

‘ why the Judge of the whole Earth has suffer’d this
 ‘ Thing to come to pass: The Child is the Occasion that
 ‘ the Blood of the old Man is spilt; but know, that the
 ‘ old Man whom thou saw’st, was the Murderer of that
 ‘ Child’s Father.



N^o 238. Monday, December 3.

Nequicquam populo bibulas donaveris Aures;
Respue quod non es ——— Perseus, Sat. 4.

A MONG all the Diseases of the Mind, there is not one more epidemical or more pernicious than the Love of Flattery. For as where the Juices of the Body are prepared to receive a malignant Influence, there the Disease rages with most Violence; so in this Distemper of the Mind, where there is ever a Propensity and Inclination to suck in the Poison, it cannot be but that the whole Order of reasonable Action must be overturn’d, for, like Musick, it

— *So softens and disarms the Mind,
 That not one Arrow can Resistance find.*

FIRST we flatter our selves, and then the Flattery of others is sure of Success. It awakens our Self-love within, a Party which is ever ready to revolt from our better Judgment, and join the Enemy without. Hence it is, that the Profusion of Favours we so often see poured upon the Parasite, are represented to us, by our Self-Love, as Justice done to the Man, who so agreeably reconciles us to our selves. When we are overcome by such soft Insinuations and ensnaring Compliances, we gladly recompense the Artifices that are made use of to blind our Reason, and which triumph over the Weaknesses of our Temper and Inclinations.

BUT were every Man persuaded from how mean and low a Principle this Passion is derived, there can be no doubt but the Person who should attempt to gratify it, would then be as contemptible as he is now successful. ’Tis the Desire of some Quality we are not possessed of, or Inclination to be something we are not,

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which are the Causes of our giving our selves up to that Man, who bestows upon us the Characters and Qualities of others; which perhaps suit us as ill and were as little design'd for our wearing, as their Clothes. Instead of going out of our own complexional Nature into that of others, 'twere a better and more laudable Industry to improve our own, and instead of a miserable Copy become a good Original; for there is no Temper, no Disposition so rude and untractable, but may in its own peculiar Cast and Turn be brought to some agreeable Use in Conversation, or in the Affairs of Life. A Person of a rougher Deportment, and less tied up to the usual Ceremonies of Behaviour, will, like *Manly* in the Play, please by the Grace which Nature gives to every Action wherein she is complied with; the Brisk and Lively will not want their Admirers, and even a more reserved and melancholy Temper may at some times be agreeable.

WHEN there is not Vanity enough awake in a Man to undo him, the Flatterer stirs up that dormant Weakness, and inspires him with Merit enough to be a Coxcomb. But if Flattery be the most sordid Act that can be complied with, the Art of Praising justly is as commendable: For 'tis laudable to praise well; as Poets at one and the same time give Immortality, and receive it themselves for a Reward: Both are pleas'd, the one whilst he receives the Recompence of Merit, the other whilst he shews he knows how to discern it; but above all, that Man is happy in this Art, who, like a skilful Painter, retains the Features and Complexion, but still softens the Picture into the most agreeable Likeness.

THERE can hardly, I believe, be imagin'd a more desirable Pleasure, than that of Praise unmix'd with any Possibility of Flattery. Such was that which *Germanicus* enjoyed, when, the Night before a Battle, desirous of some sincere Mark of the Esteem of his Legions for him, he is described by *Tacitus* listening in a Disguise to the Discourse of a Soldier, and wrapt up in the Fruition of his Glory, whilst with an undesigned Sincerity they praised his noble and majestick Mien, his Affability, his Valour, Conduct, and Success in War. How must a Man have his Heart full-blown with Joy in such an Article of Glory as this? What a Spur and Encouragement still to proceed

proceed in those Steps which had already brought him to so pure a Taste of the greatest of mortal Enjoyments?

IT sometimes happens, that even Enemies and envious Persons bestow the sincerest Marks of Esteem when they least design it. Such afford a greater Pleasure, as extorted by Merit, and freed from all Suspicion of Favour or Flattery. Thus it is with *Malvolio*; he has Wit, Learning, and Discernment, but temper'd with an Allay of Envy, Self-Love and Detraction: *Malvolio* turns pale at the Mirth and Good-humour of the Company, if it center not in his Person; he grows jealous and displeased when he ceases to be the only Person admired, and looks upon the Commendations paid to another as a Detraction from his Merit, and an Attempt to lessen the Superiority he affects; but by this very Method, he bestows such Praise as can never be suspected of Flattery. His Uneasiness and Distastes are so many sure and certain Signs of another's Title to that Glory he desires, and has the Mortification to find himself not possessed of.

A good Name is fitly compared to a precious Ointment, and when we are praised with Skill and Decency, 'tis indeed the most agreeable Perfume, but if too strongly admitted into a Brain of a less vigorous and happy Texture, 'twill, like too strong an Odour, overcome the Senses, and prove pernicious to those Nerves 'twas intended to refresh. A generous Mind is of all others the most sensible of Praise and Dispraise; and a noble Spirit is as much invigorated with its due Proportion of Honour and Applause, as 'tis depressed by Neglect and Contempt: But 'tis only Persons far above the common Level who are thus affected with either of these Extremes; as in a Thermometer, 'tis only the purest and most sublimated Spirit that is either contracted or dilated by the Benignity or Inclemency of the Season.

MR. SPECTATOR,

THE Translations which you have lately given us from the *Greek*, in some of your last Papers, have been the Occasion of my looking into some of those Authors; among whom I chanced on a Collection of Letters which pass under the Name of *Aristænetus*. Of all the Remains of Antiquity, I believe there can be Nothing produc'd of an Air so gallant and polite; each Letter contains a little Novel or Adventure, which is

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told

* told with all the Beauties of Language, and heightened
 * with a Luxuriance of Wit. There are several of them
 * translated, but with such wide Deviations from the Ori-
 * ginal, and in a Stile so far differing from the Author's,
 * that the Translator seems rather to have taken Hints
 * for the expressing his own Sense and Thoughts, than
 * to have endeavoured to render those of *Aristænetus*. In
 * the following Translation, I have kept as near the
 * Meaning of the *Greek* as I could, and have only added
 * a few Words to make the Sentences in *English* fit to-
 * gether a little better than they would otherwise have
 * done. The Story seems to be taken from that of *Pig-*
 * * *malion* and the Statue in *Ovid*: Some of the Thoughts
 * are of the same Turn, and the whole is written in a
 * kind of Poetical Prose.

Philopanax to Chromation.

“ NEVER was Man more overcome with so
 “ fantastical a Passion as mine. I have painted
 “ a beautiful Woman, and am despairing, dying for the
 “ Picture. My own Skill has undone me; 'tis not the
 “ Dart of *Venus*, but my own Pencil has thus wounded
 “ me. Ah me! with what Anxiety am I necessitated
 “ to adore my own Idol? How miserable am I, whilst
 “ every one must as much pity the Painter as he praises
 “ the Picture, and own my Torment more than equal.
 “ to my Art. But why do I thus complain? Have there
 “ not been more unhappy and unnatural Passions than
 “ mine? Yes, I have seen the Representations of *Phæ-*
 “ *dra*, *Narcissus*, and *Pasiphae*. *Phædra* was unhappy in
 “ her Love; that of *Pasiphae* was monstrous; and whilst
 “ the other caught at his beloved Likeness, he destroyed
 “ the watery Image, which ever eluded his Embraces.
 “ The Fountain represented *Narcissus* to himself, and
 “ the Picture both that and him, thirsting after his
 “ adored Image. But I am yet less unhappy, I enjoy
 “ her Presence continually, and if I touch her, I de-
 “ stroy not the beauteous Form, but she looks pleased,
 “ and a sweet Smile sits in the charming Space which
 “ divides her Lips. One would swear that Voice and
 “ Speech were issuing out, and that one's Ears felt the
 “ melodious Sound. How often have I, deceived by a
 “ Lover's Credulity, hearkned if she had not some-
 “ thing