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REFLECTIONS ON IMMODERATE DRINKING.

Vino forma perit, vino corruptior aetat. Prop.

THE common Opinion, as to the enlivening the Faculties by drinking a small Quantity extraordinary, is ill founded; a Man who requires Wine to open him, is either ill natur'd, or has not a proper Degree of Spirit: In either Case, a little Reasoning would do better than the extraordinary Glais, without running this Hazard, that by going a Step or two farther all is wrong again; the sullen Man becomes quarrelsome, and the bustling Fellow noisy: In *Italy*, where Men are allowed to have the quickest and most subtle Wits, the Bottle is never call'd in to make them shine; Sherbet and small Liquors are drank at their Assemblies, and drank because the Climate requires them: A Man heated with E'quor there, would be thought fitter for a Bed than Conversation; and indeed, so he is every where, for many Reasons: Wit is only commendable when well applied; a sprightly Saying on a proper Occasion pleases Men of sense, but a String of Jest is only fit for a Buffoon. If it should be agreed, that Wit might be raised by Wine, and that our Climate warrants strong Liquors as well as that of *Italy* does cool ones; yet it is a dangerous Experiment, unless we had a Machine for drinking, a kind of Barometer, that would shew all the Degrees between Exhilarating and Maiming; and then this Regulation must be fitted to every Man's Constitution, and every Man must be supposed to have Reason enough left, when he has been parting with his Reason for an Hour together, and stop just at such a Glass, in spite of ten thousand Intreaties to drink another. Every Man who allows himself Time to think, would be as fearful of trying the Strength of his Understanding this Way, as advancing to the Edge of a Precipice; just to try whether the Strength of his Brain would bring him back again:

THESE are some perhaps, who will pretend that Drinking is to be confined to strong Constitutions, and am sorry to say, that in all Ages there have been People whimsical enough to value themselves upon this strange Property. It was reported by the *Athenian* Ambassador to the People, with great signs of Admiration, that King *Philip* of *Macedon*, could drink more than any of his Subjects. *Demosthenes*, who was none of *Philip's* Admirers, answered, that it was no great Compliment to a Prince, to compare him to a Sponge. What he said then will be everlastingly true; an enormous Swallower of Liquor is no more than a human Sponge; and, by the Ways, those who can drink most have seldom the most Wit.

WE must indeed allow, that many who have had an indisputable Title to Wit and Parts, have drank hard, and generally speaking have drank them away; but if Men of Wit (sometimes do wrong; does it follow that we must imitate them? Or, if one may be allowed to play on the Word, ought one to affect Wit, at the Expense of one's Wit?

THE great Blessings of which Man is capable, are Serenity of Mind, and Health of Body; both of which are best preserved by strict Sobriety. It is true, a Man must be at some Trouble to find out proper Subjects for the Employment of his Thoughts when he is sober, but then this is the proper Business of a reasonable Creature; whereas Laughing, Swallowing, and Talking idly, are Employments below human Nature, and, as far as the human Faculty will hold, below even a Brute. If Gen-

appexed to human Nature to have a Portion of Care, and he who avoids that assigned him by Nature, wilfully takes a larger in point of Health. Intemperance is the Source of almost all Diseases, which either flow from our own Errors in point of Eating and Drinking, or from those of our Ancestors.

AS a Proneness to Drinking leads a Man into a Variety of Evils which he never thought of, so an inflexible Sobriety engages a Man into other good Habits which he could never have acquired otherwise: A sober Man must do something consistent with Reason, he therefore casts about for something that pleases him also; this leads him to the Study of some sort of Science or other, or to the general Study of all Science, according to the natural Bent of his Genius: In the Pursuit of such Views, he finds a Sprightliness in his Mind, warmer and better founded than any derived from Wine, and unattended with flagging of the Spirits: He goes to Bed satisfied, leaving nothing to reproach himself with; he rises cheerfully, because he has new, innocent, and worthy schemes to accomplish. Whereas he who drinks, falls asleep without knowing it, is uneasy when he wakes, and is at his being mad yesterday, makes himself drunk to-day, so that he shall forget it.

I SHALL conclude with a Saying of *Pythagoras*; who being once asked, *How a Man addicted to Drunkenness might be cured?* answered, *By considering what Ill Drunkenness brings upon him.*

PETERSBURGH, Jan. 14. O. S. THE dreadful consequences that have attended the violent cold lately felt in the most Northern provinces in this empire, cannot but tender it a very acceptable piece of news, to give a short and distinct account of the observations that were made here on that surprizing alteration of the weather. After a thaw that had continued for some time, accompanied by southern and western winds, bringing with them sometimes rain and a loose kind of large humid snow, the wind on the 12th of December turned to the north north east; and two figured and coloured clouds, not unlike rainbows, were observed; which is a never-failing sign of extreme cold weather in these climates. On the 14th the thermometer exposed to the air sunk 18 degrees and a half below the mark (0), which is 32 degrees below the freezing point. On the 15th and 16th the quicksilver was 20 degrees below the (0), with a north wind, but very small. On the 17th, at 7 in the morning, the wind N. N. E. but in a manner calm, the quicksilver was 28 degrees below (0). The 18th in the morning at 19 degrees, with a north east wind; at seven in the evening at 23 degrees, the wind being then at E. N. E. The 19th at seven in the morning at 28 degrees, with a perfect calm. The 20th at seven in the morning at 27 degrees, with a west wind. Another thermometer placed in a chamber where there was a stove, was at 56 degrees above (0); and a third suspended between two windways, stood at 3 degrees above (0), making a difference of 59 degrees with that in the chamber, and 82 degrees with that suspended in the open air. So that the cold felt here on the 19th of December, exceeded by 26 degrees the severity of the weather in Holland in the year 1740. Feb. 1. O. S. The excessive cold which has prevailed lately has not produc'd those effects here, which it has in the northern provinces of this empire, where in some villages all the inhabitants and beasts were frozen, and even persons who had shut themselves up in their bakehouses.