

VOUTI, Emperor of China, was passionately fond of the occult sciences. An impostor, availing himself of this foible, brought him an elixir, exhorting him to drink it, and assuring him that it would render him immortal. One of his Ministers, who was present, having in vain attempted to undeceive him, hastily snatched the cup, and drank the liquor. The Emperor, enraged at this insult, ordered the Mandarin to be put to death. The

honest Minister, not in the least disconcerted, said to him, 'If the elixir bestows immortality, all your efforts to put me to death will be useless; and if it does not, surely you will not be guilty of such an act of injustice for so insignificant a theft.'—This speech pacified the Emperor, who afterwards highly commended him for his fortitude in the cause of truth, in opposition to imposture.

SENTIMENTS AND SIMILIES.

[By Helen Maria Williams.]

FASHIONABLE conversation is not very extensive: it goes on rapidly for a while in a certain routine of topics, and reminds us of our street musicians, who, by turning a screw, produce a set of tunes on the hand organ; but when they have gone through a limited number, the instrument will do no more, and the performer hastens to a distant street, where the same sounds may be repeated to a new set of auditors.

Envy is a malignant enchanter, who when benignant genii have scattered flowers in profusion over the path of the traveller, waves the evil rod, and converts the scene of fertility into a desert.

What so wretched as a neglected beauty of the *zen*, when the gay images of coronets, titles, and equipages, which have long floated in her imagination, and seemed within her grasp, at length vanish, as the luxuriant colours of an evening sky fade by degrees into the sadness of twilight? Her feelings are more acute than those of a losing gamester, as she is compelled in secret to acknowledge some deficiency in her own powers of attraction, to cast an oblique reflection on nature, as well as fortune, and has no hope of retrieving her disappointments, since the fairies have long ago used every drop of that precious water which would renew expiring beauty.

The joys of dissipation are like gaudy colours, which for a moment attract the sight, but soon fatigue and oppress it; while the satisfactions of home resemble the green robe of nature, on which the eye loves to rest, and to which it always returns with a sensation of delight.

There are persons who, while they def-

cant with energy on benevolence, conceal a mind, the sole view of which is self-interest; and they remind those who know their real character, of a swan gracefully expanding his plumes of purest whiteness to the winds, and carefully hiding his black feet beneath another element.

While foresight and policy are so common, let us forgive those few minds of trusting simplicity, who are taught in vain the lesson of suspicion, on whom impressions are easily made, and who think better of human nature than it deserves. Such persons are for the most part sufficiently punished for their venial error.

The forms of ancient ceremony must have been burdensome in the intercourse of society; yet in an old person this kind of manner still appears respectable. We are charmed with the light and graceful accompaniments with which the taste of Brown has decorated our modern villas, and rejoice that each valley has no more 'a brother'; but when we visit an ancient mansion, who can wish that its long avenues of venerable trees, sanctified by age and their connexion with the days of former years and the generations that are past, should feel the destroying axe, and give place to new improvements.

That kindness which flows from the heart, is like a clear stream, that pours its full and rapid current cheerfully along, for ever unobstructed in its course; while those acts of beneficence which are performed with reluctance resemble shallow waters supplied by a muddy fountain, retarded in their noisy progress by every pebble, dried by heat, and frozen by cold.

There is a deviation, which is more than