

THE
HALIFAX MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

VOL. II.

MAY 1, 1832.

No. 24.

THE MIND.

[FOR THE H. M. M.]

SIR,—The signature of a writer in your last Magazine, would have led a person to expect that the communication to which it was affixed would be altogether unassailable, and there is certainly no injustice in supposing, that one who flings aside the modest adjunct of *Philo*, with which the ancient sages used to qualify their titles, should substitute for the sense of incapacity which so unassuming a title indicated, something in the shape of a superior knowledge of his subject, or a greater share of penetration, than they possessed. But as the man who has been fearful of annihilation from a gigantic figure which he sees before him, and afterwards discovers that its only title to humanity was in the coat that covered the straw beneath, feels a contempt for it exactly proportioned to his previous terror; so I who expected an encounter with the "Wise man" which the aforesaid writer so unhesitatingly declared himself, was not a little relieved in finding that all his *wisdom* was the property of his *title*.

I am willing to grant that the view of human nature which your correspondent took, is by far the most amiable, because it is the most flattering of the two; but what has its amiability to do with its truth? If the man who desired to ascertain of what kind of wood his mahogany painted table was made, should be deterred from making his enquiries by a fear of spoiling the polish of the surface, he would stand but small chance of attaining his object, and he who sets out with an intention of discovering what human nature really is, must not allow the silly desire of rendering every thing conformable to his own *beau ideal* of humanity, to prevent him from removing the coating which conceals its rugosities.

There are some parts of your correspondent's communication, which I confess puzzle me a little, but not perhaps in the exact way which would be most agreeable to his inclination. After inveighing against the conduct of those who from a love of simplicity reject what is "complicated and abstruse" he concludes his declamation by the triumphant introduction of Newton's celebrated Philosophizing principle; "No causes shall be admitted but such as are both true and sufficient to explain the phenomena."