

Who Was Bernard Mandeville and Was He Truly An Epicurean?

Remark (O)

making all Mankind either Fools or Impostors, which to avoid, there is nothing left us, but to say what Mr. *Bayle* has endeavour'd to prove at large in his Reflections on Comets; That Man is so unaccountable a Creature as to act most commonly against his Principle; and this is so far from being injurious, that it is a Compliment to Human Nature, for we must say either this or worse.

This Contradiction in the Frame of Man is the Reason that the Theory of Virtue is so well understood, and the Practice of it so rarely to be met with. If you ask me where to look for those beautiful shining Qualities of Prime Ministers, and the great Favourites of Princes that are so finely painted in Dedications, Addresses, Epitaphs, Funeral Sermons and Inscriptions, I answer *There*, and no where else. Where would you look for the Excellency of a Statue, but in that part which you see of it? 'Tis the Polish'd outside only that has the Skill and Labour of the Sculptor to boast of; what's out of sight is untouch'd. Would you break the Head, or cut open the Breast to look for the Brains or the Heart, you'd only shew your Ignorance and destroy the Workmanship. This has often made me compare the Virtues of great Men to your large *China* Jars; they make a fine Shew, and are Ornamental even to a Chimney; one would by the Bulk they appear in, and the Value that is set upon 'em, think they might be very useful, but look into a thousand of them, and you'll find nothing in them but Dust and Cobwebs.