

most no progression at all, which makes us perceive the justice of Cicero's observation, that to be ignorant of what passed in the world is to remain in childhood. Savages in general may be looked upon as children during the whole of their lives, on account of the very scanty share of knowledge they possess. I remember very well that the *Esquimaux* who were in London some years ago appeared to me in that light. The father and mother seemed to have their wonder and risibility excited by the same petty trifling objects which touched the fancy of *Dickizuma* their child. Nor did he, who was said to be a reverend priest upon the coast of Labrador, convince me that he was much wiser. The child was more playful than the grown people. But I impute that to corporeal levity, as I did their sedateness to corporeal tranquillity; in short, there was much about the same diversity between them as between a kitten and an old cat. Captain Cook, the celebrated circumnavigator, whose plain, candid, and judicious remarks I value very highly, gave me, in a conversation which I had with him at Sir John Pringle's table, the same account of the untutored nations in the Southern hemisphere. He told me, that we were not to suppose them witty, because they laughed at a great deal; for that they were amused with very small matters; and he also told me, that they were quite volatile and inattentive, and would ask a variety of questions in rapid succession, without waiting till they received answers. Such titillations of inquisitiveness, which could cease without being appeased by gratifications, indicate a mean state of mind, the reverse of that noble, ardent, persevering curiosity, which is ever found in a vigorous, well cultivated understanding. Nor is the continuation of childhood by reason of ignorance peculiar to savage life. For we find it in greater and lesser degrees in individuals of societies the most cultivated. 'Sauntering Jack and idle Joan,' whom Prior, by a choice collection of frivolous circumstances, represents as having 'lived in a kind or as it were,' are characters not at all so rare as one may suppose, without making an attentive close enquiry.

No man perhaps has ever had a more lively perception of the varieties of human life than Horace, whose admirable faculties were highly improved by the best education, and by the acquaintance with every thing worth knowing, which he enjoyed with the most fortunate freedom. I take it for granted that none of my readers will dispute the authenticity of Horace's history; that he actually lived in the court

of Augustus; though in an age where there is such an affectation of scepticism, I cannot be quite sure but there may be some followers of father Harduin, the jesuit, who very ingeniously wrote a dissertation to prove that the books which we call the classics, never existed in ancient Rome, but were composed by Monks in a modern period of time. Harduin's piece of classical infidelity may, I think, be esteemed as a very fair, ridiculous imitation of that kind of disbelief, which objects to the credibility of distant and extraordinary facts, though vouched by such evidence as we could reasonably expect to have. As an able member of the holy order to which he had devoted himself, he had frequent opportunities to combat irreligious doubts; and it may be supposed that his curious dissertation was meant to be gravely ironical. But I have gone after Harduin till I have lost sight of Horace, whose descriptions of youth and age came into my mind with the fine liveliness of recollection which attends the passages of that poet which we have got by heart. He in a just and striking manner contrasts the fervour and complacent gaiety of youth with the coldness and fretful rigidity of age. But Horace, though a very good philosopher upon many occasions, has not given any precepts to the young and the old how to correct their several faults, and contribute to their mutual happiness.

Youth, however inferior to age in experience and wisdom, has no doubt the advantage in mere animal life; and for this reason many very fondly give it the preference, somewhat upon the principle of the common proverb, that 'a living dog is better than a dead lion.' But surely we are formed to enjoy a kind of happiness superior to that of mere animal life, and the pleasures of the senses. Intellectual felicity affords a much higher delight to those who are capable of relishing it. Of this I am sure from what I have felt myself, and I should not say so, had I not also felt very exquisitely the pleasures of sense. I have heard that a late very old general officer in the British service, when somebody was talking to him of his high military preferments, said, that he would be content to be the lowest ensign in the army, on condition of being only sixteen years old. Such a saying, if it expressed the General's real meaning, only showed that his happiness was altogether sensual, and that in the course of a long life he had made no advance in the refinement and elevation of his nature. How different from his animal enthusiasm is the generous, though extravagant wish which the excellent Fenelon puts into the mouth of

Telemachus