

formation, in order to realize it. We find it the perennial source of a sort of gentle and quiet delectation, even to men of the most sober temperament, and whose habit is as remote as possible from that of fantastic levity, or wild and airy extravagance. When acquaintances meet together in the street, and hold colloquy for a few minutes, they may look grave enough, if business or politics or some matter of serious intelligence be the theme—yet how seldom do they part before some coruscation of playfulness has been struck out between them ; and the interview, though begun perhaps in sober earnest, but seldom passes off without some pleasantry or other to enliven it. We should not dwell so long on this part of the human constitution, were there not so much of happiness and so much of benevolence allied with it—as is obvious, indeed, from the very synonymes, to which the language employed for the expression of its various phenomena and feelings has given rise. To what else but to the pleasure we have in the ludicrous is it owing, that a ludicrous observation has been termed a pleasantry ; or how but to the affinity between happiness and mirth can we ascribe it, that the two terms are often employed as equivalent to each other ; and whence but from the strong connection which subsists between benevolence and humour can it be explained, that a man is said to be in good humour when in a state of placidness and cordiality with all who are around him ? We