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modern languages, they receive a softer turn on this occasion, by the addition of a new syllable. *Nick* in *Italian* is *Nicolini*, *Jack* in *French* *Janot*; and so of the rest.

There is another particular in our language which is a great instance of our frugality in words, and that is the suppressing of several particles which must be produced in other tongues to make a sentence intelligible: this often perplexes the best writers, when they find the relatives *whom*, *which*, or *they*, at their mercy whether they may have admission or not; and will never be decided till we have something like an Academy, that by the best authorities and rules drawn from the analogy of languages, shall settle all controversies between grammar and idiom.

I have only considered our language as it shews the genius and natural temper of the *English*, which is modest, thoughtful and sincere, and which perhaps may recommend the people, though it has spoiled the tongue. We might perhaps carry the same thought into other languages, and deduce a great part of what is peculiar to them from the genius of the people who speak them. It is certain the light talkative humour of the *French*, has not a little infected their tongue, which might be shewn by many instances; as the genius of the *Italians*, which is so much addicted to musick and ceremony, has moulded all their words and phrases to those particular uses. The stateliness and gravity of the *Spaniards* shews it self to perfection in the solemnity of their language; and the blunt honest humour of the *Germans* sounds better in the roughness of the *High Dutch*, than it would in a politer tongue.

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----*Omnem quæ nunc obducta tuenti
Mortales hebetat visus tibi, et humida circum
Caligat, nubem eripiam*-----

Virg.

WHEN I was at *Grand Cairo* I picked up several oriental Manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entituled, *The Visions of Mirza*, which I have read over with

with great pleasure. I intend to give it to the publick when I have no other entertainment for them; and shall begin with the first Vision, which I have translated word for word as follows.

“ ON the fifth day of the moon, which according to the custom of
“ my forefathers I always keep holy, after having washed my
“ self, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills
“ of *Bagdat*, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and pray-
“ er. As I was here airing my self on the tops of the mountains, I fell
“ into a profound contemplation on the vanity of humane life; and pas-
“ sing from one thought to another, Surely, said I, man is but a shadow
“ and life a dream. Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards
“ the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered
“ one in the habit of a shepherd, with a musical instrument in his hand.
“ As I looked upon him he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon
“ it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety
“ of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different
“ from any thing I had ever heard. They put me in mind of those hea-
“ venly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their
“ first arrival in paradise, to wear out the impressions of their last ago-
“ nies, and qualifie them for the pleasures of that happy place. My
“ heart melted away in secret raptures.

“ I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a
“ Genius; and that several had been entertained with musick who had
“ passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made him-
“ self visible. When he had raised my thoughts, by those transporting
“ airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I
“ looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the
“ waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat.
“ I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature;
“ and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had
“ heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The Genius smiled upon me
“ with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my
“ imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with
“ which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking
“ me by the hand, *Mirzab*, said he, I have heard thee in thy soliloquies,
“ follow me.

“ Hethen led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me
“ on the top of it, Cast thy eyes eastward, said he, and tell me what thou
“ seest.

" seeft. I fee, faid I, a huge valley and a prodigious tide of water rol-
 " ling through it. The valley that thou feeft, faid he, is the vale of mi-
 " fery, and the tide of water that thou feeft, is part of the great tide of
 " Eternity. What is the reason, faid I, that the tide I fee riles out of a
 " thick mift at one end, and again lofes it felf in a thick mift at the o-
 " ther? What thou feeft, faid he, is that portion of Eternity which is
 " called Time, meafured out by the Sun, and reaching from the begin-
 " ning of the world to its confummation. Examine now, faid he, this
 " fea that is thus bounded with darknefs at both ends, and tell me what
 " thou difcovereft in it. I fee a bridge, faid I, ftanding in the midft of
 " the tide. The bridge thou feeft, faid he, is humane life; confider it at-
 " tentively. Upon a more leifurely furvey of it, I found that it confifted of
 " threefcore and ten entire arches, with feveral broken arches, which ad-
 " ded to thofe that were entire, made up the number about an hundred.
 " As I was counting the arches the Genius told me that this bridge con-
 " fifted at firft of a thoufand arches; but that a great flood fwept away
 " the reft, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it.
 " But tell me further, faid he, what thou difcovereft on it. I fee mul-
 " titudes of people paffing over it, faid I, and a black cloud hanging on
 " each end of it. As I looked more attentively, I faw feveral of the paf-
 " fengers dropping through the bridge, into the great tide that flowed
 " underneath it; and upon further examination, perceived there were
 " innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the paf-
 " fengers no fooner trod upon, but they fell through them into the tide
 " and immediately difappeared. Thefe hidden pit-falls were fet very
 " thick at the entrance of the bridge, fo that throngs of people no fooner
 " broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They
 " grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay clofer toge-
 " ther towards the end of the arches that were entire.
 " There were indeed fome perfons, but their number was very fmall,
 " that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but
 " fell through one after another, being quite tired and fpent with fo long
 " a walk.
 " I paffed fome time in the contemplation of this wonderful ftructure,
 " and the great variety of objects which it prefented. My heart was filled
 " with a deep melancholy to fee feveral dropping unexpectedly in the
 " midft of mirth and jollity, and catching at every thing that flood by
 " them to fave themfelves. Some were looking up towards the Heavens
 " in a thoughtful pofture, and in the midft of a Speculation flumbled and
 " fell

“ fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles
 “ that glittered in their eyes and danced before them, but often when
 “ they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed
 “ and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some
 “ with Scymetars in their hands, and others with Urinals, who ran to and
 “ fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did
 “ not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped, had
 “ they not been thus forced upon them.

“ The Genius seeing me indulge my self in this melancholy prospect,
 “ told me I had dwelt long enough upon it: Take thine eyes off the
 “ bridge, said he, and tell me if thou seeest any thing thou dost not com-
 “ prehend. Upon looking up, What mean, said I, those great flights of
 “ birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon
 “ it from time to time? I see vultures, harpyes, ravens, cormorants; and
 “ among many other feathered creatures several little winged boys, that
 “ perch in great numbers upon the middle arches. These, said the Ge-
 “ nius, are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares
 “ and passions that infest humane life.

“ I here fetched a deep sigh; Alas, said I, man was made in vain! How
 “ is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swal-
 “ lowed up in death! The Genius being moved with compassion towards
 “ me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. Look no more, said
 “ he, on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for E-
 “ ternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears
 “ the several generations of mortals that fall into it. I directed my sight
 “ as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good Genius strengthened it
 “ with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was be-
 “ fore too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at
 “ the further end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had
 “ a huge rock of Adamant running through the midst of it, and divi-
 “ ding it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of
 “ it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it: but the other appear-
 “ ed to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were co-
 “ vered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little
 “ shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glo-
 “ rious habits with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees,
 “ lying down by the sides of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers;
 “ and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, hu-
 “ mane voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the
 “ dis-
 “ disco-

“ discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the Genius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of Death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. The islands, said he, that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye or even thine imagination can extend it self. These are the mansions of good men after death, who according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several Islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every Island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O *Mirza*, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an Eternity reserved for him. I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy Islands. At length said I, shew me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lye hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of Adamant. The Genius making me no answer, I turned about to address my self to him a second time, but I found that he had left me; I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating, but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy Islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of *Bagdat*, with oxen, sheep, and camels, grazing upon the sides of it.

The end of the first vision of Mirzah.



Monday,