

# *Elegant Extracts*

CONTAINING

An awful instance of disobedience  
Parents—Divisions, how to heal—  
Mysteries—Composition—Abilities  
Action of men—Advice—Affecta-  
tion—Genius—Happiness—Novelty  
Openness—Prudence—Party spirit  
Cheerfulness in Religion.

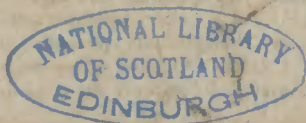


“ Ah! Sir, had I attended to your admonition, I would  
“ not have been in this awful situation to-day. Page 2”

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# ELEGANT EXTRACTS.

## DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.

A striking example of disobedience to parents occurred some years ago in the south of England. A respectable family had two sons whom they endeavoured to bring up in the fear of God. For a time, they made a promising appearance, and bade fair for becoming a blessing to their parents; but alas! the love of company and of pleasure led them to disregard their parents' admonitions, and the religious example with which they were favoured, and by degrees not only to forsake the sanctuary of God, but soon after, their father's house; and forgetting their situation in life, to go and enter themselves on board a ship of war. A friend in London wrote to a respectable clergyman in P——h, where it was suspected they had gone, to endeavour to find them out, and if possible, to persuade them to return. With some difficulty he did find them, carried them to his house, shewed them all kindness, remonstrated with them, and pointed out the great evil and impropriety of their sinful and undutiful conduct to their parents. Observing one of them considerably affected, he addressed him, and said, James, are you still determined to go to sea? or will you go home and prove a comfort to your friends? Yes, I will, said he. He then turned round to the other, and said, William, will you also go home? No, I will not, Sir, I wont be kept under by my father, and made to go to church, and say my prayers by my mother as I have been; I wish to enjoy myself and see the world a little. The clergyman again remonstrated with him, and pointed out the judgment of God that frequently attended such undutiful conduct; but the young man remained obstinate and resolute. Finding no impression could be made on him, he said, It appears, my young friend, you are determined to pursue your own evil course, but I request you will remember what I now say to you, and **DEPEND UPON IT YOUR SINS WILL FIND YOU OUT.** He retired with scornful look, and nothing was heard of him for several years; till one night, after the same clergyman had gone to rest, a sailor came to his gate with a very urgent message from a young man under sentence of death, on board a ship at S——d, who wish'd most anxiously to see him. He took his staff in his hand and went down thro' the fleet, and soon perceived, by the melancholy signal, the ship in which the unfortunate youth was to suffer. He went on board, and was received with much politeness by the captain, who told him he would desire the youth to be brought up to his cabin, where he might have a better opportunity of speaking with him than in the dungeon where he lay. In a short time the rattling of chains, and heavy groans, indicated his approach; and no sooner did he behold the countenance of his former monitor than he exclaimed, Ah! you are the man I want; had I attende

to your admonitions, I would not have been in this awful situation to-day. He was so worn down and emaciated, that the clergyman did not recognize him, but asked what was his inducement to send for him, as he had no recollection of him, " Ah!" replied the young man, " do you not remember the two unfortunate youths, that left their parents' house and entered on board the navy, and to whom you shewed so much kindness. Ah! do you not recollect, Sir, the one you used so many entreaties with to return, but who would not, and to whom you said, that the judgments of God would follow him, and SOONER OR LATER HIS SINS WOULD FIND HIM OUT. They have done so, Sir, for I am that unfortunate youth. I have been led from sin to sin, till I have committed that for which, in a few days, I must give up my life. Oh! Sir, if no respite can be procured for me, pray, do pray. I beseech you, to God for my immortal soul, that it perish not!"

#### DIVISIONS, HOW TO HEAL.

IT is to be lamented, that such are the effects of our depravity, that when disputes are begun in a religious society, they seldom subside till the minister or the people eventually part; however, as it sometimes happens that breaches are healed, the following are some of the most likely methods for that desirable end:

1st. Each party should forbear abusing one another. Nothing continues and inflames dissensions amongst professors of religion more, than aspersing one another's character, or speaking with contempt of each other; one step therefore to quench the flame of contention is to call no ill names, but to treat each other with civility, if we cannot with great respect.

2dly. Let each party seek divine direction by prayer. As the Lord loves all his churches, and can bring down pride and party spirit, there is the greatest reason to believe that he will do it, when fervent and repeated prayers are put up to him for that purpose.

3dly. Let mutual private interviews take place. It is too common to make religious disputes public, before the principles on both sides have coolly conve

matters, and endeavoured to settle them privately; but as soon as possibly this should be sincerely and repeatedly done, and with minds open to conviction.

4thly. If the above method does not succeed, refer the matter to two or three very sensible and pious arbitrators. If the matters in question cannot be settled privately, let two or more be chosen to decide it; there should be one or two very impartial pious persons chosen on each side: it would be best for them to be of the same congregation, and not related to either party.

5thly. If some of the leading persons on either side are contending for power, it is not likely that these excellent methods, or indeed any means whatever, will make up differences; but, if the principal persons on both sides are really pious, and there are only misunderstandings between them, then there is good reason to hope that such means as the above, with the divine blessing, will in time produce a reconciliation.

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#### MYSTERIES.

AS there is a foolish wisdom, so there is a wise ignorance in not prying into God's ark, not inquiring into things not revealed. I would gladly know all that I need, and all that I may know, but I leave God's secrets to himself; it is happy for me, that God makes me of his court, though not of his council.

2. A mystery, as applied to religion, means something that is true and sacred, though in <sup>the</sup> degree secret; this in the strictest sense

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is applicable to almost all things in revelation, and indeed even the nature and perfections of God; but this word is commonly applicable to the Trinity, the incarnation of Christ, the reconciliation of an offended God through the atonement of the Saviour, and the resurrection and re-union of the same body and soul together; these are great and precious truths, but they are undoubtedly very mysterious, however as they are clearly revealed, it is as much our duty to believe them, as to love God and obey him.

3. Even the gospel, which in many respects is so clear to a believer, is expressly called a mystery in many places in the New Testament, because it is so deep and hidden from the carnal; thus it is called the mystery of God, the mystery of Christ, the mystery of faith, and it is expressly called the mystery of the gospel.

4. The doctrine of the Trinity, though a glorious truth, is deeply mysterious, and indeed is the leading mystery in the Christian religion, and those who arrogantly attempt to accommodate it to the grasp of human reason, have by such an attempt given up the very thing we contend for. Bishop Brown remarks, "We are not required to believe any mystery in the matter, but only in the manner; thus for instance, the mystery in this doctrine does not lie in the matter, or fact, that there are three in one, but in the manner, or how to account for and explain it: we must believe the fact, because it is plainly revealed, but as to the manner, wherein the whole mystery lies, as it is not revealed, we have nothing to do with it."

## AUTHORS.

HE who purposes to be an author must first be a student. The most engaging powers of an author, are to make new good things familiar and familiar things to appear as new; either to teach what is not known or to recommend known truths by adorning them either to let new light in upon the mind, or to vary the dress, and situation of common objects, so as to give them fresh grace, more powerful attraction, or to spread such flowers over the regions through which the intellect has already passed, as may tempt it to return and take a second view of things hastily passed over or negligently regarded.

2. Writers of extensive comprehension have made identical remarks, upon topics perhaps very remote from the subject matter mentioned in the title page. These remarks are sometimes more valuable than formal treatises, and he that collects these under proper heads, is very laudably employed; for though he exert no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progress of others, and by making that easy of attainment, which is already written, may give some vigorous minds leisure for new thoughts and original designs.

3. Some authors on political or temporary subjects may be read only once, but others may be read many times, respecting which we may say, as Elijah said to his servant, *go again seven times.*

4. If I could choose my readers, I would not wish the most ignorant or the most learned to read my works: not the former, for they could not do me justice; and not the latter, because I could not sufficiently please them.

Many authors, and especially poets, have not got much for their compositions; and several have died very poor, as Otway, Dryden, Goldsmith, &c.

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COMPOSITION.

THE first requisite for a good style is to think closely on the subject, till we obtain a full and distinct view of what we are to clothe in words; and then that which we conceive clearly and feel strongly, we shall naturally express with property and warmth.

2. The next thing is a proper use of the best writers; this is requisite in order to form a just taste in style, and to supply with a full stock of words on every subject; however, we must guard against a servile imitation of any author, but make whatever we read our own, otherwise our style will be stiff and awkward.

3. The next thing is to adapt our style to the subject, or to the hearers; in that which is very solemn, very few ornaments are necessary, but in what is descriptive or pathetic, many more may be used.

4. The last requisite to form a good style, is frequent use and practice; it is not a few years that will form an excellent style, but exercise and habit for many years; but after all, we should be more desirous to attain a fund of solid, ingenious, and useful thoughts, than to dress up common and trivial sentiments in elegant language.

5. The chief thing requisite to a good style, is to be a perfect master of the language we write in, and especially to know the force and

propriety of words, and the beauties of expression. No rule or critical observations will ever bring any to a just style, who does not understand, and feel his subject, and has not a natural way of writing, but they will improve a good genius, when nature leads the way, provided he is not too scrupulous, and is not a slave to rules, that will bring on a stiffness and affectation, which are opposite to a good style.

6. A composition is then good, when the matter naturally rises out of the subject, when the thoughts are agreeable to the matter, and the expressions suitable to the thoughts, when there is no inconsistency from the beginning to the end, but you can follow the whole by the order of its parts, without being confused; sometimes going back, and where the end winds up the whole, and makes every intelligent reader to understand the subject.

#### ABILITIES.

HE who can produce more and better than others, has talents; and he who can produce something quite new, has genius. Abilities make a good man better, and a bad man worse.

2. Merit is sometimes an obstacle to fortune and that because of envy and fear. Envy in those who have not the same talents, and fear in such as are established, lest they should be supplanted, if they advance or encourage a man who has growing abilities.

3. A man of moderate abilities advances slowly, but surely; whereas, those of extraordinary talents frequently overshoot themselves



and like wheels, by moving too fast, injure themselves.

4. Men of abilities should be prudent and diligent, otherwise by imprudence and idleness, they may, like Otway and Savage, become not only disesteemed, and an incumbrance to society, but a burden to themselves.

5. To mistake our talents, and overrate our abilities, is always ridiculous, and sometimes dangerous; very few excel in many things, and scarcely one in all things.

6. It is a sign of extraordinary merit, when those who envy it, are forced to praise it. The art of setting off moderate abilities steals esteem, and often gains more reputation than real merit. The world often rewards the appearance of merit, more than merit itself. Merit has its season as well as fruit has. We should not judge of a man's abilities by his great qualities, but by the use he makes of them.— The desire of appearing to be persons of ability, sometimes prevents us being so; and as to those who have abilities, it requires no small degree of judgment when to conceal them.— The height of ability consists in a thorough knowledge of the real value of things, and of the genius of the age in which we live.

#### ACTIONS.

THINGS may be seen differently, and differently shewn; but actions are visible, though motives are secret. The splendour of our actions may be tarnished, by too often speaking of them. Undertake actions deliberately, but having undertaken them go through.

2. Allowing the performance of an honourable action to be attended with trouble, the trouble is soon over, but the honour is durable; whereas, should pleasure wait on the commission of what is dishonourable the pleasure is short, but the dishonour is lasting.

3. Sacrifices to virtue, though they are frequently difficult to perform, are always grateful in remembrance. No virtuous person ever repented of doing a good action.

4. Many great actions, as well as great causes, owe their success to Providence, or to nature; but the general, the admiral, the statesman, and the physician, frequently run away with the applause.

5. As much of the comfort of our actions depends on the motives by which we are influenced, it is prudent to be cool and deliberate in entering upon any new concern; it requires time and caution to know our own motives. Many christians have bitter remembrance of imprudent and rash actions, which a little more time and prayer to God, might have prevented.

6. We should examine our actions, and direct them in such a manner, that every thing we do may turn to account. A good intention will not justify a bad action, though it may extenuate its malignity; but a good intention, joined to a good action, gives it a proper force and efficacy. We should aim at a laudable end also in all our actions, either the glory of God, the good of mankind, or the benefit of our souls; thus we should continually act, and imitate the conduct of those holy men, who are said in scripture to have walked with God.

## ADVICE.

ADVISE not what is most pleasant, but what is best. The chief rule to be observed in giving advice, is to preserve it pure from all mixture of interest or vanity; the most unpleasant thing is to reprove; but he who endeavours only the good of him whom he reproveth, will always have either the satisfaction of obtaining or deserving kindness; if he succeeds, he benefits his friend, and if he fails, he has at least the consciousness that he suffers for only doing well.

2. Advice is seldom welcome, and those who want it most, like it the least. Nothing is less sincere than the manner of asking and giving advice, he who asks advice of his friend, seems to have a deference for his opinion, though frequently he only wishes to have his own approved of; on the contrary, he who gives it, repays the confidence reposed in him by a seeming disinterested zeal, though perhaps he only aims at his interest or reputation.

3. As you should never trust alone to your reason in religion; without the assistance of revelation; so you should never trust alone to your understanding, if a friend can assist you. Advice should drop on us as dew, and not fall on us as a hasty and heavy shower: advice wants a wise reproveth, and an obedient ear.

4. With some persons, nothing is received with so much reluctance as advice; as therefore it requires so much skill to make it agreeable, many devices have been used to make this bitter potion palatable; for this purpose, some have conveyed their instructions in the best chosen words, others in the most harmo-

nious numbers, some in points of wit, and others in short proverbs. Think those more faithful, who reprove thee for thy faults, than those who praise thee for thy virtues.

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AFFECTATION.

AFFECTATION is to be distinguished from hypocrisy, being the art of counterfeiting those qualities which we might with innocence and safety be known to want; therefore hypocrisy is criminal, but affectation only ridiculous. He who gives himself airs of importance, exhibits the credentials of impotence. Affectation sooner discovers what we are, than makes known what we would appear to be.

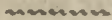
2. We are never made so ridiculous by the want of qualities, as by those we affect to have. If affectation is so unbecoming in common life, it is more so in religion; if it be so disgusting in the parlour, it is much more so in the pulpit. Affectation is certain deformity; by forming themselves on fantastic models, the young begin with being ridiculous, and often end in being vicious. No man is ridiculous for seeming what he is, but only for affecting to be something more, either as to what respects the mind or the body.

3. Affectation proceeds either from pride or hypocrisy; for as vanity puts on false characters, in order to purchase applause; so hypocrisy sets us on an endeavour to avoid censure by concealing our vices, under an appearance of their opposite virtues.

4. It is possible that beauty in a woman,

and learning in a man, may become almost hid, by the force of affectation, and even when we see some degrees of it in men of worth and distinction, we cannot but lament it; thus, for instance, it is sometimes seen at the bar with young barristers, nay, it too often ascends the pulpit, and by making the preacher appear ridiculous, it prevents much good being done.

5. When Cicero consulted the oracle at Delphos, concerning what course of studies he should pursue, the answer was, "follow nature." If every one would do this, affectation would almost be unknown. Affectation is not only a folly, but repugnant to nature, and opposite to the designs of Providence; and therefore it is certainly a crime. Nature indeed has sometimes made a fool, but a coxcomb is always of a man's own making.



#### GENIUS.

GENIUS is used to signify the talent which we receive from nature, whereby we excel in any one thing; thus we speak of a genius for mathematics, for poetry, painting, or any mechanical employment. Genius cannot be acquired by art and study, though it may be greatly improved by them. Genius is a higher faculty than taste, for it is not uncommon to meet with persons who have an excellent taste in music, poetry, painting, or oratory, or all together; but to find one who is an excellent performer in these is rather rare, and shews a genius.

2. As to an universal genius, or one who excels in all or many arts and sciences, is very

uncommon indeed. Those who attempt to be great in many professions or sciences, are not likely to excel in any; it is therefore best, especially for youth, to find out and pursue what nature points out, and then to bind the mind only to one or two objects; this will have the fairest prospect of success, for the rays must converge to a point in order to glow intensely.

3. Genius consists in an assemblage of imaginations, judgment, and taste, but chiefly in the imagination. As to original genius, it may be defined a native and radical power of discovering something new or uncommon on every subject on which it employs its faculties.—Most enlightened nations can boast of many authors of great abilities, and whose works have been very acceptable, but there are very few who have possessed original genius. Men of original genius are generally remarkable for some singularities and extremes; their excursions, like those of an eagle, are towering and devious, or as the course of a comet, blazing and irregular, and their errors, as well as their excellencies, are generally inimitable.

4. A great genius is rather an obstacle to fortune, because, wherever a man of real genius goes, he raises envy in some, and fear in others; envy in those who cannot attain to the like merit, and fear in such as are already established, who may be apprehensive that they shall be supplanted; if they should advance, or suffer to be advanced, a man of greater genius than themselves.

## HAPPINESS.

HE is happy who is cheerful though possessing but little; he is unhappy who is troubled although amidst much wealth. The happiness of the body consists in health, that of the mind in knowledge. To be wise and virtuous will make us happy.

2. Health and peace, a moderate fortune, and a few select friends, sum up the chief articles of temporal felicity. If you would judge whether a man is happy, you must not think of his property, and appearance, but inquire whether he is contented, and habitually cheerful. If the feelings of pleasure are more numerous in high life, so are also those of pain. If greatness flatters our vanity, it multiplies our dangers and desires. If the middle rank, or the poor, are confined to a more narrow compass, yet their wants are fewer, and they have more real enjoyments. With respect to spiritual happiness, the grace of God, and the forgiveness of sin, are the chief articles of it; here we are at a certainty, for the son of God has removed the veil which covered true bliss, and has taught the way which leads to eternal and complete happiness.

3. There are three reasons why many do not enjoy true happiness:

1st. Because they expect too much here below; whoever said, I am completely happy?— If we have religion and wealth, perhaps we want health of body; if we even possess that, some enemies or relations may trouble us; all this is designed to teach us, that this world is not our home.

2dly. Looking up with envy at those above

us; we fancy others must be more happy because they are more rich, healthy, or have fewer enemies. We should think of those below us, who are in poor-houses, or prisons, that are either in extreme poverty, or blind, lame, dumb, insane, or under public disgrace.

3dly. Because we will not be satisfied with simplicity. Let us consider how few are our real wants, if we have our liberty, and our health, we have the principal requisites of natural happiness; and if besides this, we have grace and the influences of the Spirit, we may be called happy persons.

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NOVELTY.

AS Providence has made the human soul always impatient for novelty, and struggling for something yet unenjoyed, with unwearied progression, the world seems to be eminently adapted to this disposition of the mind; it is formed to raise expectations by constant vicissitudes, and to obviate satiety by perpetual change.

2. Wherever we turn our eyes, we find something to revive our curiosity, and engage our attention. In the dusk of the morning we watch the rising of the sun, and we see the day diversify the clouds, and open new prospects to its gradual advance. After a few hours, the shades begin to lengthen and the light declines, till the sky is resigned to a multitude of shining orbs different from each other in magnitude and splendour.

3. The earth varies its appearance as we move upon it; the woods offer their shades, and the fields their harvests, the hills flatter with an



extensive view, and the vallies invite with shelter, fragrance, and flowers.

4. Not only nature but art continually affords us a pleasing variety, and gratifies the love of novelty; thus in many places, the many ingenious and elegant inventions and improvements of curious artists, afford great delight to those who have knowledge and taste for the respective arts, sciences, and manufactures.

5. But although the love of novelty should be encouraged, so far as it conduces to social benefit and improvement, yet when it produces unsteadiness to necessary business, or fosters a desultory and fickle disposition, it is certainly reprehensible.

6. Novelty has charms that our minds can hardly withstand; the most valuable persons or things, if they have for a long time appeared amongst us, do not make that impression which they did at first, or which very inferior persons or things that are quite new do. Perhaps it is part of our natural depravity that we should thus unjustly slight what is common though truly excellent; or perhaps it is permitted to shew us that this is an imperfect state, and we shall never be satisfied till we come to heaven.

7. Novelty in religion should not be indulged, such as wandering after new preachers, and seeing new faces; this starves the mind and the devotion, while it feeds curiosity. Many are so fond of novelty, that they would almost leave a paradise to wander in a desert so as to enjoy it.

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OPENNESS.

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ingenuous behaviour. An honest unsuspecting disposition diffuses a serenity over life, like that of a fine day, when no cloud conceals the blue sky, nor a blast ruffles the stillness of the air. But a crafty and designing bosom is all tumult and darkness, and may be said to resemble a misty and disordered atmosphere in the comfortless climate of the poor Highlander: the one raises a man almost to the rank of an angel of light, the other sinks him to a level with the powers of darkness; the one constitutes almost a terrestrial heaven in the breast, but the other deforms and debases it, till it becomes like the bottomless pit.

2 A free and ingenuous mind furnishes a man with the courage and generosity of the lion; but a sly, crafty person, has only the pitiful cunning of a fox. The open disposition is truly consistent, having a pleasant outside, and the inside the same; so that the man is nearly transparent; but the crafty person, while he puts on an affected smile, or speaks in an assumed, soft, and affectionate manner, has a heart as dark and as foul as the abysses which constitute the abodes of the evil spirits. The open and honest disposition has no need of disguise, and carries on no plots; but the crafty are continually plotting disguises, and laying schemes, and no combination of conspirators, or confederacy, of thieves, can be carried on with more artifice.

3. An open and ingenuous disposition is not only beautiful and most conducive to private happiness, but is productive of many virtues for the good of society; because it recommends sincerity and integrity, and also pro-

motes mutual confidence, friendship, and benevolence: too often, that which personates it, is a refined dissimulation, whose end is to procure confidence.

4. It is true, indeed, that this amiable disposition is not agreeable to the world, as it will create enemies, and perhaps prevent our rising in life; but notwithstanding this, as dissimulation, cunning, and deceit, are all contrary to religion, truth, and virtue; we should constantly hate and avoid them; we should have courage enough to avow our sentiments, and to let our countenances and our tongue be the heralds of our hearts; this, good persons will be pleased with, and the bad we shall not seek to please.

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#### PRUDENCE.

PRUDENCE excels most of the other virtues as far as the sight of our eyes does the other senses. Prudence is an universal virtue, and enters into the composition of almost all the rest, for without this, love is indiscreet, fortitude weak, zeal blind, and knowledge almost useless.

2. Discretion, or prudence, is not only very commendable, but it is a virtue; it has to do with our spiritual as well as temporal affairs, and shews itself not only in the words but in the circumstances of action, and is like an under agent of Providence, to guide and direct us in all the concerns of life. There are many more shining qualities of the mind, but none so useful as prudence; it is this which gives value to all the rest, which sets them at work

in their proper times and places, and turns them to the advantage of the person who is possessed of them ; without it learning is pedantry, wit impertinence, and even virtue itself looks like weakness.

3. Discretion, not only makes a man the master of his own parts, but of other men's ; the discreet man finds out the talents of those he converses with, and knows how to make use of them. Accordingly, if we look into communities and divisions of men, we may observe that it is the prudent man, not the witty, nor the learned, who guides conversation and governs society ; therefore it plainly appears, that if a man has all other talents, and wants discretion, he will be of no great use to the world ; but, if he has this single virtue, and only a moderate share of others, he may be truly and respectable and useful.

4. Many mistake cunning or craftiness for prudence and discretion, but if we compare them, we shall see a great difference ; as for instance, cunning has only selfish actions, and sticks at nothing to make them succeed, but discretion points out the noblest ends, and only uses laudable methods to attain them. Discretion is generally found in persons of good understanding and great piety, and the more it is discovered the greater authority it gives to the persons who possess it. In short, cunning is only the mimic of discretion, and can only pass for a short time, and chiefly upon persons of weak understanding, or little experience in the world.

5. True discretion is highly useful in religion ; it teaches when to speak, and when to be silent, to avoid party spirit, to be candid

and moderate, and to shun every appearance of evil: in short, it is indispensably necessary for all ranks, upon all occasions, and at all times to the end of life.

6. Economy, or frugality, is closely connected with prudence, and must be observed in every pursuit, action and undertaking.—Numbers have been brought into bad circumstances and many troubles from small neglects, as well as from great errors in material affairs. People are apt to think lightly of shillings and pence, forgetting that they are the constituent parts of a pound, till a deficiency in the great article shews them their mistake, convinces them by dear-bought experience of this truth, that they might have learned from a little attention, viz. that great sums are made up of small, and that therefore he that does not regard small things may fall by little and little.

7. It is very true that we are to avoid so much frugality as leads to covetousness, but at the same time we must by prudence avoid prodigality. Our frugality must be in proportion to our income, family, and situation in life; in general we may truly say, that a little is enough for all the necessities and innocent delights in nature, and it may be justly asserted, that without economy, even a large estate may soon be wasted.

8. Prudence has two offices, viz. to inform the understanding, and to regulate the will; she determines both on maxims of speculation and practice, and keeps the mind upon its guard against prejudice and precipitation. Though fortune seems to be an universal mistress, yet prudence is her's, and when we are guided by

her we are surrounded by all other blessings. Prudence does not only shew itself in words, but in all the circumstances of life, and is like an under agent of Providence, to guide and direct us in all our concerns. There are many more shining qualities in the mind of man, but there is none so useful as prudence ; it is this which gives a value to all the rest, which sets them to work in their proper times and places, and turns them to advantage. Without prudence, cunning is pedantry, zeal rashness, and even virtue weak and almost useless.

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PARTY SPIRIT.

PARTY spirit, is a disposition not easily defined; it is a monstrous composition of many bad qualities. Sometimes it is ignorance, which prevents us from receiving some important truths ; and sometimes it is arrogance which rashly maintains whatever it has once advanced, and chiefly because it is too mortifying to yield, and to say, " I am wrong, I mistook."

2. A party spirit, is that disposition which envenoms and contracts so many hearts, separates so many families, divides so many societies, and undermines real religion ; party spirit, not only incapacitates for sweet communion with God, but by encouraging pride, and many evil passions it frequently excites to malice and barbarity, and the most bitter persecutions.

3. Party-work, is the madness of many, for the gain of a few. There never was any party, faction, sect, or cabal whatsoever, in which

the most ignorant were not the most violent; for a bee is not a busier animal than a block-head. However such instruments are necessary to politicians, and perhaps it may be with states as with clocks, which must have some dead weights hanging at them, to keep and regulate the motion of the finer and more useful parts. He knows very little of mankind, who expects by any reasoning or facts whatever, to convince a determined party-man.

4. It is an observation founded on experience, that the best things when corrupted become the worst. This is strictly applicable to religion, which is the best thing for enjoyment, but the worst thing when perverted by party spirit. It is certain that every degree of revealed truth is important, and freedom of inquiry should be encouraged; but when any divide or disturb churches, or hate all but those of their own way of thinking, whatever reason they pretend to give for their conduct, while their motives are bad, they are nothing but partizans in religion; and even if their motives and intentions be good, yet if they persecute, or with anger in their hearts wilfully misrepresent the sentiments or conduct of any to do a personal injury, in defending their own tenets, they undoubtedly act in a party spirit.

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#### CHEERFULNESS IN RELIGION.

IN real religion, there is a great tendency to cheerfulness; and such a frame of mind, is not only the most lovely, but strongly recommends it.

2. Those who recommend religion as gloomy, are like spies who brought a false report of Ca-

naan, which discouraged the people; but those who shew us the joy and cheerfulness that attend real goodness, are like Caleb and Joshua, who brought a true report, and also the cluster of grapes, by which they invite others into the pleasant and fruitful country.

3. It is true, indeed, that some good persons are naturally gloomy, or perhaps have become so by great trials; but this is not owing to religion, but to their peculiar circumstances, or dispositions.

4. Religion banishes all vicious and vulgar mirth and levity of behaviour; but in exchange, it is the perpetual source of real gladness of heart; it cheers as well as composes the soul under the severest troubles, and fills the mind with a perpetual serenity and cheerfulness, as well as an habitual inclination to please others.

5. Ebenezer Adams, a celebrated quaker of Philadelphia, on visiting a lady of rank, whom he found six months after the death of her husband, sitting on a sofa, covered with black cloth, and in all the dignity of woe, approaching her with great solemnity, and gently taking her by the hand, thus accosted her—"So friend, I see thou hast not yet forgiven God Almighty." This seasonable reproof had such an effect upon her, that she immediately had all her trappings of grief destroyed, and went about her necessary business.

FINIS.