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An ESSAY on refined and friendly
Conversation.

*Written in the Twenty second Year of the AU-
THOR'S Age.*

⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ T has been observed that some,
⊗ ⊗ — ⊗ ⊗ who have been justly esteemed
⊗ | I | ⊗ Writers of the first Rank in the
⊗ ⊗ — ⊗ ⊗ Learned World, have not
⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ been favoured with a very hap-
py Turn for Conversation ;
and that others, on the contrary, could never
make their Appearance to Advantage in Print,
who were yet looked upon as the very Life and
Genius of every private Company they came
into.

Thus Mr. ANTHONY WOOD informs us,
“ That whenever Sir WILLIAM KILLI-
“ GREW took Pen in Hand, he did not come
“ to the never-failing Smartness, which he
“ shewed in Conversation ; whereas Mr.
“ COWLEY was the Reverse of this Charac-
“ ter, as Sir JOHN DENHAM gives us to un-
“ derstand in the following Lines :

“ *Had COWLEY ne'er spoke, KILLIGREW*
ne'er Writ ;
“ *Combin'd in one they'd shew'd a matchless*
Wit.”

This may be accounted for after the follow-
ing manner : Some Men are of an airy, vola-
tile Temper ; the Edge of their Wit is very
fine, but soon turn'd : They have Briskness
and Vivacity of Spirit enough for a sharp,
surprizing Repartee, or any other extempore
Sally of Fancy ; but they have not that Strength
and Steadiness of Spirit, which is necessary to

keep up an uninterrupted Tenour of good
Writing, and to convey their Thoughts with
Chastity and Propriety of Style. And indeed
even in Conversation I have observed some
Gentlemen of this Stamp, when they have fal-
len foul on Men of superior Sense, to have
been very brisk and vigorous in their first At-
tack ; but fainter and weaker in their last Ef-
forts. Their Spirits evaporated, and, if their
Antagonist bravely stood his Ground, he was
convinced, that their Forces were rather for a
short Skirmish of Wit, than for a set and last-
ing Battle. They put me in Mind of what
some ancient Historians relate of the *Gauls*,
viz. That in the Beginning of the Fight,
they used to perform more than *Men* ; but to-
wards the Conclusion of it, less than *Women*.
Some on the other Hand, are of a more
phlegmatick Constitution ; their Parts are
slow, but sure ; and, what is wanting in
Sprightliness, is made up in what we call
strong, masculine Sense.

I would therefore observe, that there are
two Kinds of Wit ; the one I call *Tinsel Wit*,
which consists of glittering Points, little Flou-
rishes, and ludicrous Conceits : The other
may be styled true Sterling-Wit ; which is
made up of a rich Vein of good Thinking, ex-
alted Sentiments, and curious Observations.
The former is more glaring and dazzling ;
the Touches of the latter are very masterly,
but too delicate and nice for vulgar Observers.
The former pleases more upon a superficial,
transient View ; the latter upon a mature De-
liberation ; the one therefore more taking in
common Conversation ; the other in Writing.

That I may not lose myself in too large a
Field,