

“Buy the merry madness of one hour
With the long irksomeness of following time.”¹

If mankind cannot be engaged in practices “full of austerity and rigour,” by the love of righteousness and the fear of evil, without seeking for other compensation than that which flows from the gratification of such love and the consciousness of escape from debasement, they are in a bad case. For they will assuredly find that virtue presents no very close likeness to the sportive leader of the joyous hours in Hume’s rosy picture; but that she is an awful Goddess, whose ministers are the Furies, and whose highest reward is peace.

It is not improbable that Hume would have qualified all this as enthusiasm or fanaticism, or both; but he virtually admits it:—

“Now, as virtue is an end, and is desirable on its own account, without fee or reward, merely for the immediate satisfaction which it conveys, it is requisite that there should be some sentiment which it touches; some internal taste or feeling, or whatever you please to call it, which distinguishes moral good and evil, and which embraces the one and rejects the other.

“Thus the distinct boundaries and offices of *reason* and of *taste* are easily ascertained. The former conveys the knowledge of truth and falsehood: The latter gives the sentiment of beauty and deformity, vice and virtue. The one discovers objects as they really stand in nature, without addition or diminution: The other has a productive faculty: and gilding and staining all natural objects with the colours borrowed from internal sentiment, raises in a manner a new creation. Reason being cool and disengaged, is no motive to action, and directs only the impulse received from appetite or in-

¹ Ben Jonson’s *Cynthia’s Revels*, act i.