

haps a still more effective exemplification may be had in another emotion of this class, that which arises from our sense of the ludicrous—which so often ministers to the gaiety of man's heart, even when alone ; and which, when he congregates with his fellows, is ever and anon breaking forth into some humorous conception, that infects alike the fancies of all, and finds vent in one common shout of ecstasy. Like every other emotion, it stands allied with a perception as its antecedent, the object of the perception in this instance being the conjunction of things that are incongruous with each other—on the first discovery or conception of which, the mirth begins to tumultuate in the heart of some one ; and on the first utterance of which, it passes with irrepressible sympathy into the hearts of all who are around him—whence it obtains the same ready discharge as before, in a loud and general effervescence. To perceive how inexhaustible the source of this enjoyment is, we have only to think of it in connection with its cause ; and then try to compute, if we can, all the possibilities of wayward deviation, from the sober literalities of truth and nature, whether in the shape of new imaginations by the mind of man, or of new combinations and events in actual history. It is thus that the pleasure connected with our sense of the ludicrous, forms one of the most current gratifications of human life ; nor is it essential that there should be any rare peculiarity of mental con-