THE FABLE OF THE BEES:

OR;

'Private Vices, Public Benefits,'

With, An ESSAY on CHARITY and CHARITY-

ool 8£

AND,

A SEARCH into the Nature of Society'The ninth

EDITIONS

To which is added,

A VINDICATION of the Book from the Aspersions contained in a Presentment of the Grand Jury of Middlesex; and an abusive Letter to the Lord C.

EDINBURGH
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keys and government are to the political bo-

dies of civil societies, what the vital spirits and life itself are to the natural bodies of animated creatures; and as thole that study the anatomy of dead carcales may fee, that the chief organ? and nicest springs, more immediately required to continue the motion of our machine, are not hard bones, strong muscles and nerves, nor the smooth white skin that so beautifully covers them, but small trifling films and little pipes, that are either overlooked, or else seem inconsiderable to vulgar eyes; so they that examine into the nature of man, abstred from art and education, may observe, that what renders him a sociable animal, consists not in his desire of company, good nature, pity, affability, and other graces of fair outford but that his vilest and most hateful qualities are the most necessary accomplishments to fit him for the largest, and, according to the world, the happiest and most flourishing societies.

The following Fable, in which, what I have laid, is set forth at large, was printed about fifteen years ago in a sixpenny pamphlet, called, THE GRUMBLING HIVE: OR KNIVES TURN'D HONEST; and being soon after pirated, cried about the streets in a halfpenny sheet. Since the first publishing of it, I have met with several that, either wilfully or ignorantly mistaking the design, would have it, that

* This was wrote in 1714*
the scope of it was a satyr upon virtue and molality," and the whole wrote for the encouragement of vice. This made me resolve, whenever it should be reprinted, some way or other to inform the reader of the real intent "this little poem was wrote with. I do not dignify thee few loose lines with the Bfsme of a poem, that I would have the reader expect any poetry in them, but barely because they are rhyme, and I am in reality puzzled what name to give them; for they are neither heroic nor pastoral, satyr, burlesque nor hero-comic; to be a talec they want probability, and the whole is rather too long for a fable. All I can say of them is, that they are a story told in dogrel, which, without the least design of being witty, I have endeavoured to do in as easy and familiar a manner as I was able; the reader shall be welcome to call them what he pleases. It was said of Montagne, that he was pretty well versed in the defeats of mankind, but unacquainted with the excellencies of human nature: if I fare no worse, I shall think myself well used.

What country soever in the universe is to be understood by the Bee-hive represented here, it is evident from what is said of the laws and constitution of it, the glory, wealth, power and industry of its inhabitants, that it must be a large, rich and warlike nation, that is happily governed by a limited monarchy. The satyr therefore to be met with in the following lines, upon the several professions and callings, and almost every degree and station of people, was not made to injure and point to particular persons, but only to shew the vileness of the ingredients that altogether compose the wholesome mixture of a well-ordered society; in order to extol the wonderful power of political wisdom, by the help of which so beautiful a machine is raised from the most contemptible branches. For the main design of the fable (as it is briefly explained in the moral) 13 to flor the impiety and enjoy all
The comforts of life, that are to be, met with in an industrious, wealthy and powerful nation, and at the same time be blessed with all the virtue and innocence that can be wished for in a golden age; from thence to expose the unreasonable benevolence and folly of those, that defend of being, a opulent and industrious people, and wonderfully greedy after all the benefits they can receive, are yet always murmuring at and excusing against those vices and inconveniences, that, from the beginning of the world to this present day, have, been inseparable from all kingdoms and Hates that ever were famed for strength, riches and politeness, at the same time.

To do this, I first lightly touch upon some of the faults and corruptions the several professions and callings are generally charged with. After that I shew that those very vices of every particular person, by skilful management, were made subservient to the grandeur and worldly happiness of the whole.

Lastly, by setting forth what necessity must be the consequence of general honesty and virtue, and national temperance, innocence and content, I demonstrate, that if mankind could be cured of the failings they are naturally guilty of, they would cease to be capable of being raised into such vast, potent and polite societies, as they have been under the several great common-wealths and monarchies, that have flourished since the creation.

If you ask me, why I have done all this, and what good these notions will produce, truly, besides the reader's diversion, I believe none at all; but, if I was asked, what naturally ought to be expected from them, I would answer, That, in the first place, the people, who continually find fault with others, by reading them, would be taught to look at home, and examining their own consciences, be made ashamed of always railing at what they are more or less guilty of themselves; and that...


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The PREFACE;
the next, those who are fond of the easy and comfortable, and reap all the benefits that are the consequence of a great and flourishing nation, would learn more patiently to submit to those inconveniences, which no government on earth can remedy when they should feel the impossibility of enjoying any great share of the first, without partaking Hke of the latter...

This, I say, ought naturally to be expected from the publishing of these notions, if people were to be made better by anything that could be said to them; but mankind having for so many ages remained still the same, notwithstanding the many illustrative and elaborate writings, by which their amendment has been endeavoured, I am not so vain as to hope for better success from so incon siderable a trifle.

Having allowed the small advantage this little whim is likely to produce, I think myself obliged to shew, that it cannot be prejudicial to any; for what is published, if it does no good, ought at least to do no harm: in order to this, I have made force explanatory notes, to which the reader will find himself referred in those passages that seem to be most liable to exceptions.

The conscientious, that never saw the GRUMBLING HIVE, will tell me, that whatever I may talk of the fable, it not taking up a tenth part of the book, was only contrived to introduce the REMARKS; that, instead of clearing up the doubtful or obscure places, I have only pitched upon such as I had a mind to expatiate upon; and that, far from extenuating the errors committed before, I have made bad worse, and drawn myself a more but-faced champion for vice in the rambling digression than I had done in the table itself.

I ill all spend to time in answering these accusations; where men are prejudiced, the best apology are lulled and I knew that those who think it;"
wrinaf to fuppofe a neceflity of vice in any cafe whatever, will never be reconciled to any part of the performance; but if this be thoroughly examined, all the offence it can give, must result from the wrong inferences that may perhaps be drawn from it, and which I defire nobody to make. When I affert that vices are inseparable from great and potent societies, and that it is impoflive their wealth and grandeur fhould subsift without, I do not fay,, that the particular members of them, who are guilty of any; (hould not be continually reprovd, or not be punifhed for them when they grow into crimes.

There are, I believe, 'few people in London, of thofe that are at any time forced to go £-foot; but what could wijlv the ftreets of it much cleaner thart generally they are, whilft they regard nothing but their own clothes and private conveniency: but when once they come to confider, that what of fends them is the refult of the plenty, great traffic and opulence of that mighty city, if they have any concern in its welfare, they will hardly ever wifh to fee the ftreets of it lefs dirty. For if we mind the materials of all forts that muft supply fuch an infinite number of trades and handicrafts, &c are always going forward; the vaft quantity of victuals that are daily confumed in it; die waste and superfluitieS that muft be produced from them; die multitudes of horfes, and other cattle, that are always dawbing the ftreets; the carts, coaches, and more heavy carriages, that are perpetually wearing and breaking the pavement of them.; and, above all, the numberlefs swarms of people tij it are continually harrafling and trampling through every part of them. If, I fay, we mind all thefe, we lhall find, that every moment muft produce new filth and confidering how far diftant the great ftreets are from the river fide, what cofl and care- CYCl be bellowed to remove the oatinefs almol
as fast as 'tis made, it is impossible London should be morecleanly before it is lefts flourishing. Now would I ask if a good citizen, in consideration of what has been-said* might not assert, that dirty, streets are a necessary evil inseparable from the felicity, of London, without the least hindrance to th\& cleaning of shoes, or sweeping of streets, and consequently without any prejudice, either to the Black-r

guard, or the Scavengers.

But-if, without any regard to the interest or hap-

pinefs of the city, the question was put. What place* I thought most pleasant to walk in ? No body can; doubt but, before the flinking ftreets of London, I would esteem a fragrant garden, or a shady grove in the country* In the fame manner, if laying a fide* all worldly greatnefs and vain-glory, I fhould be asked, where I thought it was most probable that men? might enjoy true happinefs ? I would prefer a small peaceable society, in which men, neither envied nor cffeemed by neighbours, fhould be contented to live tjon the natural product of the fpot they inhabit; to a, vaft multitude «abounding in wealth and power, that fhould always be conquering others by their arms« abroad, and debauching themselves by foreign luxury* at ho,v.e.

Thus much I had faid to the reader in the firft-
edition; and have added nothing by way of preface, in the fecoftd. But fince that,* a violent outcry has? been made againft the book, exa&ly anfwering the-
expectation I always had of the juftice, the wifdomy the charity, and fair-dealing of thofe whofe good, will I defpaired of. It has been prefented by the, grand jury, and condemned by thoufands who never faw a Word of it* It has been preached againft before my lord mayor; and an utter, refutation of it, is daily expec\wed from a reverence divine, who has - called me names-in the advertisements, and threatened to anfwer me in two months time for above five; months together. What-I have to fay for myclf..
The Preface.

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The reader will see in my vindication-at the end of the book, where he will likewise find the J\Mand jury's pi\fentment, and a kt\fr to the righ\honourable Lord C, which is-" very rhetorical beyond argument on connexion. The author (he\s a fine talent for inve\fives, and great fagacity in dis\\\öffering atheifm,- where others can find none. He g zealous: agai\pt wicked books, points at the F\ble of the bee\, and is very angry with the author: he be\ows four strong epithets on the enormity of his guilt, and by federal elegant in\\ufffduendo's- to the multitude" as the danger there is in fu\ring such authors to live, and the vengeance of heaven upon a whole nation: very charitably recommends him to their care.

Confidering the length "of t\iis epiftle. and that it is not wholly levelled at me only, I thought at fir\it to have made some-extra\ls from it of what related to myself; but finding on-a nearer enqu\ry, that what i concerned me • was fo blended and interwoven with what did not, I was obliged to trouble the reader with it entire; not without hopes, that, prolix as it is, the axtravagancy of it will be entertaining to > th\e who ha\rufed the treatie it condemns with . , fo much horror.