

ledge in what they ought to prescribe; and those who obey, to find a new pleasure resulting from their obedience, I should think myself the most happy of mortals.

The most happy of mortals should I think myself, could I contribute to make mankind recover from their prejudices. By prejudices, I here mean, not that which renders men ignorant of some particular things, but whatever renders them ignorant of themselves.

It is in endeavouring to instruct mankind, that we are best able to practise that general virtue, which comprehends the love of all. Man, that flexible being, conforming in society to the thoughts and impressions of others, is equally capable of knowing his own nature, whenever it is laid open to his view; and of losing the very sense of it, when this idea is banished from his mind.

Often have I begun, and as often have I laid aside this undertaking. I have a thousand times given the leaves I have written, to the \* winds: I every day felt

\* *Ludibria ventis.*