

and distant regions; though none of the countries into which he advances are, every circumstance considered, superior to those he leaves behind, yet feels in every step of his progress, feels in the mere act of traversing a large extent of the surface of this globe, a certain sensation of pleasure, which he, who remains attached to a single spot, cannot even figure in imagination.

It is a favourite doctrine with certain philosophers, that a man's riches and his happiness are not to be estimated by the sum of his wealth, or the number of his enjoyments, but by the proportion between his wants and his ability to supply them. The man, say these speculists, who feels no desire which he cannot fully gratify, has arrived at the summit of human felicity. But does not this reasoning prove too much? And, from the same

premises from which this is inferred, may we not fairly conclude, that the condition of an oyster is as much to be envied as the state of the most exalted creature in the creation of God?

If we judge of the sentiments of mankind upon this point from their invariable practice, we shall see that they have, in all ages, uniformly given the lie to these pretended philosophers. If we consider that love of change, that restless activity, which so strongly characterise our frame, we shall no longer upbraid bustling and ambitious spirits with pursuing a shadow instead of a substance; we shall, on the contrary, pronounce that they have followed the original bent of human nature, that they have acted properly, that in proportion to their success, they have augmented their sum of happiness.

ON THE PRIDE OF NOBILITY.

THE vanity founded on imaginary nobility, flows from the same tainted spring, as that founded on the antiquity of a nation; every one accounting himself the more noble, the more ancient the date of his nobility.

Nobility is not, indeed, without its value, when acquired by personal merit, or the eminent services of ancestors; but to pride one's self absolutely in a title and coat of arms, or even on the services of ancestors, so as to neglect the acquirement of personal merit, is a ridicule not to be too severely exposed. A noble birth, in right honourables of shallow understandings, produces only pride. Self-esteem in noblemen, whose honour it is to be descended from heroes or sages, but whose misfortune it is to bear little or no resemblance to them, makes no better figure than a young gentleman out at the elbows, to boast of the illustrious blood which boils in his veins.

Scarce a farmer or tradesman in Spain is without his genealogical table; which, like those in vogue among the Irish, seldom stop short of Noah's ark. This chimerical nobility will not allow a Spanish farmer to put his hand to the plough. Labour, they think, is fit only for slaves. Two hours work in a day is as much as a man of a liberal way of thinking can stoop to. The consequence of this is, he hires some foreigner to till his grounds and dispose of their product, while he lounges at home; or, at most, exercises his fingers on

a guitar. But when such a high-born husbandman debases his hands so as to guide the plough, he has a way of dignifying this mean occupation; sticking some cock's feathers in his hat, with his cloak and sword lying by him; but on the appearance of company, he immediately quits the plough, throws on his cloak, claps his Toledo under his arm, stroaks his mustachios, and struts like a gentleman taking the air. A Frenchman and beggar are the same thing with the commonalty in Spain, multitudes of French resorting thither for work, especially in the time of vintage; and the Swissers are in a fair way of being looked on in no better light; for I see every day, and with extreme concern I see it, companies of sturdy Roman Catholic Swissers, with their pretty wives and flock of children, tramping away to Spain, as they themselves say, *to avoid starving at home; and who can blame us?*

The Florentine nobility are extremely reserved and haughty towards foreigners who cannot prove their nobility, and, in reality, may be only commoners; yet amidst all this fastidiousness, it is a known fact, that in the palaces and finest houses of Florence, there is a little window to the street with an iron knocker, and over it an empty flask, as a sign that wine is to be sold there, even by the single flask. There is no inconsistency in a Florentine nobleman selling a pound of raisins, or a yard of ribbon, or a flask of red-gut wine; yet would he think it a sad derogation from