

LOVE OF ADMIRATION A MORAL VIRTUE.

Our friend the Recluse has this time caught a Tartar. The writer, however, of the following counterblast to his attack on woman is not of the gentler sex, but one who has nobly come forward as their champion.—Ems.

There is implanted in several species of animals a love of admiration, which seeks its gratification in the exhibition of real or imaginary excellencies. The pleasure derived through this craving of the nature is very exquisite, and by no means depends upon the possession by the individual of those qualities for which he may be admired. Among the animals who conspicuously exhibit this propensity, we mention particularly, men, turkey gobblers, ladies, peacocks, and ministers. On examination, this is found to be the most active principle of the human nature, and is not only the source of great enjoyment to the individual, but excuses that vanity of dress, manners, appearance, qualities and character, which together constitutes what is commonly called life. What a flat, stale and unprofitable world this must be, if its members were not prompted by some impulse to display their beauty, elegance, education, or wealth. In fact, were it not for this impulse, all these valuable possessions would lose their worth, and it is highly probable, that the fairer and better, and more numerous portion of the human race would find existence a burthen too great to be borne, and man would at once lose all signs of being a rational being, and fleeing from civilization would roam the world as a naked savage. I am aware that this impulse or propensity is, by the majority of moralists, denominated *vanity*.

This term which signifies nothingness, is, however, a very improper designation of a principle, which is to man what steam is to the engine, giving motion to the whole machine; since, evidently, the only respects in which the civilized man differs from the savage, proceed from a love of admiration. Examine the hut of the Hottentot, and contrast it with the palatial residence of the civilized man. Compare the scanty garb of the Nubian female with the full costume of our ladies,—and when you trace the wide diversities which exist to their cause, you will admit that whatever that

cause may be, vanity will very imperfectly designate it.

Whether the love of admiration be vanity or no, depends altogether upon circumstances. In the case of man it is, I admit, nothing but vanity,—by man I here mean a rational and intelligent being, of the male gender. But, in the case of ladies and ministers, it is a very different thing—being in their case a virtue—which tends to civilize and bless the whole human race, and which calls forth from those who feel the power of this passion the most sublime exhibition of patience, fortitude, courage, and all the more heroic virtues.

In man I admit a love of admiration is vanity—nothing but vanity—because there is nothing in him admirable; on him flattery is altogether misplaced, and all his attempts at display are supremely ridiculous.

Now, what is man? I am aware, that by giving a fair and truthful reply to this question, I shall incur a great degree of odium,—but in the discussion of great moral questions the truth must be told. But let me ask those who are not liable to be influenced in their discussions by undue partiality, What do all good books say about man? Why, that he is shockingly bad. What do almost all natural and intelligent beings on earth, who are not men themselves, say? Why, that as regards his outward man, he is ugly, that intellectually he is stupid, and that his disposition is horrid. How often his sister or wife is obliged to inform him that he is an ugly, stupid and horrid animal,—and this is, in fact, the only definition of man that can be given; as Shakspeare says—“Man, proud man, clothed with a little brief authority, plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven, that he makes the angels laugh.” I remember also once to have read another beautiful piece of poetry, but as I do not know where, and as I have altogether forgotten it, you must excuse the want of a quotation.

All display on the part of man for