

N^o 453. Saturday, August 9.

*Non usitata nec tenui ferar
Pennâ*

Hor.

THERE is not a more pleasing Exercise of the Mind than Gratitude. It is accompanied with such an inward Satisfaction, that the Duty is sufficiently rewarded by the Performance. It is not like the Practice of many other Virtues, difficult and painful, but attended with so much Pleasure, that were there no positive Command which injoin'd it, nor any Recompence laid up for it hereafter, a generous Mind would indulge in it, for the natural Gratification that accompanies it.

IF Gratitude is due from Man to Man, how much more from Man to his Maker? The Supreme Being does not only confer upon us those Bounties which proceed more immediately from his Hand, but even those Benefits which are conveyed to us by others. Every Blessing we enjoy, by what Means soever it may be derived upon us, is the Gift of him who is the great Author of Good, and Father of Mercies.

IF Gratitude, when exerted towards one another, naturally produces a very pleasing Sensation in the Mind of a grateful Man; it exalts the Soul into Rapture, when it is employed on this great Object of Gratitude; on this Beneficent Being who has given us every thing we already possess, and from whom we expect every thing we yet hope for.

MOST of the Works of the Pagan Poets were either direct Hymns to their Deities, or tended indirectly to the Celebration of their respective Attributes and Perfections. Those who are acquainted with the Works of the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets which are still extant, will upon Reflexion find this Observation so true, that I shall not enlarge upon it. One would wonder that more of our Christian Poets have not turned their Thoughts this way,

way, especially if we consider, that our Idea of the Supreme Being is not only infinitely more Great and Noble than what could possibly enter into the Heart of an Heathen, but filled with every thing that can raise the Imagination, and give an Opportunity for the sublimest Thoughts and Conceptions.

PLUTARCH tells us of a Heathen who was singing an Hymn to *Diana*, in which he celebrated her for her Delight in human Sacrifices, and other Instances of Cruelty and Revenge; upon which a Poet who was present at this piece of Devotion, and seems to have had a truer Idea of the Divine Nature, told the Votary by way of Reproof, that in recompence for his Hymn, he heartily wished he might have a Daughter of the same Temper with the Goddess he celebrated. It was indeed impossible to write the Praises of one of those false Deities, according to the Pagan Creed, without a Mixture of Impertinence and Absurdity.

THE Jews, who before the Times of Christianity were the only People that had the Knowledge of the True God, have set the Christian World an Example how they ought to employ this Divine Talent of which I am speaking. As that Nation produced Men of great Genius, without considering them as inspired Writers, they have transmitted to us many Hymns and Divine Odes, which excel those that are delivered down to us by the Ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*, in the Poetry, as much as in the Subject to which it was consecrated. This I think might easily be shewn, if there were occasion for it.

I have already communicated to the Publick some Pieces of Divine Poetry, and as they have met with a very favourable Reception, I shall from time to time publish any Work of the same Nature which has not yet appeared in Print, and may be acceptable to my Readers.

I.

WHEN all thy Mercies, O my God,
My rising Soul surveys;
Transported with the View, I'm lost
In Wonder, Love, and Praise:

II.

O how shall Words with equal Warmth
The Gratitude declare,

*That glows within my ravish'd Heart?
But thou canst read it there.*

III.

*Thy Providence my Life sustain'd,
And all my Wants redrest,
When in the silent Womb I lay,
And hung upon the Breast.*

IV.

*To all my weak Complaints and Cries,
Thy Mercy lent an Ear,
Ere yet my feeble Thoughts had learnt
To form themselves in Pray'r.*

V.

*Unnumber'd Comforts to my Soul
Thy tender Care bestow'd,
Before my infant Heart conceiv'd
From whom these Comforts flow'd.*

VI.

*When in the slipp'ry Paths of Youth
With heedless Steps I ran,
Thine Arm unseen convey'd me safe
And led me up to Man;*

VII.

*Through hidden Dangers, Toils, and Deaths,
It gently clear'd my Way,
And through the pleasing Snares of Vice,
More to be fear'd than they.*

VIII.

*When worn with Sicknes oft hast thou
With Health renew'd my Face,
And when in Sins and Sorrows sunk
Reviv'd my Soul with Grace.*

IX.

*Thy bounteous Hand with worldly Blis
Has made my Cup run o'er,
And in a kind and faithful Friend
Has doubled all my Store.*

X.

*Ten thousand thousand precious Gifts
My Daily Thanks employ,
Nor is the least a chearful Heart,
That taste those Gifts with Joy.*

XI. Through