it is what seems to be easy, but yet is not; as Horace says, ut sibi quivis speret idem, &c. We may further observe, that what is truly simple always carries in it the idea of being easy in its production, as well as in imitation and indeed the one of these seems necessarily to suppose the other. Whatever seems to be the effect of study and much invention cannot be simple. It is finely exemplified in the introduction of Anthony's speech in Shakspeare: I am no orator as Brutus is, &c. Rollin has given us an admirable example of a story told with a beautiful simplicity, from Cicero's offices. There is an example also in Livy's account of the battle of the Horatii and Curiatii, only with a little more force of expression, as the importance and solemnity of the subject seemed to require it. But it requires a very masterly knowledge of the Latin language, to perceive the beauties fully, that are pointed at by Rollin in the first instance, or might easily be mentioned in the last. There is no author in our language who excels more in simplicity than Addison.—The Spectator in general indeed, but especially the papers written by him, excel in this quality. Ease and elegance are happily joined in them, and nature itself, as it were, seems to speak in them. If some of the later periodical writers have equalled, or even excelled them in force or elegance, not one has ever come up to them in simplicity.

The subjects or the species of writing in which simplicity chiefly shines, are narration, dialogue, epistolary writing, essay writing, and all the light-

er species of poetry, as odes, songs, epigrams, elegies, and such like. The ancients were remarkable for a love and admiration of simplicity, and some of them remain to us as eminent examples of its excellence. Xenophon, in his institution of Cyrus, is particularly remarkable for a sweet and dignified simplicity. He uses neither language nor ideas that are difficult and farfetched. In the smaller compositions of the ancients, as odes, epigrams, &c. they were at prodigious pains to polish them, and make them quite easy and natural. They placed their great glory in bestowing much art, and at the same time making it to appear quite easy and artless, according to the saying now grown into a proverb, *artis est celare artem.* The beauty of simplicity may not appear at first sight, or be at all perceived by persons of a vitiated taste, but all persons of good judgment immediately, and the bulk of mankind in time, are charmed with what is quite easy, and yet truly accurate and elegant.

It ought to be carefully observed, that simplicity is quite a different thing from lowness and meanness, and the great art of a writer is, to preserve the one without degenerating into the other. It is the easiest thing in the world, to speak or write vulgarisms, but a person of true taste will carefully avoid every thing of that kind. For example, one who would write simply, and as near the language of plain people in ordinary discourse as possible, would yet avoid every absurdity or barbarism that obtains a place in common conversation, as to say, "This here table, "and that there candle." It is also quite contrary to simplicity, to adopt the quaint expres-

sions or cant phrases that are the children of fashion, and obtain for a little, or in some particular places and not in others. The Spectator attacked, with great spirit and propriety, several of those that were introduced into conversation and writing, in his time, such as, *mob*, *rep*, *pos*, *bite*, *bamboosle*, and several others. Most of them he fairly defeated, but one or two of them got the better of him, and are now freely introduced into the language, such as *mob*. Johnson also has put bamboosle in his Dictionary, which he calls, indeed, a low word. Arbuthnot is his authority, but it was plainly used by him in the way of ridicule, and therefore it should either not have been in the Dictionary, at all, or such an authority should not have been given for it.

It is exceedingly difficult, and requires an excellent judgment, to be able to descend to great simplicity, and yet to keep out every low expression, or idea. I do not think it is easy to be a thorough judge of pure diction in any language but our own, and not even in that, without a good deal of the knowledge of human life, and a thorough acquaintance with the best authors. Writers and speakers, of little judgment, are apt, at times, to go into extremes, to swell too much on the one hand, and to fall into what is vulgar and offensive on the other.

When speaking on simplicity, I observe, that there is a simplicity in the taste and composition of a whole discourse, different from simplicity of sentiment and language in the particular parts. This will incline a man to avoid all unnecessary ornament, particularly the ornaments of fashion, and the peculiar dress, or mode of the times.

We say, in architecture, that a building is in a simple style, when it has not a great multiplicity of ornaments, or is not loaded with beauties, so to speak. It is very remarkable, that books written in the same age will differ very much, one from another, in this respect; and those which have least of the ornaments then in vogue continue in reputation, when the others are grown ridiculous. I will give you an instance of this. A small religious treatise, Scougal's Life of God in the Soul of Man, which is written with great simplicity, and yet dignity, and may now be read with pleasure and approbation, by persons of the best taste; while most of the other writers of his age and country are ridiculous, or hardly intelligible.

Perhaps it may help us to form right notions of simplicity, to consider, what are the opposites, or the greatest enemies to it. (1.) One is abstraction of sentiment, or too great refinement of any kind: of this the greatest example in an author of merit, is the writer of the Rambler; almost every page of his writings furnishes us with instances of departure from simplicity, partly in the sentiment, and partly in the diction.

(2.) Another, is allegory, and especially far-fetched allusions, as, in the example which the Spectator gives of a poet, who speaks of Bacchus' cast coat: this is little better than a riddle, and even those who discern it will take a little time to reflect, that, according to the heathen mythology, Bacchus was the god of wine; wine is kept in casks, and therefore, an empty cask, or at least an useless one, may be called Bacchus' cast coat.

(3.) A third enemy to simplicity is an affectation of learning: This spoils simplicity many ways; it introduces terms of art, which cannot be understood, but by those who are adepts in a particular branch. Such persons have been long exposed to ridicule, under the name of pedants. Sometimes, indeed, the word pedantry has been in a manner confined to those addicted to classic literature, and who intermix every thing they say with scraps taken from the learned languages; but this is quite improper, for lawyers, physicians, dunces, or schoolmasters, are equally ridiculous, when they fill their discourse with words drawn from their particular art.

(4.) The only other enemy to simplicity I shall mention is, an ambition to excel. This, perhaps, should not have been so much divided from the rest, as to be made the great principle from which the rest proceed. Nothing more certainly renders a man ridiculous, than an over-forwardness to display his excellence; he is not content with plain things, and particularly with such things as every body might say, because these would not distinguish him.

On the whole, as I observed, on sublimity, that one of the best and surest ways to attain it was to think nobly, so the best way to write simply, is to think simply, to avoid all affectation, to attempt to form your manner of thinking to a noble self-denial. A man little solicitous about what people think of him, or rather having his attention fixed upon quite another purpose, viz. giving information, or producing conviction, will

only attain to a simple manner of writing, and indeed, he will write best in all respects.

As to the mixed style or manner of writing, as it consists of the mixture of the other two, I shall not need to say any thing by way of explaining it, but only make a remark or two, of the use and application of it. The mixed kind of writing chiefly consists of history and controversy. The great quality necessary to execute it properly, is soundness of judgment, to determine on what subjects, and on what parts of subjects, it is proper to write with simplicity, and on what with force—One would wish not to go beyond, but just to gratify a reader's inclination in this respect.

There are many cases in history, where the greatest sublimity, both of sentiments and language, is both admitted and required, particularly, all the beauty and all the force that can be admitted into description, is of importance in history. Those who will read in Robertson's history of Scotland, the account he gives of the astonishment, terror and indignation that appeared in the English court, when news was brought of the massacre at Paris, or in the same author, the account of the execution of Mary, queen of Scots, will see the force and sublimity of description. The difference between sublimity of sentiment and language in an historian, and in a poet, or orator, seems to me to resemble the difference between the fire of a managed horse, when reined in by the rider, and marching with a firm and stately pace, and the same, when straining every nerve in the eager contention in a race. We shall enter a little into this matter, if we consider the different images

that are made use of in the different arts. In poetry, we say, a beautiful, striking, shining metaphor, fervent, glowing imagery. In oratory, we say, warm, animated, irresistible. In history, we use the words, force, nobleness, dignity, and majesty, particularly those last attributes, of dignity and majesty. Herodotus has been often called the father of history, though I confess I apprehend he has obtained this title, chiefly, because of his antiquity, and his being the first that ever gave any thing of a regular history; but, though he has some things august enough, yet, he has admitted so many incredible stories, and even peculiarities, into his work, as very much detracts from its dignity; we must, indeed, impute a good deal of this to the age in which he lived, and the impossibility of their distinguishing truth from falsehood, so well as those of later ages, who have had the advantage of all past experience.

History, indeed, is not only of the mixed kind of writing, so as to admit sometimes sublimity, and sometimes simplicity, but those styles should be really blended together, in every part of it. The most noble and animated sentiments, characters or descriptions in history, should yet be clothed with such a gravity and decency of garb, so to speak, as to give an air of simplicity to the whole. It is an advantage to a poem, that the author says but little in his own person, but makes the characters speak and say all; and in an orator, it is an advantage, when he can carry the hearers off from himself to his subject; but, above all, an historian should not so much as wish

to shine; but with the coolness of a philosopher, and the impartiality of a judge, should set the actors and transactions before the reader.

Controversy is another subject of the mixed kind, which ought to be, in general, written with simplicity, yet will sometimes admit of the ornaments of eloquence: of this I shall speak a little more afterwards, and, therefore, shall now only add, that controversy differs from history, in that it sometimes admits of passion and warmth, when there seems to be a sufficient foundation laid for it; a controversial writer will endeavour to interest his reader, and excite either contempt or indignation against his adversary.

After having given you this view of the three great kinds of writing, or, as they are sometimes called, different styles, it may not be amiss to observe, that there are distinctions of style, which it is proper that an able writer should observe, that do not range themselves, at least not fully and properly, under these three heads, but may be said to run through all the kinds of eloquence.

Many eminent authors have said, that the climates have some effect upon the style; that in the warmer countries the style is more animated, and the figures more bold and glowing: and nothing is more common, than to ascribe a peculiarity of style, and that particularly elevated and full of metaphor, to the orientals, as if it belonged to that part of the globe; but, if I am not mistaken, both this and other things, such as courage, that have been attributed to the climate, belong either not to the climate at all, or in a small measure, and are rather owing to the state of

society and manners of men. We have before had occasion to see that all narrow languages are figured. In a state, where there are few or no abstract ideas, how should there be abstract terms. If any body will read the poem of Fingal, which appears to have been composed on the bleak hills of the north of Scotland, he will find as many figures, and as bold, as in any thing composed in Arabia, or Persia. The state of society, then, is, what gives a particular colour to the style, and by this the styles of different ages and countries are distinguished—that the climate does but little, may be seen, just by comparing ancient and modern Italy; what difference between the strength and force of the ancient Latin tongue, and the present Italian language, in the expression of sentiments? it must, therefore, vary with sentiments and manners; and what difference between the stern and inflexible bravery of a free ancient Roman, and the effeminate softness of a modern Italian? yet, they breathed the same air, and were nursed by the same soil. I will just go a little off from the subject, to say, that a very late author, (lord Kaimes), seems to think, that the courage of mankind is governed by the climates; he says, that the northern climates produce hardened constitutions, and bold and firm minds; that invasions have been made from north to south: but I apprehend he may be mistaken here, both in his facts, and the reasons of them—Invasions have not always been made from north to south: for the Roman arms penetrated very far to the north of their territory; the first great conquerors of the east, in Egypt and Babylon,

carried their arms to the north: and where the conquest ran the other way, it was owing to other circumstances; and Dean Swift says, much nearer the truth, it was from poverty to plenty.

The design of this digression is to show, that not only the circumstances that appear in a language, but several others that have also been attributed to climate, owe very little to it, but to the state of mankind, and the progress of society. The maxim of that great modern writer, Montesquieu, which he applies to population, is also true of language—That natural causes are not, by far, so powerful as moral causes. Allowing, therefore, as some have affirmed, that the northern climates may give a roughness and harshness to the accent and pronunciation, I believe it is all that we can expect from climate; the distinction of styles and composition must come from another original.

LECTURE X.

HAVING, in a great measure, rejected the supposition, of the style in writing being affected by the climate, and shown that it rather takes its colour from the state of society, and the sentiments and manners of men, it follows, that all the great distinctions that take place in manners will have a correspondent effect upon language spoken, or written. When the manners of a people are little polished, there is a plainness or a roughness in the style. Absolute monarchies, and the obsequious

subjection introduced at the courts of princes, occasion a pompous swelling and compliment to be in request, different from the boldness, and sometimes ferocity, of republican states.

Seneca, in remarking upon the Roman language, says, Genus dicendi mutatur per publicos mores, &c. This he exemplifies in the Roman language, which was short and dry, in the earliest ages, afterwards become elegant and ornate, and at last loose and diffuse.

The style of an age, also, is sometimes formed by some one or more eminent persons, who, having obtained reputation, every thing peculiar to them is admired and copied, and carried much into excess. Seneca has remarked this also, that commonly one author obtains the palm, and becomes the model, and all copy him. Hæc vitia unus aliquis inducit. And he gives a very good example of it, of which we may now judge, in Sallust. He also very properly observes, that all the faults that arise from imitation become worse in the imitator than in the example. Thus reproving the fault just now mentioned in our ancestors.

It is remarkable that Seneca himself was another example of the same thing. His manner of writing, which is peculiar, came to be the standard of the age. His manner has been called by critics, point and antithesis. A short sentence containing a strong sentiment, or a beautiful one, as it were, like a maxim by itself. For an example or two of this; to express the destruction of Lyons he says, Lugdunum quod ostendebatur, &c. That Lyons, which was formerly shown, is now sought.

And on the same subject—Una nox, &c. There was but one night between a great city and none. Quid est eques Romanus, &c. What! is a Roman knight a freed man or slave! names generated by ambition or oppression.

The fault of this sententious manner of writing does not lie in the particulars being blameable, but in the repetition and uniformity becoming tedious—when every paragraph is stuffed with sentences and bright sayings, generally having the same tune, it wearies the ear. The most remarkable book in the English language for putting continual smartness, sentence and antithesis, for elegance, is the Gentleman instructed. I shall read you one paragraph—The misfortune of one breathes vigour into the others: They carry on manfully the attack—Their heads run round with the glasses. Their tongues ride post. Their wits are jaded. Their reason is distanced. Brutes could not talk better, nor men worse. Like skippers in a storm, they rather hallooed than spoke. Scarce one heard his neighbour, and not one understood him; so that noise stood for sense, and every one passed for a virtuoso, because all played the fool to extravagance.

I shall not enlarge much farther upon the difference of style arising from the character of an age, as in the ages before the reformation, called the times of chivalry, when military prowess was the great thing in request—their gallantry and heroism were to be seen in every writer.—At the time of the reformation and the revival of learning, their citations of the ancient writers and allusions to the classic phrases distinguished every author.

In the age of the civil wars of England, of which religion was so much the cause, allusions to singular expressions, and theological opinions, are every where to be met with, of which the great Milton is an example.

But there is another distinction of styles, which is chiefly personal, and will distinguish one author from another in the same age, and perhaps of the same or nearly the same abilities. There are several different epithets given to style in our language, which I shall mention in a certain order, which I suppose will contribute something to explain the meaning of them. We call a style simple, or plain, smooth, sweet, concise, elegant, ornate, just, nervous, chaste, severe. These are all different epithets, which will each of them convey to a nice critical ear something different, though I confess it is not easy to define them clearly, or explain them fully. Plainness and simplicity is when the author does not seem to have had any thing in view but to be understood, and that by persons of the weakest understanding. That ought to be in view in many writings, and indeed perspicuity will be found to be a character of many styles, when there are other great qualities; but we call that plain and simple, when there is no discovery of literature, and no attempt at the pathetic. Scougal's Life of God in the Soul of Man, and Dr. Evan's Sermons, are admirable patterns of this manner. (2) I would call that a smooth style, when the utmost care had been taken to measure the periods, and to consult the ear on the structure of the sentence; for this I know no author more remarkable than Hervey, in his Meditations. (3.) Sweetness seems

to me to differ from the former only, in that the subjects and the images are generally of a pleasing or soothing nature, such as may particularly be seen in Mrs. Rowe's Letters; perhaps also in a more modern composition by a lady, Lady Mary W. Montague's Letters. And indeed, when female authors have excelled, they generally do excel in sweetness. (4) The next is conciseness. This is easily understood, it is just as much brevity as is consistent with perspicuity. It is a beauty in every writing, when other qualities are not hurt by it. But it is peculiarly proper for critical or scientific writing, because there we do not so much expect or want to know the author's sentiments, but as soon as possible to learn the facts, to understand them fully, and range them methodically. There are many more authors who excel in this respect in the French, than in the English language. Not only the scientific writings, but even political and moral writings, are drawn up by them with great conciseness. There cannot be greater conciseness than in Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws. Brown's Estimate of the manners and principles of the times seems to be an imitation of that author in his manner. In essay writing, David Hume seems to have as happily joined conciseness and perspicuity as most of our English writers. Some pious writers have been as successful this way as most of our nation; such as Mason's Sayings, and Mason on Self-knowledge. (5) A style is called elegant, when it formed by the principles of true taste, and much pains is taken to use the best and purest expressions that the language will afford. It is very com-

mon to join together ease and elegance. The great patterns we have of these are, Addison and Tillotson. Seed's Sermons too may be mentioned here, as very much excelling in both these qualities; so also does David Hume. The other Hume, author of the Elements of Criticism, though a very good judge of writing, seems, in point of style, to be very defective himself. If he has any talent, it is conciseness and plainness; but he is at the same time often abrupt and harsh. (6.) An ornate style may be said to be something more than elegant, introducing into a composition all the beauties of language, where they can find a place with propriety. I mentioned before, that Hervey's style, in his Meditations, was exceedingly smooth and flowing. I may add, it has also the qualities of elegant and ornate. That style is elegant, which is correct and free from faults; that is ornate, which abounds with beauties. (7.) The next character of style is, that it is just. By this I understand, a particular attention to the truth and meaning of every expression. Justness is frequently joined with, or otherwise expressed by precision; so that (if I may speak so) together with a taste which will relish and produce an elegance of language, there is a judgment and accuracy which will abide the scrutiny of philosophy and criticism. Many well turned periods and showy expressions will be found defective here. This justness of style is scarcely ever found without clearness of understanding, so that it appears in accuracy of method, in the whole discourse, as well as in the style of particular parts. Dr. Samuel Clark was a great example of

this. He was one of those few mathematicians who were good writers, and while he did not lose the life and fervour of the orator, preserved the precision of the natural philosopher. (8.) Nervous or strong is the next character of style, and this implies that in which the author does not wholly neglect elegance and precision. But he is much more attentive to dignity and force. A style that is very strong and nervous, might often receive a little additional polish by a few more epithets or copulatives, but cannot descend to such minuteness. It is a fine expression of Richard Baxter, upon style, "May I speak plainly "and pertinently, and somewhat nervously, I "have my purpose." Baxter was a great example of a nervous style, with great neglect of elegance, and Dean Swift is an illustrious example of the same sort of diction, with a very considerable attention to elegance. Both the one and the other seem to write in the fulness of their hearts, and to me, without scruple, those terms are commonly best, that first present themselves to a fertile invention and warm imagination, without waiting to choose, in their room, those that might be more smooth or sonorous, but less emphatic. (9.) Chastity of style, I think, stands particularly opposed to any embellishments that are not natural and necessary. Nay, we generally mean, by a very chaste writer, one who does not admit even all the ornaments that he might, and what ornaments he does admit are always of the most decent kind, and the most properly executed. (10.) Severity of style has this title only, by way of comparison. That is a severe style, which has

propriety, elegance and force, but seems rather to be above, and to disdain the ornaments which every body else would approve, and the greatest part of readers would desire.

LECTURE XI.

WE come now to the third general head, which was to speak of oratory, as it is divided into the several parts which constitute the art. These have been generally the following, invention, disposition, style or composition, pronunciation, including gesture.

1. Invention. This is nothing else but finding out the sentiments by which a speaker or writer would explain what he has to propose, and the arguments by which he would enforce it. This subject is treated of very largely in most of the books of oratory, in which I think they judge very wrong. In by far the greatest number of cases, there is no necessity of teaching it, and where it is necessary, I believe it exceeds the power of man to teach it with effect. The very first time, indeed, that a young person begins to compose, the thing is so new to him, that it is apt to appear dark and difficult, and in a manner impossible. But as soon as he becomes a little accustomed to it, he finds much more difficulty in selecting what is proper, than in inventing something that seems to be tolerable. There are some persons, I confess, whom their own stupidity, or that of their relations, forces to attempt public speaking, who are

entirely barren, and not able to bring out any thing, either good or bad; but this is exceedingly rare, and when it does happen, it will be so burdensome to the man himself, that he must speedily give over the attempt. There are infinitely more who have plenty of matter, such as it is, but neither very valuable in itself, nor clothed in proper language. I think it happens very generally, that those who are least concise and accurate are most lengthy and voluminous.

I will therefore not spend much time upon invention, leaving it to the spontaneous production of capacity and experience; only observe that it is called a common place, from whence you draw your argument. That principle of law, nature, taste, experience, from which you fetch your topic, and apply it to your particular case, is a common place; as, for example, if I want to prove that a strict discipline in a society is best, I say that discipline which will, in the most effectual manner, restrain offences is certainly the best; this is the topic, or common place.

It would be needless to point out the sources of invention, or show from whence arguments may be drawn, for they may be drawn from all the characters and qualities of an action or person, and from all the circumstances that accompany it. If I mean to aggravate a crime or injury, I say it was done deliberately, obstinately, repeatedly, without temptation, against many warnings, and much kindness; that its effects are very bad to a man's self, to others, to the character, the person, the estate, &c. If I want to speak in praise of a

free government, I mention its happy effects in giving security and happiness, promoting industry, encouraging genius, producing value; and then I apply to experience, and show the happiness of free states, and the misery of those that have been kept in slavery: but I repeat the remark, that invention need not be taught, unless it be to one that never yet composed a sentence. There have been books of common places published, containing arguments and topics for illustration, and even similitudes—sayings of the ancients, &c. but they are of very little use, unless to a person that has no fund of his own, and then one that makes use of them is like a man walking on stilts; they make him look very big, but he walks very feebly.

2. The next division of the oratorial art is disposition, or distribution. This is a matter of the utmost moment, and upon which instruction is both necessary and useful. By disposition, as a part of the oratorial art, I mean order in general, in the whole of a discourse or any kind of composition, be it what it will. As to the parts of which a single speech or oration consists, they will be afterwards considered. Before I proceed to explain or point out the way to attain good order, I would just mention a few of its excellencies.

(1) Good order in a discourse gives light, and makes it easily understood. If things are thrown together without method, each of them will be less understood, and their joint influence in leading to a conclusion will not be perceived. It is a noble expression of Horace, who calls it *lucidos ordo*, clear order. It is common to say, when we

hear a confused discourse, "It had neither head nor tail, I could not understand what he would be at." (2) Order is necessary to force, as well as light; this indeed is a necessary consequence of the other, for we shall never be persuaded by what we do not understand. Very often the force of reasoning depends upon the united influence of several distinct propositions. If they are ranged in a just order, they will all have their effect, and support one another; if otherwise, it will be like a number of men attempting to raise a weight, and one pulling at one time, and another at another, which will do just nothing; but if all exert their power at once, it will be easily overcome.

(3.) Order is also useful for assisting memory. Order is necessary even in a discourse that is to have a transient effect; but if any thing is intended to produce a lasting conviction, and to have a daily influence, it is still more necessary. When things are disposed in a proper order, the same concatenation that is in the discourse takes place in the memory, so that when one thing is remembered, it immediately brings to remembrance what has an easy and obvious connexion with it. The association of ideas linked together by any tie is very remarkable in our constitution, and is supposed to take place from some impression made upon the brain. If we have seen two persons but once, and seen them both at the same time only, or at the same place only, the remembrance of the one can hardly be separated from the other. I may also illustrate the subject by another plain instance. Suppose I desire a person going to a city to do three or four things for me

that are wholly unconnected, as to deliver a letter to one person—to visit a friend of mine, and to bring me notice how he is—to buy a certain book for me, if he can find it—and to see whether any ship be to sail for Britain soon, it is very possible he may remember some of them, and forget the others; but if I desire him to buy me a dozen of silver spoons, to carry them to an engraver to put my name upon them, and get a case to put them in, if he remembers one article, it is likely he will remember all of them. It is one of the best evidences that a discourse has been composed with distinctness and accuracy, if after you go away you can remember a good deal of it; but there are sometimes discourses which are pompous and declamatory, and which you hear with pleasure, and some sort of approbation, but if you attempt to recollect the truths advanced, or the arguments in support of them, there is not a trace of them to be found.

(4) Order conduces also very much to beauty. Order is never omitted when men give the principles of beauty, and confusion is disgustful just on its own account, whatever the nature of the confused things may be. If you were to see a vast heap of fine furniture, of different kinds, lying in confusion, you could neither perceive half so distinctly what was there, nor could it at all have such an effect, as if every thing was disposed in a just order, and placed where it ought to stand; nay, a much smaller quantity, elegantly disposed, would exceed in grandeur of appearance a heap of the most costly things in nature.

(5) Order is also necessary to brevity. A con-

fused discourse is almost never short, and is always filled with repetitions. It is with thought, in this respect, as with things visible; for to return to the former similitude, A confused heap of goods or furniture fills much more room than when it is ranged and classed in its proper order, and every thing carried to its proper place.

Having shown the excellence of precision and method, let us next try to explain what it is, and that I may have some regard to method while I am speaking of the very subject, I shall take it in three lights. (1) There must be an attention to order in the disposition of the whole piece. Whatever the parts be in themselves, they have also a relation to one another, and to the whole body, (if I may speak so) that they are to compose. Every work, be it what it will, history, epic poem, dramatic poem, oration, epistle, or essay, is to be considered as a whole, and a clearness of judgment in point of method will decide the place and proportion of the several parts of which they are composed. The loosest essay, or where form is least professed or studied, ought yet to have some shape as a whole, and we may say of it, that it begins abruptly or ends abruptly, or some of the parts are misplaced. There are often to be seen pieces in which good things are said, and well said, and have only this fault, that they are unseasonable and out of place. Horace says, in his art of poetry, what is equally applicable to every sort of composition, "Denique sit quod vis "simplex duntaxat et unum," and shortly after, "In felix operis summa, quia ponere totum nesciet."

This judgment in planning the whole will particularly enable a person to determine both as to the place and proportion of the particular parts, whether they be not only good in themselves, but fit to be introduced in such a work, and it will also (If I may speak so) give a colour to the whole composition. The necessity of order in the whole structure of a piece shows, that the rule is good which is given by some, that an orator, before he begin his discourse, should concentrate the subject as it were, and reduce it to one single proposition, either expressed, or at least conceived in his mind. Every thing should grow out of this as its root, if it be in another principle to be explained; or refer to this as its end, if it be a point to be gained by persuasion. Having thus stated the point clearly to be handled, it will afford a sort of criterion whether any thing adduced is proper or improper. It will suggest the topics that are just and suitable, as well as enable us to reject whatever is in substance improper, or in size disproportionate to the design. Agreeably to this principle, I think that not only the subject of a single discourse should be reduceable to one proposition, but the general divisions or principal heads should not be many in number. A great number of general heads both burdens the memory, and breaks the unity of the subject, and carries the idea of several little discourses joined together, or to follow after one another.

2. Order is necessary in the subdivisions of a subject, or the way of stating and marshalling of the several portions of any general head. This is applicable to all kinds of composition, and all

kinds of oratory, sermons, law pleadings, speeches. There is always a division of the parts, as well as of the whole, either expressed formally and numerically, or supposed, though suppressed. And it is as much here as any where, that the confusion of inaccurate writers and speakers appears. It is always necessary to have some notion of the whole of a piece, and the larger divisions being more bulky, to so speak, disposition in them is more easily perceived, but in the smaller, both their order and size is in danger of being less attended to. Observe, therefore, that to be accurate and just, the subdivisions of any composition, such I mean as are (for example) introduced in a numerical series, 1, 2, 3, &c. should have the following properties: (1.) They should be clear and plain. Every thing indeed should be clear, as far as he can make it, but precision and distinctness should especially appear in the subdivisions, just as the bounding lines of countries in a map. For this reason the first part of a subdivision should be like a short definition, and when it can be done, it is best expressed in a single term; for example, in giving the character of a man of learning, I may propose to speak of his genius, his erudition, his industry, or application.

(2.) They should be truly distinct; that is, every body should perceive that they are really different from one another, not in phrase or word only, but in sentiment. If you praise a man first for his judgment, and then for his understanding; they are either altogether or so nearly the same, or so nearly allied, as not to require distinction. I have heard a minister on John xvii. 11. Holy

Father, &c. in showing how God keeps his people, says, (1) He keeps their feet. He shall keep thy feet from from falling. (2.) He keeps their way. Thou shalt keep him in all his ways. Now, it is plain that these are not two different things, but two metaphors for the same thing. This indeed was faulty also in another respect; for a metaphor ought not to make a division at all.

(3.) Subdivisions should be necessary; that is to say, taking the word in the loose and popular sense, the subject should seem to demand them. To multiply divisions, even where they may be made really distinct, is tedious, and disgustful, unless where they are of use and importance to our clearly comprehending the meaning, or feeling the force of what is said. If a person in the map of a country should give a different colour to every three miles, though the equality of the proportion would make the division clear enough, yet it would appear disgustingly superfluous. In writing the history of an eminent person's life, to divide it into spaces of 10 years, perhaps, would make the view of the whole more exact; but to divide it into single years or months would be finical and disagreeable. The increase of divisions leads almost unavoidably into tediousness.

(4.) Subdivisions should be co-ordinate; that is to say, those that go on in a series, 1, 2, 3, &c. should be as near as possible similar, or of the same kind. This rule is transgressed when either the things mentioned are wholly different in kind, or when they include one another. This will be well perceived, if we consider how a man would describe a sensible subject, a country, for exam-

ple; New-Jersey contains (1) Middlesex. (2) Somerset county. (3) The townships of Princeton, (4) Morris county. So, if one, in describing the character of a real christian, should say, faith, holiness, charity, justice, temperance, patience, this would not do, because holiness includes justice, &c. When, therefore, it seems necessary to mention different particulars, that cannot be made coordinate, they should be made subordinate.

(5.) Subdivisions should be complete, and exhaust the subject. This indeed is common to all divisons, but is of most importance here, where it is most neglected. It may be said, perhaps, how can we propose to exhaust any subject? By making the divisions suitable, particularly in point of comprehension, to the nature of the subject; as an example, and to make use of the image before introduced of giving an account of a country —I may say, the province of New-Jersey consists of two parts, East and West-Jersey. If I say it consists of the counties of Somerset, &c. I must continue till I have enumerated all the counties, otherwise the division is not complete. In the same manner, in public speaking, or any other composition, whatever division is made, it is not legitimate, if it does not include or exhaust the whole subject, which may be done, let it be ever so great. For example: true religion may be divided various ways, so as to include the whole. I may say, that it consists of our duty to God, our neighbour and ourselves—or I may make but two, our duty to God and man, and divide the last into two subordinate heads, our neighbour, and ourselves—or I may say, it consists

of faith and practice—or that it consists of two parts, a right frame and temper of mind, and a good life and conversation.

(6.) Lastly, the sub-divisions of any subject should be connected, or should be taken in a series or order, if they will possibly admit of it. In some moral and intellectual subjects it may not be easy to find any series or natural order, as in an enumeration of virtues, justice, temperance and fortitude. Patience perhaps might as well be enumerated in any other order; yet there is often an order that will appear natural, and the inversion of it unnatural—as we may say, injuries are done many ways to a man's person, character and possessions. Love to others includes the relation of family, kindred, citizens, country-men, fellow-creatures.

(3.) In the last place there is also an order to be observed in the sentiments, which makes the illustration or amplification of the divisions of a discourse. This order is never expressed by numerical divisions, yet it is of great importance, and its beauty and force will be particularly felt. It is, if I may speak so, of a finer and more delicate nature than any of the others, more various, and harder to explain. I once have said, that all reasoning is of the nature of a syllogism, which lays down principles, makes comparisons, and draws the conclusion. But we must particularly guard against letting the uniformity and formality of a syllogism appear. In general, whatever establishes any connection, so that it makes the sentiments give rise to one another, is the occasion of order—sometimes necessity and utility point

out the order as a good measure—As in telling a story, grave or humorous, you must begin by describing the persons concerned, mentioning just as many circumstances of their character and situation as are necessary to make us understand the facts to be afterwards related. Sometimes the sensible ideas of time and place suggest an order, not only in historical narrations and in law pleadings, which relate to facts, but in drawing of characters, describing the progress and effects of virtue and vice, and even in other subjects, where the connexion between those ideas and the thing spoken of, is not very strong.—Sometimes, and indeed generally, there is an order which proceeds from things plain to things obscure. The beginning of a paragraph should be like the sharp point of a wedge, which gains admittance to the bulky part behind. It first affirms what every body feels or must confess, and proceeds to what follows as a necessary consequence: In fine, there is an order in persuasion to a particular choice, which may be taken two ways with equal advantage, proceeding from the weaker to the stronger, or from the stronger to the weaker. As, in recommending a pious and virtuous life, we may first say it is amiable, honourable, pleasant, profitable, even in the present life; and, to crown all, makes death itself a friend, and leads to a glorious immortality; or, we may begin the other way, and say it is the one thing needful, that eternity is the great and decisive argument that should determine our choice, though every thing else were in favour of vice; and then add, that even in the present life, it is a great mistake to think that bad

men are gainers, &c. This is called sometimes the ascending and descending climax. Each of them has its beauty and use. It must be left to the orator's judgment to determine which of the two is either fittest for the present purpose, or which he finds himself at that time able to execute to the greatest advantage.

LECTURE XII.

THE next branch of this division is style, or composition. This, which is so great a part of the subject, has already been considered in one view, under the three great kinds of writing, and will again be mentioned under the two following heads, as well as the remarks at the close: yet I will drop a few things upon it in this place. 1. It is necessary that a writer or speaker should be well acquainted with the language in which he speaks, its characters, properties and defects, its idioms, or peculiar terms and phrases, and likewise with as many other languages as possible, particularly such as are called the learned languages, the Latin and Greek.—Our own language is the English. A thorough acquaintance with it must be acquired by extensive reading in the best authors, giving great attention to the remarks made by critics of judgment and erudition, and trying it ourselves in practice. Our language, like most of the northern languages, is rough, with a frequent meeting of consonants, difficult of pronunciation; it abounds in monosyllables. You may write a

whole page, and scarce use one word that has more than one syllable; this is a defect, and to be avoided when it can be done consistently with other properties, particularly simplicity and perspicuity. Our language is said to have an overproportion of the letter S, and therefore called a hissing language. This a writer of judgment will endeavour to avoid, wherever he can do it with propriety and elegance. A thorough acquaintance with the genius and idioms of our own language can scarcely be attained, without some acquaintance with others, because it is comparison of one with another which illustrates all. There are not only smaller differences between one language and another, but there are some general differences in the arrangement of words, in the ancient and modern languages: in the Greek and Latin, the governed words are pretty generally before the verb. It is a mistake for us to say that the English order is the natural order, as some have done.—It is certain that they are either both alike natural and equally obvious, when once custom has fixed them, or that the ancient order is the more natural of the two. There are two things, the action and the object, to be conjoined, and it is fully as proper to turn your attention first to the object, before you tell what you are to say of it, or what you would have done with it, as after. Istud scalpellum quod in manu habes, commoda mihi paulisper, si placet: and in longer and more involved sentences, the suspending the sentiment for some time, till it be compleated, is both more pleasing and more forcible. Our own language admits of a little transposition, and be-

comes grander and more sonorous by it, both in poetry and prose.

2. We may attend to the arrangement of the clauses of a sentence, and their proportion and sound. Every sentence may be considered as having so many clauses or members, which have, each of them some meaning, but which is not complete till it is closed. Every sentence is capable of receiving some degree of harmony by a proper structure; this it receives, when the most important ideas and the most sonorous expressions occupy the chief places; but what, you will say, are the chief places? We naturally, says an eminent French author on this subject, love to present our most interesting ideas first; but this order, which is dictated by self-love, is contrary to what we are directed to by the art of pleasing. —The capital law of this art is, to prefer others to ourselves, and therefore the most striking and interesting ideas come with the greatest beauty, as well as force, in the close. Where the difference does not lie in the ideas, the words or phrases that are most long and sonorous ought to be so distinguished; this rule, however, will admit some exception, when we are to persuade or instruct, for we must never seem to have sweetness and cadence chiefly in view.

The rule of placing in a sentence the most important ideas and expressions last, was taken notice of by ancient writers. In verbis observandum est, says one of them, ut a majoribus ad minus descendat oratio, melius enim dicitur, vir est optimus, quam vir optimus est. Sometimes several monosyllables terminate a sentence well enough,

because in pronunciation they run into one, and seem to the hearers little different from a single word. It is an observation, that the ear itself often directs to the rule upon this subject. Some French critics observe that some syllables in their language, which are usually short, are produced in the end of a sentence; for instance, Je suis votre serviteur monsieur, je suis le votre; where *votre* is short in the first sentence, and long in the second; and I believe the same thing would happen in translating that sentence literally into English.

The harmony of sentences is preserved either by a measured proportion, or regular gradation of the clauses: Cicero says upon this subject, Si membra, &c. In every sentence consisting of two members only, every body's ear will make them sensible, that the last clause after the pause of the voice ought to be longest; as in Shakespear, But yesterday, &c. In longer sentences there must be a greater variety, and several causes must contribute to determine the length of the clauses; but it is plain the last must be longer than the preceding; and sometimes a regular gradation of more than two clauses has a very happy effect; such as these of Cicero, Quorum quæstor fueram, &c. Again he says, in the same oration, Habet honorem, &c. There is another order, in which there are two equal, and one unequal member, and in that case, when the unequal member is shortest, it ought to be placed first; when it is longest, it ought to be placed last, as in the two following examples; Testis est Africa, &c. and, Eripite nos ex miseris, &c. There is another

structure of the members of a sentence, in which this rule is departed from, and yet it pleases, because of a certain exact proportion, as that of Monsieur Fenelon, Dans sa douleur, &c. The first and last members are equal, and that which is in the middle is just double to each of them.

Perhaps it will be asked, must an author then give attention to this precise measure? Must he take a pair of scales or compasses, to measure every period he composes? By no means. Nothing would be more frigid and unsuccessful; but it was proper thus to analyse the subject, and show in what manner the ear is pleased; at the same time there is so great a variety and compass in the measures of prose, that it is easy to vary the structure and cadence, and make every thing appear quite simple and natural. This leads me to the third remark upon style.

3. That variety is to be particularly studied. If a writer thinks any particular structure necessary, and forces every thing he has to say just into that form, it will be highly disagreeable, or if he is much enamoured with one particular kind of ornament, and brings it in too frequently, it will immediately disgust. There is a mixture in the principles of taste, a desire of uniformity and variety, simplicity and intricacy, and it is by the happy union of all these, that delight is most effectually produced. What else is necessary upon style will fall, very properly, under some of the following heads.

The last part of the oratorial art is pronunciation, including gesture. This is of the utmost, and indeed of universally confessed importance. The effects of the different manner of delivering the same

thing are very great. It is a famous subject, largely treated of by all critical writers. It seems to have been nicely studied by the ancients, and if we may judge from some circumstances, their action has been often very violent. We are told of Cicero, that when he first went to the bar, the violence of his action, and what is called contentio laterum, was such as endangered his constitution, so that he took a journey for his health, and on his return took to a more cool and managed way of speaking. There is also somewhere in his writings, an expression to this purpose, nec fuit etiam, quod minimum est, supplosio pedis. As if stamping with the foot had been one of the least violent motions then in use. We cannot judge of this matter very well at such a distance. There is a difference in the turn of different nations upon this subject. The French and Italians have much more warmth and fire in their manner than the British. I remember once to have been told that no man could perceive the beauty of Raphael's picture of Paul preaching at Athens, unless he had seen a Frenchman or Italian in the pulpit. Leaving you to read and digest all the critcisims and remarks upon this subject to be met with in different authors, I shall only give a few directions, that I esteem most useful, for avoiding improprieties and attaining some degree of excellence in this respect.

1. Study great sincerity; try to forget every purpose but the very end of speaking, information and persuasion. Labour after that sort of presence of mind which arises from self-denial, rather than from courage. Nothing produces

more aukwardness than confusion and embarrassment. Bring a clown into a magnificent palace, and let him have to appear in the presence of persons of high rank, and the fear and solicitude he has, about his own carriage and discourse, makes both the one and the other much more absurd and aukward than it would have otherwise been.

2. Learn distinct articulation, and attend to all the common rules of reading which are taught in the English grammars. Articulation is, giving their full force and powers to the consonants as as well as to the vowels. The difference between a well articulated discourse and one defective in this respect is, that the first you will hear distinctly as far as you can hear the voice; the other you will hear sound enough, yet not understand almost any thing that is said. Practice in company is a good way to learn this and several other excellencies in discourse.

3. Another rule is, to keep to the tone and key of dialogue, or common conversation, as much as possible. In common discourse, where there is no affectation, men speak properly. At least, though even here there are differences from nature—some speaking with more sweetness and grace than others, yet there is none that falls into any of those unnatural rants or ridiculous gestures, that are sometimes to be seen in public speakers.

4. It is of considerable consequence to be accustomed to decency of manners in the best company. This gives an ease of carriage and a sense of delicacy, which is of great use in forming the deportment of an orator.

5. In the last place, every one should consider not only what is the manner best in itself, or even best suited to the subject, but what is also best suited to his own capacity. One of a quick animated spirit by nature may allow himself a much greater violence of action, than one of a colder disposition. If this last works himself up to violence, or studies to express much passion, he will not probably be able to carry it through, but will relapse into his own natural manner, and by the sensible difference between one part of his discourse and another render himself ridiculous. Solemnity of manner should be substituted by all such persons in the room of fire.

LECTURE XIII.

WE come now to the fourth general division of this subject, which is, that its object or end is different. The ends a writer or speaker may be said to aim at are, information, demonstration, persuasion, and entertainment. I need scarce tell you that these are not so wholly distinct, but that they are frequently intermixed, and that more than one of them may be in view at the same time. Persuasion is also used in a sense that includes them all. The intention of all speech, or writing, which is but recorded speech, is to persuade, taking the word with latitude. Yet I think you will easily perceive that there are very different sorts of composition, in some of which one of the above mentioned purposes, and in others a different one,

takes the lead, and gives the colour to the whole performance. Great benefit will arise from keeping a clear view of what is the end proposed. It will preserve the writer from a vicious and mistaken taste. The same thoughts, the same phraseology, the same spirit in general, running through a writing, is highly proper in one case, and absurd in another. There is a beauty in every kind of writing when it is well done, and impropriety or bad taste will sometimes show themselves in pieces very inconsiderable—If it were but inditing a message card, penning an article in a news-paper, or drawing up an advertisement, persons accustomed to each of these will be able to keep to the common form, or beaten track; but if any thing different is to be said, good sense and propriety, or their contraries, will soon show themselves.

The writings which have information as their chief purpose, are history, fable, epistolary writing, the common intercourse of business or friendship, and all the lower kinds. The properties which should reign in them are the following. (1) Plainness. (2) Fulness, (3) Precision, and (4) Order. Plainness it is evident they ought to have; and indeed not barely perspicuity, so as to be intelligible, but an unaffected simplicity, so as not to seem to have any thing higher in view than to be understood. (2) When we say that fulness is a property of writings which have information as their purpose, it is not meant to recommend a long or diffuse narration, but to intimate that nothing should be omitted in giving an account of any thing, which is of importance to its being truly and completely understood. Let a writer be

as large as he pleases in what he says, if he omits circumstances as essential as those he mentions, and which the reader would naturally desire to know, he is not full. Many are very tedious, and yet not full. The excellence of a narrative is to contain as many ideas as possible, provided they are interesting, and to convey them in as few words as possible, consistently with perspicuity. (3) Precision, as a quality of narration, belongs chiefly to language. Words should be chosen that are truly expressive of the thing in view, and all ambiguous as well as superfluous phrases carefully avoided. The reader is impatient to get to the end of a story, and therefore he must not be stopped by any thing but what you are sure he would be glad to know before he proceeds further. (4) The last particular is order, which is necessary in all writings, but especially in narration. There it lies chiefly in time and place, and a breach of order in these respects is more easily discerned and more universally offensive than in any other. Common hearers do not always know when you violate order in ranging the arguments on a moral subject; but if you bring in a story abruptly, or tell it confusedly, either in a letter or a discourse, it will be instantly perceived, and those will laugh at you, who could not tell it a whit better themselves.

Imagination is not to be much used in writings of the narrative kind. Its chief use in such writings is in description. A man of a warm fancy will paint strongly, and a man of a sentimental turn will interest the affections even by a mere recital of facts. But both the one and the other should be kept in great moderation; for a warm

fancy is often joined to credulity, and the sentimental person is given to invention: so that he will turn a real history into half a romance. In history a certain cool and dispassionate dignity is the leading beauty. The writer should appear to have no interest in characters or events, but deliver them as he finds them. The character which an illustrious historian acquires from this self-denial, and being, as it were, superior to all the personages, how great soever, of whom he treats, has something awful and venerable in it. It is distinguished, by this circumstance, from the applause given to the poet or orator.

Demonstration is the end in view in all scientific writings, whether essays, systems, or controversy. The excellencies of this kind of writing may be reduced to the three following: Perspicuity, order, and strength. The two first are necessary here, as every where else, and the composition should be strong and nervous, to produce a lasting conviction; more force of language is to be admitted, at least more generally in this kind than in the former; but a great deal less of imagination and fancy than even there. Whenever a scientific writer begins to paint and adorn, he is forgetting himself and disgusting his reader. This will be sensibly felt, if you apply it to the mathematics. The mathematician is conversant only with sensible ideas, and therefore the more naked and unadorned every thing that he says is, so much the better. How would it look, if a mathematician should say, do you see this beautiful, small, taper, acute angle? It always approaches to this absurdity, when, in searching after abstract truth, wri-

ters introduce imagination and fancy. I am sensible that, having mentioned controversy as belonging to this class, many may be surprised that I have excluded imagination altogether, since commonly all controversial writers do, to the utmost of their ability, enlist imagination in the service of Reason. There is nothing they are so fond of, as exposing the weakness of their adversaries by strokes of raillery and humour. This I did on purpose that I may state this matter to you clearly. Controversy should mean, and very generally such writers pretend to mean, weighing the arguments on each side of a contested question, in order to discover the truth. What strong professions of impartiality have we sometimes from the very champions of a party quarrel? while yet it is plain that searching after truth is what they never think of, but maintaining, by every art, the cause which they have already espoused.

I do not deny that there are sometimes good reasons for making use of satire and ridicule, in controversies of the political kind, and sometimes it is necessary in self-defence. If any writer in behalf of a party attempts to expose his adversaries to public scorn, he ought not to be surprised, if the measure he metes to others is measured out to him again. What is unlawful in the aggressor, becomes justifiable, if not laudable, in the defender. Sometimes it is necessary to expose tyrants or persons in power, who do not reason, but punish, and sometimes it is necessary to bring down self-sufficient persons, with whom there is no dealing, till their pride is levelled a little with this dismaying weapon. Dr. Brown has set this matter

in a very clear light in his Essays on the Characteristics, where he says, that ridicule is not the test of truth, but it may be very useful to expose and disgrace known falshood.

But when controversy is really an impartial search after truth, it is the farthest distant imaginable, either from passionate declamation on the one hand, or sallies of wit and humour on the other. There is one instance of a controversy carried on between Dr. Butler and Dr. Clark, upon the subject of space and personal identity, in which there did not seem to be any design upon either side, but to discover the truth. It ended in the entire conviction and satisfaction of one of them, which he readily and openly acknowledged: and I think in such an instance there is much greater glory to be had in yielding, than in conquering. There is great honor in candidly acknowledging a mistake, but not much in obtaining a victory in support of truth. It is worth while just to mention, that this was far from being the case in another controversy before two, who were also very great men, Mr. Locke and Dr. Stillingfleet, upon innate ideas. They not only supported each his sentiments, with warmth and keenness, but descended to all the malice of personal reproach, and all the littleness of verbal criticism.

The next great end that may be in view is persuasion. This being the great and general subject of oratory, has had most said upon it in every age. That you may understand what I mean by distinguishing it from information, demonstration, and entertainment, observe, that persuasion is when we would bring the reader or hearer to a

determinate choice, either immediately upon the spot for a particular decision, as in an assembly or court of justice, or in a more slow and lasting way, as in religious and moral writings. But particularly persuasion is understood to be in view, as the effect of a single discourse. When this is the purpose, there are opportunities for all the ways of speaking within the compass of the oratorial art. There are times when an orator must narrate simply—there are times when he must reason strongly—and there are times when he may wound satirically. It must be remembered, however, that too great an infusion of wit takes away both from the dignity and force of an oration. We shall see under the next head that it cannot be admitted in religious instruction; but when you are speaking against an adversary that is proud and conceited, or when you want to make your hearers despise any person or thing, as well as hate them, wit and satire may be of use. A minister of state is very often attacked in this way with propriety, and success. It is sometimes allowed to relieve the spirits of the audience when they begin to flag. In this view Cicero recommends the *urbanitas*, and practises it himself; but at the same time he intimates, that it should be done sparingly, and with caution—*Quo tanquam sale conspergatur oratio.* Wit, therefore, is to be absolutely excluded from scientific writings, and very rarely to be used in serious persuasion.

The last end of speaking and writing I shall mention, is entertainment. This includes all such writings as have the amusement or entertainment of the hearers or readers as the only, the chief, or

at least one, great end of the composition. This is the case with all poetical compositions. They may pretend to write for the instruction of others, but to please them and obtain their favour is probably more their purpose. At any rate they must content themselves with taking in both, and say with Horace, *Et prodesse volunt & delectare poetæ.* Sweetness, tenderness, and elegance of style, ought to characterize these sorts of composition. Here is the greatest room for imagination and fancy. Here is the dominion of wit and humour. It is an observation of some, that the word *humour* is peculiar to the English language; that the *eutrapelia* in Greek, *sales & urbanitas* in Latin, have all the same meaning with our general term *wit;* but that *humour* denotes a particular kind of wit, consisting chiefly of irony. But if the word is peculiar to the English language, it is certain that the thing itself is far from being peculiar to the English nation. Perhaps Homer's Batrychomachia may be said to be the most ancient example of it upon record. Lucian's Dialogues have it in high perfection, though it must be owned that it seems particularly to have flourished in modern times. Fontenelle's Dialogues of the Dead, and Boileau's Satires, are famous examples of it; but none ever exceeded Cervantes, the celebrated author of Don Quixotte. That piece is highly entertaining to an English reader under two great disadvantages. One is, its being translated into another language. Now, wit is more difficult to translate than any other subject of composition. It is easier to translate undiminished the force of eloquence, than the poignancy of wit. The other

disadvantage is, its being written in ridicule of a character that now no more exists; so that we have not the opportunity of comparing the copy with the original.

We must also observe that wit in general, and this species of it in particular, has often appeared in the highest perfection in Britain, both in prose and poetry; Shakespear's dramatic pieces abound with it, and Dr. Donnes' Satires. It is in high perfection in Marvel's Rehearsal transprosed; Alsop's Melius Inquirendum; but, above all, in Swift's writings, prose and verse.

It is observed sometimes, that the talent of humour is often possessed, in a very high degree, by persons of the meanest rank, who are themselves ignorant of it; in them it appears chiefly in conversation, and in a manner that cannot be easily put upon paper. But as to those who think fit to try this manner from the press, they should be well assured before hand, that they really possess the talent. In many other particulars, a real taste for it, and a high admiration of any thing, is a considerable sign of some degree of the talent itself; but it is far from being so in wit and humour. Mr. Pope tells us, that "Gentle dullness ever loves a joke;" and we see every day people aiming at wit, who produce the most miserable and shocking performances: sometimes they do not excite laughter, but loathing or indignation; sometimes they do excite laughter, but it is that of contempt. There is a distinction, which every one should endeavour to understand and remember, between a wit and a droll; the first makes you laugh at what he says, and the object of his

satire, and the second makes you laugh at his own expense, from his absurdity and meanness.

LECTURE XIV.

WE come now to the fifth general division of eloquence, as its subject is different, under which we may consider the three great divisions of the pulpit, the bar, and promiscuous assemblies; all the general principles of composition are common to these three kinds, nor can any man make a truly distinguished figure in any one of them, without being well acquainted with literature and taste. Some peculiarities in different ways of writing have been already touched at, all which I suppose you gave attention to; but there are still some differences, as the scene in which a man is to move in life is different, which are highly worthy of observation. I will therefore consider each of these separately, and try to point out the qualities for which it ought to be distinguished; or delineate the character of an accomplished minister, lawyer and senator.

I begin with the pulpit. Preaching the gospel of Christ is a truly noble employment, and the care of souls a very important trust. The qualities of most importance, I think, are as follow.

1. Piety—To have a firm belief of that gospel he is called to preach, and a lively sense of religion upon his own heart. Duty, interest and utility, all conspire in requiring this qualification; it is of the utmost moment in itself, and what men

will the least dispense with, in one of that profession. All men, good and bad, agree in despising a loose or profane minister. It discovers a terrible degree of depravity of heart, and those that begin so, seldom alter for the better. The very familiar acquaintance which they acquire with serious thoughts and spiritual subjects serves to harden them against the arrows of conviction, and it is little wonder, that for such daring wickedness God should leave them to themselves, or sentence them to perpetual barrenness; but whilst I think it my duty thus to warn you, I must beg leave to guard it against abuse, lest, while we are aggravating the sin of profane ministers, others should think themselves at liberty, who have no view to that sacred office. We have even seen persons decline the sacred office, because they did not think they had true religion, and then with seeming ease and quietness set themselves to some other business, as if in that there was no need of religion at all. Alas! after all that can be said of the guilt and danger of an irreligious minister, there is an infinite danger to every one who shall go out of this life an irreligious man. Will it not be poor consolation, think you, in the hour of sickness or death, that though you must perish everlastingly, you go to hell not as a minister, but a lawyer or a physician. I do truly think this has been a pillow of security to many poor thoughtless souls, and that they have actually rid themselves of conviction by this mistaken comfort, as if there was much merit in it, that they would not be ministers, because they wanted religion. Remember this then, in a single word, that there is neither

profession nor station, from the king on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill, to whom a concern for eternity is not the *one thing needful.*

But let me just take notice of the great advantage of true religion to one destined for the work of the ministry. (1.) It gives a man the knowledge that is of most service to a minister. Experimental knowledge is superior to all other, and necessary to the perfection of every other kind. It is indeed the very possession or daily exercise of that which it is the business of his life, and the duty of his office, to explain and recommend. Experimental knowledge is the best sort in every branch, but it is necessary in divinity, because religion is what cannot be truly understood, unless it is felt.

(2.) True piety will direct a man in the choice of his studies. The object of human knowledge is so extensive, that nobody can go through the whole; but religion will direct the student to what may be most profitable to him, and will also serve to turn into its proper channel all the knowledge he may otherwise acquire.

(3.) It will be a powerful motive to diligence in his studies. Nothing so forcible as that in which eternity has a part. The duty to a good man is so pressing, and the object so important, that he will spare no pains to obtain success.

(4.) True religion will give unspeakable force to what a minister says. There is a piercing and a penetrating heat in that which flows from the heart, which distinguishes it both from the coldness of indifference, and the false fire of enthusiasm and vain-glory. We see that a man, truly pi-

ous, has often esteem, influence and success, though his parts may be much inferior to others, who are more capable, but less conscientious. If, then, piety makes even the weakest venerable, what must it do, when added to the finest natural talents, and the best acquired endowments?

(5.) It adds to a minister's instruction, the weight of his example. It is a trite remark, that example teaches better than precept. It is often a more effectual reprimand to vice, and a more inciting argument to the practice of virtue, than the best of reasoning. Example is more intelligible than precept—Precepts are often involved in obscurity, or warped by controversy; but a holy life immediately reaches, and takes possession of the heart.

If I have lengthened out this particular beyond the proportion of the rest, I hope you will forgive it for its importance, and observe, as the conclusion of the whole, that one devoted to the service of the gospel should be *really*, *visibly*, and *eminently* holy.

2. Another character which should distinguish pulpit eloquence, is simplicity. Simplicity is beautiful every where; it is of importance that young persons should be formed to a taste for it, and more disposed to exceed here than in the opposite extreme, but if I am not mistaken, it is more beautiful, and the transgressions of it more offensive, in the pulpit, than any where else. If I heard a lawyer pleading in such a style and manner, as was more adapted to display his own talents than to carry his client's cause, it would considerably lessen him in my esteem; but if I

heard a minister acting the same part, I should not be satisfied with contempt, but hold him in detestation.

There are several obvious reasons why simplicity is more especially necessary to a minister than any other. (1) Many of his audience are poor ignorant creatures. If he mean to do them any service, he must keep to what they understand, and that requires more simplicity than persons without experience can easily imagine. It is remarkable, that at the first publication it was a character of the gospel that it was preached to the poor. In this our blessed Master was distinguished both from the heathen philosophers and Jewish teachers, who confined their instructions in a great manner to their schools, and imparted what they esteemed their most important discourses to only a few chosen disciples.. (2) Simplicity is necessary to preserve the speaker's character for sincerity. You heard before how necessary piety is, which is the proper parent of sincerity in the pulpit. Now it is not easy to preserve the opinion of piety and sincerity in the pulpit, when there is much ornament. Besides the danger of much affected pomp or foppery of style, a discourse very highly polished, even in the truest taste, is apt to suggest to the audience, that a man is preaching himself and not the cross of Christ. So nice a a matter is this in all public speaking, that some critics say, that Demosthenes put on purpose some errors in grammar in his discourses, that the hearers might be induced to take them for the immediate effusions of the heart, without art, and with

little premeditation. I doubt much the solidity of this remark, or the certainty of the fact; but however it be, there is no occasion for it in the case of a minister, because preparation and premeditation are expected from him, and in that case he may make his discourses abundantly plain and simple without any affected blunders. (3) Simplicity is also necessary, as suited to the gospel itself, the subject of a minister's discourses. Nothing more humbling to the pride of man, than the doctrine of the cross; nothing more unbecoming that doctrine, than too much finery of language. The apostle Paul chose to preach "not with the words which man's wisdom teacheth"—and again, "not with excellency of speech or wisdom," which though I admit that it does not condemn study and sound knowledge, yet it certainly shows that the style of the pulpit should be the most simple and self-denied of any other.

3. Another qualification for a minister, is accuracy, from the utmost diligence in his important work. I place this immediately after the other, to guard it against abuse by excess. To avoid vain affected ornaments is a very different thing from negligence in preparation. The very same apostle, who speaks with so much contempt of human wisdom, yet greatly insists, in writing to Timothy and Titus, on their giving themselves to study, to exhortation, to doctrine, "Meditate upon those things," says he, &c.

Study and accuracy indeed are necessary, that a minister may procure and keep up the attention of his hearers. That he may inform the judgment,

as well as convince the conscience. The ancient fathers have generally insisted upon this, as of much moment. And in our own times I observe that it is necessary, to avoid offending persons of finer taste, who are two much attached to the outside of things, and are immediately disgusted with every error against propriety, and are apt to reproach religion itself, for the weakness or absurdity of those who speak in its behalf. Let no man seek to avoid that reproach which may be his lot, for preaching the truths of the everlasting gospel, but let him always avoid the just reproach of handling them in a mean, slovenly and indecent manner.

4. Another quality of a minister's eloquence should be force and vehemence. I have, in some former parts of the general subject, shown you how and when this is to be most exerted. The design of the present remark is to let you know, that there is no speaker who has a greater right to exert himself to the utmost, or who may properly interest his hearers more, than a minister of the gospel. No speaker has subjects or arguments more proper for producing this effect. To consider the subjects which a speaker from the pulpit has to handle, one would think that it must be the easiest thing imaginable to speak from them in a powerful and interesting manner. The eternal God —the greatness of his works—the universality of his Providence—his awful justice—his irresistible power—his infinite mercy—and the wisdom of God in the mystery of redeeming grace—the condition of saints and sinners while on earth—and the final decision of their eternal state in the

day of judgment. The truth is, the subjects are so very great in themselves, that it is not possible to equal them by the manner of handling them. Probably for this very reason many fall short. Discouraged by the immensity of the theme, they fall below what they might have done on subjects less awful. This however shows, with what a holy ambition those who are employed in the service of Christ, in the gospel, should endeavour to exert themselves in the glorious cause. Provided they are themselves in earnest, and take truth and nature as their guide, they can scarcely exceed in zeal and ardour for the glory of God, and the good of precious souls.

5. Another excellent quality of pulpit eloquence is, to be under the restraint of judgment and propriety. I place this after the former, as its counterpart, and necessary to give it proper effect. And it may be observed, that as religious and moral subjects give the surest and the fullest scope to zeal and fervour, so they need as much as any, the strict government of prudence and experience. I do not mean only by this to guard ministers from the irregular fervours of enthusiasm, but to give, if possible, a degree of solidity and real truth to their instructions. They ought to avoid all turgid declamation, to keep to experience, and take things as they really are. Let some people, for example, speak of riches, and what shall you hear from them? Gold and silver, what are they but shining dross, sparkling metals, a thing of no real value? That in the eye of reason and philosophy they are of no extensive use, and altogether contemptible. And indeed to take things in a cer-

tain philosophical abstraction, they are good for nothing.—Mere gold or silver you can neither eat nor wear—Their value, you will say, depends all upon opinion, the changeable fancy of men—But this manner of speaking, and all that is related to it, seeming to be philosophy and reason, is really absurdity and nonsense. For, though it be true, that gold, abstracted from the opinion of mankind, is not a whit more valuable than stones, and that if I was in the midst of a forest surrounded with wild beasts, a whole bag full of gold would do me no service; yet it is as certain, that in our present situation it is of that real value as to procure all the conveniences of life. The way then to treat such subjects is not to use these rhetorical phrases in contempt of riches; but to show from experience that they are good or evil, according to the temper of him that uses them; and that we see discontent and ungoverned passion find as easy access to the antichamber of the prince as the cottage of the poor. The same thing I would say of fame, that it is easy to say fame is no more but idle breath, &c. but the great matter is, to view those things in a sober and rational light, to give to every outward mercy its proper value, and only show how much they are counterbalanced by things of infinitely greater moment.

But what I have often observed with most regret upon this subject is, young persons carrying the things that are really true and excellent to a certain excess or high pitch, that is beyond nature, and does not tend in the least to promote conviction, but rather hinders it. When men speak of virtue or true goodness, they are apt to raise the

description beyond the life in any real instance; and when they speak of vice and its consequences, they are apt to draw the character so, as it will apply only to a few of the most desperate profligates, and the miserable state to which they reduce themselves. This rather seems to fortify the generality of persons, to whom these descriptions do not apply, in their careless and secure state.

Once more, I have often observed young persons frequently choose as their subject afflictions, of which probably they have had very little experience, and speak in such a high style, as if every good man were, as the heroes of old, above the reach of every accident. And it is true, that an eminent saint is sometimes made superior to all his sufferings; but, generally speaking, we ought to be very tender of sufferers, till we ourselves have been in the furnace of affliction; and after that, we shall not need be told so. On the whole, a strict adherence to truth and nature, and taking the world just as it is, will be an excellent mean to direct us in every part of our public service.

6. Lastly, a minister ought to have extensive knowledge. Every thing whatever, that is the object of human knowledge, may be made subservient to theology. And considering that a minister is in public life, and has to do with friends and enemies of all ranks, he ought to be well furnished with literature of every kind. At the same time I would have this well understood, it is not necessary, and I think it is not desirable, that a minister should be quite an adept in

particular branches of knowledge, except those that are closely related to his proper work. The reason of this is, it takes more time to be a perfect master of some of the particular sciences, than he has to spare from his duty, and therefore, with a taste of the several sciences, general knowledge is most suited to his circumstances, and most necessary to his usefulness.

LECTURE XV.

I PROCEED now to the eloquence of the bar. The profession of the law is of great importance in the British dominions. There is, therefore, great room for this sort of eloquence. This, indeed, may be said to be the country of law, not only on account of its being a free state, the character of which is, that not man, but the laws, have dominion, which is our glory, but because by the great multiplicity of our statutes it becomes an important and difficult science. For both these reasons, there are great hopes proposed to persons of ability in this department. They have not only the reasonable prospect, if of tolerable abilities, with diligence, to provide an honorable subsistence to themselves, but it is the direct road to promotion, and the way of obtaining the highest offices in the state.

Here, as in the former particular, we must consider every thing as already said, that belongs to the subject in general; and indeed by far the greatest number of valuable books on the subject of eloquence having been drawn up by pleaders at

the bar, they must be at least as much, or perhaps more directly applicable to this species as any other. I cannot help, however, taking notice of a preposterous practice in this country, of some who take their children from literature before they have finished their course, because they intend to put them to the law. This must be voluntarily confining them to the very lowest sort of practice in that profession, for if any whatever stand in need of literature it must be the lawyers. Supposing therefore all that has been said of composition, and speaking in general, there are a few particular characters of most importance in men of that class.

1. Probity, or real untainted integrity. There can be no doubt that integrity is the first and most important character of a man, be his profession what it will; but I have mentioned it here, because there are many not so sensible of the importance of it in the profession of the law, and think it is necessary to make a good man, but not a good lawyer. On the contrary, I am persuaded, not only that a man loses nothing in any capacity by his integrity, but that a lawyer should in general study, by probity and real worth, to obtain respect from the public, and to give weight to every thing he says. This integrity should show itself in undertaking causes. There are many that think there is no ground of scruple in this respect, and sometimes they are found to boast with what address they conducted, and with what success they carried through, a very weak cause. I apprehend this is truly dishonorable, and

as there are plenty of causes in which the equity is doubtful, every one who should make it a point of honor not to undertake a cause, which they knew not to be just, it would give unspeakable influence to his management and pleadings. The same probity should appear in the manner of conducting causes. No sinister arts, no equivocation, or concealment of the truth. Perhaps some may think that those who should be conscience-bound in this manner would give roguish persons an evident advantage over them ; but it is a great mistake. Let them use but prudence and firmness, joined with integrity, and they are an over-match for all the villains upon earth. The common proverb is certainly just, " Honesty is the best policy." The arts of chicanery can only succeed once or twice. As soon as a man gets the reputation of cunning, its effect is over, for nobody will trust him, and every body counter-works him.

2. Another excellent quality for a lawyer is, assiduity and method in business. This is of great advantage to the very best genius. I the rather insist upon it, that there prevails often a supposition that it is not the quality of a great man. Because there are some persons of very middling abilities, who give great application, and are lovers of order, therefore some are pleased to call those dull plodding fellows, and think it is a mark of fire and vivacity to be irregular, both in their business and in their lives. There are also some few men of real and great capacity, who are negligent and even loose in their practice, who rise by the mere force of singular parts. These are an unhappy example to those superficial creatures.

who think, by imitating them in their folly, that they will become as great geniuses as they. But suffer me to observe to you, that the greatest geniuses here have been remarkable for the most vigorous application, and the greatest men have been and are remarkable for order and method in every thing they do. There is a certain dignity which arises from a man's word being sacred, even in keeping an appointment, or the most trifling circumstance; and for people of business, order and punctuality gives so much ease to themselves, and pleasure to all who have to do with them, that it is a wonder there should be any body that does not study it. Is there any genius, think you, in throwing down a thing so unthinkingly, that you do not know how to take it up again? The great archbishop of Cambray looks upon it as one of the most important things, to teach young persons to put every thing in its proper place. As every thing that belongs to furniture, dress, books, and implements, must be in some place, they are always best disposed, when each is in its own place. They will give least disturbance there, when they are not used, and they will be most readily found, when they ought to be used.

But when we come to loose and vicious practices, it is truly entertaining to meet with riotous disorderly fellows, who are pleased to speak with contempt of those who love form and good order, as if they themselves were men of great acuteness. Now I almost never knew an example of your mischief-workers, but they were thick skulls. I have known some, who could neither write a jest,

nor speak a jest, in all their life, but had tricks enough they could play, to disturb a sober neighbourhood. I have thus been led back to the irregularities of youth from speaking of method in business, as of importance to lawyers. I shall conclude the observation with saying, that there is no great prospect of a man's ever being lord chancellor, who spends his time in scouring the streets and beating the watch, when he is at the inns of court.

3. Another quality useful to a lawyer is, address, and delicacy in his manners and deportment in general, and the conduct of his business in particular, and above all in pleading and public speaking. The address and delicacy I mean, are such as are acquired by the knowledge of human nature, and some acquaintance with human life. They are useful I admit, for every public speaker, but if I am not mistaken, much more needful to the lawyer thant he clergyman. The clergyman proceeds upon things of acknowledged moment; a certain dignity of character is allowed him, and expected from him. A pretended delicacy is sometimes offensive in him. A certain firmness, not to call it boldness, and impartiality in administering instruction and reproof, are ornaments in him. But a lawyer must always consider the propriety of time and place—What belongs to him that speaks, or to him or them that are spoken to, or that are spoken of. There are some fine examples of address and delicacy in Cicero, particularly in his oration pro Roscio,—pro Milone—et de lege agraria.

4. A fourth quality necessary for a lawyer is, extensive knowledge in the arts and sciences, in

history, and in the laws. A person that means to rise, or attain to some of the highest degrees of this profession, must strive to accomplish himself by knowledge in the arts and sciences. His business is of a public kind, the causes he may have occasion to treat are exceedingly various. What adversaries he may meet with he is altogether uncertain. I do not mean that a lawyer need to be an adept in particular branches of science, but the principles of knowledge in general are very necessary, otherwise he will frequently expose himself. Gross ignorance in the sciences will lay him open to blunders in language, which he could not otherwise avoid. History also is a branch of literature that a lawyer should make his favourite study; as his business lies in canvassing the various relations of men in social life, he will be best able to reason on the meaning and propriety of laws, and their application, if he be well acquainted with history, which points out the state of society and human affairs in every age. As to knowledge of the laws, this is what lawyers cannot do without, and what therefore they do necessarily study, but it would be much to their advantage, if they would add to the knowledge of the municipal laws of their own country, a knowledge of the great principles of equity, and of natural and political law, as applied in general.

5. The last quality I shall mention as of use to a lawyer is, quickness and vivacity. It is of use to him to have an acuteness and penetration, to observe the turns of a cause, to detect the plots and fallacy of adversaries, as well as to answer upon the spot whatever may be thrown up. I am

sensible that this of quickness is entirely a natural quality, and cannot be learned; but I thought it best to observe it, because it is of more use to a lawyer than to most other men. A minister is only called to speak what he has deliberately prepared, and fully digested, but a lawyer, quite incapable of extemporary productions, would not do so well. It is also certain, that wit, which is intolerable in the pulpit, is often not barely pardonable in a lawyer, but very useful. There is, however, such a difference in the capacity of men, that one may be eminent in one branch, and defective in another. A man of coolness, penetration and application, is often eminent in chamber councils, and one of vivacity, passion and elocution, eminent in pleading causes, especially in criminal courts.

The third and last division of this class is, the eloquence of promiscuous deliberative assemblies. I shall not be very long upon this subject; but as it is far from being improbable that some here present may in future life have occasion to act in that sphere, and to be members of the provincial assemblies, I shall make a few remarks upon it to that purpose. In large deliberative assemblies of the political kind, there is nearly as much opportunity for fervor and passion, as there is to the divine, and more scope for wit and humour, than to the lawyer. For though no matters of a merely temporal kind, are of equal moment in themselves, with the things a minister has to treat of, yet men's passions are almost as much, and in many cases more, excited and interested by them. The fate of nations, the welfare of our country, liberty or ser-

vitude, may often seem to want as violent an exertion of the passionate kind of eloquence, as any subject whatever.

It is worth while to observe, that several writers, in speaking of the ancient and modern eloquence, have taken it for granted, that the circumstances of things are changed; that the violent passionate eloquence, that prevailed in Greece and Rome, would not do in modern times. They will tell you, that in a modern senate, or other deliberative assembly, people come all prepared by private interest, and will vote just as they are engaged, without regard to either eloquence or truth; but some very able writers have delivered a contrary opinion particularly David Hume, who, though an infidel in opinion, is of great reach and accuracy of judgment in matters of criticism. He has said that human nature is always the same, and that the eloquence which kindles and governs the passions will always have great influence in large assemblies, let them be of what station or rank soever. I apprehend, that experience, since his writing the above, has fully justified it by two signal examples: one in the state, and the other in the church. Mr. Pitt, now Earl of Chatham, from being a colonel of dragoons, rose to the highest station in the British Empire, merely by the power of a warm and passionate eloquence; there was never any thing in his discourses, that are remarkable either for strength of reasoning, or purity and elegance of style; but a very great impetuosity and fire, that carried his point in the British house of commons. The other instance is the late Mr. Whitefield, who acquired and preserved a degree of popularity, to

which the present age never saw any thing that could be compared; the happy ends that were promoted by this in providence, I omit, as a subject of a different nature; but the immediate and second causes that produced it were, a power of elocution, and natural talents for public speaking, superior by far to any that ever I saw possessed by any man on earth.

To succeed in speaking in public deliberative assemblies, the following are the most important qualities: (1) Dignity of character and disinterestedness. In public deliberations, it is not easy to procure attention, unless there is some degree of character preserved; and indeed, wherever there is ahigh opinion of the candour and sincerity of the speaker, it will give an inconceivable weight to his sentiments in debate.

(2) There is a necessity of knowledge of the most liberal kind, that is, the knowledge of men and manners, of history, and of human nature. The most successful speakers in senates are generally those who know mankind best; and if a man would uniformly preserve his character and influence in this light, he must addict himself to the study of history, and the exercise of reflection.

(3) To this sort of eloquence is particularly necessary, a power over the passions. This is one of the most important characters of eloquence in general; yet it is more peculiarly necessary, and more eminently powerful in promiscuous deliberative assemblies, than in any other. In religious discourses, the effect is expected to be cool, deep and permanent. Even preachers, in single discour-

ses, rather choose to speak as writers, than as pleaders; and lawyers, except in some few instances, may expect to have their assertions taken to pieces, canvassed, and tried one after another; but in meetings of the political kind, the decision is to be by a vote, before the dissolution of the assembly, and cannot be altered afterwards, though the majority should change their sentiments. In these assemblies, therefore, to be sure, a power over the passions must be of the utmost moment.

I shall conclude this particular by two subordinate remarks on the same subject. (1) That to succeed in speaking in senates or large asemblies, there is much need of great discernment, both to proportionate men's attempts to their capacity, and to choose the proper time for exerting it. When information is demanded, any person who can give it will be heard with patience upon it: but on subjects of high political importance, where there are many eminent champions on each side, even persons of moderate abilities would run a risk of being affronted. (2) The other direction is, that all who intend to be speakers in political assemblies must begin early; if they delay beginning till years shall add maturity to their judgment, and weight to their authority, the consequence will be, that years will add so much to their caution and diffidence, that they will never begin at all.

We come now to consider the structure of a particular discourse—the order, proportion, and mutual relation of the several parts. Orators, or critics on oratory, very early learned to analyse a discourse, and to enumerate the parts of which it

is composed. They are a little differently stated by different authors; some reckon four, introduction, proposition, confirmation, and conclusion; others, five, adding narration; others, six, adding refutation; and there are some discourses in which you may easily have each of these different things; but considering that we must take this matter so generally, as to include all kinds of composition, it would be, I think, as well to adopt the division in poetical criticism, and say that every regular discourse or composition of every kind must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Every performance, however short, must be capable of some such division, otherwise it is called abrupt and irregular. The reason why I would make the division in this manner is, that the beginning is properly the introduction; the middle includes every thing, however various, that is taken into the body of a discourse; now these may be very many, proposition, narration, explication, confirmation, illustration and refutation; but these are not all requisite in every discourse, and are to be introduced in propositions, variable and accidental, according to the nature of every particular subject.

Let us speak first of the introduction—This is the more necessary, that it is of very considerable importance, especially to an orator; it is also difficult, at least speakers have generally said so. We find it said in some of the books of oratory, that the introduction, though first pronounced, ought to be last composed—that it comes to be considered after the discourse is finished; but this does not appear to me to be either natural or ne-

cessary, except in a qualified sense; the introduction is commonly settled after the subject is pitched upon, the distribution planned and digested, and such reflection upon the whole as precedes writing.

The ends in an introduction are said by Cicero to be these, Reddere auditorem attentum, benevolum et docilem; to make the reader attentive to the discourse, favourable to the speaker, and willing to receive instruction upon the subject. These different views may not only be altered in their order, at the judgment of the orator, but any of them may be left out, when it is unnecessary; if, for example, I have no reason to suspect disaffection in any of my hearers, long apologies, especially if any way personal, are rather disgusting.

The ways of procuring either attention, a favour, or making the hearers teachable, are so various, that they can neither be enumerated nor classed. In this, the orator must exercise his invention, judgment, and good taste. The most usual manner of introduction is a common-place upon the importance of the subject; the introductions drawn from the circumstances of time, place and person, are generally the most striking; sometimes an unusual stroke is happy in the introduction, as also a weighty reflection or bold sentiment on the subject itself. A funeral sermon was happily begun, by Mr. Baxter, in this manner: "Death is the occasion of our present meeting, "and death shall be the subject of the following "discourse; I am to speak of that which shall short- "ly silence me, and you are to hear of that which "shall speedily stop your ears." Dr. Evans be-

gins a sermon on Eccles. xii. 10. "Rejoice, O young man," &c. by telling a story of a soldier, whose life was saved by a bible in his pocket, and his conversion produced by the accident; the bible saved him from being shot through with a bullet, and when he examined, it had just pierced the leaves through, till it stopped at that passage, which no doubt he read with particular emotions. A discourse of a lawyer, in a law-suit, is generally best begun by a narrative of the occasion of the quarrel, and the introducing of any common-place topics would be reckoned affectation. A clergyman may often have an introduction to his subject with advantage, and may also often begin, by a concise view of the context, or the occasion of the words he has chosen to discourse upon.

Perhaps what will be of most use here, will be, to point out several ways by which an introduction may be faulty; of these I shall mention the following.

1. An introduction may be faulty, by being too pompous and extravagant. This is one of the most common faults in the prefaces or introductions to books. When an author is to write upon any subject, he thinks it necessary to show, not only that his subject is worth the handling, but that it is better than all other subjects. Weak and pedantic writers are often guilty of this to a degree that is ridiculous. A treatise on arithmetic sometimes is introduced by a pompous proof that the knowledge of numbers is either superior to, or the basis of, all other knowledge; the same thing is done with grammar; and there is often a general truth or plausibility, from which the ridicule to

which they expose themselves takes its rise; for to be sure, number is every where; every thing that ever was, or can be, must be either one or more. As to grammar, all good sense must certainly be grammar; yet there are sometimes persons, who would be thought to understand both these subjects very well, who could not speak five sentences, or write a letter, without being deservedly laughed at.

2. An introduction may be faulty, by being general. We see often reflections in the introduction to a discourse, that would be just as proper for one subject as for another. Such sentiments may be said to go before, but they cannot be said to introduce their subject. Sometimes you will hear the introduction almost out, before you can conjecture what is to be the subject; and some are so unhappy in the choice of introductory sentiments, that you would think they intend something that is very different from what really appears in the piece itself.

3. It is a fault in an introduction, to be filled with remarks quite beaten and hackneyed, if I may speak so. These may have been very good remarks or sentiments when first conceived and uttered; but by perpetual repetition have lost their force, and from the very commonness appear mean and despicable. They are many of them founded upon sayings in the classic authors, and in the past age were commonly produced as quotations, with their paraphrase, such as "omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci." "Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dixeris."

4. An introduction may be forced, and unnatural; that is to say, such remarks may be made, as it requires a great deal of pains to show any relation between them and the subject to be treated.

5. It may be fanciful, or whimsical. There was an age when these sort of introductions were to the taste of the public. This fancy, or whim, or, as I may call it, a finical way of entering upon a subject publickly, may be best illustrated by an example. An author of the last age begins a discourse upon ch. viii. of the Epistle to the Romans, v. 28, to this purpose: The Scriptures may be considered as a large and rich garden.—The New Testament is the most valuable division of that garden—the Epistle to the Romans is the richest compartment of that division; the 8th chap. is the most delightful border of that compartment; and the 28th verse the finest flower of that border.

6. An introduction may be faulty, by being tedious. An introduction is designed to whet the attention, and excite impatience for what is to follow. But when it is very long, it not only disgusts by the disappointment, but wastes that attention, which should be preserved in full vigour, or raises a high expectation, which is probably for that reason disappointed.

As to the middle or body of a discourse, the chief thing to be attended to in this place is, to make you sensible of what it consists. The former discourses have all been intended to teach you the way of composition, both as to materials and structure; yet as to the method of conducting a

particular discourse, I would make the three following remarks: (1.) Be careful of the order of the several particulars mentioned. You may not see it proper to introduce all in the compass of a single discourse, but so far as they are introduced, they should be in the following order: Proposition, narration, illustration, confirmation, refutation. You will speedily perceive this to be the order of nature, to lay down the method, narrate the facts, illustrate them by whatever may have that effect, adduce the proofs, resolve objections. A person of a clear head will range his sentiments in this order—yet there are some exceptions to be admitted. Sometimes it is useful in a cause to reserve a part of the story itself, to apply or illustrate an argument—and in some few instances it is best to answer objections, or remove prejudices, before you adduce your proofs.

(2.) It is a most useful direction to the greatest part of writers and speakers, to guard against introducing every thing that they might say, or being so formal, that they will say something in the way of form in every one of their divisions. This analysis of a discourse is good for making the judgment clear; but if it be applied merely to make the invention copious, it will probably produce an unnecessary load. Some people will needs answer objections on any subject, and frequently teach their hearers to make objections which they never would have thought of.

(3.) Learn to keep close to a subject, and bring in nothing but what is truly of force, to the point to be proved. I the rather mention this as a rule for the middle or body of a discourse, because the

most are there apt to transgress it. In the introduction and the conclusion, every one, but those who are perfectly stupid, keep their subject directly in their eye; whereas in the body, when they are entered upon argument and amplification, they are apt to be led astray, and either to fall into what may be called absolute digressions, or at least to lengthen some parts more than true proportion requires.

As to the conclusion or peroration, to this may be applied particularly all that was said upon pathos, or raising the passions, to which I add the following short observations:

(1.) The conclusion should be by far the warmest and most animated part of the discourse. It is not, I think, desireable, to attempt to raise the passions of an audience high, till towards the close of a discourse, because, if it be begun sooner, there is an evident hazard of not being able to preserve them in the same pitch till the end.

(2.) The conclusion should collect into one point of view, by some well chosen expressions, the force of what has gone before, and the greatest skill in the speaker is shown by concentrating the whole in this manner. Before the illustration, it could not be said so briefly; but by the help of what went before, it may be recalled to memory in less room.

(3.) Towards the conclusion, the sentences should be studied, the tone of voice higher, and the pronunciation more rapid, than towards the beginning.

(4.) Lastly, great care should be taken in moral discourses to have no far-fetched inferences.

LECTURE XVI.

I AM now to conclude the discourses upon this subject, by an enquiry into the general principles of taste and criticism. In the former discourses we have kept close to the arts of writing and speaking, and have attempted to describe the various kinds of composition, their characters, distinctions, beauties, blemishes, the means of attaining skill in them, and the uses to which they should be applied. But is it not proper to consider the alliance, if there be any such, between this and other arts? This will serve greatly to improve and perfect our judgment and taste. It was very early observed, that there was a relation between the different arts, and some common principles that determine their excellence. Cicero mentions this, in the introduction of his oration for Archias the poet. Et enim omnes artes quæ ad humanitatem pertinent, habent quoddam commune vinculum, et quasi cognatione quadam inter se continentur.

These arts, which Cicero says, Ad humanitatem pertinent, are called by the moderns the fine arts. This is to distinguish them from those commonly called the mechanic arts, making the utensils and conveniences of common life. And yet even these may be included, as taste and elegance, or the want of it, may plainly be discerned in every production of human skill. However, those called the fine arts are the following: Poetry, oratory,

music, painting, sculpture, architecture. It must be allowed, that, though these arts have some common principles of excellence, there are some persons who have a strong inclination after, and even a capacity of performing in some of them, and not in others. There are good orators who are no musicians, or, perhaps, who have very little taste for the beauties of architecture. Yet, commonly, complete critics, and those who have a well formed taste, are able to perceive the beauty of the whole, and the relation of one to another. It is remarkable that the expressions in composition are frequently borrowed from one art, and applied to another. We say a smooth, polished style, as well as a polished surface; and we say a building is sweet or elegant, as well as an oration. We say the notes in music are bold and swelling, or warm and animated.

One of our modern authors on eloquence has thought fit to take exception at the use of the word *taste*, as being of late invention, and as implying nothing but what is carried in judgment and genius. But I apprehend that the application of it, though it should be admitted to be modern, is perfectly just. It came to us from the French. The *bon gout* among them was applied first to classic elegance, and from thence to all the other arts. And as a sense of the beauty of the arts is certainly a thing often distinct from judgment, as well as from erudition, the term seems not only to be allowable, but well chosen. We find persons who can reason very strongly upon many subjects, who yet are incapable of elegance in composition, and indeed of receiving much delight from the

other fine arts. Nay, we find persons of uncommon acuteness in mathematics and natural philosophy, who yet are incapable of attaining to a fine taste.

It has been sometimes said, that taste is arbitrary.—Some will have it, that there is no such thing as a standard of taste, or any method of improving it. It is a kind of common proverb with many, that there is no disputing about taste. That it is of this intellectual as of natural taste, according as the palate or organs are differently formed; what gives an agreeable relish to one, gives a disagreeable one to another. They say, that the modes of taste are temporary and variable —that different nations, climates, governments, and ages, have different ways of speaking and writing, and a different turn in all the arts—that chance or particular persons will be able to give a turn to the mode in all these. Even so great a man as Dr. Warburton has embraced this sentiment, and to those who attack the Scriptures as not being a complete model of eloquence, he answers, there is no fixed standard of eloquence. That eloquence is one thing in Arabia, another in Greece, and another in England; for this reason he condemns those, who, after the example of Mr. Blackwall in his sacred classics, vindicates the Scriptures from objections of this kind, or produce instances of their sublimity and beauty. But though I have shown you in some of the former discourses, that the style and manner in vogue will receive some tincture, and be liable to some variation, from all the particulars mentioned, yet there is certainly a real beauty or deformity in

nature, independent of these partial changes, which, when properly explained, and examples of it exhibited, will obtain more universal approbation, and retain it longer than the others. The poetry and oratory of the ancients, and their painting and statuary, are instances and proofs of this. It may also appear, from what I mentioned to you formerly, that those compositions which have most simplicity, and such excellencies as are most solid, with fewest of the casual ornaments of fashion, and the peculiarities of their own age, will please, when their contemporaries are lost in oblivion. The same thing holds with pieces of furniture that are elegant, but plain. Such have the beauties of nature, which belong to every age. But to show this more fully, even the remarks upon natural taste are not true, in such a sense as to weaken what has been said. For though it is certain that persons used to the coarsest kind of food, which they have often eaten with relish, may show at first an aversion to the delicacies of cookery, yet after a person has been a little accustomed to that kind of preparation of victuals, in which regard is had to the mixtures that are most proper to gratify the palate, he will not easily return to his slovenly provision. But though there were less in this remark, it seems plain that there is a taste in the fine arts, and a real foundation for it in nature.

But supposing that there is a foundation in nature for taste and criticism, there is another question that arises, viz. Can we tell what it is? Can we reach the original principles which govern this matter? Can we say, not only that such and such

things please us, but why they do so? Can we go any further than we have already done, as to composition? Some have denied, that we can with certainty reach the source of this subject. When the cause is asked, why one person, one thing, or one composition, is more excellent than another, they say it is an immediate and simple perception, a je ne sçais quoi, as the French say, which phrase seems to have taken its rise from the circumstance which often occurs, that in a house, a garden, a statue, or painting, or even in a person's countenance and carriage, you perceive something agreeable upon the whole, and yet cannot suddenly tell wherein it lies, the parts are not better proportioned perhaps, nor the features better formed, than in another, and yet there is something in the composition of the whole, that gives the most exquisite delight.

Others, however, and the far greatest number, have thought it proper to go a great deal further, and to inquire into human nature, its perceptions and powers, and endeavour to trace out the principles of taste, which apply in general to all the fine arts, or, in greater or less proportion, to each of them; for some apply more to one than to others. As for example, if the sense of harmony is an original perception, it applies chiefly to music, and remotely to the pronunciation of an orator, and still more remotely to the composition of an orator. These powers, or perceptions in human nature, have been generally called the powers of imagination. Mr. Hutchinson calls them reflex senses, finer internal sensations; and upon examination we shall find, that, besides the internal

senses, there are certain finer perceptions which we are capable of, which may be said to take their rise from outward objects, and to suppose the external sensation, but yet to be additions to, and truly distinct from it. As for example, I see a beautiful person. My eye immediately perceives colour, and shape, variously disposed; but I have further a sense of beauty in the whole. I hear the sound of musical instruments; my ear receives the noise; every body's ear, who is not deaf, does the same. If I have a sense of harmony, I take a pleasure in the composition of the sounds. The way to examine the principles of taste is, to consider which of these perceptions are simple, immediate, and original; which of them are dependent upon others, and how they may be combined and compounded, and afford delight by such composition.

This is an extensive subject, and it is difficult to treat it concisely, and yet plainly; and indeed, after all the pains I can take, there will be reason to apprehend some obscurity will remain to persons not used to such kind of disquisitions. The way I shall take is to state to you, critically or historically, the way in which this matter hath been treated by some of the most celebrated writers. The Spectator, written by Mr. Addison, on the pleasures of the imagination, reduces the sources of delight or approbation to three great classes, novelty, greatness, and beauty. He says, that such is our desire after novelty, that all things that were before unknown are, from this circumstance, recommended to us; and that we receive a delight in the discovery and contemplation of

what we never saw before, except such objects as are painful to the organs of sight. That children run from one play thing to another, not because it is better, but new; that it is the same case with men, and that authors, in particular, are at great pains to have something new and striking in their manner, which is the more difficult to be attained, that they must make use of known words, and that their ideas too must be such as are easily intelligible. There is something here that would require a good deal of explication. I do not think that any object is, properly speaking, painful to the organs of sight, except too much light; but we do not consider this as a fault in the object, but feel it as a weakness in ourselves. And further, if there be such a thing as beauty, one would think, that if beauty be agreeable, it must have a contrary, which is ugliness, and that must be disagreeable. As to greatness, this has been always considered as a source of admiration. The most ancient critics observe, that we do not admire a small rivulet, but the Danube, the Nile, the ocean. This I will afterwards consider. As to beauty, it has been considered as of all other things most inconceivable, and therefore made a first and immediate perception.

Others have taken beauty and grace as the general terms, including every thing that pleases us. Thus we say a beautiful poem, statue, landscape. Thus also we say a sublime and beautiful sentiment. Thus they have taken in under it novelty and greatness, and every other agreeable quality. Many eminent critics have acted in this manner, particularly the ancients. Longinus, on the Sublime,

introduces several things which do not belong to it, as distinguished from beauty. Taking beauty as the general object of approbation or source of delight, and as applicable to all the fine arts, it has been variously analysed.

A French writer, Crousaz, Traite du Beau, analyses beauty under the following principles: Variety, unity, regularity, order, proportion. Variety is the first. This seems to be related to, or perhaps in some respects the same with novelty, which was formerly mentioned. It is certain that a dead uniformity cannot produce beauty in any sort of performance, poem, oration, statue, picture, building. Unity is, as it were, the bound and restraint of variety. Things must be connected as well as various, and if they are not connected, the variety is nothing but confusion. Regularity is the similarity of the correspondent parts; order is the easy gradation from one to another, and proportion is the suitableness of each part to the whole, and to every other part. I think it cannot be denied, that all these have their influence in producing beauty.

One of the most celebrated pieces upon this subject is the famous painter Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty. He first produced his system in a sort of enigma, drawing one curved line, with the title of the line of beauty, and another with a double wave, which he called the line of grace. He afterwards published his Analysis of Beauty, which he resolves into the following principles: Fitness, variety, uniformity, simplicity, intricacy, and quantity. The first principle is fitness, under which he

shows that we always conceive of a thing as intended for some use, and therefore there must be a correspondence or suitableness to the use, otherwise, whatever be its appearance, we reject it as not beautiful. He instances in sailors, who, whenever there is a ship that sails well, they call her a beauty. The same thing will apply perfectly to all kinds of writing: for whatever fine sentiments and noble expression be in any composition, if they are not suited to the season and subject, we say with Horace, Sed nunc non erat his locus. Variety and uniformity must be compounded together, and as he has made no mention of order and proportion, it is to be supposed that by variety he meant that which changes in a gradual and insensible manner; for variety without order is undistinguishable, and a heap of confusion. Simplicity means that which is easy, and which the eye travels over and examines without difficulty; and intricacy is that which requires some exercise and attention to follow it; these two must limit one another. In representing beauty as a visible figure, he observes, that a straight line has the least beauty; that which has a wave or easy declination one way begins to be beautiful; that which has a double wave has still greater grace. The truth is, if these two things do not destroy the one the other, simplicity and intricacy improve and beautify one another. Mr. Hogarth observes, that ringlets of hair waving in the wind have been an expression of grace and elegance in every age, nation and language; which is just a contrasted wave, first, that of the curls, and this again ren-

dered a little more intricate by the motion of the breeze. If one would have a view of this principle, as exhibited in a single kind, let him look at the flourishes with which the masters of the pen adorn their pieces, and he will see, that if they are easy and gradual in their flexions, and just as intricate as the eye can follow without confusion, any thing less than that is less beautiful, and any thing more destroys the beauty by disorder. I might show you how this principle applies to all the arts, but shall only mention composition, where the simplicity must be combined with refinement, and when the combination is just, there results the most perfect elegance. Mr. Hogarth adds quantity; that a thing having the other qualities pleases in proportion as it is great; as we say, a magnificent building, where the proportions are truly observed, but every part is large.

I have only to observe, that Mr. Hogarth has very well illustrated the principles of beauty, but at the same time he seems to have introduced two, which belong to the other sources of delight, viz. fitness and quantity, as will be shown afterwards.

It is to be observed, that in the enumeration of the principles of beauty, there are to be found in some authors things not only different, but opposite. A French author, not many years ago, to the principles mentioned by others, adds strength, which he illustrates in this manner. He considers it as a principle of grace and beauty in motion, and says that every thing that we do with great difficulty, and that seems to require our utmost effort, is seen with uneasiness, and not with pleasure. For this reason he says the motions of

young people in general are more graceful than those of old, and agreeably to this we join the word *ease* to gracefulness, as explicatory—a graceful easy carriage. With this explication it seems abundantly proper to admit the remark. On the other hand, there are some who have made comparative weakness a principle of beauty, and say that the more light and slender any thing is, unless it be remarkably weak, it is the more beautiful, and that things remarkably strong rather belong to another class. Thus we say, a fine, tender, delicate shape,—and on the contrary we say, a strong, coarse, robust make—a strong, coarse, masculine woman. Perhaps we may reconcile these two, and say they are both principles, because there should be just as much of ease as is suitable to the thing in question, that a person may have either too strong or too weak a frame, for being esteemed beautiful—that a pillar or dome may be too delicate to be durable, or too strong and bulky to be elegant.

Again: many writers, as you have seen, make greatness a principle of beauty; yet there are others, who make littleness one of the constituents of beauty. Those who do so, tell us that *little* is a term of endearment, in every nation and language yet known; that it is the language of the vulgar, and therefore the unfeigned expression of nature. They instance the diminutive appellations which are always used in fondling—filiolus, filiola, have more affection, than filius, and filia—my dear little creature—it is a pretty little thing. To enumerate these different appearances, some, particularly Burke on the Sublime, affirms that the ideas of sublimity and beauty are ideas of a class radi-

cally different; that the first, sublimity, ultimately arises from the passion of terror, and the other from that of love and delight; he with a good deal of ingenuity resolves all the sources of the sublime into what is either terrible, or allied to this passion, exciting it either immediately in some degree, or by association. It is however uncertain, whether we should reduce what we receive so much delight from to a passion, which, in itself, or in its purity, so to speak, is painful: this objection he endeavours to remove, by shewing that the exercise of all our passions, in a moderate degree, is a source of pleasure; but perhaps we may distinguish the ideas of sublime and beautiful, without having recourse to the passion of terror at all, by saying that there is an affection suited to the greatness of objects, without considering them as terrible, and that is, veneration: nay, perhaps we may go a little further, and say, that veneration is the affection truly correspondent to greatness, in innocent creatures, which becomes terror in the guilty. I cannot go through the particulars of Burke's theory. He seems rightly to divide the ideas of sublime and beautiful; by the union of which, some have made one thing, others directly its contrary, to belong to beauty. One thing remarkable in Burke's Essay is, that he denies proportion to be any of the causes of beauty, which yet almost every other writer has enumerated among them; and what he says of the infinitely various proportion in plants and animals seems to be much in support of his opinion: yet in works of art, proportion seems of much moment, and it is difficult to say to what source to refer it. I view a build-

ing, and if the parts are not in a regular proportion, it offends my eye, even though I could suppose that the disproportion was voluntary, in order to obtain some great convenience.

I should be inclined to think, that there are a considerable number of simple principles or internal sensations, that contribute each its part in forming our taste, and are capable of being variously combined, and by this combination are apt to be confounded one with another. One of the most distinct and complete enumerations we have in Gerard's Essay on Taste, and is as follows: A sense of novelty, sublimity, beauty, imitation, harmony, ridicule and virtue. I cannot go through all these in order, but shall make a few remarks, and show where the division is just or defective. His distinguishing all these from one another is certainly just; but there are some things that he introduces under wrong heads; fitness, for example, he introduces under the head of beauty; and this seems rather a source of approbation distinct in itself, as also proportion, if that is not included in fitness. Perhaps a more complete enumeration than any of them may be given thus, novelty, sublimity, beauty, proportion, imitation, harmony, ridicule, utility, and virtue.

We shall now proceed to those we have not spoken of before; imitation certainly gives great pleasure to the mind, and that of itself, even independent of the object imitated. An exceedingly well imitated resemblance of any object, of that which is indifferent or even disagreeable in itself, gives the highest pleasure, either from the act of comparison, as some say, or from its suggesting the

idea of skill and ingenuity in the imitator. The arts of painting and statuary derive their excellence from the perfection of imitation, and it is even thought that poetry and oratory may be considered in the same light, only that the first imitates form, and passions by the means of form, and the other imitates actions and affections by language, as the instrument.

Harmony is the most distinct and separate of all the internal senses that have been mentioned; it is concerned only in sound, and therefore must be but remotely applicable to the writer and speaker. What is remarkable, that although harmony may be said to be of much importance in speaking, there are many examples of the most excellent speakers, that yet have no musical ear at all; and I think the instances of those who have a remarkably delicate musical ear, and at the same time are agreeable speakers, are not many.

The sense of ridicule is not very easily explained, but it is easily understood when spoken of, because it is universally felt. It differs in this from most other of our constitutional powers, that there is scarcely any man, who is not sensible of the ridiculous, or may be made easily sensible of it; and yet the number of good performers in the art of ridiculing others, or in wit and humour, is but very small. The multitude, who cannot follow speculative reasoning, and are hard to be moved by eloquence, are all struck with works of humour. Most people are apt to think they can do something in the way of humour; and yet we have many who render themselves ridiculous by the attempt.

As to a sense of virtue, my mentioning it is by no means from my joining with those who would place moral approbation entirely on the same footing with the internal senses, that are the foundation of taste. Hutchinson and Shaftsbury incline very much this way; on the contrary, I think we are evidently sensible that the morality of actions is a thing of a different species, and arises from the sense of a law, and obligation of a superior nature: yet I have mentioned it here, because there is certainly a relation or connecting tie between the sentiments of the one kind and of the other. The beauties of nature, we are sensible, are greatly heightened, by adding to their delightful appearance a reflection on their utility, and the benevolent intention of their author. In persons capable of morality, as in human nature, we consider fine features and an elegant carriage as indications of the moral disposition or the mental powers; and as the whole of the sources of delight mentioned above may be combined in a greater or lesser degree, as novelty, sublimity, beauty, &c. so the governing principle, which ought to direct the application of the whole, is what gives them their highest excellence, and indeed only is their true perfection. The gratification even of our internal senses is highly improved, when united with taste and elegance. As the most delicious food, when served up with neatness and order, accompanied with politeness of manners, and seasoned with sprightly conversation; in the same manner, the fine arts themselves acquire a double beauty and higher relish, when they are inseparably connected with and made subservient to pu-

rity of manners. An admirable poem, or an eloquent discourse, or a fine picture, would be still more excellent, if the subject of them were interesting and valuable, and when any of them are perverted to impious or wicked purposes, they are just objects of detestation.

After having thus attempted the analysis of the principles of taste and elegance, I would observe, that as nature seems to delight in producing many great and different effects from simple causes, perhaps we may find an ultimate principle that governs all these. A French author has written a treatise called the Theory of agreeable sensations, in which he says that the great principle is, whatever exercises our faculties, without fatiguing them, gives pleasure; and that this principle may be applied to our bodily form, and to the constitution of our mind, to objects of external sensation, to objects of taste, and even to our moral conduct. It may no doubt be carried through the whole of criticism, and we may say this states the bounds between variety and uniformity, simplicity and intricacy, order, proportion and harmony.

Neither would it be difficult to show that this principle may be applied to morality, and that an infinitely wise and gracious God had so ordered matters, that the moderate exercise of all our powers, should produce at once virtue and happiness, and that the least transgression of the one must prove of necessity an injury to the other.

You may see, from the preceding remarks, that the foundation is laid for taste in our natures; yet is there great room for improvement and cultivation; by investigating the grounds of appro-

bation; by comparing one thing with another; by studying the best examples; and by reflection and judgment; men may correct and refine their taste upon the whole, or upon particular confined subjects.

Carrying taste to a finical nicety in any one branch is a thing not only undesirable, but contemptible; the reason of which may be easily seen: when a person applies his attention so much to a matter of no great moment, it occasions a necessary neglect of other things of much greater value. After you pass a certain point, attachment to a particular pursuit is useless, and then it proceeds to be hurtful, and at last contemptible.

THE END.