

THE HALIFAX MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

VOL. II.

FEBRUARY 1, 1832.

No. 21.

THE MIND.

[FOR THE H. M. M.]

No subject more baffles the ingenuity of the human mind, than an investigation of its own nature. Whoever directs his attention to this subject, will feel a consciousness, that that principle in which his thoughts and actions originate, is something of a vastly different nature from that grosser part with which it is connected, and through whose mediation its intercourse with the external world is conducted. This principle whether it be designated life, soul, or mind, is far above our comprehension. There is in it, nothing which can be rendered palpable to any of the senses, and the external world presents no analogy, or resemblance, which might lead us to a discovery of its nature. If we turn our view upon ourselves, the boundary of our knowledge is, a *consciousness* that we are conscious. The effects of this principle, are the only data, from which our knowledge of its nature is to be derived, and if we reflect upon the difficulty, nay frequent impracticability, of deciding upon those causes which produce the commonest effects of natural science, we may form a feeble, though inadequate idea, of the obstacles to be encountered in tracing effects which are themselves but ideas to a cause, of whose existence these ideas are the only evidence. How absurd then, the speculations of those, who divide a principle so incomprehensible, into an almost infinite variety of the most incongruous parts, and form of a substance immaterial and indivisible, a confused assemblage of contradictory and irreconcilable principles, which cannot operate till the victory of one of the parties establishes a superiority over the others.

Palpably absurd as such a doctrine may abstractedly appear, it is but the amount of those systems of Philosophy, professing to