

Who Was Bernard Mandeville and Was He Truly An Epicurean?

Post by “Cassius” of August 26, 2021 at 11:10 AM

Also promising, from the same section:

chase it, he covets to be thought wise, Brave, Generous, Good-natur'd, and endu'd with all the Virtues he thinks worth having. He would have us believe that the Pomp and Luxury he is serv'd with are as many tiresome Plagues to him; and all the Grandeur he appears in is an ungrateful Burden, which, to his Sorrow, is inseparable from the high Sphere he moves in, that his noble Mind so much exalted above vulgar Capacities, aims at higher ends, and can not relish such worthless Enjoyments; that the highest of his Ambition is to promote the Publick Welfare, and his greatest Pleasure to see his Country flourish and every Body in it made happy. These are call'd real Pleasures by the Vicious, and Earthly minded, and whoever is able, either by his Skill or Fortune after this refin'd manner at once to enjoy the World, and the good Opinion of it, is counted extremely happy by all the most fashionable part of the People.

But on the other side most of the ancient Philosophers and grave Moralists, especially the Stoicks, would not allow any thing to be a real Good that was liable to be taken from them by others. They wisely consider'd the Instability of Fortune and the Favour of Princes, the Vanity of Honour and Popular Applause; the Precariousness of Riches and all Earthly Possessions, and therefore placed true Happiness in the calm Serenity of a contented Mind free from Guilt and Ambition; a Mind, that, having subdued every sensual Appetite, despises the Smiles as well as Frowns of Fortune, and taking no delight but in Contemplation, desires nothing but what every Body is able to give to himself: A Mind, that arm'd with Fortitude and Resolution has learn'd to sustain the greatest Losses without Concern, to endure Pain without Affliction, and to bear Injuries without Resentment. Many have own'd themselves arriv'd to this height of Self-denial, and then, if we may believe them, they were rais'd