

Then all for Women, Painting, Rhiming, Drinking:
 Besides ten thousand Freaks that dy'd in thinking.
 Blest Madman, who cou'd every Hour employ,
 With something New to wish, or to enjoy! C



N^o 163. Thursday, September 6.

— — — *Si quid ego adfuero, curamve levasse,
 Quæ nunc te coquit, & versat sub pectore fixa,
 Ecquid erit pretii?* Enn. ap. Tullium.

ENQUIRIES after Happiness, and Rules for attaining it, are not so necessary and useful to Mankind as the Arts of Consolation, and supporting ones self under Affliction. The utmost we can hope for in this World is Contentment; if we aim at any thing higher, we shall meet with nothing but Grief and Disappointment. A Man should direct all his Studies and Endeavours at making himself easy now, and happy hereafter.

THE Truth of it is, if all the Happiness that is dispersed through the whole Race of Mankind in this World were drawn together, and put into the Possession of any single Man, it would not make a very happy Being. Though on the contrary, if the Miseries of the whole Species were fixed in a single Person, they would make a very miserable one.

I am engaged in this Subject by the following Letter, which, though Subscribed by a fictitious Name, I have reason to believe is not Imaginary.

MR. SPECTATOR,

I Am one of your Disciples, and endeavour to live up to your Rules which I hope will incline you to pity my Condition: I shall open it to you in a very few Words. About three Years since a Gentleman, whom, I am sure, you your self would have approved, made his Addressee to me. He had every thing to recommend him but an Estate, so that my Friends, who all of them applauded his Person, would not for the sake of both of us favour his Passion. For my own part I resigned my self up entirely to the Direction of those who knew the World much better

‘ better than my self, but still lived in hopes that some Jun-
‘ ture or other would make me happy in the Man whom,
‘ in my Heart, I preferred to all the World ; being deter-
‘ mined if I could not have him, to have no Body else.
‘ About three Months ago I received a Letter from him,
‘ acquainting me, that by the Death of an Uncle he had a
‘ considerable Estate left him, which he said was welcome
‘ to him upon no other Account, but as he hoped it would
‘ remove all Difficulties that lay in the Way to our mutual
‘ Happiness. You may well suppose, Sir, with how much
‘ Joy I received this Letter, which was followed by sever-
‘ al others filled with those Expressions of Love and Joy,
‘ which I verily believe no Body felt more sincerely, nor
‘ knew better how to describe, than the Gentleman I
‘ am speaking of. But Sir, how shall I be able to tell it
‘ you ! by the last Week’s Post I received a Letter from an
‘ intimate Friend of this unhappy Gentleman, acquainting
‘ me, that as he had just settled his Affairs, and was pre-
‘ paring for his Journey, he fell sick of a Fever and died.
‘ It is impossible to express to you the Distress I am in up-
‘ on this Occasion. I can only have recourse to my De-
‘ votions, and to the reading of good Books for my Con-
‘ solation ; and as I always take a particular Delight in
‘ those frequent Advices and Admonitions which you give
‘ the Publick, it would be a very great Piece of Charity
‘ in you to lend me your Assistance in this Conjunction. If
‘ after the reading of this Letter you find your self in a
‘ Humour, rather to Rally and Ridicule, than to Comfort
‘ me, I desire you would throw it into the Fire, and think
‘ no more of it ; but if you are touched with my Mis-
‘ fortune, which is greater than I know how to bear,
‘ your Counsels may very much Support, and will infi-
‘ nitely Oblige the afflicted

LEONORA.

‘ A Disappointment in Love is more hard to get over than
‘ any other ; the Passion it self so softens and subdues the
‘ Heart, that it disables it from struggling or bearing up
‘ against the Woes and Distresses which befall it. The Mind
‘ meets with other Misfortunes in her whole Strength ; she
‘ stands collected within her self, and sustains the Shock
‘ with all the Force which is natural to her ; but a Heart
‘ in

in Love has its Foundations sapped, and immediately sinks under the Weight of Accidents that are disagreeable to its Favourite Passion.

IN Afflictions Men generally draw their Consolations out of Books of Morality, which indeed are of great use to fortify and strengthen the Mind against the Impressions of Sorrow. Monsieur St. Evrement, who does not approve of this Method, recommends Authors who are apt to stir up Mirth in the Mind of the Readers, and fancies Don Quixote can give more Relief to an heavy Heart than *Plutarch* or *Seneca*, as it is much easier to divert Grief than to conquer it. This doubtless may have its Effects on some Tempers. I should rather have recourse to Authors of a quite contrary kind, that give us Instances of Calamities and Misfortunes, and shew human Nature in its greatest Distresses.

IF the Affliction we grope under be very heavy, we shall find some Consolation in the Society of as great Sufferers as our selves, especially when we find our Companions Men of Virtue and Merit. If our Afflictions are light, we shall be comforted by the Comparison we make between our selves and our Fellow-Sufferers. A Loss at Sea, a Fit of Sickness, or the Death of a Friend, are such Trifles when we consider whole Kingdoms laid in Ashes, Families put to the Sword, Wretches shut up in Dungeons, and the like Calamities of Mankind, that we are out of Countenance for our own Weakness, if we sink under such little Strokes of Fortune.

LET the Disconsolate *Leonora* consider, that at the very time in which she languishes for the Loss of her deceased Lover, there are Persons in several Parts of the World just perishing in a Shipwreck; others crying out for Mercy in the Terrors of a Death-bed Repentance; others lying under the Tortures of an infamous Execution, or the like dreadful Calamities; and she will find her Sorrows vanish at the Appearance of those which are so much greater and more astonishing.

I would further propose to the Consideration of my afflicted Disciple, that possibly what she now looks upon as the greatest Misfortune, is not really such in it self. For my own part, I question not but our Souls in a separate State will look back on their Lives in quite another View, than what they had of them in the Body; and that what they

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