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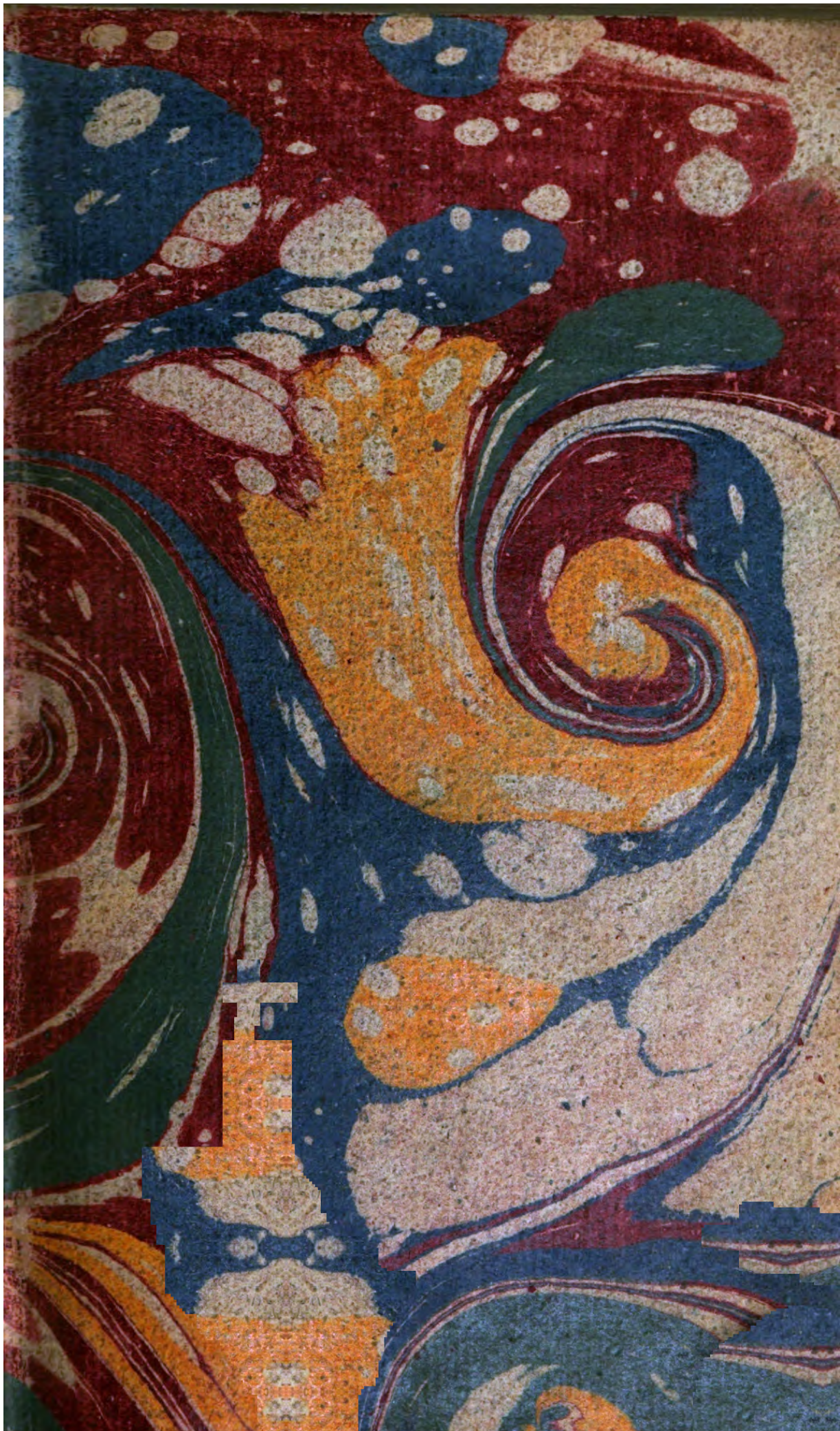
VOLTAIRE ROOM



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THE
WORKS
OF
VOLTAIRE.

VOL. XXV.

Being VOL. VI. of his

DRAMATIC WORKS.



To the PUBLIC.

By the Indisposition of the Engraver, the Frontispiece to this Volume could not be finished in Time; it will therefore be given the First of April, with the Frontispiece to the next Volume.

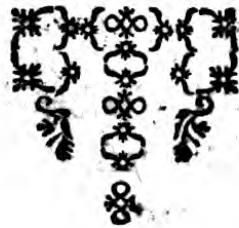
THE
DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

Mr. DE VOLTAIRE.

Translated by the Rev. Mr. FRANCKLIN.

V O L. VI.



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. NEWBERRY, R. BALDWIN, S. CROWDER,
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M.DCC.LXIII.

This VOLUME contains

AN ADVERTISEMENT from the EDITOR.

A LETTER to his Majesty the King of PRUSSIA.

A LETTER from Mr. VOLTAIRE to Pope BENE-
DICT XIV.

The ANSWER of Pope BENE-
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A LETTER of THANKS from Mr. VOLTAIRE to the
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 A D V E R T I S E M E N T

FROM THE

E D I T O R.

THE litterary world will perhaps think themselves oblig'd to me for publishing the tragedy of *Mahomet*, which had been barbarously mangled in two surreptitious editions. I can venture to assure the reader, that it was written in 1736, and a copy of it then sent by the author to the *Prince Royal*, now *King of Prussia*, who at that time cultivated the *Belles-Lettres* with astonishing success, and continues to make them his principal amusement.

I was at *Lisle* in 1741, where Mr. *de Voltaire* came to pass a few days: there was then the best company of actors in the town that had ever been in *Provence*, who represented this piece highly to the satisfaction of a very numerous audience. The governor and the intendant were several times present at the performance. A tragedy written in so new a taste, and on so delicate a subject, treated with such judgment and discretion, in-

duc'd many prelates to have it acted in a private house by the same persons. Their opinion confirm'd that of the public. The author was at the same time so happy as to get his manuscript presented to * one of the first men in the church, and indeed in all Europe, who supported the weight of public affairs with firmness, and judg'd concerning works of genius with true taste, at an age when few men have, and still fewer preserve their wit and delicacy. He pronounc'd that the piece was written with all proper decorum and circumspection, and that it was impossible to handle with more prudence so dangerous a subject; but that with regard to the poetry, there were many things in it that wanted correction: these the author, to my knowledge, afterwards retouch'd with the greatest care. This was likewise the opinion of another eminent personage of equal rank, and of equal abilities.

At length this excellent performance, which had been licens'd according to form in many other places, was exhibited at *Paris* on the ninth of *August*, 1742: a whole box was fill'd with the principal magistrates of the city: the ministers were also present, and all were of the same opinion with the excellent judges above-

* Cardinal Fleury.

mention'd. There were however some persons at the first representation who disapprov'd of it: whether it was that in the hurry of the action they did not sufficiently attend to the gradual process of it, or that they were little vers'd in stage matters, * they seem'd shock'd at *Mahomet's* ordering a man to commit murder, and making use of his religion to stir up an innocent youth, the instrument of his crimes, to an assassination. These gentlemen, struck with the horror of the action, did not sufficiently consider, that this murder is represented in the tragedy as the most atrocious of all crimes, and that indeed it was morally impossible it shou'd be otherwise! the truth was, they saw indeed but one side, the usual method which men take to deceive themselves. And as they consider'd that side only, it was no wonder they shou'd take offence, which a little more attention wou'd easily have remov'd: but in the first heat of their zeal they cry'd out, it was a dangerous performance, and fit only to produce *Ravaillacs* and *Jacques Clements*. A most

* The true state of the case was that the *Abbé des Fontaines* and some others as malicious as himself, decry'd the tragedy of *Mahomet*, as a wicked and scandalous performance: the affair made so much noise, that the prime minister, Cardinal Fleury, who had long before read and approv'd of it, was notwithstanding oblig'd to advise the author to withdraw it.

extraordinary piece of criticism which these gentlemen no doubt are by this time heartily ashamed of. This would in effect be to affirm, that HERMIONE teaches us to assassinate kings, ELECTRA to kill our mothers, CLEOPATRA and MEDEA to slay our own children: that HARPAGON makes misers, the GAMESTER gamblers, and *Tartuffe* hypocrites. The censure of *Mahomet* would carry with it even more injustice than this, because the iniquity of that false prophet is represented in a light more odious and detestable than any of the vices or follies satyrised in those performances. The tragedy was written directly in opposition to the *Ravallacs* and *Jacque Clements*, in so much that, as a person of excellent judgment lately observed, if *Mahomet* had been written in the time of *Henry III.* and *Henry IV.* it might have saved both their lives. Would one think it possible that the author of the HENRIADE would ever have met with such a reproach, he who has so often in that poem, and in other parts of his works, lifted up his voice, not only against such crimes, but against all those pernicious maxims which are the causes of them? The more I read that writer's works, the more have I always found the love of public good their distinguishing characteristic: every part of them
inspires

inspires horror and detestation of rebellion, persecution, and fanaticism.

Is there a good and worthy citizen who wou'd not adopt all the maxims of the *Henriade*? Does not that poem inspire us with the love of virtue? *Mahomet* appears to me to be written in the same spirit, and this I am persuaded the author's greatest enemies will frankly acknowledge.

He soon perceiv'd that a formidable party was rais'd against him: some of the most violent amongst them had got the ear of a few great men, who not having seen the piece themselves, believ'd every thing that these gentlemen thought proper to report concerning it. The celebrated *Moliere*, the glory of *France*, was once in nearly the same condition, when his *Tartuffe* was first exhibited: he had immediate recourse to *Lewis the great*, who knew and lov'd him. The authority of that monarch soon put an end to the sinister and malevolent misrepresentations of *Tartuffe*: but times are chang'd: that protection which is given to arts in their infant state, cannot be expected to continue after those arts have been cultivated for a length of time: besides that one man may not have interest to obtain that which another had procur'd with ease: some instruments must be set to work, some discussions made,

some new examinations pass'd through, before any thing can be done in his favor. The author therefore thought it most adviseable to withdraw his piece, after the third representation, in hopes that time wou'd get the better of prejudice, which must inevitably * happen amongst a people so sensible and judicious as our own. It was put in the public papers, that the tragedy of *Mabomet* had been stopp'd by order of the government, which was an absolute falsehood: no such order was ever given; and the first men in the kingdom, who had seen this tragedy, unanimously concurr'd in their admiration of it. Some persons having hastily transcrib'd a few scenes from the actors parts, two or three imperfect editions crept into the world: it is easy to see how much they differ from the true work which I have here given. Prefix'd to this tragedy are several interesting pieces; one of the most curious amongst them, in my opinion, is a letter written by the author to his majesty the *king of Prussia*, on his return through *Holland*, after a visit to him. In papers of this kind,

* What the editor foresaw in 1742 did actually come to pass in 1751, when this tragedy was represented with universal applause. Cabal and persecution gave way to the voice of the public, and perhaps the more readily as many by this time began to feel some remorse at having forc'd a man to quit his country, who had labour'd so successfully for the honour of it.

which

which were not originally design'd for the public, one fees the real sentiments of men: I flatter myself they will afford the same pleasure to every true philosopher which they gave me in the perusal.

To his MAJESTY

The KING of PRUSSIA.

SIR, *Rotterdam, January 20, 1742.*

I AM at present, like the pilgrims of *Mecca*, turning their eyes perpetually towards that city after leaving it, as I do mine towards the court of *Prussia*. My heart, deeply penetrated with the sense of your majesty's goodness, knows no grief but that which arises from my incapacity of being always with you. I have taken the liberty to send your majesty a fresh copy of *Mahomet*, the sketch of which you have seen some time ago. This is a tribute which I pay to the lover of arts, the sensible critic, and above all, to the philosopher much more than to the sovereign. Your majesty knows by what motive I was inspir'd in the composition of that work. The love of mankind, and the hatred of fanaticism, two virtues that adorn your throne, guided my pen: I have ever been of opinion,

that tragedy shou'd correct, as well as move the heart. Of what consequence or importance to mankind are the passions or misfortunes of any of the heroes of antiquity, if they do not convey some instruction to us? It is universally acknowledg'd, that the comedy of *Tartuffe*, a piece hitherto unequal'd, did a great deal of good in the world, by shewing hypocrisy in its proper light; and why therefore shou'd we not endeavour in a tragedy to expole that species of imposture which sets to work the hypocrisy of some, and the madness of others? Why may we not go back to the histories of those antient ruffians, the illustrious founders of superstition and fanaticism, who first carry'd the sword to the altar to sacrifice all those who refus'd to embrace their doctrines?

They who tell us that these days of wickedness are past, that we shall never see any more *Barcochebas*, *Mabomets*, *John of Leyden's*, &c. And that the flames of religious war are totally extinguish'd, in my opinion, pay too high a compliment to human nature. The same poison still subsists, though it does not appear so openly, some symptoms of this plague break out from time to time enough to infect the earth: have not we in our own age seen the prophets of *Cevennes* killing
in

in the name of God those of their sect, who were not sufficiently pliant to their purposes?

The action I have describ'd is terrible; I don't know whether horror was ever carry'd farther on any stage. A young man born with virtuous inclinations, seduc'd by fanaticism, assassinate an old man who loves him; and whilst he imagines he is serving God, is, without knowing it, guilty of parricide: the murder is committed by the order of an impostor, who promises him a reward, which proves to be incest. This, I acknowledge, is full of horror; but your majesty is throughly sensible, that tragedy shou'd not consist merely of love, jealousy, and marriage: even our historians abound in actions much more horrible than that which I have invented. *Seid* does not know that the person whom he assassinate is his father, and when he has committed the crime, feels the deepest remorse for it; but *Mezeray* tells us, that at *Milan* a father kill'd his son with his own hand on account of religion, and was not in the least sorry for it. The story of the two brothers *Diaz* is well known; one of them was at *Rome* and the other at *Allemagne*, in the beginning of the commotions rais'd by *Luther*: *Bartholomew Diaz*, hearing that his brother embrac'd the opinion of *Luther* at *Francfort*, left *Rome* on purpose to assassinate him,

and accordingly did so. *Herrera*, a *Spanish* author, tells us, that *Bartholomew Diaz* run a great hazard in doing this, but nothing intimidates a man of honour guided by honesty. *Herrera*, we see, brought up in that holy religion, which is an enemy to cruelty, a religion which teaches long-suffering and not revenge, was persuaded that honesty might make a man an assassin and a parricide: ought we not to rise up on all sides against such infernal maxims? these put the poniard into the hand of that monster who depriv'd *France* of *Henry the Great*: these plac'd the picture of *James Clement* on the altar, and his name amongst the saints: these took away the life of *William* prince of *Orange*, founder of the liberty and prosperity of his country. *Salcede* shot at and wounded him in the forehead with a pistol; and *Strada* tells us, that *Salcede* wou'd not dare to undertake that enterprize till he had purify'd his soul by confession at the feet of a *Dominican*, and fortify'd it by the holy sacrament. *Herrera* has something more horrible, and more ridiculous concerning it. *He stood firm*, (says he) *after the example of our saviour Jesus Christ, and his saints*. *Balthasar Girard*, who afterwards took away the life of that great man, behav'd in the same manner as *Salcede*.

I have remark'd, that all those who voluntary committed

mitted such crimes were young men like *Seid. Balthasar Girard* was about twenty years old, and the four *Spaniards*, who had bound themselves by oath with him to kill the prince, were of the same age. The monster who kill'd *Henry III.* was but four-and twenty, and *Poltrou*, who assassinated the great *Duke of Guise* only twenty five: this is the age of seduction and madness. In *England* I was once a witness how far the power of fanaticism cou'd work on a weak and youthful imagination: a boy of sixteen, whose name was *Shepherd*, engag'd to assassinate king *George I.* your majesty's grandfather by the mother's side. What could prompt him to such madness? the only reason to be assigned was, that *Shepherd* was not of the same religion with the king. They took pity on his youth, offered him his pardon, and for a long time endeavoured to bring him to repentance; but he always persisted in saying, it was better to obey God than man; and if they let him go, the first use he made of of his liberty should be to kill the king: so that they were obliged at last to execute him as a monster, whom they despaired of bringing to any sense of reason.

I will venture to affirm, that all who have seen any thing of mankind must have remarked, how easily
nature

nature is sometimes sacrificed to superstition : how many fathers have detested and disinherited their children ? how many brothers have persecuted brothers on this destructive principle ? I have myself seen instances of it in more than one family.

If superstition does not always signalize itself in those glaring crimes which history transmits to us, in society it does every day all the mischief it possibly can : disunites friends, separates kindred and relations, destroys the wise and worthy by the hands of fools and enthusiasts : it does not indeed every day poison a *Socrates*, but it banishes *Descartes* from a city which ought to be the asylum of liberty, and gives *Jurieu*, who acted the part of a prophet, credit enough to impoverish the wise philosopher *Bayle* : it banished the successor of the great *Leibnitz*, and deprives a noble assembly of young men that crowded to his lectures of pleasure and improvement : and to re-establish him heaven must raise up amongst us a royal philosopher, that true miracle which is so rarely to be seen, In vain does human reason advance towards perfection, by means of that philosophy which of late hath made so great a progress in *Europe* : in vain do you, most noble prince, both inspire and practice this humane philosophy : whilst in the same age wherein reason raises her throne

throne on one side, the most absurd fanaticism adorns her altars on the other.

It may perhaps be objected to me, that, out of my too abundant zeal, I have made *Mahomet* in this tragedy guilty of a crime which in reality he was not capable of committing. The count de *Boulainvilliers*, some time since, wrote the life of this prophet, whom he endeavoured to represent as a great man, appointed by providence to punish the christian world, and change the face of at least one half of the globe. *Mr. Sale* likewise, who has given us an excellent translation of the alcoran into English, wou'd persuade us to look upon *Mahomet* as a *Numa* or a *Theseus*. I will readily acknowledge, that we ought to respect him, if, born a legitimate prince, or call'd to government by the voice of the people, he had instituted useful and peaceful laws like *Numa*, or like *Theseus*, defended his countrymen: but for a driver of camels to stir up a faction in his village; to associate himself with a set of wretched Coracites, and persuade them that he had an interview with the angel *Gabriel*; to boast that he was carry'd up to heaven, and there receiv'd part of that unintelligible book which contradicts common sense in every page; that in order to procure respect to this ridiculous performance he shou'd carry fire and sword
 into

into his country, murder fathers, and ravish their daughters, and after all give those whom he conquer'd the choice of his religion or death ; this is surely what no man will pretend to vindicate, unless he was born a *Turk*, and superstition had totally extinguished in him the light of nature.

Mahomet, I know, did not actually commit that particular crime which is the subject of this tragedy : history only informs us, that he took away the wife of *Seid*, one of his followers, and persecuted *Abusophan*, whom I call *Zopir* ; but what is not that man capable of, who, in the name of God, makes war against his country ? It was not my design merely to represent a real fact, but real manners and characters, to make men think as they naturally must in their circumstances ; but above all it was my intention to shew the horrid schemes which villainy can invent, and fanaticism put in practice. Mahomet is here no more than *Tartuffe* in arms.

Upon the whole I shall think myself amply rewarded for my labour, if any one of those weak mortals, who are ever ready to receive the impressions of a madness foreign to their nature ; shou'd learn from this piece to guard themselves against such fatal delusions ; if after being shock'd at the dreadful consequences of

Seid's

Seid's obedience, he shou'd say to himself, why must I blindly follow the blind who cry out to me, hate, persecute all who are rash enough not to be of the same opinion with ourselves, even in things and matters we do not understand? what infinite service wou'd it be to mankind to eradicate such false sentiments! A spirit of indulgence wou'd make us all brothers; a spirit of persecution can create nothing but monsters. This I know is your majesty's opinion: to live with such a prince, and such a philosopher, wou'd be my greatest happiness; my sincere attachment can only be equall'd by my regret; but if other duties draw me away, they can never blot out the respect I owe to a prince, who talks and thinks like a man, who despises that specious gravity which is always a cover for meanness and ignorance: a prince who converses with freedom, because he is not afraid of being known; who is still eager to be instructed, and at the same time capable himself of instructing the most learned and the most sagacious.

I shall, whilst I have life, remain with the most profound respect, and deepest sense of gratitude, your majesty's, &c. &c. &c.

A

* A LETTER from Mr. VOLTAIRE
TO
POPE BENEDICT XIV.

Most blessed father,

YOUR holiness will pardon the liberty taken by one of the lowest of the faithful, though a zealous admirer of virtue, of submitting to the head of the true religion this performance, written in opposition to the founder of a false and barbarous sect. To whom cou'd I with more propriety inscribe a satire on the cruelty and errors of a false prophet, than to the vicar and representative of a God of truth and mercy? your holiness will therefore give me leave to throw at your feet both the piece and the author of it, and humbly to request your protection of the one, and your benediction of the other; in hopes of which, with the profoundest reverence, I kiss your sacred feet.

Paris, August 17, 1745.

* These three letters are translated from the Italian.

The ANSWER of Pope B E N E D I C T XIV.
To Mr. V O L T A I R E.

*Benedictus P. P. dilecto filio salutem & Apostolicam
Benedictionem.*

THIS day sev'nnight I was favor'd with your excellent tragedy of *Mahomet*, which I have read with great pleasure : Cardinal *Passionei* has likewise presented me with your fine poem of *Fontenoy*. Signor *Leprotti* this day repeated to me your * distich made on my retreat. Yesterday morning Cardinal *Valenti* gave me your letter of the 17th of *August*. So many are the obligations which you have conferr'd on me, for which I am greatly indebted to you ; for all and every one of them, and to assure you that I have the highest esteem for your merit, which is universally acknowledg'd.

The distich has been publish'd at *Rome*, and objected to by one of the *litterati*, who, in a public conversation, affirm'd that there was a mistake in it with regard to the word *hic*, which is made short, whereas it ought to be always long. To which I reply'd, that

* The distich is as follows :
Lambertinus hic est, Romæ decus, & pater orbis,
Qui mundum scriptis docuit, virtutibus ornat.

it may be either long or short; *Virgil* having made it short in this verse,

Solus hic inflexit sensus, animumque labantem.

And long in another,

Hic finis Priami fatorum, hic exitus illum.

The answer I think was pretty full and convincing, considering that I have not look'd into *Virgil* these fifty years. The cause however is properly yours; to your honour and sincerity therefore, of which I have the highest opinion, I shall leave it to be defended against your opposers and mine, and here give you my apostolical benediction. *Datum Romæ apud sanctam Mariam majorem die 19 Sept. Pontificatus nostri anno sexto.*

A LETTER of THANKS

FROM

Mr. VOLTAIRE to the POPE.

THE features of your excellency are not better express'd on the medal you were so kind as to send me, than are the features of your mind in the letter which you honour'd me with: permit me to throw at your feet my sincerest acknowledgments: in points of
is

literature, as well as in matters of more importance, your infallibility is not to be disputed: your excellency is much better vers'd in the *Latin* tongue than the *Frenchman* whom you condescended to correct: I am indeed astonish'd how you cou'd so readily appeal to *Virgil*: the popes were always rank'd amongst the most learned sovereign's, but amongst them I believe there never was one in whom so much learning and taste united.

Agnosco rerum dominos, gentemque togatam.

If the *Frenchman* who found fault with the word *hic* had known as much of *Virgil* as your excellency, he might have recollected a verse where *hic* is both long and short

Hic vir hic est tibi quem promitti sæpius audis.

I cannot help considering this verse as a happy presage of the favors conferr'd on me by your excellency. Thus might *Rome* cry out when *Benedict XIV.* was rais'd to the supremacy: with the utmost respect and gratitude I kiss your sacred feet, &c. &c.

D R A-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MAHOMET.

ZOPIR, Scheik of Mecca.

OMAR. } General and second in command to Mahe-
met.

SEID, }
PALMIRA, } Slaves to Mahomet.

PHANOR, Senator of Mecca.

Company of Meccans.

Company of Musulmen.

SCENE, MECCA.

MAHOMET.
A
TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

ZOPIR, PHANOR.

ZOPIR.

THink'st thou thy friend will ever bend the knee
To this proud hypocrite; shall I fall down
And worship, I who banish'd him from Mecca?
No: punish me, just heav'n, as I deserve,
If e'er this hand, the friend of innocence
And freedom, stoop to cherish foul rebellion,
Or aid imposture to deceive mankind!

PHANOR.

Thy zeal is noble, and becomes the chief
Of Ismael's sacred senate, but may prove

Destruc-

Destruotive to the cause it means to serve :
Thy ardor cannot check the rapid pow'r
Of Mahomet, and but provokes his vengeance :
There was a time when you might safely draw
The sword of justice, to defend the rights
Of Mecca, and prevent the flames of war
From spreading o'er the land ; then Mahomet
Was but a bold and factious citizen,
But now he is a conqu'ror, and a king :
Mecca's impostor at Medina shines
A holy prophet ; nations bend before him,
And learn to worship crimes which we abhor.
Ev'n here, a band of wild enthusiasts, drunk
With furious zeal, support his fond delusions,
His idle tales, and fancy'd miracles :
These spread sedition thro' the gaping throng,
Invite his forces, and believe a God
Inspires, and renders him invincible.
The lovers of their country think with you,
But wisest counsels are not always follow'd ;
False zeal, and fear, and love of novelty
Alarm the croud ; already half our city
Is left unpeopled ; Mecca cries aloud
To thee her father, and demands a peace.

Z O P I R.

ZOPIR.

Peace with a traitor ! coward nation, what
 Can you expect but slav'ry from a tyrant !
 Go, bend your supple knees, and prostrate fall
 Before the idol whose oppressive hand
 Shall crush you all : for me, I hate the traitor ;
 This heart's too deeply wounded to forgive :
 The savage murth'rer robb'd me of a wife
 And two dear children : nor is his resentment
 Less fierce than mine ; I forc'd his camp, pursued
 The coward to his tent, and slew his son :
 The torch of hatred is lit up between us,
 And time can ne'er extinguish it.

PHANOR.

I hope

It never will ; yet shou'd'st thou hide the flame,
 And sacrifice thy griefs to public good :
 What if he lay this noble city waste,
 Will that avenge thee, will that serve thy cause ?
 Thou hast lost all, son, brother, daughter, wife,
 Mecca alone remains to give thee comfort,
 Do not lose that, do not destroy thy country.

ZOPIR.

Kingdoms are lost by cowardice alone.

PHANOR.

PHANOR.

As oft perhaps by obstinate resistance.

ZOPIR.

Then let us perish, if it be our fate.

PHANOR.

When thou art almost in the harbour thus
 To brave the storm, is false and fatal courage:
 Kind heav'n, thou see'st, points out to thee the means
 To soften this proud tyrant; fair Palmira
 Thy beauteous captive, brought up in the camp
 Of this destructive conqueror, was sent
 By gracious heav'n, the messenger of peace,
 Thy guardian angel, to appease the wrath
 Of Mahomet; already by his herald
 He has demanded her.

ZOPIR.

And wou'd'st thou have me
 Give up so fair a prize to this barbarian?
 What! whilst the tyrant spreads destruction round
 him,
 Unpeoples kingdoms, and destroys mankind,
 Shall beauty's charms be sacrific'd to bribe
 A madman's frenzy? I shou'd envy him
 That lovely fair one more than all his glory;

Not

Not that I feel the stings of wild desire,
 Or, in the evening of my days, indulge,
 Old as I am, a shameless passion for her ;
 But, whether objects born like her to please,
 Spite of ourselves demand our tend'rest pity,
 Or that perhaps a childless father hopes
 To find in her another daughter, why
 I know not, but for that unhappy maid
 Still am I anxious ; be it weakness in me,
 Or reason's pow'rful voice, I cannot bear
 To see her in the hands of Mahomet ;
 Wou'd I cou'd mould her to my wishes, form
 Her willing mind, and make her hate the tyrant
 As I do ! she has sent to speak with me
 Here in the sacred porch—and lo ! she comes :
 On her fair cheek the blush of modesty
 And candor speaks the virtues of her heart.

S C E N E II.

ZOPIR, PALMIRA.

ZOPIR.

Hail, lovely maid ! the chance, of cruel war
 Hath made thee Zopir's captive, but thou art not
 Amongst barbarians ; all with me revere
 Palmira's virtues, and lament her fate,

Whilſt youth with innocence and beauty plead
 Thy cauſe ; whate'er thou aſk'ſt in Zopir's pow'r
 Thou ſhalt not aſk in vain : my life declines
 Towards its period, and if my laſt hours
 Can give Palmira joy, I ſhall eſteem them
 The beſt, the happieſt I have ever known.

PALMIRA.

Theſe two months paſt, my lord, your pris'ner here,
 Scarce have I felt the yoke of ſlavery ;
 Your gen'rous hand, ſtill rais'd to ſooth affliction,
 Hath wiped the tears of ſorrow from my eyes,
 And ſofter'd all the rigour of my fate :
 Forgive me, if embolden'd by your goodneſs
 I aſk for more, and center ev'ry hope
 Of future happineſs on you alone ;
 Forgive me, if to Mahomet's requeſt
 I join Palmira's, and implore that freedom
 He hath already aſk'd : O liſten to him,
 And let me ſay, that after heav'n and him
 I am indebted moſt to gen'rous Zopir.

ZOPIR.

Has then oppreſſion ſuch enticing charms
 That thou ſhou'd'ſt wiſh and beg to be the ſlave
 Of Mahomet, to hear the claſh of arms,

With

With him to live in deserts, and in caves,
And wander o'er his ever shifting country?

PALMIRA.

Where'er the mind with ease and pleasure dwells,
There is our home, and there our native country:
He form'd my soul; to Mahomet I owe
The kind instruction of my earlier years;
Taught by the happy part'ners of his bed,
Who still adoring and ador'd by him
Send up their pray'rs to heav'n for his dear safety,
I liv'd in peace and joy! for ne'er did woe
Pollute that seat of bliss till the sad hour
Of my misfortune, when wide-wasting war
Rush'd in upon us and enslav'd Palmira:
Pity, my lord, a heart oppress'd with grief,
That sighs for objects far far distant from her.

ZOPIR.

I understand you, madam, you expect
The tyrant's hand, and hope to share his throne.

PALMIRA.

I honour him, my lord; my trembling soul
Looks up to Mahomet with holy fear
As to a God; but never did this heart
E'er cherish the vain hope that he wou'd deign

To wed Palmira : No : such splendor ill
Wou'd suit my humble state.

ZOPIR.

Whoe'er thou art,
He was not born, I trust, to be thy husband,
No, nor thy master; much I err, or thou
Spring'ft from a race design'd by heav'n to check
This haughty Arab, and give laws to him
Who thus assumes the majesty of kings.

PALMIRA.

Alas! we know not what it is to boast
Of birth or fortune; from our infant years
Without or parents, friends, or country, doom'd
To slav'ry; here resign'd to our hard fate,
Strangers to all but to that God we serve,
We live content in humble poverty.

ZOPIR.

And can ye be content? and are ye strangers,
Without a father, and without a home?
I am a childless, poor, forlorn, old man;
You might have been the comfort of my age:
To form a plan of future happiness
For you, had soften'd my own wretchedness,
And made me some amends for all my wrongs:
But you abhor my country and my law.

PAL

PALMIRA.

I am not mistress of myself, and how
 Can I be thine? I pity thy misfortunes,
 And bless thee for thy goodness to Palmira;
 But Mahomet has been a father to me.

ZOPIR.

A father! ye just Gods! the vile impostor!

PALMIRA.

Can he deserve that name, the holy prophet,
 The great ambassador of heav'n, sent down
 T' interpret its high will?

ZOPIR.

Deluded mortals!

How blind ye are, to follow this proud madman,
 This happy robber, whom my justice spared,
 And raise him from the scaffold to a throne!

PALMIRA.

My lord, I shudder at your imprecations;
 Though I am bound by honour and the ties
 Of gratitude to love thee for thy bounties,
 This blasphemy against my kind protector
 Cancels the bond, and fills my soul with horror.
 O superstition, how thy savage pow'r
 Deprives at once the best and tend'rest hearts
 Of their humanity!

Z O P I R.

Alas! Palmira,
 Spite of myself, I feel for thy misfortunes,
 Pity thy weakness, and lament thy fate.

P A L M I R A.

You will not grant me then——

Z O P I R.

I cannot yield thee
 To him who has deceiv'd thy easy heart,
 To a base tyrant; No: thou art a treasure
 Too precious to be parted with, and mak'st
 This hypocrite but more detested.

S C E N E III.

Z O P I R, P A L M I R A, P H A N O R,

Z O P I R.

Phanor,

What woud'st thou?

P H A N O R.

At the city gate that leads
 To Moad's fertile plain the valiant Omar
 Is just arriv'd.

Z O P I R.

Indeed! the tyrant's friend,
 The fierce vindictive Omar, his new convert,

Who

Who had so long oppos'd him, and still fought
For us!

PHANOR.

Perhaps he yet may serve his country,
Already he hath offer'd terms of peace;
Our chiefs have parley'd with him, he demands
An hostage, and I hear they've granted him
The noble Seid.

PALMIRA.

Seid? gracious heav'n!

PHANOR.

Behold! my lord, he comes.

ZOPIR.

Ha! Omar here!

There's no retreating now, he must be heard;
Palmira, you may leave us.—O ye gods
Of my forefathers, you who have protected
The sons of Ismael these three thousand years,
And thou, O Sun, with all those sacred lights
That glitter round us, witness to my truth,
Aid and support me in the glorious conflict
With proud iniquity!

S C E N E IV.

ZOPIR, OMAR, PHANOR, Attendants.

ZOPIR.

At length, it seems,
Omar returns, after a three years absence,
To visit that lov'd country which his hand
So long defended, and his honest heart
Has now betray'd: deserter of our gods,
Deserter of our laws, how dar'st thou thus
Approach these sacred walls to persecute
And to oppress; a public robber's slave;
What is thy errand? wherefore com'st thou hither?

OMAR.

To pardon thee: by me our holy prophet,
In pity to thy age, thy well-known valour,
And past misfortunes, offers thee his hand:
Omar is come to bring thee terms of peace.

ZOPIR.

And shall a factious rebel offer peace
Who shou'd have sued for pardon? gracious gods!
Will ye permit him to usurp your pow'r,
And suffer Mahomet to rule mankind?
Dost thou not blush, vile minion as thou art,
To serve a traitor? has thou not beheld him
Friendless and poor, an humble citizen,

And

And ranking with the meanest of the throng?
How little then in fortune or in fame!

OMAR.

Thus low and grov'ling souls like thine pretend
To judge of merit, whilst in fortune's scale
Ye weigh the worth of men: proud empty being,
Dost thou not know that the poor worm which crawls
Low on the earth, and the imperial eagle
That soars to heav'n, in the all-seeing eye
Of their eternal maker are the same,
And shrink to nothing? men are equal all;
From virtue only true distinction springs,
And not from birth: there are exalted spirits
Who claim respect and honour from themselves
And not their ancestors: these, these my lord,
Are heav'n's peculiar care, and such is he
Whom I obey, and who alone deserves
To be a master; all mankind like me
Shall one day fall before the conqu'ror's feet,
And future ages follow my example.

ZOPIR.

Omar, I know thee well; thy artful hand
In vain hath drawn the visionary portrait;
'Thou may'st deceive the multitude, but know,

What Mecca worships Zopir can despise :
Be honest then, and with th'impartial eye
Of reason look on Mahomet ; behold him
But as a mortal, and consider well
By what base arts the vile impostor rose,
A camel-driver, a poor abject slave,
Who first deceived a fond believing woman,
And now supported by an idle dream
Draws in the weak and cred'lous multitude :
Condemn'd to exile, I chastis'd the rebel
Too lightly, and his insolence returns
With double force to punish my indulgence.
He fled with Fatima from cave to cave,
And suffer'd chains, contempt and banishment ;
Mean time the fury which he call'd divine
Spread like a subtle poison thro' the croud ;
Medina was infected : Omar then,
To reason's voice attentive, wou'd have stopp'd
Th'impetuous torrent ; he had courage then
And virtue to attack the proud usurper,
Tho' now he crouches to him like a slave.
If thy proud master be indeed a prophet,
How did'st thou dare to punish him ? or why,
If an impostor, wilt thou dare to serve him ?

O M A R.

OMAR.

I punish'd him because I knew him not ;
 But now, the veil of ignorance remov'd,
 I see him as he is ; behold him born
 To change th' astonish'd world, and rule mankind :
 When I beheld him rise in awful pomp
 Intrepid, eloquent, by all admir'd,
 By all ador'd ; beheld him speak and act,
 Punish and pardon like a God, I lent
 My little aid, and joyn'd the conqueror.
 Altars, thou know'st, and thrones were our reward ;
 Once I was blind, like thee, but, thanks to heav'n !
 My eyes are open'd now ; wou'd, Zopir, thine
 Were open too ! let me intreat thee, change,
 As I have done ; no longer boast thy zeal
 And cruel hatred, nor blaspheme our God ;
 But fall submissive at the hero's feet
 Whom thou has injur'd ; kiss the hand that bears
 The angry light'ning lest it fall upon thee.
 Omar is now the second of mankind ;
 A place of honour yet remains for thee,
 If prudent thou wilt yield, and own a master :
 What we have been thou know'st, and what we are :
 The multitude are ever weak and blind,
 Made for our use, born but to serve the great,

But

But to admire, believe us, and obey :
 Reign then with us, partake the feast of grandeur,
 No longer deign to imitate the croud,
 But henceforth make 'em tremble.

Z O P I R.

Tremble thou,

And Mahomet, with all thy hateful train :
 Think'st thou that Mecca's faithful chief will fall
 At an impostor's feet, and crown a rebel ?
 I am no stranger to his specious worth ;
 His courage and his conduct have my praise ;
 Were he but virtuous I like thee shou'd love him ;
 But as he is I hate the tyrant : hence,
 Nor talk to me of his deceitful mercy,
 His clemency and goodness ; all his aim
 Is cruelty and vengeance : with this hand
 I slew his darling son ; I banish'd him :
 My hatred is inflexible, and so
 Is Mahomet's resentment : if he e'er
 Re-enters Mecca, he must cut his way
 Thro' Zopir's blood, for he is deeply stain'd
 With crimes that justice never can forgive.

O M A R.

To shew thee Mahomet is merciful,
 That he can pardon tho' thou can'st not, here

I offer thee the third of all our spoils
 Which we have ta'en from tributary kings ;
 Name your conditions, and the terms of peace ;
 Set your own terms on fair Palmira ; take
 Our treasures, and be happy.

ZOPIR.

Think'ft thou Zopir

Will basely sell his honour and his country,
 Will blast his name with infamy for wealth,
 The foul reward of guilt, or that Palmira
 Will ever own a tyrant for her master ?
 She is too virtuous e'er to be the slave
 Of Mahomet, nor will I suffer her
 To fall a sacrifice to base impostors,
 Who wou'd subvert the laws, and undermine
 The safety and the virtue of mankind.

OMAR.

Implacably severe ; thou talk'ft to Omar
 As if he were a criminal, and thou
 His judge ; but henceforth I wou'd have thee act
 A better part, and treat me as a friend,
 As the ambaffador of Mahomet,
 A conqu'ror and a king.

ZOPIR.

ZOPIR.

A king! who made,
Who crown'd him?

OMAR.

Victory: respect his glory,
And tremble at his pow'r: amidst his conquests
The hero offers peace; our swords are still
Unsheath'd, and woe to this rebellious city
If she submits not: think what blood must flow,
The blood of half our fellow-citizens;
Consider, Zopir, Mahomet is here,
And even now requests to speak with thee.

ZOPIR.

Ha! Mahomet!

OMAR.

Yes, he conjures thee.

ZOPIR.

Traitor!

Were I the sole despotic ruler here
He shou'd be answer'd soon——by chastisement.

OMAR.

I pity, Zopir, thy pretended virtue;
But since the senate insolently claim
Divided empire with thee, to the senate
Let us begone; Omar will meet thee there.

ZOPIR,

ZOPIR.

I'll follow thee: we then shall see who best
 Can plead his cause: I will defend my gods,
 My country, and her laws; thy impious voice
 Shall bellow for thy vengeful deity,
 Thy persecuting god, and his false prophet.

[Turning to Phanor.]

Haste, Phanor, and with me repulse the traitor;
 Who spares a villain is a villain:—come,
 Let us, my friend, unite to crush his pride,
 Subvert his wily purposes, destroy him,
 Or perish in th' attempt: If Mecca listens
 To Zopir's councils, I shall free my country
 From a proud tyrant's pow'r, and save mankind.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II. S C E N E I.

SEID, PALMIRA.

PALMIRA.

Welcome, my Seid, do I see thee here
 Once more in safety? what propitious God
 Conducted

Conducted thee ? at length Palmira's woes
Shall have an end, and we may yet be happy.

SEID.

Thou sweetest charmer, balm of ev'ry woe,
Dear object of my wishes and my tears,
O since that day of blood when flush'd with conquest
The fierce barbarian snatch'd thee from my arms,
When mid'st a heap of slaughter'd friends I lay
Expiring on the ground, and call'd on death,
But call'd in vain, to end my hated being,
What have I suffer'd for my dear Palmira !
How have I curs'd the tardy hours that long
Witheld my vengeance ! my distracted soul
Impatient thirsted for the bloody field,
That with these hands I might lay waste this seat
Of slav'ry, where Palmira mourn'd so long
In sad captivity ; but thanks to heav'n !
Our holy prophet, whose deep purposes
Are far beyond the ken of human wisdom,
Hath hither sent his chosen servant Omar ;
I flew to meet him, they requir'd an hostage ;
I gave my faith, and they receiv'd it ; firm
In my resolve to live or die for thee.

P A L-

PALMIRA.

Seid, the very moment e'er thou cam'st
 To calm my fears, and save me from despair,
 Was I intreating the proud ravisher ;
 Thou know'st, I cry'd, the only good on earth
 I priz'd is left behind, restore it to me :
 Then clasp'd his knees, fell at the tyrant's feet,
 And bath'd 'em with my tears, but all in vain :
 How his unkind refusal shock'd my soul !
 My eyes grew dim, and motionless I stood
 As one depriv'd of life ; no succour nigh,
 No ray of hope was left, when Seid came
 To ease my troubled heart, and bring me comfort.

SEID.

Who cou'd behold unmov'd Palmira's woes ?

PALMIRA.

The cruel Zopir ; not insensible
 He seem'd to my misfortunes, yet at last
 Unkindly told me, I must never hope
 To leave these walls, for nought shou'd tear me from
 him.

SEID.

'Tis false ; for Mahomet, my royal master,
 With the victorious Omar, and forgive me,
 If to these noble friends I proudly add

The

The name of Seid, these shall set thee free,
 Dry up thy tears, and make Palmira happy :
 The God of Mahomet, our great protector,
 That God whose sacred standard I have borne ;
 He who destroy'd Medina's haughty ramparts
 Shall lay rebellious Mecca at our feet ;
 Omar is here, and the glad people look
 With eyes of friendship on him ; in the name
 Of Mahomet he comes, and meditates
 Some noble purpose.

PALMIRA.

Mahomet indeed
 Might free us, and unite two hearts long since
 Devoted to his cause ; but he, alas !
 Is far remov'd, and we abandon'd captives.

S C E N E II.

PALMIRA, SEID, OMAR.

OMAR.

Despair not ; heav'n perhaps may yet reward you,
 For Mahomet and liberty are nigh.

SEID.

Is he then come ?

PALMIRA.

Our friend and father ?

O M A R.

OMAR.

Yes.

I met the council, and by Mahomet
 Inspir'd, address'd them thus : " Within these walls,
 " Ev'n here, I cry'd, the favorite of heav'n,
 " Our holy prophet, first drew breath, the great
 " The mighty conqu'ror, the support of kings,
 " And will ye not permit him but to rank
 " As friend and fellow-citizen ? he comes not
 " To ruin or enslave, but to protect,
 " To teach you and to save, to fix his pow'r,
 " And hold dominion o'er the conquer'd heart."

I spake ; the hoary sages smil'd applause,
 And all inclin'd to favor us ; but Zopir,
 Still resolute and still inflexible,
 Declar'd, the people shou'd be call'd together,
 And give their gen'ral voice : the people met,
 Again I spake, address'd the citizens,
 Exhorted, threaten'd, practis'd ev'ry art
 To win their favor, and at length prevail'd ;
 The gates are open'd to great Mahomet,
 Who after fifteen years of cruel exile
 Returns to bless once more his native land ;
 With him the gallant Hali, brave Hercides,
 And Ammon the invincible, besides
 A numerous train of chosen followers :

The

The people throng around him; some with looks
 Of hatred, some with smiles of cordial love;
 Some bless the hero, and some curse the tyrant:
 Some threaten and blaspheme, whilst others fall
 Beneath his feet, embrace and worship him;
 Mean-time the names of God, of peace, and freedom,
 Are eccho'd thro' the all-believing croud;
 Whilst Zopir's dying party bellows forth
 In idle threats its impotent revenge:
 Amidst their cries, unruffled and serene,
 In triumph walks the god-like Mahomet,
 Bearing the olive in his hand; already
 Peace is proclaim'd, and see! the conqu'ror comes.

S C E N E III.

MAHOMET, OMAR, HERCIDES, SEID,

I' ALMIRA, Attendants.

MAHOMET.

My friends, and fellow-lab'ers, valiant Hali,
 Morad, and Hammon, and Hercides, hence
 To your great work, and in my name instruct
 The people, lead them to the paths of truth,
 Promise and threaten; let my God alone
 Be worshipp'd, and let those who will not love
 Be taught to fear him. — Seid, art thou here?

S E I D.

SEID.

My ever-honour'd father, and my king,
Led by that pow'r divine who guided thee
To Mecca's walls, preventing your commands
I came, prepar'd to live or die with thee.

MAHOMET.

You shou'd have waited for my orders ; he
Who goes beyond his duty knows it not ;
I am heavn's minister, and thou art mine ;
Learn then of me to serve and to obey.

PALMIRA.

Forgive, my lord, a youth's impatient ardor :
Brought up together from our infant years,
The same our fortunes, and our thoughts the same :
Alas ! my life has been a life of sorrow ;
Long have I languish'd in captivity,
Far from my friends, from Seid, and from thee ;
And now at last, when I beheld a ray
Of comfort shining on me, thy unkindness
Blasts my fair hopes, and darkens all the scene.

MAHOMET.

Palmira, 'tis enough : I know thy virtues ;
Let nought disturb thee : spite of all my cares,

Glory,

A H O M E T.

Empire, and the weight of war,
For thee; Palmira still
Lives in my heart, and shares it with mankind:
Seid shall join our troops; thou, gentle maid,
May'st serve thy God in peace: fear nought but Zopir.

S C E N E IV.

MAHOMET, OMAR.

MAHOMET.

Brave Omar, stay, for in thy faithful bosom
Will I repose the secrets of my soul:
The ling'ring progress of a doubtful siege
May stop our rapid course; we must not give
These weak deluded mortals too much time
To pry into our actions: prejudice
Rules o'er the vulgar with despotic sway.
Thou know'st there is a tale which I have spread
And they believe, that universal empire
Awaits the prophet, who to Mecca's walls
Shall lead his conqu'ring bands, and bring her peace.
'Tis mine to mark the errors of mankind,
And to avail me of them; but whilst thus
I try each art to sooth this fickle people,
What thinks my friend of Seid and Palmira?

O M A R.

O M A R.

I think most nobly of them, that amidst
 Those few staunch followers who own no God,
 No faith but thine, who love thee as their father,
 Their friend, and benefactor, none obey
 Or serve thee with an humbler, better mind ;
 They are most faithful.

M A H O M E T.

Omar, thou'rt deceiv'd ;
 They are my worst of foes, they love each other.

O M A R.

And can you blame their tenderness ?

M A H O M E T.

My friend,
 I'll tell thee all my weakness.

O M A R.

How, my lord !

M A H O M E T.

Thou know'st the reigning passion of my soul ;
 Whilst proud ambition and the cares of empire
 Weigh'd heavy on me, Mahomet's hard life
 Has been a conflict with opposing nature,
 Whom I have vanquish'd by austerity,
 And self-denial ; I have banish'd from me
 That baleful poison which unnerves mankind,

Which

M A H O M E T.

erves to fire them into madnes,
lies; on the burning sand
I brave th' inclement sky,
And bear the seasons rough vicissitude:
Love is my only solace, the dear object
Of all my toils, the idol I adore,
The God of Mahomet, the pow'rful rival
Of my ambition: know, mid'st all my queens,
Palmira reigns sole mistress of my heart:
Think then what pangs of jealousy thy friend
Must feel when she express'd her fatal passion
For Seid.

OMAR.

But thou art reveng'd.

MAHOMET.

Judge thou

If soon I ought not to take vengeance on them;
That thou may'st hate my rival more, I'll tell thee
Who Seid and Palmira are — the children
Of him whom I abhor, my deadliest foe.

OMAR.

Ha! Zopir!

MAHOMET.

Is their father: fifteen years
Are past since brave Hercides to my care

Gave

Gave up their infant years; they know not yet
 Or who or what they are; I brought them up
 Together; I indulg'd their lawless passion,
 And added fuel to the guilty flame.
 Methinks it is as if the hand of heav'n
 Had meant in them to center ev'ry crime.
 But I must — Ha! their father comes this way,
 His eyes are full of bitterness and wrath
 Against me: — now be vigilant, my Omar,
 Hercides must be careful to possess
 This most important pass; return, and tell me
 Whether 'tis most expedient to declare
 Against him, or retreat: away.

S C E N E V.

Z O P I R, M A H O M E T.

Z O P I R.

Hard fate!

Unhappy Zopir! thus compell'd to meet
 My worst of foes, the foe of all mankind!

M A H O M E T.

Since 'tis the will of heav'n that Mahomet
 And Zopir shou'd at length unite, approach
 Without a blush, and fearless tell thy tale.

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D

Z O P I R.

Z O P I R.

I blush for thee alone, whose baneful arts
 Have drawn thy country to the brink of ruin ;
 Who in the bosom of fair peace wou'dst wage
 Intestine war, loosen the sacred bonds
 Of friendship, and destroy our happiness ;
 Beneath the veil of proffer'd terms thou mean'st
 But to betray, whilst discord stalks before thee :
 Thou vile assemblage of hypocrisy
 And insolence, abhorred tyrant ! thus
 Do the chos'n ministers of heav'n dispense
 Its sacred blessings, and announce their God ?

M A H O M E T.

Wert thou not Zopir, I wou'd answer thee
 As thou deserv'st, in thunder, by the voice
 Of that offended being thou derid'st :
 Arm'd with the hallow'd koran I wou'd teach thee
 To tremble and obey in humble silence :
 And with the subject world to kneel before me ;
 But I will talk to thee without disguise,
 As man to man shou'd speak, and friend to friend :
 I have ambition, Zopir ; where's the man
 Who has it not ? but never citizen,
 Or chief, or priest, or king projected aught
 So noble as the plan of Mahomet ;

In

In acts or arms hath ev'ry nation shone
 Superior in its turn ; Arabia now
 Steps forth ; that gen'rous people, long unknown
 And unrespected, saw her glories sunk,
 Her honours lost ; but, lo ! the hour is come
 When she shall rise to vict'ry and renown ;
 The world lies desolate from pole to pole ;
 India's a slave, and bleeding Persia mourns
 Her slaughter'd sons ; whilst Egypt hangs the head
 Dejected, from the walls of Constantine
 Splendor is fled ; the Roman empire torn
 By discord, sees its scatter'd members spread
 On ev'ry side inglorious ; let us raise
 Arabia on the ruins of mankind :
 The blind and tott'ring universe demands
 Another worship, and another God.
 Crete had her Minos, Ægypt her Osiris,
 To Asia Zoroaster gave his laws,
 And Numa was in Italy ador'd :
 O'er savage nations where nor monarch's ruled
 Nor manners soften'd, nor religion taught,
 Hath many a sage his fruitless maxims spread ;
 Beneath a nobler yoke I mean to bend
 The prostrate world, and change their feeble laws,
 Abolish their false worship, to pull down

Their pow'rless gods, and on my purer faith
 Found univerfal empire : fay not, Zopir,
 That Mahomet betrays his country, no :
 I mean but to deftroy its weak fupports,
 And, banifhing idolatry, unite it
 Beneath one king, one prophet, and one God ;
 I fhall fubdue it but to make it glorious.

Z O P I R.

Is this thy purpofe then, and dar'ft thou thus
 Avow it ? can'ft thou change the hearts of men,
 And make them think like thee ? are war and flaughter
 The harbingers of wifdom and of peace ;
 Can he who ravages inftruct mankind ?
 If in the night of ignorance and error
 We long have wander'd, muft thy dreadful torch
 Enlighten us ? what right haft thou to empire ?

M A H O M E T.

That right which firm exalted fpirits claim
 O'er vulgar minds.

Z O P I R.

Thus ev'ry bold impoftor
 May forge new fetters, and enslave mankind :
 He has a right, it feems, to cheat the world
 If he can do it with an air of grandeur.

M A H O M E T.

MAHOMET.

I know your people well ; I know they want
 A leader ; my religion, true or false,
 Is needful to them : what have all your gods
 And all your idols done ? what laurels grow
 Beneath their altars ? your low grov'ling sect
 Debases man, unnerves his active soul,
 And makes it heavy, phlegmatic, and mean ;
 Whilst mine exalts it, gives it strength and courage :
 My law forms heroes.

ZOPIR.

Rather call them robbers :
 Away ; nor bring thy hateful lessons here ;
 Go to the school of tyrants, boast thy frauds
 To lost Medina, where thou reign'st supreme,
 Where blinded bigots bend beneath thy pow'r,
 And thou behold'st thy equals at thy feet.

MAHOMET.

My equals ! Mahomet has none ; long since
 I pass'd 'em all ; Medina is my own,
 And Mecca trembles at me ; if thou hold'st
 Thy safety dear, receive the peace I offer.

ZOPIR.

Thou talk'st of peace, but 'tis not in thy heart ;
 I'm not to be deceiv'd.

MAHOMET.

I wou'd not have thee ;
The weak deceive, the powerful command :
To-morrow I shall force thee to submit ;
To-day, observe, I wou'd have been thy friend.

ZOPIR.

Can we be friends ? can Mahomet and Zopir
E'er be united ? say, what God shall work
A miracle like that ?

MAHOMET.

I'll tell thee one,
A pow'rful God, one that is always heard,
By me he speaks to thee.

ZOPIR.

Who is it ? name him.

MAHOMET.

Int'rest, thy own dear int'rest.

ZOPIR.

Sooner heav'n
And hell shall be united ; interest
May be the god of Mahomet, but mine
Is—justice : what shall join them to each other ?
Where is the cement that must bind our friendship ?
Is it that son I slew, or the warm blood
Of Zopir's house which thou has shed ?

M A H O-

MAHOMET.

It is

Thy blood, thy son's——for now I will unveil
 A secret to thee, known to none but me :
 Thou weepest thy children dead ; they both are —
 living.

ZOPIR.

What say'st thou ? living ? unexpected blifs !
 My children living ?

MAHOMET.

Yes ; and both——my pris'ners.

ZOPIR.

My children slaves to thee ? impossible !

MAHOMET.

My bounty nourish'd them.

ZOPIR.

And cou'd'st thou spare

A child of Zopir's ?

MAHOMET.

For their father's faults

I wou'd not punish them.

ZOPIR.

But tell me, say,

For what are they reserv'd ?

MAHO-



MAHOMET.

Their life or death
Depend on me : speak but the word, and thou
Art master of their fate.

ZOPIR.

O name the price
And thou shalt have it ; must I give my blood,
Or must I bear their chains, and be the slave
Of Mahomet ?

MAHOMET.

I ask not either of thee :
Lend me thy aid but to subdue the world ;
Surrender Mecca to me, and give up
Your temple, bid th' astonish'd people read
My sacred Alkoran, be thou my vassal,
And fall before me, then will I restore
Thy son, perhaps hereafter may reward thee
With honours, and contract a closer tie
With Zopir.

ZOPIR.

Mahomet, thou see'st in me
A tender father : after fifteen years
Of cruel absence, to behold my children,
To die in their embraces, were the first
And fairest blessings that my soul cou'd wish for ;

But

But if to thee I must betray my country,
Or sacrifice my children, know, proud tyrant,
The choice is made already—fare thee well.

MAHOMET.

Inexorable dotard ! but henceforth
I will be more implacable, more cruel
Ev'n than thyself.

S C E N E VI.

MAHOMET, OMAR.

OMAR.

And so indeed thou must be,
Or all is lost : already I have bought
Their secret counsels : Mahomet, to-morrow
The truce expires, and Zopir reassumes
His pow'r ; thy life's in danger : half the senate
Are leagu'd against thee : those who dare not fight
May hire the dark assassin to destroy thee ;
May screen their guilt beneath the mask of justice,
And call the murder legal punishment.

MAHOMET.

First they shall feel my vengeance : persecution,
Thou know'st, has ever been my best support.
Zopir must die.

D 5

OMAR.

OMAR.

'Tis well resolv'd : his fate
Will teach the rest obedience : lose no time.

MAHOMET.

Yet, spite of my resentment, I must hide
The murth'rous hand that deals the blow, to scape
Suspicion's watchful eye, and not incense
The multitude.

OMAR.

They are not worth our care.

MAHOMET.

And yet they must be pleas'd : I want an arm
That will strike boldly.

OMAR.

Seid is the man ;

I'll answer for him.

MAHOMET.

Seid ?

OMAR.

Ay : the best,

The fittest instrument to serve our purpose :
As Zopir's hostage he may find occasion
To speak with him, and soon avenge his master,
Thy other fav'rites are too wise, too prudent

For

For such a dang'rous enterprize ; old age
 Takes off the bandage of credulity
 From mortal eyes ; but the young simple heart,
 The willing slave to its own fond opinions,
 And void of guile, will act as we direct it :
 Youth is the proper period for delusion.
 Seid, thou know'st, is superstitious, bold,
 And violent, but easy to be led ;
 Like a tame lion, to his keeper's voice
 Obedient.

MAHOMET.

What ! the brother of Palmira ?

OMAR.

Ay ; Seid, the fierce son of thy proud foe,
 Th'incestuous rival of great Mahomet,
 His master's rival.

MAHOMET.

I detest him, Omar,
 Abhor his very name ; my murder'd son
 Crys out for vengeance on him ; but thou know'st
 The object of my love, and whence she sprung ;
 Thou see'st I am oppress'd on ev'ry side ;
 I wou'd have altars, victims, and a throne ;
 I wou'd have Zopir's blood, and Seid's too :
 I must consult my int'rest, my revenge,

My

My honour, and my love, that fatal passion,
 Which, spite of my resentment, holds this heart
 In shameful chains: I must consult religion,
 All pow'rful motive, and necessity
 That throws a veil o'er ev'ry crime—away.

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

SEID, PALMIRA.

PALMIRA.

O Seid, keep me not in dread suspense,
 What is this secret sacrifice? what blood
 Hath heav'n demanded?

SEID.

The eternal pow'r
 Deigns to accept my service, calls on me
 To execute its purposes divine;
 To him this heart's devoted, and for him
 This arm shall rise in vengeance; I am bound
 To Omar and to Mahomet, have sworn
 To perish in the glorious cause of heav'n:
 My next and dearest care shall be Palmira.

P A L-

PALMIRA.

Why was not I a witness to thy oath?
 Had I been with thee, I had been less wretched;
 But doubts distract me: Omar talks of treason,
 Of blood that soon must flow; the senate's rage,
 And Zopir's dark intrigues: the flames of war
 Once more are kindled, and the sword is drawn
 Heav'n only knows when to be sheath'd again:
 So says our prophet, he who cannot lye,
 Cannot deceive us: O I fear for Seid,
 Fear all from Zopir.

SEID.

Can he have a heart
 So base and so perfidious? but this morning,
 When as an hostage I appear'd before him,
 I thought him noble, gen'rous, and humane;
 Some pow'r invincible in secret work'd,
 And won me to him; whether the respect
 Due to his name, or specious form external
 Conceal'd the blackness of his heart I know not;
 Whether thy presence fill'd my raptur'd soul
 With joy that drove out ev'ry painful sense,
 And wou'd not let me think on aught but thee:
 Whate'er the cause, methought I was most happy
 When nearest him: that he shou'd thus seduce

My

My easy heart makes me detest him more ;
 And yet how hard it is to look on those
 With eyes of hatred whom we wish to love !

P A L M I R A.

By ev'ry bond hath heav'n united us,
 And Seid and Palmira are the same :
 Were I not bound to thee, and to that faith
 Which Mahomet inspires, I too had pleaded
 The cause of Zopir ; but religion, love,
 And nature, all forbid it.

S E I D.

Think no more
 Of vain remorse, but listen to the voice
 Of heav'n, the God we serve will be propitious :
 Our holy prophet who protects his children
 Will bless our faithful love : for thy dear sake
 I hazard all. Farewell.

S C E N E II.

P A L M I R A alone.

Some dark presage
 Of future misery hangs o'er me still :
 That love which made my happiness, this day,
 So often wish'd for, is a day of horror :
 What is this dreadful oath, this solemn compact
 Which

Which Seid talks of? I've a thousand fears
 Upon me when I think of Zopir: oft
 As I invoke great Mahomet, I feel
 A secret dread, and tremble as I worship:
 O save me, heaven! fearful I obey,
 And blind I follow: O direct my steps
 Aright, and deign to wash my tears away!

S C E N E III.

MAHOMET, PALMIRA.

PALMIRA.

Propitious heav'n hath heard my pray'rs; he comes,
 The prophet comes. O gracious Mahomet,
 My Seid——

MAHOMET.

What of him? thou seem'st disturb'd;
 What shou'd Palmira fear when I am with her!

PALMIRA.

Have I not cause when Mahomet himself
 Seems touch'd with grief?

MAHOMET.

Perhaps it is for thee:

Dar'st thou, imprudent maid, avow a passion
 E'er I approv'd it: is the heart I form'd
 Turn'd rebel to its master, to my laws
 Unfaithful? O ingratitude!

P A L-

PALMIRA.

My Lord,

Behold me at your feet, and pity me :
 Did'st thou not once propitious smile upon us,
 And give thy sanction to our growing love ?
 Thou know'st the virtuous passion that unites us
 Is but a chain that binds us more to thee.

MAHOMET.

The bonds that folly and imprudence knit
 Are dang'rous ; guilt doth sometimes follow close
 The steps of innocence : our hearts deceive us,
 And love, with all his store of dear delights,
 May cost us tears, and dip his shafts in blood.

PALMIRA.

Nor wou'd I murmur if it flow'd for Seid.

MAHOMET.

Are you indeed so fond ?

PALMIRA.

E'er since the day
 When good Hercides to thy sacred pow'r
 Consign'd us both, unconquerable instinct,
 Still growing with our years, united us
 In tender friendship ; 'twas the work of heav'n
 That guides our ev'ry action, and oe'r-rules

The

The fate of mortals ; so thy doctrines teach :
 God cannot change, nor gracious heav'n condemn
 That love itself inspir'd : what once was right
 Is always so ; can't thou then blame Palmira ?

MAHOMET.

I can, and must ; nay, thou wilt tremble more
 When I reveal the horrid secret to thee.
 Attend, rash maid, and let me teach thy soul
 What to avoid, and what to follow : listen
 To me alone.

PALMIRA.

To thee alone Palmira
 Will listen ever, the obedient slave
 Of Mahomet ; this heart can never lose
 Its veneration for thy sacred name.

MAHOMET.

That veneration in excess may lead
 To foul ingratitude.

PALMIRA.

When I forget
 Thy goodness, then may Seid punish me !

MAHOMET.

Seid !

P A L-

PALMIRA.

O why, my lord, that cruel frown,
And look severe?

MAHOMET.

Be not alarm'd; I meant
But to explore the secrets of thy heart,
And try if thou wert worthy to be fav'd:
Be confident, and rest on my protection;
On your obedience will depend your fate;
If ye expect a blessing at my hands,
Be careful to deserve it, and whate'er
The will of heav'n determines touching Seid,
Be thou his guide, direct him in the paths
Of duty, and religion; let him keep
His promise, and be worthy of Palmira.

PALMIRA.

O he will keep it; doubt him not, my lord,
I'll answer for his heart as for my own;
Seid adores thee, worships Mahomet
More than he loves Palmira; thou art all
To him, his friend, his father, and his king;
I'll fly, and urge him to his duty.

SCENE

S C E N E IV.

MAHOMET alone.

Well :

Spite of myself I must, it seems, be made
 A confident ; the simple girl betray'd
 Her guilty flame, and innocently plung'd
 The dagger in my heart : unhappy race !
 Father, and children, all my foes, all doom'd
 To make me wretched ! but ye soon shall prove
 That dreadful is my hatred,---and my love.

S C E N E V.

MAHOMET, OMAR.

OMAR.

At length the hour is come, to seize Palmira,
 To conquer Mecca, and to punish Zopir ;
 His death alone can prop our feeble cause,
 And humble these proud citizens : brave Seid
 Can best revenge thee ; he has free access
 To Zopir : yonder gloomy passage leads
 To his abode ; there the rebellious chief
 His idle vows and flatt'ring incense pours
 Before his fancy'd deities ; there Seid,
 Full of the law divine by thee inspir'd,

Shall

Shall sacrifice the traitor to the God
Of Mahomet.

MAHOMET.

He shall : that youth was born
For crimes of deepest die : he shall be first
My useful slave, my instrument, and then
The victim of my rage ; it must be so :
My safety, my resentment, and my love,
My holy faith, and the decrees of fate
Irrevocable, all require it of me :
But think'st thou, Omar, he hath all the warmth
Of wild fanaticism ?

OMAR.

I know he has,
And suits our purpose well ; Palmira too
Will urge him on ; religion, love, resentment
Will blind his headstrong youth, and hurry him
To madness.

MAHOMET.

Hast thou bound him by an oath ?

OMAR.

O yes ; in all the gloomy pomp of rites
Nocturnal, oaths, and altars, we have fix'd
His superstitious soul, plac'd in his hand

The

The sacred sword, and fir'd him with the rage
Of fierce enthusiasm---but behold him.

S C E N E VI.

MAHOMEE, OMAR, SEID.

MAHOMET.

Child

Of heav'n, decree'd to execute the laws
Of an offended God, now hear by me
His sacred will: thou must avenge his cause.

SEID.

O thou, to whom my soul devoted bends
In humblest adoration, king, and prophet,
Sov'reign acknowledg'd by the voice of heav'n
O'er prostrate nations---I am wholly thine:
But O enlighten my dark mind, O say,
How can weak man avenge his God?

MAHOMET.

Oft-times

Doth he make use of feeble hands like thine
To punish impious mortals, and assert
His pow'r divine.

S E I D.

SEID.

Will he, whose perfect image
Is seen in Mahomet, thus condescend
To honour Seid ?

MAHOMET.

Do as he ordains ;
That is the highest honour man can boast
Blindly to execute his great decree :
Be thankful for the choice, and strike the blow :
The angel of destruction shall assist,
The God of armies shall protect thee.

SEID.

Speak ;

What tyrant must be slain ? what blood must flow ?

MAHOMET.

The murth'rer's blood whom Mahomet abhors,
Who persecutes our faith, and spurns our God,
Who slew my son, the worst of all my foes,
The cruel Zopir.

SEID.

Ha ! must Zopir fall ?

MAHOMET.

And dost thou pause ? presumptuous youth ! 'tis impious
But to delib'rate : far from Mahomet

Be

Be all who for themselves shall dare to judge
Audacious; those who reason are not oft
Prone to believe; thy part is to obey.
Have I not told thee what the will of heav'n
Determines? if it be decreed that Mecca,
Spite of her crimes and base idolatry,
Shall be the promis'd temple, the chos'n seat
Of empire, where I am appointed king,
And Pontiff, know'st thou why our Mecca boasts
These honours? know'st thou holy Abram here
Was born, that here his sacred ashes rest?
He who, obedient to the voice of God,
Stifled the cries of nature, and gave up
His darling child: the same all pow'ful being
Requires of thee a sacrifice, to thee
He calls for blood; and dar'st thou hesitate
When God commands? hence, vile idolater,
Unworthy Musulman, away, and seek
Another master; go, and love Palmira;
But thou despisest her, and brav'st the wrath
Of angry heav'n; away, forsake thy lord,
And serve his deadliest foes.

* The Musulmans are persuaded that the tomb of Abraham is
at Mecca.

SEID.

It is the voice
Of God that speaks in Mahomet : — command,
And I obey.

MAHOMET.

Strike then, and by the blood
Of Zopir merit life eternal.—Omar,
Attend and watch him well.

S C E N E VII.

SEID alone.

To sacrifice

A poor defenceless weak old man ! --- no matter :
How many victims at the altar fall
As helpless ! yet their blood in grateful streams
Rises to heav'n : God hath appointed me ;
Seid hath sworn, and Seid shall perform
His sacred promise : --- O assist me now
Illustrious spirits, you who have destroy'd
The tyrants of the earth, O join your rage
To mine, O guide this trembling hand, and thou
Exterminating angel, who defend'st
The cause of Mahomet, inspire this heart
With all thy fierceness ! — ha ! what do I see ?

S C E N E

S C E N E VIII.

ZOPIR, SEID.

ZOPIR.

Seid, thou seem'st disturb'd ; unhappy youth !
 Why art thou rank'd amongst my foes ? my heart
 Feels for thy woes, and trembles at thy danger ;
 Horrors on horrors croud on every side ;
 My house may be a shelter from the storm,
 Accept it, thou art welcome, for thy life
 Is dear to Zopir.

SEID.

Gracious heav'n ! wilt thou
 Protect me thus ? will Zopir guard his foe ?
 What do I hear ! O duty, conscience, virtue !
 O Mahomet, this rives my heart.

ZOPIR.

Perhaps

Thou art surpris'd to find that I can pity
 An enemy, and wish for Seid's welfare ;
 I am a man like thee, that tie alone
 Demands at least a sympathetic tear
 For innocence afflicted : gracious gods,
 Drive from this earth those base and savage men,
 Who shed with joy their fellow-creatures blood.

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E

SEID.

SEID.

O glorious sentiments ! and can there be
Such virtue in an infidel ?

ZOPIR.

Thou know'st

But little of that virtue thus to stand
Astonish'd at it ! O mistaken youth,
In what a maze of errors art thou lost !
Bound by a tyrant's savage laws, thou think'st
Virtue resides in Musulmen alone ;
Thy master rules thee with a rod of iron,
And shackles thy free soul in shameful bonds ;
Zopir thou hat'st, alas ! thou know'st him not ;
I pardon thee because thou art the slave
Of Mahomet ; but how can'st thou believe
A God who teaches hatred, and delights
In discord ?

SEID.

O I never can obey him ;
I know, and feel I cannot hate thee, Zopir.

ZOPIR.

Alas ! the more I talk to him, the more
He gains upon me ; his ingenuous look,
His youth, his candor, all conspire to charm me :

How

How cou'd a follower of this vile imposter
Thus win my heart ! who gave thee birth ? what art
thou ?

SEID.

A wretched Orphan ; all I have on earth
Is a kind master, whom I never yet
Have disobey'd ; howe'er my love for thee
May tempt me to betray him.

ZOPHIR.

Know'st thou not
Thy parents then ?

SEID.

His camp was the first object
My eyes beheld ; his temple is my country ;
I know no other ; and amid'st the croud
Of yearly tributes to our holy prophet,
None e'er was treated with more tenderness
Than Seid was.

ZOPHER.

I love his gratitude :
Thy kind return for benefits receiv'd
Merits my praise : — O why did heav'n employ
The hand of Mahomet in such an office ?
He was thy father, and Palmira's too ;
Why dost thou sigh ? why dost thou tremble thus ?

E 2

Why

Why turn thee from me? sure some dreadful thought
Hangs on thy mind.

SEID.

It must be so: the times
Are full of terror.

ZOPIR.

If thou feel'st remorse
Thy heart is guiltless; murder is abroad,
Let me preserve thy life.

SEID.

O gracious heav'n!
And can I have a thought of taking thine?
Palmira! O my oath! O God of vengeance!

ZOPIR.

For the last time remember I intreat thee
To follow me; away, thy fate depends
Upon this moment.

S C E N E IX.

ZOPIR, SEID, OMAR.

OMAR.

[Entering hastily.

Traitor, Mahomet
Expects thee.

SEID.

O I know not where or what
I am; destruction, ruin, and despair

On

On ev'ry side await me: whither now
Shall wretched Seid fly?

OMAR.

To him whom God
Hath chos'n, thy injur'd king, and master.

SEID.

Yes:

And there abjure the dreadful oath I made.

S C E N E X.

ZOPIR alone.

The desp'rate youth is gone — I know not why,
But my heart beats for his distress; his looks,
His pity, his remorse, his ev'ry action
Affect me deeply: I must follow him.

S C E N E XI.

ZOPIR, PHANOR.

PHANOR.

This letter, fir, was by an Arab giv'n
In secret to me.

ZOPIR.

From Hercides! gods,
What do I read? will heav'n in tend'rest pity
At length repay me for a life of sorrows?
Hercides begs to see me — he who snatch'd
From this fond bosom my two helpless children;

E 3

They

They yet are living, so this paper tells me,
Slaves to the tyrant — Seid and Palmira
Are orphans both, and know not whence they sprang,
Perhaps my children — O delusive hope,
Why wilt thou flatter me? it cannot be ;
Fain wou'd I credit thee, thou sweet deceiver ;
I fly to meet and to embrace my children ;
Yes ; I will see Hercides : let him come
At midnight to me, to this holy altar,
Where I so often have invok'd the gods
At last perhaps propitious to my vows :
O ye immortal pow'rs, restore my children,
Give back to virtue's paths two genrous hearts
Corrupted by an impious vile usurper !
If Seid and Palmira are not mine,
If such is my hard fate, I will adopt
The noble pair, and be their father still.

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

MAHOMET, OMAR.

OMAR.

MY lord, our secret is discover'd; Seid
Has told Hercides; we are on the verge
Of ruin, yet I know he will obey.

MAHOMET.

Reveal'd it, say'st thou?

OMAR.

Yes: Hercides loves him
With tendernefs.

MAHOMET.

Indeed! what said he to it?

OMAR.

He stood aghast, and seem'd to pity Zopir.

MAHOMET.

He's weak, and therefore not to be entrusted;
Fools ever will be traitors: but no matter,
Let him take heed; a method may be found
To rid us of such dang'rous witnesses:
Say, Omar, have my orders been obey'd?

OMAR.

They have, my lord.

E 4

M A H O-

MAHOMET.

'Tis well: remember, Omar,
 In one important hour or Mahomet
 Or Zopir is no more; if Zopir dies,
 The cred'lous people will adore that God
 Who thus declar'd for me, and fav'd his prophet:
 Be this our first great object; that once done,
 Take care of Seid; art thou sure the poison
 Will do its office?

OMAR.

Fear it not, my lord,

MAHOMET.

O we must work in secret, the dark shades
 Of death must hide our purpose — whilst we shed
 Old Zopir's blood, be sure you keep Palmira
 In deepest ignorance; she must not know
 The secret of her birth: her bliss and mine
 Depend upon it; well thou know'st, my triumphs
 From error's fruitful source incessant flow:
 The ties of blood, and all their boasted pow'r
 Are mere delusions: what are nature's bonds?
 Nothing but habit, the mere force of custom:
 Palmira knows no duty but obedience
 To me; I am her lord, her king, her father,
 Perhaps may add the name of husband to them:

Her

Her little heart will beat with proud ambition
 To captivate her master — but the hour
 Approaches that must rid me of my foe,
 The hated Zopir : Seid is prepar'd —
 And see, he comes : let us retire.

OMAR.

Observe

His wild demeanor ; rage and fierce resentment
 Possess his soul.

S C E N E II.

MAHOMET and OMAR. retir'd to one side of the stage,
 SEID at the further end.

SEID.

This dreadful duty then
 Must be fulfill'd.

MAHOMET. [To Omar.

Let us begone, in search
 Of other means to make our pow'r secure.

[Exit with Omar.
 SEID alone.

I cou'd not answer : one reproachful word
 From Mahomet suffic'd : I stood abash'd,
 But not convinc'd : if heav'n requires it of me,
 I must obey ; but it will cost me dear.

E 5

S C E N E

S C E N E III.

SEID, PALMIRA.

SEID.

Palmira, art thou here ; what fatal cause
Hath led thee to this seat of horror ?

PALMIRA.

Fear

And love directed me to find thee, Seid,
To ask thee what dread sacrifice thou mean'st
To offer here ; do heav'n and Mahomet
Demand it of thee, must it be ? O speak.

SEID.

Palmira, thou command'st my ev'ry thought
And ev'ry action ; all depend on thee :
Direct 'em as thou wilt, inform my soul,
And guide my hand : be thou my guardian God,
Explain the will of heav'n which yet I know not ;
Why am I chos'n to be its instrument
Of vengeance ? are the prophet's dread commands
Irrevocable ?

PALMIRA,

Seid, we must yield in silence,
Nor dare to question his decrees ; he hears
Our secret sighs, nor are our sorrows hid
From Mahomet's all seeing eye : to doubt

Is

Is prophanation of the deity.
 His God is God alone; he cou'd not else
 Be thus victorious, thus invincible.

SEID.

He must be Seid's God who is Palmira's :
 Yet cannot my astonish'd soul conceive
 A being, tender, merciful, and kind,
 Commanding murder; then again I think
 To doubt is guilt: the priest without remorse
 Destroys the victim: by the voice of heav'n
 I know that Zopir was condemn'd, I know
 That Seid was predestin'd to support
 The law divine: so Mahomet ordain'd,
 And I obey him; fir'd with holy zeal
 I go to slay the enemy of God;
 And yet methinks another deity
 Draws back my arm, and bids me spare the victim :
 Religion lost her pow'r when I beheld
 The wretched Zopir; duty urg'd in vain
 Her cruel plea, exhorting me to murder;
 With joy I listen'd to the plaintive voice
 Of soft humanity: but Mahomet —
 How awful! how majestic! who can bear
 His wrath? his frowns reproach'd my shameful weak-
 nefs;

Religion

Religion is a dreadful pow'r : alas !
 Palmira, I am lost in doubts and fears,
 Discordant passions tear this feeble heart :
 I must be impious, must desert my faith,
 Or be a murth'rer : Seid was not form'd
 For an Assassin ; but 'tis heavn's command,
 And I have promis'd to avenge its cause :
 The tears of grief and rage united flow,
 Contending duties raise a storm within,
 And thou alone, Palmira, must appease it ;
 Fix my uncertain heart, and give it peace :
 Alas ! without this dreadful sacrifice,
 The tie that binds us is for ever broke ;
 This only can secure thee.

PALMIRA.

Am I then
 The price of blood, of Zopir's blood ?

SEID.

So heav'n

And Mahomet decree.

PALMIRA.

Love ne'er was meant
 To make us cruel, barb'rous, and inhuman.

SEID.

To Zopir's murth'rer, and to him alone,
 Palmira must be giv'n.

PALMIRA.

PALMIRA.

O hard condition !

SEID.

But 'tis the will of Mahomet and heav'n.

PALMIRA.

Alas !

SEID.

Thou know'st the dreadful curse that waits
On disobedience, everlasting pain.

PALMIRA.

If thou must be the instrument of vengeance,
If at thy hands the blood which thou hast promis'd
Shall be requir'd —

SEID.

What's to be done ?

PALMIRA.

I tremble

To think o'nt—yet—

SEID.

It must be so then : thou
Hast fix'd his doom ; Palmira has consented.

PALMIRA.

Did I consent ?

SEID.

Thou didst.

PALMIRA.

PALMIRA.

Detested thought !

What have I said ?

SEID.

By thee the voice of heav'n
Speaks its last dread command, and I obey :
Yon fatal altar is the chosen seat
Of Zopir's worship, there he bends the knee
To his false gods ; retire, my sweet Palmira.

PALMIRA.

I can not leave thee.

SEID.

Thou must not be witness
To such a deed of horror : these, Palmira,
Are dreadful moments : fly to yonder grove,
Thou wilt be near the prophet there : away.

PALMIRA.

Zopir must die then ?

SEID.

Yes : this fated hand
Must drag him to the earth, there murder him,
And bathe yon ruin'd altar in his blood.

PALMIRA.

Die by thy hand ! I shudder at the thought :
But see ! he comes ; just heav'n !

[The

[The farther part of the stage opens, and discovers an altar.]

ZOPIR, SEID, PALMIRA, on one side.

ZOPIR, standing near the altar.

Ye guardian gods

Of Mecca, threaten'd by an impious sect
Of vile impostors, now assert your pow'r,
And let your Zopir's pray'rs, perhaps the last
He e'er shall make, be heard! the feeble bonds
Of our short peace are broken, and fierce war
Vindictive rages; O if ye support
The cause of this usurper —

SEID. [Aside to Palmira.

Hear, Palmira,

How he blasphemes!

ZOPIR.

May death be Zopir's lot!

I wish for nought on earth but to behold,
In my last hour, and to embrace my children,
To die in their lov'd arms: if yet they live,
If they are here, for something whispers me
That I shall see 'em still.

PALMIRA. [Aside to Seid.

His children, said he?

ZOPIR.

ZOPIR.

O I shou'd die with pleasure at the fight :
 Watch over and protect them, ye kind gods,
 O let 'em think like me, but not like me
 Be wretched !

SEID.

See ! he prays to his false gods :
 This is the time to end him.

[Draws his sword.

PALMIRA.

Do not, Seid.

SEID.

To serve my God, to please and merit thee,
 This sword, devoted to the cause of heav'n,
 Is drawn, and shall destroy its deadliest foe :
 Yon dreary walk invites me to the deed,
 Methinks the path is bloody, wand'ring ghosts
 Glide thro' the shade, and beckon me away.

PALMIRA.

What say'st thou, Seid ?

SEID.

Ministers of death,
 I follow you ; conduct me to the altar,
 And guide my trembling hand !

PALMIRA.

PALMIRA.

It must not be ;
'Tis horrible : O stop, my Seid.

SEID.

No :

The hour is come, and see ! the altar shakes.

PALMIRA.

'Tis heavn's assent, and we must doubt no more.

SEID.

Means it to urge me on, or to restrain ?
Our prophet will reproach me for this weakness :
Palmira !

PALMIRA.

Well !

SEID.

Address thyself to heav'n ;
I go to do the deed.

[He goes behind the altar where Zopir is retired.

PALMIRA alone.

O dreadful moment !
What do I feel within ! my blood runs cold ;
And yet if heav'n demands the sacrifice,
Am I to judge, to ask, or to complain ?
Where is the heart that knows itself, that knows
Its innocence or guilt ? We must obey :
But hark ! methought I heard the plaintive voice

Of

Of death ; the deed is done — alas ! my Seid

SEID. [Returns looking wildly.
What voice was that ? where am I ? where's Palmira ?
I cannot see Palmira ; O she's gone,
She's lost for ever.

PALMIRA.
Art thou blind to her
Who only lives for thee ?

SEID.
Where are we ?

PALMIRA. Speak,
My Seid, is the dreadful sacrifice
Perform'd, and thy sad promise all fulfill'd ?

SEID.
What say'st thou ?
PALMIRA.
Zopir ? is he dead ?

SEID. Who ? Zopir ?
PALMIRA.
Good heav'n, preserve his senses ! — come, my Seid,
Let us be gone.

SEID.
How will these tott'ring limbs
Support me ! — I recover — is it you,
Palmira ?

P A L

PALMIRA.

Yes: what hast thou done?

SEID.

Obey'd

The voice of heav'n, seis'd with this desp'rate hand
 His silver hairs, and dragg'd him to the earth:
 'Twas thy command: O God! thou could'st not bid me
 Commit a crime! trembling and pale a while
 I stood aghast, then drew this sacred sword,
 And plung'd it in his bosom: what a look
 Of tenderness and love the poor old man
 Cast on his murtherer! a scene so mournful
 Ne'er did these eyes behold: my heart retains
 And will for ever keep the sad idea:
 Wou'd I were dead like him!

PALMIRA.

Let us repair

To Mahomet, the prophet will protect us;
 Here you're in danger; follow me.

SEID.

I cannot:

Palmira, pity me.

PALMIRA.

What mournful thought
 Can thus depress thee?

SEID.

SEID.

O if thou had'st seen
 His tender looks, when from his bleeding side
 He drew the fatal weapon forth, and cry'd,
 Dear Seid, poor unhappy Seid ! Oh
 That voice, those looks, and Zopir at my feet
 Welt'ring in blood are still before my eyes :
 What have we done ?

PALMIRA.

I tremble for thy life :
 O, in the name of all the sacred ties
 That bind us, fly, and save thyself.

SEID,

Away,
 And leave me : why did thy ill-fated love
 Command this dreadful sacrifice, Palmira ?
 Without thy cruel order heav'n itself
 Had never been obey'd.

PALMIRA.

Unkind reproach !
 Coud'st thou but know what thy Palmira suffers
 How woud'st thou pity her !

SEID.

SEID.

What dreadful object

Is that before us ?

[Zopir rises up slowly from behind the altar, and leans upon it.

PALMIRA.

'Tis the murther'd Zopir ;

Bloody and pale he drags his mangled limbs

Towards us.

SEID.

Wilt thou go to him ?

PALMIRA.

I must ;

For pity and remorse distract my soul,

And draw me to him.

ZOPIR. [Comes forward leaning on Palmira.

Gentle maid, support me !

[He sits down.

Ungrateful Seid, thou hast slain me ; now

Thou weep'st ; alas ! too late.

S C E N E V.

ZOPIR, SEID, PALMIRA, PHANOR.

PHANOR.

O dreadful sight !

What's here ?

ZOPIR.

ZOPIR.

I wish I cou'd have seen my friend
Hercides — Phanor, art thou there? — behold
My murtherer.

[Points to Seid.

PHANOR.

O guilt! accursed deed!
Unhappy Seid, look upon — thy father.

SEID.

Who?

PALMIRA.

He?

SEID.

My father?

ZOPIR.

Gracious heav'n!

PHANOR.

Hercides

In his last moments took me in his arms,
And weeping cry'd, if there be time, O haste
Prevent a parricide, and stop the arm
Of Seid; in my breast the tyrant lodg'd
The dreadful secret; now I suffer for it,
And die by Mahomet's detested hand:
Haste, Phanor, fly, inform the hapless Zopir,
That Seid and Palmira are—his children.

SEID.

Palmira!

P A L-

PALMIRA.

Thou my brother?

ZOPIR.

O ye gods!

O nature, thou hast not deceiv'd me then,
 When thou didst plead for them! unhappy Seid,
 What cou'd have urg'd thee to so foul a deed?

SEID.

[Kneeling.

My gratitude, my duty, my religion,
 All that mankind hold sacred, urg'd me on
 To do the worst of actions: --- give me back
 That fatal weapon.

PALMIRA. [Laying hold of Seid's arm.

Plunge it in my breast;
 I was the cause of my dear father's murder;
 And incest is the price of parricide:

SEID.

Strike both: heav'n hath not punishment enough
 For crimes like ours.

ZOPIR.

[embracing them.

Let me embrace my children:
 The gods have pour'd into my cup of sorrow
 A draught of sweetest happiness: I die,
 Contented, and resign me to my fate:

But

But you must live, my children ; you, my Seid,
 And you, Palmira, by the sacred name
 Of nature, by thy dying father's blood,
 Fast flowing from the wound which thou hast made,
 Let me intreat you, live ; revenge yourselves,
 Revenge the injur'd Zopir, but preserve
 Your precious lives ; the great th' important hour
 Approaches, that must change the mournful scene :
 Th'offended people, e'er to-morrow's dawn,
 Will rise in arms and punish the usurper ;
 My blood will add fresh fuel to their rage ;
 Let us await the issue.

SEID.

O I fly

To sacrifice the monster, to take vengeance
 For a dear father's life, or lose my own.

S C E N E VI.

ZOPIR, SEID, PALMIRA, OMAR, Attendants.

OMAR.

Guards, seize the murth'rer ; Mahomet is come
 To punish guilt, and execute the laws.

ZOPIR.

What do I hear ?

SEID.

SEID.

Did Mahomet command thee
To punish Seid ?

PALMIRA.

Execrable tyrant !
Was not the murder done by thy command ?

OMAR.

'Twas not commaded.

SEID.

Well have I deserv'd
This just reward of my credulity.

OMAR.

Soldiers, obey.

PALMIRA.

O stop, ye shall not —

OMAR.

Madam,

If Seid's life is dear to you, submit
With patience, lest the prophet's anger fall
Like thunder on your head ; if you obey,
Great Mahomet is able to protect you :
Guards, lead her to the king.

PAMIRA.

O take me, death,
From this sad scene of never-ending woe !

[Seid and Palmira are carry'd off.]

ZOPIR.

[to Phanor

They're gone, they're lost : O most unhappy father,
The wound which Seid gave is not so deep,
So painful as this parting.

PHANOR.

See, my lord,
The day appears, and the arm'd multitudes
Press onward to defend the cause of Zopir.

ZOPIR.

Support me, Phanor : yet thy friend may live
To punish this vile hypocrite ; at least
In death may serve my dear—my cruel—children.

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V. S C E N E I.

MAHOMET, OMAR, Guards at a distance.

OMAR,

ZOPIR's approaching death alarms the people,
We have endeavour'd to appease their clamours,
And disavow'd all knowledge of the deed ;
To some, we call'd it the avenging hand

Of

Of heav'n that favours thus its prophet's cause :
 With others, we lament his fall, and boast
 Thy awful justice that will soon avenge it.
 The croud attentive listen to thy praise,
 And all the danger of the storm is o'er ;
 If ought remains of busy faction's rage
 It is but as the tossing of the waves
 After the tempest, when the vault of heav'n
 Is placid and serene.

MAHOMET.

Be it our care
 To keep it so : where are my valiant bands ?

OMAR.

All ready ; Osman in the dead of night
 By secret paths conducted them to Mecca.

MAHOMET.

'Tis strange that men must either be deceiv'd
 Or forc'd into obedience : Seid knows not
 It is a father's blood that he must shed ?

OMAR.

Who cou'd inform him of it ? he alone
 Who knew the secret is no more ; Hercules
 Is gone, and Seid soon shall follow him ;
 For know, he has already drank the poison ;

His crime was punish'd e'er it was committed :
 Ev'n whilst he dragg'd his father to the altar
 Death lurk'd within his veins ; he cannot live :
 Palmira too is safe ; she may be useful :
 I've giv'n her hopes of Seid's pardon, that
 May win her to our cause ; she dare not murmur,
 Besides, her heart is flexible and soft,
 Form'd to obey, to worship Mahomet,
 And make him soon the happiest of mankind :
 Trembling and pale behold they bring her to thee.

MAHOMET.

Collect my forces, Omar, and return.

S C E N E II.

MAOMET, PALMIRA, Guards.

PALMIRA.

O heav'n ! where am I ? gracious God !

MAHOMET.

Palmira,

Be not alarm'd ; already I have fix'd
 Thy fate and Mecca's : know, the great event
 That fills thy soul with horror is a myst'ry
 'Twixt heav'n and me that's not to be reveal'd :
 But thou art free, and happy : think no more

Of

Of Seid, nor lament him ; leave to me
 The fate of men, be thankful for thy own :
 Thou know'st that Mahomet hath lov'd thee long,
 That I have ever been a father to thee ;
 Perhaps a nobler fate, and fairer title
 May grace thee still, if thou deserv'st it ; therefore
 Blot from thy memory the name of Seid,
 And let thy soul aspire to greater blessings
 That it could dare to hope for ; let thy heart
 Be my last noblest victory, and join
 The conquer'd world to own me for its master.

PALMIRA.

What joys, what blessings, or what happiness
 Can I expect from thee, thou vile impostor ?
 Thou bloody savage ! This alone was wanting,
 This cruel insult to complete my woes :
 Eternal father, look upon this king,
 This holy prophet, this all-pow'rful God
 Whom I ador'd : thou monster, to betray
 Two guiltless hearts into the crying sin
 Of parricide ; thou infamous seducer
 Of my unguarded youth, how dar'st thou think,
 Stain'd as thou art with my dear father's blood,
 To gain Palmira's heart ? but know, proud tyrant,
 Thou art not yet invincible : the veil

Is off that hid thee, and the hand of vengeance
 Uprais'd to scourge thy guilt : dost thou not hear
 The madd'ning multitude already arm'd
 In the defence of injur'd innocence ?
 From death's dark shades my murder'd father comes
 To lead them on : O that these feeble hands
 Cou'd tear thee piece-meal, thee and all thy train !
 Wou'd I cou'd see them welt'ring in their blood ;
 See Mecca, and Medina, Afia, all
 Combin'd against thee ! that the credulous world
 Wou'd shake off thy vile chains, and thy religion
 Become the jest and scorn of all mankind
 To after ages ! may that hell, whose threats
 Thou hast so oft denounc'd 'gainst all who dar'd
 To doubt thy false divinity, now open
 Her fiery gates, and be thy just reward !
 These are the thanks I owe thee for thy bounties,
 And these the pray'rs I make for Mahomet.

MAHOMET.

I see I am betray'd ; but be it so :
 Whoe'er thou art, learn henceforth to obey ;
 For know, my heart —

S C E N E

S C E N E III.

MAHOMET, PALMIRA, OMAR, ALI, Attendants.

OMAR.

The secret is reveal'd ;
 Hercides told it in his dying moments :
 The people all enrag'd have forc'd the prison :
 They're up in arms, and bearing on their shoulders
 The bloody corpse of their unhappy chief,
 Lament his fate, and cry aloud for vengeance :
 All is confusion : Seid at their head
 Excites them to rebellion, and cries out,
 ' I am a parricide ;' with rage and grief
 He seems distracted ; with one voice the croud
 Unite to curse the prophet and his God :
 Ev'n those who promis'd to admit our forces
 Within the walls of Mecca, have conspir'd
 With them to raise their desp'rate arms against thee ;
 And nought is heard but cries of death and vengeance.

PALMIRA.

Just heav'n pursue him, and defend the cause
 Of innocence !

MAHOMET.

[to Omar.

Well, what have we to fear ?

F 4

O M A R.

OMAR.

Omar, my lord, with your few faithful friends,
 Despising danger, are prepar'd to brave
 The furious storm, and perish at your feet.

MAHOMET.

Alone I will defend you all; come near:
 Behold, and say I act like Mahomet.

S C E N E IV.

MAHOMET, OMAR, and his party on one side, SEID,
 and the people on the other. PALMIRA, in the middle

SEID:

Revenge my father, seize the traitor.

MAHOMET.

People,

Born to obey me, listen to your master.

SEID.

Hear not the monster; follow me:

[He comes forward a little, and then staggers.

O heav'n!

What sudden darkness spreads o'er my dim eyes?

Now strike, my friends — O I am dying.

MAHOMET.

Ha!

Then all is well.

P A L M I R A

My brother, can'st thou shed
No blood but Zopir's?

SEID.

Yes: come on — I cannot;
Some God unnerves me.

[He faints.

MAHOMET.

Hence let ev'ry foe
Of Mahomet be taught to fear and tremble:
Know, ye proud infidels, this hand alone
Hath pow'r to crush you all, to me the God
Of nature delegates his sov'reign pow'r:
Acknowledge then his prophet, and his laws,
Twixt Mahomet and Seid let that God
Decide the contest, which of us foe'er
Is guilty, now, this moment let him perish!

PALMIRA.

My brother — Seid — can this monster boast
Such pow'r? the people stand astonish'd at him,
And tremble at his voice; and wilt thou yield
To Mahomet?

SEID. [Supported by his attendants

Alas! the hand of heav'n
Is on me, and th' involuntary crime
Is too severely punish'd: O Palmira

In vain was Seid virtuous : O if heav'n
 Chastises thus our errors, what must crimes
 Like thine expect, detested Mahomet ?
 What cause hast thou to tremble — O I die ;
 Receive me, gracious heav'n, and spare Palmira.

P A L M I R A.

[Dies.

'Tis not, ye people, 'tis not angry heav'n
 Pursues my Seid ; No : he's poison'd —

M A H O M E T. [Interrupting her, and
 addressing himself to the people.

Learn

From Seid's fate, ye unbelievers, how
 To rev'ence Mahomet whom heav'n defends ;
 Nature and death, ye see, have heard my voice,
 And this pale corpse hath witness'd their obedience ;
 The sword of fate hangs o'er your heads, beware
 It fall not on you : thus will I reward
 All impious rebels, all vile infidels,
 And punish ev'ry word and thought against me.
 If I withhold my rage, and let you live,
 Remember, traitors, that you owe your beings
 To my indulgence ; hasten to the temple,
 Prostrate yourselves before the throne of grace,
 And deprecate the wrath of Mahomet.

[The people retire.

P A L-

PALMIRA.

O stay, and hear me, people — the barbarian
 Poison'd my brother — monster, rais'd by crimes
 To empire thus, and deify'd by guilt,
 Thou murth'rer of Palmira's hapless race,
 Complete thy work, and take my wretched life:
 O my dear brother, let me follow thee !

[She seizes her brother's sword and stabs herself.

MAHOMET.

Seize, and prevent her —

PALMIRA.

'Tis too late; I die :
 And dying hope a God more just than thine
 Has yet in store a state of happiness
 For injur'd innocence : let Mahomet
 Reign here in peace : this world was made for tyrants.

[Dies.

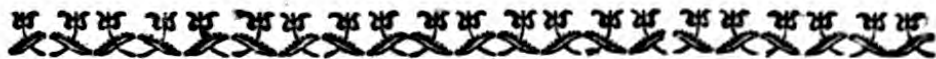
MAHOMET.

She's gone ; she's lost ; the only dear reward
 I wish'd to keep of all my crimes : in vain
 I fought, and conquer'd ; Mahomet is wretched
 Without Palmira : Conscience, now I feel thee,
 And feel that thou can't rive the guilty heart.
 O thou eternal God, whom I have made
 The instrument of ill, whom I have wrong'd,

Brav'd.

Brav'd, and blasphem'd; O thou whom yet I fear,
Behold me self-condemn'd, behold me wretched,
Ev'n whilst the world adores me: vain was all
My boasted pow'r: I have deceiv'd mankind;
But how shall I impose on my own heart?
A murder'd father, and two guiltless children
Must be reveng'd: come ye unhappy victims,
And end me quickly! — Omar, we must strive
To hide this shameful weakness, save my glory,
And let me reign o'er a deluded world:
For Mahomet depends on fraud alone,
And to be worshipp'd never must be known.

END of the FIFTH and last ACT.



S O C R A T E S.

A

DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE.

BY

The late Mr. THOMSON.

A NEW EDITION.

Enlarged and Corrected from the Author's
own Manuscript.





* P R E F A C E.

B Y

MR. F A T I M A.

IT has been said by one author, and repeated by another, that the simple representation of a merely virtuous man, without passion or intrigue, cannot possibly meet with applause on the stage, which I look upon as an injurious reflection on human nature, and the falsehood of it sufficiently prov'd by this performance, written by the late Mr. *Thomson*. The famous Mr. *Addison* was a long time in doubt, whether he shou'd make *Socrates* or *Cato* the subject of his tragedy :

* What reasons Mr. *Voltaire* might have for not acknowledging himself the author of *Socrates* on its first publication we cannot determine : those amongst our readers however, who have any acquaintance with the English stage, will easily perceive, that the whole story in the preface about *Addison*, *Thomson*, and lord *Lyttleton*, is nothing but pure fiction, design'd to conceal the real author of this motley performance.

he

he thought *Cato* a virtuous man, and as such a proper object of imitation ; but that *Socrates* was much superior to him : the virtue of the latter, he observ'd, had more softness and humanity in it, and was withal more resigned to the will of God than that of the former : the *Grecian*, he us'd to say, did not, like the *Roman*, imagine that he was at liberty to destroy himself, or to quit the post which God had allotted to him : *Addison*, in short, consider'd *Cato* as the victim of liberty, and *Socrates* as the martyr of wisdom. *Sir Richard Steele* however persuaded him, that *Cato* was a subject better adapted to the theatre than the other, and at the same time likely to prove more agreeable to the nation, whilst it was in a political ferment. To say the truth, the death of *Socrates* wou'd perhaps have made very little impression in a country where no man is ever persecuted on account of his religion ; where a general toleration has so prodigiously enrich'd and peopled the community ; as it has also in Holland, my dear native country. *Sir Richard Steele* says expressly in his *Tattler*, that the subject of a dramatic piece shou'd always be the reigning vice or foible of the nation where it is represented. The success which *Addison* met with in his *Cato*, encourag'd him to sketch out the death of *Socrates*, in three acts. The place of secretary of state, which

which he had some time after, prevented his finishing this work; he gave the manuscript to his pupil, Mr. *Thomson*, who was afraid to hazard on the stage a subject so extremely grave, and at the same time void of all those fashionable embellishments which had then taken possession of the English theatre.

He began therefore with some other tragedies, *Sophonisba*. * *Coriolanus*, *Tancred*, &c. and finish'd with the death of *Socrates*, which he wrote in prose scene by scene, and shew'd to his illustrious friends, Mr. *Doddington* and Mr. *Lyttleton*, persons deservedly rank'd amongst the first geniusses in *England*: these two gentlemen, whom he always consulted, advised him to follow the example of *Shakespeare*; to introduce the whole body of the people into his tragedy; to paint *Xantippe*, the wife of *Socrates*, just as she really was, a peevish, cross-grain'd city-madam, scolding her husband, and yet fond of him; to bring all the *areopagus* on the stage; and, in a word, to make the whole piece a simple representation of human life; one of those pictures that exhibit a view of every state and condition. This is an undertaking attended with

* Mr. Voltaire either forgot or did not know that *Coriolanus* was Mr. Thomson's last tragedy, and was play'd after his death for the benefit of his relations.

some difficulty; and though the sublime continued throughout is a species of writing infinitely superior to it, this mixture of the pathetic and familiar has notwithstanding its degree of merit. One may compare them to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssy*. Mr. *Lyttleton* wou'd not suffer the piece to be play'd, because the character of *Melitus* too closely resembled that of serjeant *Catbrée*, to whom he was related; besides, that the whole was rather a sketch than a finish'd performance.

He made me a present of this drama when he came last to *Holland*. I translated it immediately into Dutch, my mother tongue. I did not however think proper to bring it on the stage at *Amsterdam*, though, thank God, amongst all our pedants, we have ne'er a one there so hateful or so impertinent as serjeant *Catbrée*. The great number of actors which this play requires, deterr'd me from any thoughts of exhibiting it. I translated it afterwards into *French*, and shall let this translation pass, till I have an opportunity of publishing the original.

Amsterdam 1755.

Since this the death of *Socrates* has been represented at *London*, but that was not the play written by Mr. *Thomson*.

N. B.

N.B. There have been some people ridiculous enough to endeavour to refute the palpable truths advanc'd in this preface ; pretending that Mr. *Fatima* cou'd not have wrote it in 1755, because he dy'd in 1754 : if it was really so, what a foolish reason ! but the fact is, he died in 1757.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SOCRATES.

ANITUS, High Priest of Ceres.

MELITUS, one of the Judges of Athens.

XANTIPPE, Wife of Socrates.

AGLAE, a young Athenian Lady, brought up by
Socrates.

SOPHRONIMUS, a young Athenian Gentleman, brought
up by Socrates.

DRIXA,

TERPANDER, } Friends of Anitus.

ACROS,

Judges, Disciples of Socrates, and three Pedants,
protected by Anitus.

SOCRATES.

S O C R A T E S.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

ANITUS, DRIXA, TERPANDER, ACROS.

ANITUS.

MY dear confidante, and you my trusty friends, you well know how much money I have put into your pockets this last feast of Ceres: I am now going to be marry'd, and I hope you will all do your respective duties on this great occasion.

DRIXA.

That, my lord, we most certainly shall, provided you give us an opportunity of getting a little more by it.

ANITUS.

I shall want of you, madam Drixia, two fine Perfian carpets; from you, Terpander, I must have two large silver candlesticks; and from you half a dozen robes.

T E R-

TERPANDER.

A considerable demand, my lord ; but there is nothing which we wou'd not do to merit your holy protection.

ANITUS.

O you will be rewarded for it an hundred fold : 'tis the best means to gain the favor of the gods : give much, and much you shall receive ; but above all fail not, I beseech you, to stir up the people against all the rich and great, who are deficient in paying their vows, and presenting their offerings.

ACROS.

On that, my lord, you may depend ; it is a duty too sacred ever to be neglected by us.

ANITUS.

'Tis well, my friends ; may heaven continue to inspire you with the same just and pious sentiments, and be assur'd you will prosper ; you, your children, and your children's children, to all posterity.

TERPANDER.

You have said it, my lord, and therefore it must be so.

S C E N E

S C E N E II.

ANITUS, DRIXA.

ANITUS.

Well, my dear Drixia, I believe you will have no objection to my marrying Aglae; I shall not love you the less, and we may still live together as we us'd to do.

DRIXA.

O my lord, I am not jealous; as long as trade goes on well, I am contented. Whilst I had the honour of being one of your mistresses, I was a woman of some consequence in Athens: but if you are in love with Aglae, I, in my turn, am as fond of young Sophronimus: and Xantippe, Socrates' wife, has promis'd that he shall marry me. I shall be always, notwithstanding, as much at your service as ever. I am only vex'd that this young fellow has been brought up with that rascal Socrates, and that Aglae is still in his hands. We must take 'em both out as fast as we can. Xantippe will be glad to get rid of them. The beautiful Sophronimus and the fair Aglae have a sad time of it with the surly Socrates.

ANITUS.

I am in great hopes, my dear, that Melitus and I together shall soon be able to destroy this dangerous
fellow,

fellow, who preaches nothing but virtue and divinity, and has taken the liberty to laugh at some certain adventures that happen'd at the mysteries of Ceres : but he is Aglae's tutor : her father, Agathon, they tell me, has left her a great fortune : in short, Aglae is a charming girl ; I love her, and I will marry her ; and as to Socrates, I shall take care of him.

DRIXA.

Do what you please with Socrates, so I can but get my dear Sophronimus : but how cou'd that fool Agathon leave his daughter in the hands of this old flatnos'd Socrates, that intolerable reasoner, who corrupts all our young men, and keeps them away from courtezans and the mysteries.

ANITUS.

Agathon himself was tainted with the same vile principles : he was one of your sober serious fools, whose manners differ'd in every respect from ours ; a man, in short, of another age, one of our sworn and inveterate enemies, who think they have fulfill'd every duty when they worship God, assist man, cultivate friendships, and study philosophy ; one of those ridiculous creatures who insolently deny that the gods prognosticate future events by the liver of an ox ;
those

those merciless reasoners, who find fault with priests for sacrificing young girls, or passing a night with them on occasion. These you see, Drixa, are a kind of people not fit to live. As to Socrates, I shou'd have been glad to have had him strangled long ago. However, I have agreed to meet him here in the portico, and talk with him about the marriage.

DRIXA.

Here he comes: you do him too much honor: but I must leave you, and talk to Xantippe about my young man.

ANITUS.

The gods conduct you, my dear Drixa; remember to serve them, and don't forget my two fine Persian carpets.

S C E N E III.

ANITUS, SOCRATES.

ANITUS.

Good morrow, my dear Socrates, thou favorite of the gods, and wisest of men; methinks every time I see you I am rais'd above myself; in you I look up with admiration to the dignity of human nature.



SOCRATES.

O my lord, I am a plain simple man, as void of knowledge, and as full of weakness, as any of my fellow-creatures: it is enough for me if you can bear with me.

ANITUS.

Bear with? I admire you, and wou'd it were possible I cou'd resemble you! To convince you of it, and that I may oftener be a witness to your virtues, and improve by your instructions, I am willing to espouse your fair pupil Aglae, whom I find you have the intire disposal of.

SOCRATES.

It is true indeed that her father Agathon, who was my friend, the dearest of all relations, bequeathed to my care, by his last will, this amiable and virtuous orphan.

ANITUS.

With a considerable fortune no doubt, for I hear she is one of the best matches in all Athens.

SOCRATES.

With regard to that I can give you no information; her father, my dearest friend, whose will is ever sacred to me, forbade me to divulge the situation of her affairs in that point.

ANITUS.

ANITUS.

This respect and discrete veneration for the last will of your friend are worthy of your noble soul; but it is well enough known that Agathon was rich.

SOCRATES.

He deserved to be so, if riches are a mark of the divine favor.

ANITUS.

They tell me a young coxcomb, named Sophronimus, makes love to her on account of her fortune; but I am persuaded you will not give encouragement to such a fellow, and that Anitus will have no rival.

SOCRATES.

I know in what light I ought to consider a person like you; but it is not for me to thwart the inclinations of Aglae. I wou'd supply the place of a father to her, but I am not her master: she has a right to dispose of her own heart: I look upon restraint in this case as a crime: talk to her: if she hearkens to your proposal, with all my heart, I have no objection.

ANITUS.

I have your wife's consent already; without doubt she is acquainted with Aglae's sentiments, and therefore I look upon the affair as good as concluded.

SOCRATES.

But I never look upon things as done till they are really so.

S C E N E IV.

SOCRATES, ANITUS, AGLAE.

SOCRATES.

Come hither, Aglae, and determine for yourself. Here is a person of considerable rank, who offers himself to you for a husband: you are at liberty to explain yourself to him: my presence might perhaps be a restraint upon you: whatever choice you make I shall approve: Xantippe will prepare every thing for your nuptials.

[Exit.

ANGLAE.

Generous Socrates! I am sorry you leave me.

ANITUS.

You seem, charming Aglae, to place great confidence in the good Socrates.

AGLAE.

It is my duty, Sir; he has been a father to me; he has educated and instructed me.

ANITUS.

ANITUS.

And pray, my dear, as he has instructed you, tell me what is your opinion of Ceres, Cybele, and Venus?

AGLAE.

Of them, sir, I will think just as you please.

ANITUS.

'Tis well said, and you will do as I please too then I hope.

AGLAE.

No, sir, that is quite another affair.

ANITUS.

You see, the wise Socrates consents to our marriage, and Xantippe above all things wishes for it. You know my passion for you, and are no stranger to my rank and fortune; my happiness, perhaps your own too, depends on one word, therefore determine.

AGLAE.

I will answer you, sir, with that truth and sincerity which the great man who just now left us taught me never to depart from: I respect your dignity, know but little of your person, and, in a word, can never be yours.

G 3

ANITUS.

ANITUS.

Never? cruel Aglae, are you not free? you will not then?

AGLAE.

No, Sir, I cannot.

ANITUS.

What an affront, what an indignity is this! but 'tis to Socrates I am oblig'd for it: he dictated your answer, I know he did; he prefers Sophronimus to me, that unworthy rival, that impious —

AGLAE.

Sophronimus is not impious, not unworthy; Socrates has lov'd him from his infancy; he has been a father to us both. Sophronimus is all beauty and all virtue; I love, and am belov'd by him; it is in my power to marry him if I think proper; but I shall no more be his than yours.

ANITUS.

You astonish me: what! own you love Sophronimus?

AGLAE.

Yes, sir, I own it, because it is true.

ANITUS.

And yet when it is in your power to make yourself happy with him, refuse him your hand?

AGLAE.

AGLAE.

That, sir, is no less true.

ANITUS.

Then I suppose your fear of displeasing me prevents your engaging with him?

AGLAE.

No such thing, I assure you: for having never wished to please, I have no fear of displeasing you.

ANITUS.

You dread then perhaps the displeasure of the gods, at seeing you prefer a profane wretch, like Sophronimus, to a high-priest.

AGLAE.

Not in the least. I am persuaded it is matter of very little concern to the supreme being, whether I marry you, or not.

ANITUS.

The supreme being! my dear child, you shou'd not talk in this manner; you shou'd say the gods and goddesses: take care, for I see you entertain some very dangerous opinions; but I know too well from whom they came. Learn then that Ceres, whose priest I am, may punish you for thus despising her worship, and her minister.

G 4

AGLAE.

A G L A E.

I despise neither the one nor the other. I have been told that Ceres presides over the harvest, and I believe it; but she has nothing to do with my marriage.

A N I T U S.

She has to do with every thing, you know it; but I hope I shall be able to convert you. Are you indeed resolv'd not to marry Sophronimus?

A G L A E.

Yes; I am resolv'd, and am very sorry for it.

A N I T U S.

I cannot understand a word of all these contradictions: but observe me; I love you, wou'd have made you happy, and advanc'd you to rank and dignity: be advis'd, and reject not the offers which kind fortune thus courts you to accept: remember that every thing shou'd be sacrific'd to our real interest; that youth will pass away, but riches remain: that wealth and honours shou'd be your first concern, and that I speak to you on the part of the gods. I beg you will reflect seriously on what I have said: farewell; my dear girl, I shall pray to Ceres that she wou'd inspire you, and still flatter myself she will touch your heart. Once more adieu, remember, you have promis'd me never to marry Sophronimus.

A G L A E.

A G L A E.

I promis'd myself, but not you.

[Exit Anitus.

A G L A E. alone.

This man but makes me more unhappy. I know not why it is, but I never see him without shuddering : but here comes Sophronimus : alas ! whilst his rival fills my heart with terror, he increases my tenderness and doubles my disquietude.

S C E N E V.

A G L A E S O P R O N I M U S.

S O P H R O N I M U S.

My dear Aglae, I met Anitus, the priest of Ceres, that worst of men, the sworn enemy of Socrates, just coming from you : your eyes seem bath'd in tears.

A G L A E.

Is he the enemy of our benefactor too ? then indeed I wonder not at my aversion to him, even before he spoke.

S O P H R O N I M U S.

And is he the cause of your tears, my Aglae ?

A G L A E.

No, Sophronimus, he can inspire nothing but hatred and disgust : my tears can flow for you alone.

SOPHRONIMUS.

For me? O gods, for me, who wou'd repay them with my blood, for me who adore you, who hope to be belov'd by Aglae, who only live for and wou'd die for you? shall I reproach myself with having embitter'd one moment of your life? Aglae weeps, and Sophronimus is the cause. What have I done? what crime have I committed?

AGLAE.

None, my Sophronimus: you cou'd not do it: 'tis not in your nature. I wept because you merit all my tendernefs, because you have it, and because I must renounce you.

SOPHRONIMUS.

What dreadful sentence have you pronounc'd against me? I cannot believe you: you love me, you said you did, and Aglae can never change. You have promised to be mine, you cannot wish my death.

AGLAE.

No; I wou'd have thee live and be happy; but, alas! I cannot make you so: I hoped I cou'd, but fortune has deceiv'd me. I swear to you, Sophronimus, since I cannot be yours, I never will be another's. I have declared so to Anitus, who courts me, and whom I despise; and here I declare the same to you, with a heart full of grief, tendernefs, and love.

S O-

SOPHRONIMUS.

Since you love me, I must live ; but if you refuse me your hand, it will be death to Sophronimus ; therefore, my dearest Aglae, in the name of love, of all your charms, and all your virtues, explain to me this dreadful mystery.

S C E N E VI.

SOCRATES, SOPHRONIMUS, AGLAE.

SOPHRONIMUS.

O my honour'd master, my father, and my friend, behold in Sophronimus the most unfortunate of men, though in the presence of the only two beings upon earth who cou'd make me happy : Socrates first taught me wisdom, and from Aglae I learn'd to love ; you consented to our marriage, and this beauteous fair one, who seem'd so desirous of it, now refuses me ; and whilst she says she loves, plunges a dagger in my heart : she has broke off the match without assigning any cause of her cruel caprice : O Socrates, prevent my misery, or teach me, if possible, how to bear it.

SOCRATES.

Aglae is mistress of herself ; her father made me her tutor, but not her tyrant ; to see you united wou'd
have

have made me happy : If she has chang'd her mind I am surpris'd and sorry for it: but let us hear her reasons; if they are good, we must submit to them.

SOPHRONIMUS.

It is impossible they shou'd.

AGLAE.

To me however they appear so, but you shall hear them. When you first open'd my father's will, most noble Socrates, you told me he had left me a sufficient competency; from that moment I resolv'd to bestow my fortune on the good Sophronimus, who has no support but you, no riches but his virtue: you applauded my resolution. How great was my happiness, in promoting that of him whom you have so long regard-ed as your own son! full of this pleasing hope I laid open the situation of my heart to Xantippe, who at once undeceiv'd me. She treated me as an idle visionary; shew'd me the will of my father, who dy'd a beggar, and left me nothing but your friendship to depend on. Awaken'd from my dream of promis'd happiness, nothing remain'd for me but the melancholy reflection, that it was no longer in my power to make the fortune of Sophronimus: I wou'd not oppress him with the weight of my misfortunes.

S O.

SOPHRONIMUS.

I told you, Socrates, her reasons were poor and insufficient ; If she loves me, am I not rich enough ? Hitherto, it is true, I have subsisted from your bounty ; but there is no employment, however irksome, which I wou'd not undertake, to provide for my dearest Aglae : I ought indeed to make her a sacrifice of my passion, to find out some richer happier lover for her : but I own my weakness, I cannot do it, there I am indeed unworthy of her ; but if she cou'd content herself with my low estate, if she cou'd stoop to my humble condition : but I dare not hope so much ; I sink beneath a misfortune which her fortitude is able to bear.

SOCRATES.

My dear children, it was very indiscreet in Xantippe to shew you the will ; but believe me, Aglae, she deceiv'd you.

AGLAE.

Indeed she has not : I saw it with my own eyes : I know my father's hand too well to have the least doubt of it : but be assured, Socrates, I shall be able to bear poverty as I ought : these hands will support me ; if I can but live, it is enough for me, but it is not for Sophronimus.

SOPHRONIMUS.

It is too much, a thousand times too much for me : thou tender noble soul, worthy of thy illustrious master : a virtuous and laborious poverty is the natural state of man. I wish I cou'd have offer'd you a throne, but if you will condescend to live with Sophronimus, our respectable poverty will be superior to the throne of Cræsus.

SOCRATES.

Your generous sentiments at once delight and distress me : I behold with transport those virtues budding forth in your heart, which I myself had sown : never were my hopes better fulfilled than in Aglae and Sophronimus : but once more believe me, Aglae, my wife has misinform'd you : you are richer than you think you are : it was not to her, but to me your father entrusted you. May he not have left you a fortune which Xantippe knows nothing of ?

AGLAE.

No, Socrates, he says expressly in his will, that he has left me poor.

SOCRATES.

And I tell you that you are deceiv'd, that he has left you a sufficient competency to enable you to live happily with the virtuous Sophronimus, and that I desire therefore

therefore you wou'd come, and sign the contract immediately.

S C E N E VII.

SOCRATES, XANTIPPE, AGLAE,
SOPHRONIMUS.

XANTIPPE.

Come, come, child, don't stand amusing yourself there with my husband's visions and nonsense: philosophy to be sure is a mighty pretty thing when folks have nothing else to do: but you are a beggar, child; and must study how to live first, and philosophise afterwards. I have concluded your marriage with Anitus, a worthy priest, and a man of fortune. Come, child, follow me, let me have no delays nor contradiction; I love to be obey'd: quick, quick, my dear, 'tis for your good, therefore let me have none of your reasonings, but follow me.

SOPHRONIMUS.

O heaven! my dear Aglae!

SOCRATES.

Let her talk, and trust to me for your happiness.

XANTIPPE.

Let me talk indeed! I shall talk and do too, I assure

sure you. You are a pretty one to be sure, with your wisdom, your familiar dæmon, your irony, and all your nonsense that signifies nothing, to trouble yourself about matrimony : you are a good sort of man, but you really know nothing of the world ; happy is it for you that I am able to govern you. Come, Aglaë, I must settle you as soon as possible : And you, fir, there, that seem as if you were thunderstruck, I have taken care of you too : Drixa is the woman for you : you will both of you thank me by and by : I shall have done it all in a minute : I am very expeditious : let us lose no time therefore, by rights it shou'd have been all over before this.

S O C R A T E S.

My children, don't thwart or provoke her, but pay her all kind of deference : we must comply with since we can't mend her : it is the triumph of reason to live well with those who have none.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T

A C T II. S C E N E I.

S O C R A T E S, S O P H R O N I M U S.

S O P H R O N I M U S.

Divine Socrates, I know not how to believe my own happiness: how can Aglae, whose father dy'd in extreme poverty, be possess'd of so considerable a fortune?

S O C R A T E S.

I told you before, she had more than she thought she had: I knew her father's affairs better than herself: let it suffice that you both enjoy a fortune which you deserve: the secrets of the dead shou'd be preserv'd as religiously as those of the living.

S O P H R O N I M U S.

I am only afraid the priest of Ceres, to whom you have preferr'd Sophronimus, will endeavour to revenge Aglae's refusal upon you: he is a man whom we have reason to dread.

S O C R A T E S.

What has he to fear who does his duty? I know the malice of my enemies; I know all their calumnies; but when we take care never to offend God, and endeavour to do all the good we can to mankind, then is it that we are afraid of nothing, or whilst we live, or when we die.

S O-

SOPHRONIMUS.

I know it well; yet I shou'd die with grief if the happiness you bestow'd on me shou'd induce your enemies to put your virtue to the trial.

S C E N E II.

SOCRATES, SOPHRONIMUS, AGLAE.

AGLAE.

O my benefactor, my father, let me fall at your feet, thou more than man; join me, Sophronimus, in mutual acknowledgments; 'tis he, 'tis Socrates who marrys us at his own expence, and gives us best part of his own fortune to support us: but we must not suffer him, we must not be rich on these conditions; no, if our hearts have any gratitude, let them imitate his generosity,

SOPHRONIMUS.

O Socrates, with her I throw myself at thy feet; like her I am charm'd astonish'd and confounded at thy goodness; we will not, must not abuse it: look on us as your children, but do not let those children be a burthen to their kind parent; thy friendship is fortune sufficient, 'tis all that we desire: you are not rich, and yet you do more than all the great ones of the earth; but were we to accept thy bounties, we shou'd be unworthy of them.

S O C R A-

SOCRATES.

Rise, my children, you affect me too deeply: are we not bound to respect the will of the dead? did not your father, Aglae, whom I always consider'd as part of myself, did he not injoin me to treat you as my daughter? Had I not done so, I had betray'd the confidence of friendship: I took upon me the performance of his will, and I have executed it: the little I bestow on you wou'd have been useless to my old age, which has not many wants to supply. If it was my duty to obey my friend, it is yours to obey your father. I am that father now, and by that sacred name command you not to make me unhappy by your refusal: but retire, I see Xantippe coming this way; I have reasons for desiring you to avoid her at present.

AGLAE.

Your commands are cruel, but they must be obey'd.

S C E N E III.

SOCRATES, XANTIPPE.

XANTIPPE.

A fine piece of work you have made here; upon my word, my dear husband, I must put a stop to your proceedings. Here had I promis'd Aglae to Anitus the high-priest, a man of interest amongst the great, and
Sophro-

Sophronimus to the rich Drixia, a man of the most extensive influence in the whole nation; and you marry your two fools together, and make me break my word to both: not content with this, you must needs give 'em best part of your fortune too. Twenty thousand drachms! good gods! twenty thousand drachms! an't you ashamed of yourself? at the age of threescore and ten too? Who's to pay your physicians when you are sick? or your lawyers when you have a law-suit? What am I to do, when that villainous wry-neck'd fellow, Anitus, whom you might have had on your side, if he shou'd join his party to persecute you, as they have done so often already? confusion to all philosophy and philosophers I say, and to my own foolish regard for you! You pretend to direct others, and want leading-strings yourself; always reasoning without a grain of common sense. If you were not one of the best men in the world, you wou'd be the most ridiculous and the most insupportable: but mind me, you have only one way left, break off this foolish match, and do what your wife bids you.

S O C R A T E S.

You talk well, my dear Xantippe, and with great moderation; but hear what I have to say in return. I did not propose this marriage myself, but Aglae and
Sophronimus

Sophonimus love and are worthy of each other. I have already made over every thing to you that the laws will allow me, and have given almost all that remain'd to the daughter of my friend : the little which I keep is enough for me. I have no physician to pay because I live sober ; no lawyers because I have neither debts nor reversions : and with regard to that philosophy you reproach me with, it will teach me to bear the malice of Anitus, and your treatment of me ; nay, even to love you, in spite of your ill-humour. [Exit.

S C E N E IV.

XANTIPPE alone.

The old fool ! and yet, spite of myself. I can't help esteeming him ; for after all, there is something great even in his follies : but his coolness and indifference makes me mad. To scold him is but lost labour : for these thirty years past I have been perpetually pecking at him ; and when I have tired myself with it, he bids me go on, and I am dumb-founded. Surely there must be something in that soul of his superior to mine.

S C E N E

S C E N E V.

XANTIPPE, DRIXA.

D R I X A.

So, Madam Xantippe, I see you are mistress at home: fye! fye! how mean it is to be govern'd by a husband! this vile Socrates, to prevent my making a young fellow's fortune; but I'll be reveng'd.

XANTIPPE.

My dear madam Drixia, don't be so angry with my husband, I am angry enough with him myself: he's a poor weak man, I confess; but I verily believe has one of the best hearts in the world; has not the least degree of malice, and does a thousand foolish things without designing, and with so much honesty, that one can't help forgiving him: then indeed he is as obstinate as a mule: I have done nothing but tease and torment him my whole life; nay, I have even beat him sometimes, and yet I have never been able to mend him, nay, not so much as to put him into a passion. What can I do with him?

D R I X A.

I tell you, I'll be reveng'd: under yonder portico I perceive his good friend Anitus, and some more of our party: let me alone with him.

X A N-

XANTIPPE.

My god ! I am dreadfully afraid these folks, all together, will do my poor husband some mischief: I must go and tell him of it, for after all one can't help loving him.

S C E N E VI.

ANITUS, DRIXA, TERPANDER, ACROS.

DRIXA.

Most noble Anitus, we have all been wrong'd: you are trick'd as well as myself: this vile Socrates has given away three parts of his fortune on purpose to spite you: you must take ample revenge of him.

ANITUS.

I design it: heaven itself requires it of me: this man treats me with contempt, and of course must despise the gods. Already we have had several accusations against him, we must repeat them, you will all assist me: we will put him in danger of his life, then will I offer him my protection, on condition that he resigns Aglae to me, and to you the beautiful Sophronimus: thus we shall all gain our several points: he will be sufficiently punished by the fright we shall put him into: I shall get my mistress, and you your lover.

D R I X A.

DRIXA.

Wisdom herself speaks in Anitus : sure some divinity inspires you : but tell us, how are we to proceed ?

ANITUS.

This is about the time when the judges go to the tribunal, with Melitus at the head of them.

DRIXA.

That Melitus is a little pedant, a sad fellow, and your enemy.

ANITUS.

He is so ; but he is still a greater enemy to Socrates ; 'tis a rascally hypocrite who supports the rights of the areopagus against me : but we always hold together when our mutual interest and business is to destroy these pretended wise men, who want to open the eyes of people on our conduct : harkee, my dear Drixa, you are a devotee.

DRIXA.

Certainly, my lord, I love money, and I love pleasure with all my soul ; but in matters of devotion I yield to none.

ANITUS.

Go then immediately, and get together as many bawling enthusiasts as you can, and cry out, impiety ! impiety.

TER-

TERPANDER.

Is there any thing to be got by it ; if there is, we are all ready ?

ACROS.

Ay, ay, that we are ; but what sort of impiety ?

ANITUS.

O every kind : however, we had best accuse him at once of not believing in the gods ; that's the shortest way.

DRIXA.

O let me alone then.

ANITUS.

You shall be well supported ; go, and stir up your friends under the portico : I'll inform mean time some of my news-loving friends of it, who come frequently to dine with me, a parcel of contemptible fellows they are to be sure, but such as, if properly directed, can do a good deal of mischief on occasion : we must make use of every expedient to promote a good cause : away, my friends, recommend yourselves to Ceres, and be ready to cry out when I give you the signal : 'tis the only way for you to live happy here, and gain heaven hereafter.

S C E N E VII.

ANITUS, GRAPHIUS, CHOMUS, BERTILLUS.

ANITUS.

Most indefatigable Graphius, profound Chomus, and delicate Bertillus, have you finish'd those little works as I commanded you against the impious Socrates ?

GRAPHIUS.

My lord, I have labour'd : he'll never hold up his head again.

CHOMUS.

I have prov'd the fact against him ; struck him dumb.

BERTILLUS.

I have only mention'd him in my journal, and it has done for him.

ANITUS.

Graphius, beware, you know I forbid your prolixity : you are naturally tedious, and that may wear out the patience of the court.

GRAPHIUS.

My lord, 'tis all in one leaf : wherein I have proved, that the soul is an infused quintessence ; that tails were given to animals to drive away flies ; that Ceres
works

works miracles ; and consequently, that Socrates is an enemy to the state, and ought to be exterminated.

ANITUS.

A most excellent conclusion ! remember to carry your accusation to the second judge, who is a complete philosopher. I'll answer for it, you'll soon get rid of your enemy Socrates.

GRAPHIUS.

My lord, I am not his enemy : I am only vex'd that he has so great a reputation : all that I do is for the glory of Ceres, and the good of my country.

ANITUS.

Well, well, make haste and be gone : and you, learned Chomus, what have you done ?

CHOMUS.

My lord, finding nothing reprehensible in the writings of Socrates, I shall accuse him point blank of thinking directly opposite to what he says, and shall shew the poison he intends to spread in every thing he is to say hereafter.

ANITUS.

Wonderful indeed ! carry your piece to the fourth judge : he has not common-sense, and therefore will understand you perfectly : now for you, Bertillus.

BERTILLUS.

My lord, here is my last journal upon the Chaos. I have proved, by a regular series from the Chaos to the Olympics, that Socrates perverts the youth of Athens.

ANITUS.

Admirable ! go you from me to the seventh judge, and tell him I desire he'd take care of Socrates ; so ; here comes Melitus already, the first of the eleven ; there's no necessity of practising any art with him, we know one another too well.

S C E N E VIII.

ANITUS, MELITUS.

ANITUS.

Mr. Judge, one word with you : this Socrates must be destroyed.

MELITUS.

Indeed, Mr. High-priest, I have long thought so : let us agree in this point ; we may quarrel, you know, notwithstanding about every thing else.

ANITUS.

I know we hate one another most cordially : but at the same time we may lay our heads together to govern the commonwealth.

MELITUS.

MILITUS.

With all my heart, no body can overhear us: therefore, to speak freely, I know you are a rogue, and you don't look upon me as a very honest man: I can't hurt you because you are high priest, nor you me because I am first judge; but Socrates may do us both a mischief, by exposing us to the world; our first business, therefore, is to destroy him, and then we may be at leisure to fall upon one another the first opportunity.

ANITUS.

[Aside.

'Tis well observ'd: how I cou'd rejoice now to see this rascally judge upon an altar, his arms hanging on one side and his legs on the other, whilst I with my golden knife was ripping up his guts and consulting his liver at leisure!

MELITUS.

[Aside.

Shall I never be able to send this villainous high-priest to goal, and make him swallow a point of hemlock by my command?

ANITUS.

O my friend, here come our noble assistants. I have taken care to prepare the populace.

MELITUS.

Very well, my dear friend, you may depend upon me in this affair, not forgetting old scores.

S C E N E IX.

ANITUS, MELITUS, some of the Judges of Athens
passing along under the portico.

Anitus whispers Melitus.

DRIXA, TERPANDER, and ACROS together.

Justice, justice, scandal, impiety, justice, justice,
irreligion, impiety, justice!

ANITUS.

What's the matter, my friends, what's your complaint?

DRIXA, TERPANDER, and ACROS.

Justice! in the name of the people.

MELITUS.

Against whom?

DRIXA, TERPANDER, and ACROS.

Against Socrates.

MELITUS.

Ha! ha! against Socrates? that fellow has been often accused: what has he done now?

ACROS.

ACROS.

I don't know what.

TERPANDER.

They say he gives money to young girls in marriage.

ACROS.

Ay, he corrupts our youth.

DRIXA.

O he's a wicked wretch : he has offer'd up no cakes to Ceres ; he says there is a great deal of uselefs gold and silver in the temple.

ACROS.

Ay, and he says the priests of Ceres get drunk sometimes ; that's true ; he's a wicked wretch indeed.

DRIXA.

He's a heretic ; he denys the plurality of gods ; he's a deist : he believes only in one God ; he's an atheist.

All three together.

Yes ; he's a heretic, a deist, and an atheist.

MELITUS.

Dreadful accusations indeed, and all extremely probable : I have heard as much before.

ANITUS.

The state is in danger if we leave such crimes unpunish'd: Minerva will withdraw her protection from us.

DRIXA.

Ay, that she will, I have heard him laugh at Minerva's owl.

MELITUS.

At Minerva's owl! O heav'n! gentlemen, is not it your opinion he ought to be sent to prison immediately?

The Judges all together.

To prison with him, to prison.

MELITUS.

Guards, carry Socrates to prison this instant.

DRIXA.

And afterwards let him be burn'd without a hearing.

One of the Judges.

No, no; we must hear him; we must not go against the law.

ANITUS.

No, no; that's what the good woman meant: we must hear him, but not let what he says have too much effect

effect on us; you know these philosophers are * devilish subtle: 'tis they who have disturb'd all those nations which we have endeavour'd to render peaceable and quiet.

MELITUS.

To prison with him, to prison.

S C E N E X.

To them enter XANTIPPE, SOPHRONIMUS,
AGLAE, SOCRATES in chains.

XANTIPPE, Servants.

O mercy, mercy, my poor husband is going to prison; an't you ashamed, Mr. Judges, to treat a man of his years in this manner? What harm cou'd he do? Alas! it is not in his power, † he is more fool than knave, God knows; have pity on him, good gentlemen. O my dear, I told you you wou'd draw your-

* The reader will observe, that Mr. Voltaire has made use of two or three phrases that wou'd come with more propriety from the mouth of a French catholic, than a heathen priest; such as *gagner le ciel*, *Heretique* and *Diabolique*; and some other terms which the Grecks were probably not very well acquainted with.

† La Fontaine's servant, it is reported, said the same thing of her master. It is not Mr. Thomson's fault if Xantippe said the same thing before her. Mr. Thomson painted Xantippe as she really was: he was not oblig'd to make a Cornelia of her.

self into some bad affair. This comes of portioning young girls. What an unhappy creature I am!

SOPHRONIMUS.

O my lords, respect his age, respect his virtue; give me his chains! I am ready to yield up my liberty, my life for his.

AGLAE.

Yes; we will go to prison in his stead; we will die for him: do not destroy the noblest, best of men: take us rather for your victims.

MELITUS.

You see how he corrupts our youth.

SOCRATES.

No more, my wife, no more, my children; do not oppose the will of heaven, which speaks by the laws: he who resists the law, is no longer a citizen. God wills that I shou'd be put in bondage; I submit to his divine decree without murmur, or repining. In my own house, in Athens, or in a prison, I am equally free; and whilst I behold in you so much gratitude, and so much friendship, I am happy. What matters it whether Socrates sleeps in his own chamber, or in a prison? Every thing is as the supreme will ordains, and my will shou'd submit to it.

MELI-

MELITUS.

Take away this reasoner.

ANITUS.

Gentlemen, what he says I must own has affected me ; the man seems to have a good disposition ; I flatter myself I shou'd be able to convert him ; let me have a little private conversation with him ; please to order his wife and these young folks to retire.

One of the Judges.

Most venerable Anitus, you have our consent to parley with him before he appears at the tribunal.

S C E N E XI.

ANITUS, SOCRATES.

ANITUS,

Most virtuous Socrates, my heart bleeds to see you in this condition.

SOCRATES.

And have you a heart ?

ANITUS.

I have, and one that feels for you : I am ready to do every thing for you.

SOCRATES.

I think you have done enough already.

ANI-

ANITUS.

Harke'e, Socrates, your situation is worse than you think it is ; let me tell you, your life is in danger.

SOCRATES.

That is of very little consequence.

ANITUS.

To your noble soul it may appear so, but it is otherwise in the eyes of all those who, like me, admire your virtue : believe me, however you may be arm'd by philosophy, it is dreadful to die a death of ignominy : but that is not all ; your reputation, which shou'd be dear to you, will be sullied in after ages : the religious of both sexes will laugh at your fall, and insult you : if you are burn'd, they'll light the pile ; if you're strangled, they'll tie the cord ; if you're poison'd, they'll pound the hemlock ; and not only that, but they'll make your memory execrable to all posterity. Now it is in your own power to prevent all this : I will promise not only to save your life, but even to persuade your judges to say with the oracle, that you are the wisest of men : you have nothing to do but to give me up your young pupil, Aglae, with the portion ; you understand me : as to her marriage with Sophronimus, we shall find means to set it aside : thus you will enjoy

a peaceful and honourable old age, and the gods and goddesses will bless you.

SOCRATES.

Soldiers, conduct me to prison immediately.

[He is carry'd off.]

ANITUS.

This fellow is incorrigible; but it's not my fault; I have done my duty, and have nothing to reproach myself with: he must be abandon'd as a reprobate, and left to die in his sins.

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

The Judges seated on the Tribunal.

SOCRATES below.

JUDGE.

[To Anitus.

YOU shou'd not sit here, you are priest of Ceres.

ANITUS.

I am only here for edification.

MELITUS.

Silence there: Socrates, you are accused of being a bad citizen, of corrupting youth, of denying a plurality

lity of gods, of being a heretic, deist, and atheift :
answer to the charge.

S O C R A T E S.

Judges of Athens, I exhort you all to be as good citizens as I have always myself endeavour'd to be : to shed your blood for your country, as I have done in many a battle : with regard to youth, guide them by your counsels, and, above all, direct them by your example ; teach them to love true virtue, and to avoid the miserable philosophy of the schools : the article concerning a plurality of gods is a little more difficult to discuss, but hear what I have to say upon it. Know then, ye judges of Athens, there is but one God.

MELITUS and another Judge.

O the impious wretch !

S O C R A T E S.

I say, there is but one God, in his nature infinite, nor can any being partake of his infinity. Turn your eyes towards the celestial globes, to the earth and seas ; all correspond together, all are made one for the other : each being is intimately connected with other beings, all form'd with one design, by one great architect, one only master, and preserver : perhaps he hath deigned to create genii, and dæmons, more powerful and
more

more wise than men ; if such exist, they are creatures like you, his first subjects, not gods : but nothing in nature proves to us that they do exist, whilst all nature speaks one God and one father : this God hath no need of Mercury and Iris to deliver his commands to us : he hath only to will, and that is enough. If by Minerva you understand no more than the wisdom of God ; if by Neptune you only mean his immutable laws, which raise or depress the sea, you may still reverence Neptune and Minerva, provided that under these emblems you adore none but the supreme being, and that the people are not deceiv'd by you into false opinions.

Be careful above all not to turn religion into metaphysics, its essence is morality : dispute not, but worship. If our ancestors believ'd that the supreme God came down into the arms of Alcmena, Danae, and Semele, and had children by them, our ancestors imagin'd dangerous and idle fables. 'Tis an insult on the divinity to conceive that he cou'd possibly, in any manner whatsoever, commit with woman the crime which we call adultery. It is a discouragement to the rest of mankind to say, that, to be a great man, it necessary to be produced from the mysterious union of Jupiter and one of our own wives and daughters. Miltiades, Cimon, Themistocles, and Aristides, whom you persecuted,

fecuted, were perhaps much greater than Perseus, Hercules, or Bacchus. The only way to become the children of God, is to endeavour to please him. Deserve therefore that title, by never passing an unjust sentence.

MELITUS.

What insolence ! what blasphemy !

Another Judge.

What absurdities ! one can't tell what he means.

MELITUS.

Socrates, you are always too fond of argument : answer briefly, and with precision : did you, or did you not, laugh at Minerva's owl ?

SOCRATES.

Judges of Athens, take care of your owls ; when you propose ridiculous things as objects of belief ; too many are apt to resolve that they will believe nothing : they have sense enough to find out that your doctrine is absurd, though they have not elevation of mind sufficient to discover the law of truth ; they know how to laugh at your little deceits, but not to adore the first of beings, the one incomprehensible, incommunicable being, the eternal, all-just, and all-powerful God.

M E L I-

MELITUS.

O the blasphemer ! the monster ! he has said too much already : I condemn him to death.

Many of the Judges.

And so do we.

One of the Judges.

Several of us are of another opinion ; Socrates has spoken wisely ; we believe men would be more wise and just if they thought like him : for my part, far from condemning him, I think he ought to be rewarded.

Many of the Judges.

We think so too.

MELITUS.

The opinions seem to be divided.

ANITUS.

Gentlemen of the areopagus, permit me to interrogate him a little. Do you believe, Socrates, that the sun turns round, and that the areopagus acts by divine right ?

SOCRATES.

You have no authority to ask any questions, but I have authority to teach you what you are ignorant of : it is of little importance to society, whether the sun or the earth turns round, but it is of the utmost consequence, whether the men who turn with them be
just

just or unjust : virtue only acts from the right divine, and you and the areopagus have no rights but those which your country has bestowed on you.

ANITUS.

Illustrious and most equitable judges, let Socrates retire.

[Melitus makes a sign, Socrates is carried out.

ANITUS proceeds.

Most august areopagus, instituted by heaven, you hear what he says : this dangerous fellow denies that the sun turns round, and that you act by right divine : if these opinions prevail, adieu to magistracy, and adieu to the sun : you are no longer judges appointed by Minerva ; you will become accountable for your proceedings ; you must no longer determine but according to the laws ; and if you once depend on the laws, you are undone : punish rebellion therefore, revenge earth and heaven : I am going : dread you the anger of the gods if Socrates is permitted to live.

[Anitus goes out, and the Judges demur.

One of the Judges.

I don't care to quarrel with Anitus ; he is a dangerous man to offend. If he troubled himself with the gods only it would not signify.

Another

Another Judge to his brother sitting near him.

Between you and me, Socrates is in the right ; but then he should not be in the right so publicly. I care no more for Ceres and Neptune than he does ; but he should not speak out to the whole areopagus what he ought to have whispered : yet after all, what is there in poisoning a philosopher, especially when he is old and ugly ?

Another Judge.

If there be any injustice in condemning Socrates, it is Anitus's business and not mine : I lay it all upon his conscience : besides, it grows late, we lose our time ; let us talk no more about it : to death with him.

Another.

Ay, ay, they say he's an heretic, and an atheist ; to death with him.

MELITUS.

Call Socrates.

[He is brought in]

Blessed be the gods, the plurality of voices is for death ; Socrates, the gods by us condemn you to drink hemlock.

SOCRATES.

We are all mortal : nature condemns you also to death in a short time, probably you may meet with a
more

more unhappy end than mine: the distempers which bring on death are much more painful than a cup of hemlock. I thank those amongst my judges who pleaded in favor of innocence; for the rest, they have my pity.

One of the Judges going out.

Certainly this man deserv'd a pension from the state, rather than a cup of poison.

Another Judge.

I think so too; but why wou'd he quarrel with a priest of Ceres?

Another.

After all, it is best to get rid of a philosopher: those fellows have always a certain fierceness of spirit which shou'd be damp'd a little.

Another.

One word with you, gentlemen: wou'd not it be right, whilst our hand is in, to make an end of all the geometricians, who pretend that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones? they are a mighty scandal to the foolish people that read their works.

Another.

Another.

Ay, ay, we'll hang 'em all the next session, * let's go to dinner.

SCENE II.

SOCRATES alone.

I have been long prepar'd for death ; all I fear at present is, that my wife Xantippe will be troubling me in my last moments, and interrupt me in the sweet employment of recollecting my soul, and preparing myself for eternity : I ought to busy myself only in the contemplation of that supreme being, before whom I am soon to appear : but here she comes ; I must be resign'd to all things.

SCENE III.

SOCRATES, XANTIPPE, with the Disciples of Socrates.

XANTIPPE.

Well, my poor man, what have these gentlemen of the law concluded on ? have they fined you, are you banished or acquitted ? my God ! how uneasy

In the sixth century a parallel circumstance actually happen'd, and one of the judges made use of those very words, " to death with him, and let's go to dinner.

have

have I been about you ! pray take care this don't happen a second time.

SOCRATES.

No, my dear, this will not happen a second time, I'll answer for it ; give yourself no uneasiness about any thing. My dear disciples, my friends, wellcome.

CRITO at the head of his disciples.

You see us, beloved Socrates, no less concerned for you than Xantippe ; we have gained permission of the judges to visit you ; just heaven ! must we behold Socrates in chains ! permit us to kiss those bonds which reflect shame on Athens. How could Anitus and his friends reduce you to this condition ?

SOCRATES.

Let us think no more of these trifles, my friends, but continue the examination we were making yesterday into the soul's immortality. We observ'd, I remember, that nothing could be more probable, or at the same time more full of comfort and satisfaction, than this sweet idea ; in fact, matter we know changes, but perishes not ; why then should the soul perish ? can it be that, rais'd as we are to the knowledge of a God through the veil of this mortal body, we shou'd cease to know him when that veil is removed ? no, as

we

we think now, we must always think ; thought is the very essence of man ; and this being must appear before a just God, who will recompence virtue, punish vice, and pardon weakness and error.

XANTIPPE.

Nobly said : but what does this fellow here with his cup ?

Enter the Goaler, or Executioner of the Eleven, carrying a cup of Hemlock.

Goaler.

Here, Socrates, the senate have sent you this.

XANTIPPE.

Thou vile poisoner of the common-wealth, wou'd you kill my husband before my face ? monster, I'll tear you to pieces.

SOCRATES.

My dear friend, I ask your pardon for my wife's rude behaviour : she has scolded me all her life ; she only treats you as she does her husband ; excuse her impertinence : give me the cup.

[He takes the cup.

One of the Disciples.

O divine Socrates ! why may not we take that poison for you ? horrible injustice ! shall the guilty thus condemn the innocent, and fools destroy the wise ? you go then to death !

S O C R A -

S O C R A T E S.

No, my friends, to life : this is the cup of immortality : it is not this perishable body that has loved, and instructed you ; it is my soul alone that has lived with you, and that shall love you for ever.

[He is going to drink.

G O A L E R.

I must take off your fetters first ; 'tis always done.

S O C R A T E S.

Do it then, I beg you.

[He scratches his leg.

One of the Disciples.

You smile !

S O C R A T E S.

I smile at the reflection, that pleasure shou'd arise from pain : thus it is that eternal felicity shall spring from the * miseries of this life.

[Drinks the poison.

C R I T O.

Alas ! what have you done ?

* I have taken the liberty here to retrench two whole pages of a fine sermon by Socrates : this common-place morality is extremely tiresome : those honest gentlemen, who are of opinion that Socrates shou'd have talk'd a long time on this occasion, are strangers both to the theatre, and the human heart.

Semper ad ventum festinat.

This is the great rule which Mr. Thomson carefully observ'd.

X A N-

XANTIPPE.

Ay, for a thousand ridiculous discourses of this kind the poor man has lost his life: indeed, my dear, you will break my heart; I cou'd strangle all the judges with my own hands. I did use to scold you indeed, but I always lov'd you notwithstanding; these polite well-bred gentlemen have put you to death: O my dear dear husband!

SOCRATES.

Be calm, my good Xantippe; weep not, my friends; it becomes not the disciples of Socrates to shed tears.

CRITO.

How can we avoid it on so dreadful an occasion? this legal murder!

SOCRATES.

Thus it is that men will often behave to the worshippers of one true God, and the enemies of superstition.

CRITO.

And must Socrates be one of those unhappy victims?

SOCRATES.

'Tis noble to be the victim of the deity: I die contented. I wish indeed that, to the satisfaction of seeing you, my friends, I cou'd have added the happiness of embracing Sophronimus and Aglae: I wonder they

are not here : they wou'd have made my last moments more welcome.

CRITO.

Alas ! they know not that you have already undergone the judges dreadful sentence : they have been talking to the people, and praising those magistrates who wou'd have acquitted you. Aglae has laid open the guilt of Anitus, and publish'd his shame and dishonour : they perhaps might have saved your life : O dear Socrates, why wou'd you thus precipitate your fate ?

S C E N E the last.

To them enter A G L A E, S O P H R O N I M U S.

AGLAE.

Divine Socrates, be not afraid : be comforted, Xantippe : worthy disciples of Socrates, do not weep.

S O P H R O N I M U S.

Your enemies are confounded : the people rise in your defence.

AGLAE.

We have been talking to them ; we have laid open the intrigues and jealousy of the wicked Anitus : it was my duty to demand justice for his crime, as I was the cause of it.

S O-

SOPHRONIMUS.

Anitus hath sav'd himself by flight from the rage of the people: he and his accomplices are pursued: solemn thanks have been given to those judges who appear'd in your favor: the people are now at the gates of the prison, and wait to conduct you home in triumph.

XANTIPPE.

Alas! 'tis lost labour!

One of the Disciples.

O Socrates, why wou'd you so hastily obey?

AGLAE.

Live, dear Socrates, the benefactor of your country, the model of future ages; O live for the general happiness of mankind!

CRITO.

Ye noble pair, my virtuous friends, it is too late.

XANTIPPE.

You stay'd too long.

AGLAE.

Alas? too late! what mean you? just heav'n!

SOPHRONIMUS.

Has he then already drank the fatal draught?

S O C R A T E S.

Sweet Aglae, and dear Sophronimus, the law ordain'd that I shou'd take the poison: I obey'd the law, unjust as it is, because it oppress'd myself alone: had the injustice been done to another, I wou'd have resist'd it. I go to death, but the example of friendship which you give the world, and your nobleness of soul shall never perish: your virtue is greater, much greater, than the guilt of those who accus'd me. I bless that fate which the world may call misfortune, because it hath set in the fairest light the goodness of your hearts. My dear Xantippe, be happy; and remember, that to be so, you must curb your impetuous temper. My beloved disciples, listen always to the voice of that philosophy which will teach you to despise your persecutors, and pity human weakness: and you, my daughter Aglae, and my son Sophronimus, be always what you now are.

A G L A E.

How wretched are we that we cannot die for you!

S O C R A T E S.

Your lives are valuable, mine wou'd have been useless: take my tender last farewell; the doors of eternity are open'd to receive me.

X A N-

XANTIPPE.

He was a great man ! O I will rouse up the whole nation.

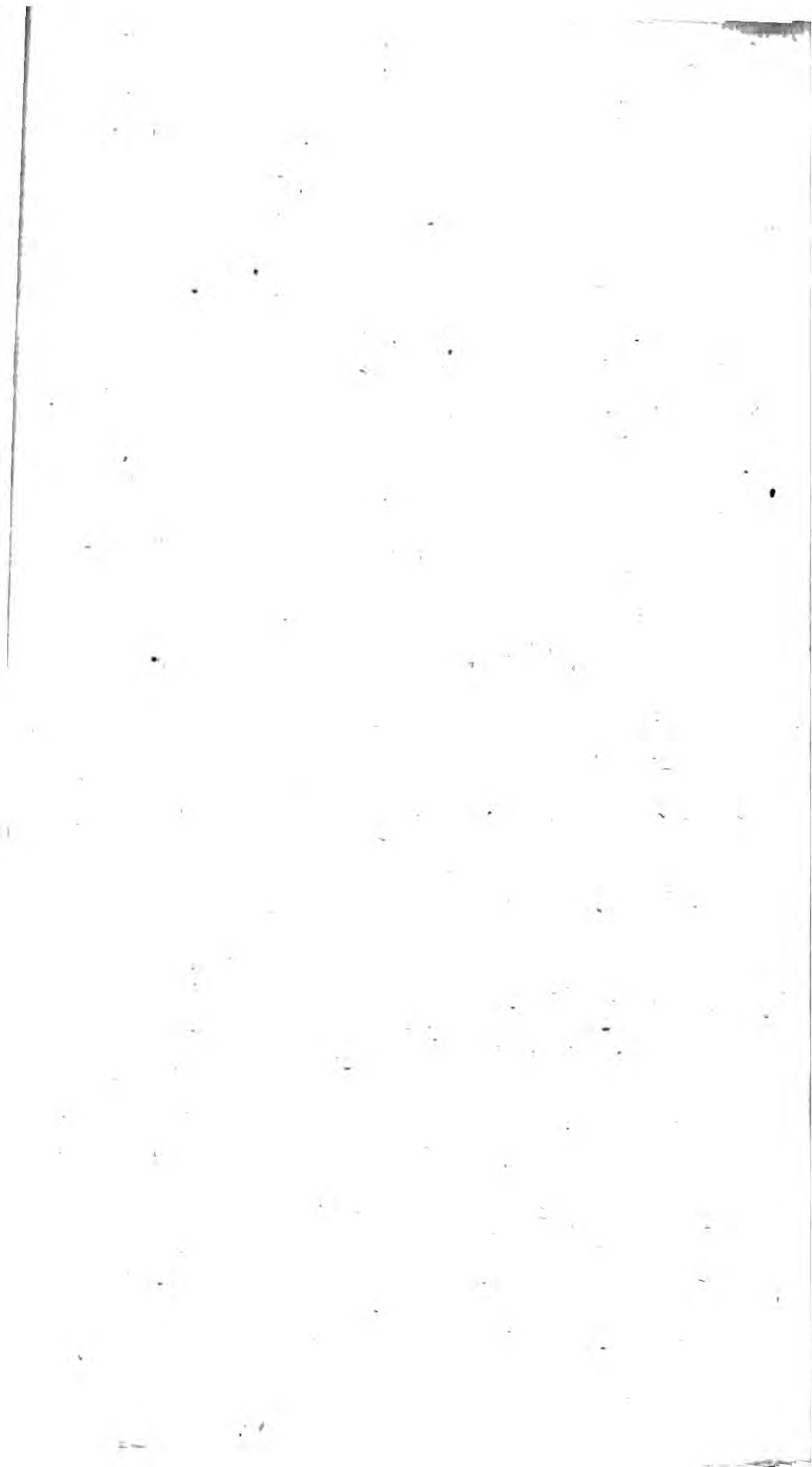
SOPHRONIMUS.

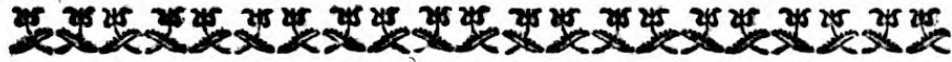
May we raise up temples to Socrates, if ever mortal man deserv'd it !

CRITO.

At least may his wisdom teach mankind, that temples shou'd be rais'd to God alone !

END of the THIRD and LAST ACT.





A L Z I R A:

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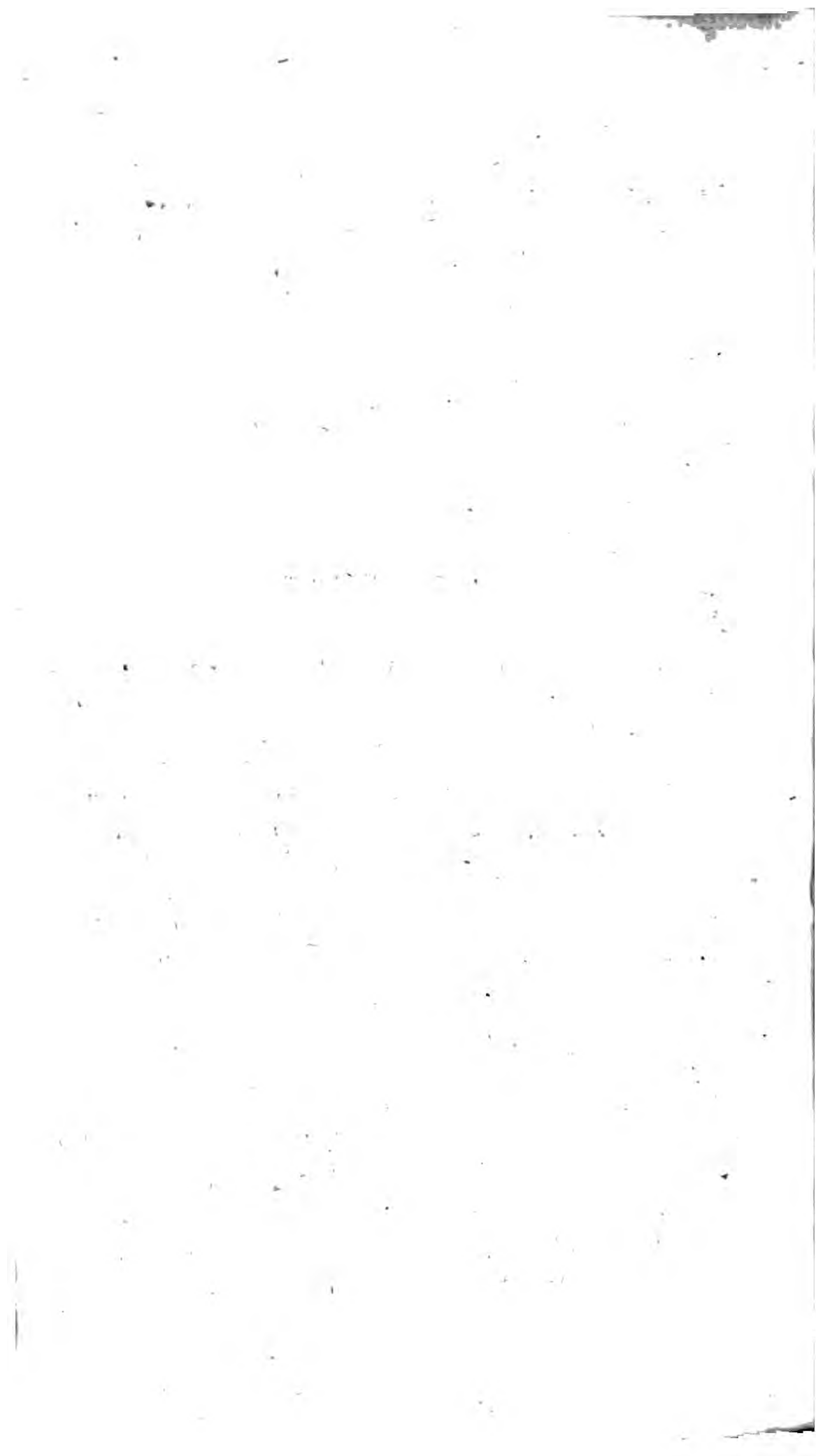
A M E R I C A N S.

A

T R A G E D Y.

Represented *Jan.* 27, 1736.





L E T T E R

T O T H E

MARCHIONESS of CHASTELLET.

MADAM,

HOW contemptible a present for the marchioness of *Chastellet*, is one of these pieces of poetry, which owing all their merit to the transitory favour of the public, and theatrical delusion, are written but for a day, and soon sink into oblivion! What indeed is a novel put into verse, and represented on the stage, to one who reads works of Geometry with as much ease as others read Romances; to her who finds in *Locke*, that great preceptor of mankind, nothing but her own opinion and the history of her own thoughts; what can it be, in short, to one who, born to enjoy the pleasures of life, quits them all for the sake of truth?

But the greatest genius, madam, and doubtless the most desirable, is he who excludes none of the fine arts, they all improve and delight the mind; is there

one of them therefore we shou'd wish to deprive ourselves of ? happy are those few whom Philosophy doth not sower, nor the Belles-Lettres enervate : who can learn fortitude of *Locke*, and acquire knowledge from *Clark* and *Newton*, improve and exalt their minds by the study of *Cicero* and *Bossuet* and adorn them with the charms of *Virgil* and *Tasso* !

Such is the marchioness of *Chastellet* : I am not afraid, madam, to say this, tho' I know you are unwilling to hear it. Your example shou'd teach those of the same sex, and the same rank, that the noblest may become more noble by the improvement of their reason, and that wit and sense give new charms to beauty. There was a time in *France*, and indeed in every part of *Europe*, when both men and women thought learning unbecoming, and that to search for knowledge and instruction, was going out of their sphere ; the former thought themselves born only for war, or idleness ; the latter for nothing but coquetry.

The ridicule which *Moliere* and *Despreaux* threw on learned women, seem'd to justify in a more refined age the prejudices of barbarism ; but *Moliere*, that great legislator in morality and decorum, certainly never meant by his attack on learned women, to laugh at wit and wisdom ; he only satiris'd the abuse and affectation

tion of them, in like manner as in his *Tartuffe* he censured hypocrisy and not virtue.

If instead of writing a satire on the sex, the exact, solid, laborious, and elegant *Despreaux*, had consulted some of the most sensible women about the court, he wou'd have added to the art and merit of his highly-finish'd works, a grace and beauty which wou'd have made them infinitely more agreeable; in vain does he endeavour to ridicule a lady for learning Astronomy, he had better have learn'd it himself.

Philosophy has made such a progress in *France* within these forty years past, that, were *Boileau* now living, he who took the liberty to laugh at a woman of the first rank, because she was privately visited by *Roberval* and *Sauveur*, wou'd now be oblig'd to respect and to imitate those who publicly receive instructions from our *Maupertuis*, *Reaumurs*, *Mairans*, *Dufays*, and *Clairauts*, from all those truly learned men, who teach a most useful science, and who, by rendering it pleasant and agreeable, make it insensibly necessary to this nation. I will venture to say, we live at a time when a Poet must be a Philosopher, and a woman may safely be one.

In the beginning of the last age, the *French* learn'd only to range their words: at length the age of things is arriv'd: she who formerly read *Montagne*, the *Astræa*,
and

and the *Tales of the Queen of Navarre*, was called a learned woman. *Deshoullieres* and *Dacier*, both excellent in their several ways, appear'd some time after ; but your sex has receiv'd yet more honour from those who had taste enough to relish that charming book, the *Plurality of Worlds*, and *Dialogues on Light*, a work perhaps not inferior to the other.

It is true indeed, that a woman who should neglect the duties of her family and station to cultivate the sciences would be blamable, even though she made the most considerable progress in them ; but the same spirit that leads to the knowledge of truth, will instruct us in the performance of every duty. The queen of *England*, wife of *George II.* who was mediatrix between the two greatest metaphysicians in *Europe*, *Clark* and *Leibnitz*, and who was able to determine the merits of them both, never on that account neglected for a moment the duties of a queen, a mother, and a wife. *Christina*, who quitted the throne for the polite arts, was ranked amongst the greatest sovereigns whilst she held the reins of empire ; and has not the grand-daughter of the immortal *Condé*, in whom we see reviv'd the spirit of her grand-father, added new dignity to the blood from whence she sprang ?

You,

You, madam, whose name deserves to be plac'd with theirs, have done the same honour to literature, by cultivating every part of it, which is your constant employment, at a time of life generally dedicated to pleasures of another kind. You have done still more; you conceal this extraordinary merit with as much care and assiduity as you acquir'd it: continue, madam, to cultivate the sciences, whilst that bright flame which you in vain endeavour to hide will break forth in spite of yourself. Shou'd those who have long dispens'd their favours in secret renounce their charity, when it is become public? Why blush at your own merit? a mind adorn'd like yours is a new empire, the arts are ever ambitious of the sovereign's protection; to have beauty for their patroness is still more serviceable.

Permit me to add, that one reason why we shou'd esteem women of letters is, that they read and study from taste and inclination only; they consider it as an addition to their pleasures, and in that they are certainly commendable: whilst, with regard to us men, we must acknowledge, that it is often from vanity, or interest, that we spend our lives in the improvement of arts: we make them but the instruments to advance our fortune, which is a kind of profanation. I am sorry
to

to hear *Horace* say of himself, * *Poverty made me a Poet*. The rust of envy, the artifice of intrigue, the poison of calumny, the assassination of satire, (if I may venture to call it so) dishonour and disgrace a profession which of it self hath something in it almost divine.

For me, madam, led by an invincible inclination to the arts from my earliest years, I always admir'd those words which I have often repeated to you, of *Cicero*, the father of his country, of liberty and of eloquence, “ Letters are the instruction of youth, and the delight
“ of old age ; an ornament in prosperity, in adver-
“ sity a comfort and a relief ; at home always agreea-
“ ble, abroad never troublesome, in town or country,
“ night and day ; at every hour, and in every place,
“ they are the truest happiness in life.” †

I have always lov'd them for their own sakes, but now I cultivate them for yours, madam, that I may deserve, if possible, the happiness of spending the remainder of my life with you in retirement, in the bosom of peace, and in the search of that truth for
which

* — paupertas impulit audax.
Ut versus faterem.

HOR. Epist. lib. 2. v. 51.

† Hac Studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium, ac solatium præbent ; delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoscant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.

which you, in the bloom of youth, have sacrificed all the false enchanting pleasures of the world, that I may one day, in short, have it in my power to say with *Lucretius*, that poet and philosopher, whose beauties and whose faults you are so well acquainted with.

* ——— 'Tis pleasant to behold from far
 The moving legions mingled in the war ;
 But much more sweet thy lab'ring steps to guide
 To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supply'd,
 And all the magazines of learning fortify'd ;
 From thence to look below on human kind
 Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind.

I will add nothing to this long epistle concerning the tragedy which I have the honour to dedicate to you ; how indeed, madam, can I speak of that, after having talk'd of you ? All I can say is, that it was written in your house, and under your eye : I have endeavor'd to make it less unworthy of you by novelty,

* Sed nil dulcius est bene quam munita tenere
 Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena ;
 Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
 Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ ;
 Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate ;
 Noctes atque dies niti præstante labore
 Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri.
 O miseras hominum mentes ! O pectora cæca !

LUCRET. L. 2. line 7.

truth,



truth, and virtue, by setting forth that generous way of thinking, that humanity, that nobleness of soul, which is always pardoning evil, and doing good; those sentiments so strongly recommended by the sages of antiquity, refined and improved by our own holy religion, those true laws of nature, for the most part so seldom obey'd; you have corrected many faults in this piece, and know but too well how many still remain in it; may the public, whose severity will be proportion'd to its former indulgence, be as favourable to my errors as you have been!

* May the work which I dedicate to you at least boast of longer life than the rest of my performances! were it worthy of her to whom it is address'd, it would be immortal.

I am, madam, with the profoundest respect, &c.

* All this was not merely an idle compliment, like most epistles dedicatory. The author did actually pass twenty years of his life with this celebrated lady, in the study of Philosophy and the Belles-Lettres; and whilst she lived he would by no means leave her, though invited by a king, as appears by several letters printed in the third volume of this edition.

P R E F A C E.

THIS Tragedy, the fable of which is invented, and almost of a new species, was written with a view of shewing how far superior the spirit of true religion is to the light of nature. The religion of a barbarian consists in offering up to his gods the blood of his enemies ; a Christian badly instructed has seldom much more humanity : to be a strict observer of some unnecessary rites and ceremonies, and at the same time deficient in the most essential duties, to say certain prayers at particular times, and carefully to conceal his vices ; this is his religion : that of a true Christian, is to look upon all mankind as his brethren, to do them all the good in his power, and pardon their offences : such is *Guzman* at the hour of death, and *Alvarez* during the whole course of his life ; such a man was Henry IV. as I have described him, even with all his foibles : in every part of my writings I have endeavoured to enforce that humanity which ought to be the distinguishing characteristic of a thinking being : the reader will always find in them (if I may venture to say so much of my own works) a desire

a desire to promote the happiness of all men, and an *abhorrence* of injustice and oppression : it is this, and this alone, which hath hitherto saved them from that obscurity to which their many imperfections would otherwise long since have condemned them : it was this which supported the *Henriade*, in spite of all the efforts of some jealous Frenchmen, who were resolved absolutely to deny that France could ever be capable of producing an epic poem : but there are always a few readers who will not suffer their judgments to be tainted by the poison of cabals and intrigues ; who love truth alone, and always look for the man in the author, with whom I found favour : to these few unprejudiced judges I beg leave to address the following reflections, and hope they will forgive that necessity which obliges me to make them.

A stranger at Paris was greatly astonished the other day at meeting with a heap of libels of various kinds, and a cruel combination against a poor man that grievously oppressed him : certainly, said he, this man must have been very ambitious, must have endeavoured to raise himself to some of those exalted posts that stir up the envy of mankind. No, it was replied, he is nothing but an obscure retired citizen, who keeps company with *Virgil* and *Locke* more than any of his country-

countrymen, whose very person is as little known to some of his enemies, as to the graver who pretended to engrave his picture : he is the author of some pieces that have drawn tears from your eyes ; of some performances, in which, in spite of all their faults, you admire that love of humanity, justice, and liberty, which reigns through every one of them : those who calumniate him are, for the most part, men even more obscure than himself, who quarrel with him only for a little idle breath of fame, and who will persecute him as long as he lives, only because he has given you pleasure. The stranger was touched with indignation against the persecutors, and felt some pity for the unhappy man who was thus persecuted.

It is hard indeed, that we cannot obtain that of our own countrymen and cotemporaries, which we have reason to expect from strangers and from posterity : very cruel, and at the same time very disgraceful it is to human wit, that literature should be infected with these personal animosities, these cabals and intrigues, which the slaves of fortune alone shou'd be tormented with. What do authors get by tearing one another to pieces ? they bring contempt and ignominy on a profession, which, but for themselves, wou'd always be respectable : how melancholy a consideration is it to reflect'

reflect, that the art of thinking, the noblest privilege of mankind, shou'd become the source of ridicule ; and that men of wit, who often by their quarrels make themselves the jest of fools, shou'd only be the buffoons of the public, when they ought to be the masters of it ?

Virgil, Varius, Pollio, Horace and Tibullus were friends ; the monuments of their friendship still subsist, to teach mankind that great minds shou'd always be united. If we cannot attain to the excellency of their genius, may we not at least imitate their virtues ? Those illustrious men, on whom the eyes of the whole universe were fixed, who contended for the admiration of *Asia, Africa, and Europe*, lov'd one another notwithstanding, and liv'd together as brethren ; whilst we, confined as we are within this narrow theatre, we whose names, scarce known in one obscure corner of the world, will soon pass away like our fashions, and be heard of no more, quarrel and fight with each other for a flash of fame, that is scarce seen by a creature beyond our own little horizon. We live as it were in a time of general famine, and prey upon one another. *Virgil* and *Horace* had no dissensions, because they liv'd in a land of plenty.

I have seen a book, entituled, *de morbis artificum*, on the *diseases* of *artists*: the most incurable of them
all

all is this meanness and jealousy ; but the worst of all is, that interest has often a greater share even than envy in these little satirical pamphlets, with which we are so over-run. It is not long ago since a fellow, who had wrote an infamous libel against his friend and benefactor, being ask'd how he cou'd be guilty of so much ingratitude, reply'd with all the indifference in the world, * I must live.

Whatever may be the cause of this shameful practice, certain it is, that when a man is attack'd, merely on account of his writings, he shou'd by no means think of answering the criticisms ; for if they are justly founded, he has nothing to do but to correct his works ; and if they are not, they will perish as soon as they are born. Let us call to mind the fable of *Boccalini*. “ A traveller, says he, was disturb'd in his
 “ journey by the noise of grasshoppers ; he stopp'd with
 “ a resolution to destroy them all, but to no purpose,
 “ it only led him out of his way : he ought to have
 “ proceeded peaceably on his journey, the grasshoppers
 “ wou'd all have died of themselves in a week's time.”

The author shou'd always forget himself, the man never ; *seipsum deserere turpissimum est*. Those who

* This answer was made by the Abbè des *Fontaines* to the count *D'Argenson*, secretary of state for military affairs,

have

have not wit enough to attack our works, will often calumniate our persons; and as foolish as it may be to answer them in some ways, it may be still more foolish not to answer them at all.

I have been abused in twenty libels as a man who had no religion; and one of the excellent proofs brought in support of it is, that, in Oedipus, Jocasta speaks thus:

These priests are not what the vile rabble think them,
Their knowledge springs from our credulity.

They who rais'd this calumny against me, are at least as reasonable as those who asserted in print, that the HENRIADE, in several parts of it, *favour'd* of the *Semipelagian*. This charge of irreligion is frequently reiterated against me, because it is the last resource of calumny. How am I to answer, or how am I to make myself easy under all this, but by calling to mind all those great men, from *Socrates* to *Descartes*, who have suffer'd from the same cause? I will only ask them one question; which has the most religion, the calumniator who persecutes, or the calumniated who forgives?

I am treated in these very libels as a man envious of the reputation of others; I am a stranger to envy, but
from

from the evil consequences of it to myself. I have commanded my pen not to be satirical, and *it is impossible for my heart to be envious*. 'Tis incapable of envy. I appeal to the author of *Rhadamistus*, and *Electra*, who first inspir'd me by those excellent performances, with the design of entering the lists with him in the same course: his success never cost me any other tears, but those which I shed at the representation on the stage: he knows that his merit rais'd no passion in my breast but emulation and friendship. I will venture to assert, that I am more strongly attach'd to the fine arts than to my own writings; fond even to excess from my infancy of every thing that carry'd with it the marks of genius, I look upon a great poet, a fine musician, a good painter, and an ingenious sculptor, (if he has integrity) as a man whom I ought to love and honour, one whom the arts teach me to look upon as a brother. Those young men who apply themselves to literature, shall always meet with a friend in me: some have found a father. Such are my sentiments, and those who have ever liv'd with me know that I have no other: I thought I was oblig'd to say thus much concerning myself once in my life: with regard to my tragedy, I shall say nothing: to refute criticism is vain self-love, but to confute calumny is a duty.

D R A-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON GUZMAN, Governor of Peru.

DON ALVAZEEZ, } Father of Guzman, the late
Governor.

ZAMOR, Sovereign of a Part of Potosi.

MONTEZUMA, Sovereign of another Part.

ALZIRA, Daughter of Montezuma.

EMIRA }
CEPHALE. } Attendants on Alzira.

SPANISH Officers.

AMERICANS.

SCENE, LIMA.

ALZIRA.

A L Z I R A.

A

T R A G E D Y.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

ALVAREZ, GUZMAN.

ALVAREZ.

AT length, for so the council hath decreed,
Guzman succeeds Alvarez ; long, my son,
May'st thou preserve for heav'n and for thy king
This better half of our new conquer'd world,
This fertile source of riches and of crimes !
Joyful to thee I yield the post of honour,
That suits but ill with feeble age like mine ;
In youth thy father trod the paths of glory ;
Alvarez first our winged castles bore
To Mexico's astonish'd sons ; he led

Spain's gallant heroes to this golden shore :
 After a life spent in my country's service,
 Cou'd I have form'd these heroes into men,
 Cou'd I have made them virtuous, mild, and good,
 I had been amply paid for all my toils :
 But who shall stop the haughty conqueror ?
 Alas ! my son, their cruelties obscure
 The lustre of their fame ; I weep the fate
 Of these unhappy victors, ras'd by heav'n
 To greatness but to be supremely wicked.
 O Guzman, I am verging to the grave,
 Let me but live to see thee govern here
 As justice shall direct thee, and I die
 With pleasure.

G U Z M A N.

By thy great example fir'd,
 With thee I fought and conquer'd for my country ;
 From thee must learn to rule : it is not mine
 To give the wise and good Alvarez laws,
 But to receive them from him.

A L V A R E Z.

No ; my son,
 The sov'reign pow'r can never be divided :
 Worn down with years and labour, I resign
 All worldly pomp ; it is enough for me

If

If yet my feeble voice be sometimes heard
 To counsel and direct thee ; trust me, Guzman,
 Men are not creatures one wou'd wish to rule :
 To that almighty being, whom too long
 I have neglected, wou'd I consecrate
 My poor remains of life ; one boon alone,
 As friend, I ask of thee, as father claim ;
 To give me up those slaves who by your order
 Are here confin'd ; this day, my son, shou'd be
 A day of pardon, mark'd by clemency,
 And not by justice.

GUZMAN.

A request from you

Is a command ; but think, my lord, I beg,
 What dangers may ensue : a savage people,
 But half subdued, and to the yoke of slav'ry
 Bending reluctant, ready for revolt,
 Shou'd never be familiar with their conqu'rors,
 Or dare to look on those they shou'd be taught
 To tremble at : unarm'd with pow'r and vengeance
 They wou'd despise us : these untutor'd Indians,
 Fiery and bold, ill brook the galling rein
 Of servitude, by chastisement alone
 Made tame, and humble, pardon'd once, they think
 You fear 'em ; pow'r, in short, is lost by mildness ;

Severity alone ensures obedience.

The brave Castilian serves in honour's cause,
 With chearful resignation, 'tis his pride,
 His glory; but inferior nations court
 Oppression; force and only force constrains them:
 Did not the gods of these barbarians drink
 The blood of men, they wou'd not be ador'd.

ALVAREZ.

And can a christian, as thou art, approve
 These tyrant maxims, the detested offspring
 Of narrow policy? are these the means
 To win the wild barbarian to our faith?
 Think'st thou to rule them with an iron hand,
 And serve a God of peace with war and slaughter?
 Brav'd I for this the burning tropic's rage,
 And all the terrors of a world unknown,
 To see our country curs'd, our faith disgrac'd?
 God sent us here for other purposes,
 Sent us to make his holy name revered,
 His sacred laws belov'd: whilst we, my son,
 Unmindful of that faith which we profess,
 The laws we teach, and all the tender ties
 Of soft humanity, insatiate still
 For blood and gold, instead of winning o'er
 These savages by gentle means, destroy them.

All

All is confusion, death, and horror round us,
 And nought have we of heaven but its thunder ;
 Our name indeed bears terror with it; Spain
 Is fear'd, but hated too : we are the scourge
 Of this new world, vain, covetous, unjust ;
 In short, I blush to own it, we alone
 Are the barbarians here : the simple savage,
 Tho' fierce by nature, is in courage equal,
 In goodness our superior. O my Guzman,
 Had he, like us, been prodigal of blood,
 Had he not felt the throbs of tender pity,
 Alvarez had not liv'd to speak his virtues :
 Hast thou forgot that day, when by a croud
 Of desp'rate natives I was circled in
 On ev'ry side, and all my faithful band
 Of followers cut off ; alone I stood,
 And ev'ry moment look'd for death, when, lo ;
 At mention of my name, they dropp'd their arms ;
 And strait a young American approach'd me,
 Embrac'd my knees, and bath'd 'em with his tears ;
 And " is it you, he cry'd, is it my friend ?
 " Live, good Alvarez, virtue pure as thine
 " May be most useful to us ; be a father
 " To the unhappy ; let thy tyrant nation,

“ That wou’d enslave us, learn from hence — to pardon,

“ And own a savage capable of virtue.”

I see you’re mov’d ; O hearken to the voice
Of mild humanity, by me she speaks,
By me address’d Guzman ; O my son,
Can’st thou expect the object of thy wishes,
The fair Aizira e’er will crown thy hopes,
If thou art cruel ? think’st thou to cement
The dearest bonds of nature in the blood
Of her lov’d countrymen, or shall their groans
Be heard, and Guzman soften into mercy ?

G U Z M A N.

’Tis your command, my lord, and I submit ;
They have their freedom, but on this condition,
For so our laws require, they must be christians :
To quit their idols, and embrace our faith,
Alone can save ’em ; we must bend by force
Their stubborn hearts, and drag ’em to the altar ;
One king must be obey’d, one God ador’d.

A L V A R E Z.

Hear me, my son, I wish, as much as Guzman,
That truth may fix her sacred empire here,
That neither heav’n nor Spai, henceforth may find

A foe on earth ; but know, the heart oppress'd
Is never conquer'd : I force none, yet I
Have conquer'd many ; the true God, my son,
The God of christians is a God of mercy.

GUZMAN.

You've conquer'd, sir, the father o'er his son
Is absolute ; and you, my lord, wou'd soften
The hardest heart, whilst virtue by Alvarez
In mildest accents pleads her pow'rful cause :
O since kind heav'n to thee hath lent the art
Of soft persuasion, use it for thy son,
On thee alone depends the happiness
Of Guzman's life : the proud Alzira scorns
My proffer'd hand : I love her but too well,
Heav'n knows how dearly ! but I cannot stoop
Meanly to sooth a haughty woman's pride,
I cannot make myself a poor tame slave
To her imperious will ; but thou hast pow'r
O'er the fair tyrant's father ; talk to him
For the last time ; let him command his daughter
To take my hand, and make your Guzman happy ;
And yet it hurts my soul to think Alvarez
Shou'd stoop so low, and be a suppliant for me.

ALVAREZ.

Already I have spoke, and Montezuma
 Hath seen his daughter ; she will soon be thine.
 I've been a friend to his unhappy race,
 And sooth'd the sorrows of captivity :
 Already he hath quitted his false gods ;
 Alzira too, a convert to our faith,
 To this new world shines forth a bright example.
 She only can unite the jarring nations,
 And make us happy ; thy long wish'd-for nuptials
 Shall join two distant globes ; these fierce barbarians,
 Who now detest our laws, when they shall see
 The daughter of their king in Guzman's arms,
 Cheerful beneath thy easy yoke shall bend
 Their willing hearts, and soon be all our own :
 But Montezuma comes ; away, my son,
 Expect me with Alzira at the altar.

S C E N E II.

ALVAREZ, MONTEZUMA.

ALVAREZ.

At length, obedient to a father's will,
 Alzira yields, I hope, to thy persuasion.

M O N-

MONTEZUMA.

If yet my daughter trembles at the thought
Of wedding him who has destroy'd her race,
Alvarez will forgive a woman's weakness ;
For thou has been a father to the wretched :
Thy gentle manners teach us to revere
That holy faith from whence they sprung ; by thee
The will of heav'n to this new world reveal'd,
Enlighten'd our dark minds ; what mighty Spain
Unconquer'd left, thy virtue has subdued :
Thy cruel countrymen's remorseless rage
Had render'd ev'n thy God detestable,
But that in thee his great perfections shine,
His goodness, and his mercy ; in thy heart
We trace his image ; Montezuma's thine,
His daughter, and his house ; the good Alvarez
Shall have them all : Potosi and Peru,
With my Alzira, shall descend to Guzman :
Prepare the nuptial rites, adorn your temple,
And let your son be ready to receive her :
Methinks it is as if th'immortal beings
Had deign'd to visit earth, and mix with men.

ALVAREZ.

O Montezuma, let me live to see
This blest event, and I shall die content.

O God, whose gracious hand conducted us
 To this new world, enlighten and preserve it ;
 Propitious smile on these first holy vows
 Made at thy altar here ! adieu, my friend,
 To thee I owe my Guzman's happiness.

S C E N E III.

MONTEZUMA alone.

O thou true God, whose pow'rful arm destroy'd
 Those idle deities I once ador'd,
 Watch o'er the poor remains of my sad life,
 And sooth my sorrows ; I have lost my all,
 All but Alzira, O protect her youth,
 Watch o'er her steps, and guide her tender heart !

S C E N E IV.

MONTEZUMA, ALZIRA.

MONTEZUMA.

Daughter, the hour is come to make thyself
 And the world happy, to command the conqu'ror,
 And make the vanquish'd smile, restore thy country
 To her lost honour, and to regal pow'r
 Rise from the bosom of adversity.
 Alzira will obey, I know she will ;
 Dry up thy tears, a father must not see them.

ALZI-

ALZIRA.

I have no will but yours ; yet, O my lord,
See my despair, and look into my soul.

MONTEZUMA.

No more of that ; thy word is pass'd, Alzira,
And I depend on't.

ALZIRA.

'Twas extorted from me ;
The cruel sacrifice : is this a time
To plight my faith, and think of nuptial joy,
This hapless day, when all I held most dear
Was ravish'd from me, when our wide-stretch'd em-
pire

And all her hosts, the children of the sun,
Inglorious fell beneath the cruel Guzman ?
O 'twas a day mark'd by the hand of heav'n
As most unfortunate.

MONTEZUMA.

Our days, Alzira,
Are happy or unhappy from ourselves,
And not from circumstance or accident,
As superstition taught our ancestors
To credit ; think no more on't.

ALZIRA.

ALZIRA.

On this day

My Zamor fell, our country's great avenger,
 My lover, chos'n by thee, by thee, my father,
 To be Alzira's husband.

MONTEZUMA.

I have paid

The debt of sorrow due to Zamor's ashes,
 And hold his mem'ry dear; but death has cancell'd
 Your mutual bonds; therefore no longer shed
 Those fruitless tears, but carry to the altar
 A free and chearful heart; thy God commands,
 He calls thee to him; if thou art a christian,
 Now hear his voice.

ALZIRA.

Alas! my lord, I know
 A father's pow'r, and know my duty to him,
 'Tis to obey, to fall a sacrifice
 Before him; I have pass'd the utmost bounds
 Which nature e'er prescribed; thy will alone
 Hath been my law, nor did I ever stain
 With disobedience my true faith, for thee
 I left my country's gods, and am a christian:
 Alas! my father, why wou'dst thou deceive me,
 Why tell me, the new deity I serve

Wou'd

Wou'd bring me peace, that his all-healing pow'r
Wou'd ease my tortur'd heart? delusive promise!
For O my lord, the deadly poison still
Lurks in my veins, still Zamor's image dwells
In his Alzira's heart, nor time nor death
Can e'er efface it: well I know Alvarez
Condemns that passion which he once approv'd:
But I will make him ample recompense
By my obedience: — wed me to the tyrant,
Give me to Guzman, 'tis a sacrifice
I owe my country; but remember, fir,
How dreadful 'tis, and tremble at the thought
Of such unnat'ral, such detested bonds,
Thou who condemn'st me to these fatal nuptials,
Who bid'st Alzira give her hand to Guzman,
And at the altar promise him a heart
Which is not hers to give.

MONTEZUMA.

What says my child?

O in the name of ev'ry tender tie
That binds thee to me, spare a wretched father!
Pity my age, and do not, by the woes
Which thou alone, Alzira, can'st remove,
Let me intreat thee, O embitter not
The sad remainder of Alvarez' life!

Have

Have I not ever strove to make thee happy,
 And wilt thou not return it? O my daughter,
 Let virtue guide thy steps in duty's path,
 And lead thee on to bliss! thy country calls,
 Wilt thou betray her? learn henceforth, Alzira,
 To be the mistress of thyself.

ALZIRA.

And must I
 Learn to dissemble then? ungrateful task!

S C E N E V.

GUZMAN, ALZIRA.

GUZMAN.

These long delays, Alzira, are unkind;
 And, let me add, ungen'rous, to the man
 Who lives but to oblige you: for thy sake
 I stopp'd the hand of justice; all those captives,
 Whose pardon you solicited, are free:
 But I shou'd blush to think that Guzman ow'd
 Thy kind compliance to so poor a service;
 'Tis on thyself, and thy consenting heart,
 He founds his hopes, nor thought I e'er till now
 My happiness cou'd make Alzira wretched.

A L Z I.

ALZIRA.

Wretched indeed ! O grant, kind heav'n, this day
 May not prove fatal to us both ! you see
 I am abash'd, confounded, left a prey
 To horror and despair : do not these eyes
 Alone betray the anguish of a mind
 Oppress'd with grief ? canst thou not read it there ?
 I know thou canst : such is my nature, Guzman ;
 Ne'er did Alzira's face bely her heart :
 Dissimulation and disguise, my lord,
 Are European arts, which I abhor.

GUZMAN.

I love thy frankness, but lament the cause ;
 Zamor is still belov'd, his mem'ry lives
 Within thy breast, my rival ev'n in death :
 This is too much, Alzira ; duty, honour,
 Virtue forbid it : weep no more, it wounds
 My heart, and I am jealous of thy tears.

ALZIRA.

Jealous of him, my lord, who in the grave
 Is mould'ring now, my lov'd, lamented Zamor ?
 For I confess I lov'd him, we were bound
 By mutual vows, and still I weep his fate :
 If thou'rt a friend to constancy and truth,
 Thou wilt not blame my passion, but approve it.

By

By this, and this alone, may Guzman gain
Alzira's heart.

S C E N E VI.

GUZMAN alone.

Her pride astonishes,

And yet I know not how her freedom charms me :
There is a savage beauty in her heart
That suits the wildness of her native clime ;
But softer manners may subdue her mind,
And bind her stubborn fierceness to the yoke
Of duty ; Guzman now is lord of all,
And nought remains unconquer'd but Alzira :
Resolv'd by force or art to make her mine,
Our hands, if not our hearts, shall be united.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II. S C E N E I.

ZAMOR, Americans.

ZAMOR.

MY noble friends, and fellow sufferers,
Whom dangers strengthen, and misfortunes
make

But

But more illustrious, shall we ne'er obtain
Or sweet revenge, or honourable death ?
Still must we live unable, or to serve
Alzira, or our country; shall we ne'er
Find out the hated Guzman, and destroy
That fell destroyer ? O my country's gods,
Pow'rless and vain, ye gave up this fair land
Of liberty to hostile deities ;
And tamely suffer'd a few wand'ring Spaniards
To spoil your altars, lay your temples waste,
And desolate our empire ; I have lost
A kingdom and Alzira ; all is gone
But shame, and sorrow, and resentment, those
I carry'd with me to the burning sands
And gloomy desarts ; there I cherish'd long
The secret hopes of vengeance : you, my friends,
Reviv'd your drooping Zamor, and inspir'd
His soul with flatt'ring thoughts of better days :
Deep in the forest's shade we left a band
Of chosen spirits, resolute and bold,
And hither came, impatient to observe
The walls uprais'd by our tremendous foe,
They watch'd, and seiz'd us : in a dungeon long
Confin'd, at length our tyrant masters grant us
Leave to walk forth, and breath the wholesome air,

Yet

Yet will not deign to let us know our fate:
 Can none inform me where we are, who dwells
 Within this seat of sorrow? where's Alzira,
 Where's Montezuma, lives he, is he free,
 Or a vile slave like Zamor? say, my friends,
 And partners in affliction, know ye not?

An American.

Like you, my lord, in chains, and hither led
 By secret paths, we're ignorant of all:
 Great Cacique, worthy of a better fate,
 If 'tis decreed that thou must fall, at least
 Thou shalt find friends prepar'd to perish with thee,
 And own them not unworthy of their master.

ZAMOR.

After a glorious victory, my friends,
 A glorious death is most to be desir'd;
 But O, to die in vile obscurity,
 To perish thus in ignominious bondage,
 To leave our bleeding country thus enslav'd
 By European robbers, those assassins
 Whose thirst for blood and gold, these proud usurpers,
 Who would extort by ev'ry cruel art
 Of punishment those riches which we hold
 More cheap, more worthless than themselves, to leave
 My lov'd Alzira, Zamor's dearer half,

To

To their licentious fury, O my friends,
'Tis worse than death : I tremble at the thought.

S C E N E II.

ALVAREZ, ZAMOR, Americans.

ALVAREZ.

Live, and be free.

ZAMOR.

Good heav'n, what do I hear ?

O unexpected sound ! what God art thou
In human shape ? a Spaniard, and forgive !
It cannot be : art thou the ruler here ?

ALVAREZ.

No, captive ; I am only the protector
Of innocence oppress'd.

ZAMOR.

Thou good old man,
What is thy office here ?

ALVAREZ.

To aid the wretched.

ZAMOR.

What could inspire thee with a thought so noble ?

ALVAREZ.

My gratitude, religion, and my God.

ZAMOR.

ZAMOR.

God and religion ! what ! these cruel tyrants,
 These ruffians, that still bath'd in human blood
 Dispeople earth, and change the smiling face
 Of nature to a dreary desert, they
 Who worship avarice alone ! their God
 Cannot be thine !

ALVAREZ.

It is the same, my son,
 But they offend him, they disgrace his name,
 And are indeed more guilty ; they abuse
 Their new-got pow'r : thou know'st their crime, but
 know

My duty too : twice hath the trav'ling sun
 Enlighten'd in his course our world and yours
 Since a brave Indian, who he was I know not,
 Stepp'd from amidst his fellow-savages,
 And sav'd me from their fury ; from that moment
 I felt your sorrows, pity'd your misfortunes,
 And held you as my brethren and my friends ;
 Cou'd I but meet my kind deliverer,
 That gallant stranger, I shou'd die in peace.

ZAMOR.

His age, his features, his transcendent virtue,
 All, all conspire to say it is Alvarez :

Behold,

Behold, and mark us well, canst thou distinguish
The hand that fav'd thee?

ALVAREZ.

Gracious heav'n! come near,
O Providence! it is, it must be he,
The wish'd-for object of my gratitude;
He whom these eyes, grown dim with age, have fought
So long in vain; my son, my benefactor,
What shall I do to serve thee? thou shalt live
With old Alvarez; he shall be thy father,
Thy guardian and protector here: kind heav'n
In gracious pity hath prolong'd my days,
That I might pay the debt I owe to thee.

ZAMOR.

O if thy barb'rous nation had possess'd
But half the virtues that adorn Alvarez,
Our willing world had bow'd submissive down
Before them; but their souls are not like thine,
For they delight in blood, whilst nature's self
Abhorring shudders at their cruelty;
Death were more welcome far than life with them:
Urge me not therefore, good Alvarez, all
I wish to know is this, have they destroy'd
My noble friend, the wretched Montezuma,

where's

Where's my Alzira's father? O my lord,
 Forgive these tears, the mem'ry of past griefs
 Sits heavy on me.

ALVAREZ.

Let 'em flow my son,
 'Tis the best mark of our humanity :
 The heart that feels not for another's woe
 Is fit for ev'ry crime: thy friend survives,
 And full of years and honours lives with us
 In happiness and peace.

ZAMOR.

Might I behold him?

ALVAREZ.

Yes; thou shalt see him soon: may his persuasion
 Induce thee to think better of us all,
 And follow his example!

ZAMOR.

Can he live
 With christians, Montezuma live with christians?

ALVAREZ.

Have patience, son, and he shall tell thee all,
 Touching our union, and the sacred bonds
 That soon shall bind in cords of amity
 Our world to thine—but I must to my son,

And

And let him know my happiness; I leave thee
But for a moment; fare thee well.

S C E N E III.

ZAMOR, Americans.

At last

Heav'n seems to smile on Zamor; I have found
Amongst these vile barbarians one just man,
Honest and true: Alvarez is a god,
Sent down from heav'n to soften this rude world,
And bless mankind: he said he had a son,
That son shall be my brother and my friend,
If he is worthy of his noble father:
O glorious hope! shall I again behold
Great Montezuma after three long years?
Alzira too, my dear my lov'd Alzira,
Shall I embrace thee, hast thou kept thy faith,
That first of virtues, to reward thy Zamor?
The heart oppress'd is ever diffident:
Another old man comes this way: my soul
Is still perplex'd.

S C E N E

S C E N E IV.

MONTEZUMA, ZAMOR, Americans.

ZAMOR.

O noble Montezuma,
 Do I once more embrace thee? see thy Zamor
 Snatch'd from the jaws of death; he lives to save
 And to defend his prince: behold thy friend,
 Thy soldier, and thy son: O where's Alzira?
 Be quick, and tell me, let me know her fate,
 My life depends on that.

MONTEZUMA.

Unhappy Cacique,
 With grief sincere we have lamented thee;
 Thy fellow soldiers to thy mem'ry rais'd
 The decent tomb, and ev'ry honour paid
 Due to thy virtues: but thank heav'n! thou liv'st,
 Henceforth may happier days await thee, Zamor!
 But say, why cam'st thou hither?

ZAMOR.

To revenge
 My gods, myself, my father and Alzira.

MONTEZUMA.

What say'st thou?

ZAMOR.

ZAMOR.

Call to mind that dreadful day
When the fierce Spaniard, terrible in arms,
Rush'd through our pow'rless hosts, o'erthrew our
bulwarks,
And laid our empire waste; his name was Guzman:
That name, thou well remember'ft, was the signal
Giv'n for destruction; at that name they snatch'd
The sweet Alzira, thy lov'd daughter, from me,
And bore her to captivity with thee
And all thy race; destroy'd the holy altar,
Where I had hoped to make Alzira mine,
Then dragg'd me to the tyrant; shall I tell thee
What cruel torments that insatiate monster
Inflicted on me, to extort confession
Of hidden gold, the christian's deity,
Which we despise and trample on; half dead
They left me and retir'd: time, Montezuma,
Can never bury injuries like mine;
Thou see'st me here, prepar'd for great revenge:
Some chosen friends, attach'd to Zamor's cause,
By equal wrongs provok'd, with equal hate
Inspir'd, await me in the neighb'ring forest,
Resolv'd with me to conquer or to die.

MONTEZUMA.

O Zamor, whither wou'd thy headlong passion
 Transport thee? wherefore wou'd'st thou thus pursue
 That death which seems so willing to avoid thee?
 What can thy friends do for thee? their weak arms,
 Their fish-bone spears, their sabres made of stone,
 Their soldiers naked, and ill-disciplin'd,
 Against these giants arm'd with mortal steel,
 And launching their dread thunder bolts against thee?
 Swift as the winds, their fiery courfers bear them
 To certain victory; the world is theirs,
 And we, my Zamor, must submit.

ZAMOR.

Whilst life

Shall animate these veins, I never will:
 No, Montezuma: their destructive thunder,
 Their coats of steel, their fiery courfers taught
 Like them to fight, and share their master's glory,
 This might affright, and terrify a while
 Our gaping savages, but I behold
 This pompous scene unruffled: to subdue
 Our haughty foe one thing alone's requir'd,
 And that is, not to fear them; novelty,
 That conquers cowards, only has enslav'd us:
 Gold, that pernicious native of our soil,

Draws

Draws Europe hither, but defends us not
 Against her; niggard nature has deny'd us
 A nobler metal, her all-conqu'ring steel,
 And giv'n it to barbarians; but kind heav'n,
 In lieu of this indulgence, hath bestow'd
 Virtues on us which Europe never knew:
 I come to fight and conquer for Alzira.

MONTEZUMA.

Urge it no more, my Zamor, heav'n declares
 Against us, calm thy rage; the times are chang'd.

ZAMOR.

Chang'd, did'st thou say, my lord? it cannot be,
 If Montezuma's heart is still the same,
 If my Alzira's faithful, if I live
 Still in her memory. — thou turn'st aside
 And weep'st.

MONTEZUMA.

Unhappy Zamor!

ZAMOR.

Am I not

Thy son, our tyrants have not alter'd thee?
 They cannot, sure they cannot have corrupted
 An old man's heart, and made it false as theirs?

L 2

MON.

MONTERUMA.

I am not guilty, Zamor, nor are all
 These conqu'rors tyrants; some were sent by heav'n
 To guide our footsteps in the paths of truth,
 To teach us arts unknown, immortal secrets,
 The knowledge of mankind, the arts, my son,
 To speak, to think, to live, and to be happy.

ZAMOR.

O horrid! can'st thou praise these ruffians, whilst
 Thy daughter, thy Alzira, is their slave?

MONTEZUMA.

Zamor, Alzira's free.

ZAMOR.

Ha! Montezuma,
 Alzira free? forgive me, but remember,
 She's mine, my lord, by every solemn tie;
 You promis'd me, before the gods you promis'd,
 To give her to me; they receiv'd our vows;
 She is not perjur'd?

MONTEZUMA.

Call not on those gods,
 For they are vain, and fancy'd idols all;
 I have abjur'd them, and henceforth must worship
 That pow'r supreme which hath subdued them.

ZAMOR.

ZAMOR.

Ha!

The law of thy forefathers, thy religion,
Is that deserted?

MONTEZUMA.

I have found its weakness,
And left its vain chimeras: may the God
Of Gods convert thee, and inspire with truth
Thy unenlighten'd soul! unhappy Zamor,
Soon may'st thou know that Europe thou condemn'st,
Her virtues, and her faith!

ZAMOR.

What mighty virtues
Has she to boast? thou art indeed a slave
If thou hast lost thy gods, thy faith, thy honour,
And broke thy sacred word: Alzira too,
Has she betray'd me? O take heed!

MONTEZUMA.

My heart
Reproaches me for nothing: fare thee well!
I bless my own good fate, and weep for thine.

ZAMOR.

If thou art false, thou'st cause to weep indeed:
Pity the torments which I feel for thee,

K 3

And

And for thy guilt; pity a heart distracted
 By love and vengeance; let me find out Guzman,
 Let me behold Alzira, let me fall
 Beneath her feet; O do not hide her from me:
 Conduct me, urge me not thus to despair,
 Put on a human heart, let thy lost virtue——

S C E N E V.

MONTEZUMA, ZAMOR, Guards.

Guard.

[To Montezuma.

The ceremony waits, my lord.

MONTEZUMA.

I come.

ZAMOR.

Thou wilt not leave me? tell me, Montezuma,
 What ceremony's this?

MONTEZUMA.

No more: away,

And leave this fatal place.

ZAMOR.

Though heav'n itself
 Forbade me, I wou'd follow thee.

MONTEZUMA.

Forgive

My rude denial, Zamor, but you must not,

I say you must not—guards, prevent him—pagans
 Must not profane our christian altars ; I
 Command not here, but Guzman speaks by me ;
 You must obey : farewell.

S C E N E VI.

ZAMOR. Americans.

ZAMOR.

What do I hear ?

Guzman ? O shameful treason ! Montezuma
 The slave of Guzman ! where is virtue fled ?
 Alzira too, is my Alzira guilty ?
 Has she too drank corruption's pois'nous bowl
 From these vile christians ?—that destroyer Guzman
 Rules here, it seems ; what's to be done ?

First American.

Permit me

To counsel you, my lord ; the good old man
 Who sav'd thee with his son will soon return,
 He can deny you nothing ; ask of him
 Safe conduct to the city gates ; that done,
 We may return and join our noble friends
 Against the foe : I doubt not of success :
 We will not spare a man of them except
 Alvarez, and his son : I've mark'd, my lord,

L 4

With

With most observant eye, their fosses, ramparts,
 And brazen thunders, European arts
 That fright not me : alas ! our countrymen
 Forge their own shameful chains, and tamely bend
 Beneath these sons of pride ; but soon, my lord,
 When they shall see their great avenger here,
 Then will they rise indignant, and destroy
 This ignominious work of slavery :
 Yes ; on the bleeding bodies of our foes
 We'll make a path to glory ; on the heads
 Of these vile christians turn the fiery tempest,
 And with their own destructive instruments
 Of murder shake this all-usurping pow'r,
 Founded by pride on ignorance and fear.

ZAMOR.

O how I joy, ye great unfortunate,
 To find your kindred breasts thus nobly beat
 With sympathetic fury ! let us punish
 The haughty Guzman, let his blood atone
 For our lost country's : O thou deity
 Of injur'd mortals, sweet revenge, O come,
 Assist thy servants, let but Guzman perish
 And we are satisfy'd ! but O my friends
 We talk of vengeance, yet are captives still,
 Still groan beneath the yoke of shameful bondage :

Deserted

Deserted by Alvarez, and betray'd
 By Montezuma, all I love perhaps
 Is in the pow'r of him whom most I hate,
 The only comfort left me is—to doubt.
 But hark ! what noise is that ? the torches flame
 On ev'ry side, and yield a double day :
 This barb'rous people's brazen thunder speaks
 Some horrid rites, or pompous sacrifice
 Preparing ; look around, and see if Zamor
 Shall save his much-lov'd friends, or perish with them.

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

ALZIRA alone.

YE manes of my dear departed Zamor,
 Forgive me, O forgive the wife of Guzman !
 The holy altar hath receiv'd our vows,
 And they are seal'd in heav'n : pursue me not,
 Indignant shade ! O if Alzira's tears,
 Her bitter anguish, her remorse, the pangs
 Of her reluctant soul, can reach the dead,
 If in a happier world thou still retain'st

L 5

Thy

Thy gen'rous noble spirit, thou wilt pardon
 My weakness ; 'twas a father's cruel will,
 A people's happiness requir'd it of me ;
 Cou'd I refuse the dreadful sacrifice ?
 Thou art at peace, my Zamor, do not thus
 Distract my soul, but leave me to my fate ;
 Alas ! already it has cost me dear.

S C E N E II.

ALZIRA, EMIRA.

And shall I not behold my countrymen,
 The lov'd companions of my infant years,
 Those wretched captives, may I not enjoy
 The mournful privilege to mix with theirs
 My friendly tears, and mourn their cruel fate ?

EMIRA.

O madam, we have cause indeed to weep,
 To dread the wrath of Guzman, to lament
 And tremble for our country ; for the hour
 Of slaughter and destruction is at hand :
 Again I saw the bloody flag display'd,
 The proud tribunal's met, and Montezuma
 Is summon'd to appear : all dreadful omens !
 What will become of us ?

ALZIRA.

ALZIRA.

Unpitying heav'n !

I've been deceiv'd, betray'd :—cruel O Guzman !

Was it for this I gave him at the altar

My long reluctant hand ? that fatal bond

I shall repent of to my latest hour :

O under what malignant star, my father,

Mad'st thou these cruel, these detested nuptials ?

S C E N E III.

ALZIRA, EMIRA, CEPHANES.

CEPHANES.

One of those slaves, whom this propitious day

Restor'd to freedom, begs admittance to you

In secret.

ALZIRA.

Let him enter ; 'twill rejoice

My heart heart to see him ; he and all his friends

Are welcome to Alzira : but why comes he

Alone ?

CEPHANES.

Some secret labours in his breast,

Which you and only you, he says, must know.

'Twas he, it seems, whose heav'n-directed arm

Sav'd

Sav'd the good father of thy valiant lord,
The noble Guzman.

EMIRA.

He has fought you long;
But Montezuma's private orders were,
He shou'd not see you : melancholy fits
On his dark brow, as if he were intent
On some great purpose.

CEPHANES.

Grief and anguish seem
To rack his soul : at mention of your name
He sigh'd, and wept, as if yet ignorant
Of your new honours and the rank you bear.

ALZIRA.

Unworthy rank, and honours I despise !
Perhaps the hero knows my wretched race,
And is no stranger to Alzira's woes :
Perhaps he knew my Zamor ; who can tell
But he might be a witness of his death,
And comes to tell the melancholy tale ?
A dreadful duty ! that wou'd but renew
A lover's pangs, and double my distress ;
But let him come : I know not why my heart
Shou'd flutter thus ; this hateful palace ever

Hath

Hath been a scene of sad disquietude
And trouble to me : bid him enter.

S C E N E IV.

ALZIRA, ZAMOR, EMIRA.

ZAMOR.

Yes ;

It is Alzira : is she then restored ?

ALZIRA.

Such were his features, voice, and motion : heav'n !
It cannot be : O Zamor !—O support me.

[She faints.

ZAMOR.

'Tis he.

ALZIRA.

Ha ! Zamor at Alzira's feet ?

'Tis all delusion.

ZAMOR.

No ; I live for thee,

And at thy feet reclaim thy plighted faith ;

O my Alzira, idol of my soul,

Wilt thou not hear me ? where are all thy vows,

The sacred ties that bound us fast together,

Thou hast not broke them ?

ALZIRA.

ALZIRA.

Thou dear fatal object
 Of grief and joy, of rapture and despair,
 In what a dreadful moment hast thou chose
 To meet Alzira? ev'ry word thou utter'ft
 But plunges a new dagger in my heart.

ZAMOR.

Thou weep'ft, yet look'ft on Zamor!

ALZIRA.

'Tis too late:

ZAMOR.

I know you thought me dead: e'er since that hour
 Of terror, when those European tyrants
 Depriv'd me of my gods, my throne and thee,
 I've been a poor unhappy wanderer.
 Know'ft thou, my love, that savage murth'rer,
 Guzman,
 With ignominious stripes, and cruel torture,
 Insulted me; the husband of thy choice,
 Thy once lov'd happy Zamor, fell a prey
 To ruffians:—how it wounds thy tender heart!
 Thou burn'ft with fierce resentment of my wrongs,
 And thou wilt join with Zamor to revenge them:
 Some guardian god, propitious to our loves,

Sav'd

Sav'd me from death, that we might meet again
 In happiness : I hope Alzira's true :
 'Thou hast not left thy gods, betray'd thy country,
 Thou art not grown a false perfidious Spaniard ?
 They tell me I shall meet with Guzman here,
 I come to free thee from that proud barbarian :
 Thou lov'st me, my Alzira, and wilt give
 The victim to my wrath.

ALZIRA.

Thou hast been wrong'd ;
 Revenge thyself, and see thy victim—here.

ZAMOR.

What say'st thou ?—ha ! thy faith, thy vows —

ALZIRA.

But strike—I merit not, or life or thee. No more,

ZAMOR.

O cruel Montezuma ! what thou told'st me
 Was but too true.

ALZIRA.

And cou'd he tell thee all ;
 Nam'd he the wretch for whom I quitted Zamor ?

ZAMOR.

ZAMOR.

He did not, durst not name him ; that remains
For thee : O speak it : I shall be surpriz'd
At nothing.

ALZIRA.

Hear then all my guilt.

ZAMOR.

Alzira !

ALZIRA.

That Guzman —

ZAMOR.

Gracious heav'n !

ALZIRA.

Thy murtherer,

Within this hour receiv'd my guilty hand ;
He is — my husband.

ZAMOR.

Guzman !

ALZIRA.

Montezuma,

Alvarez — they betray'd my easy youth,
And urg'd me to the deed : the lost Alzira
Did at the christian altar give up all
That she held dear on earth, her gods, her country,
Her — Zamor : O by those dear injur'd names
I beg thee, take this hated life.

ZAMOR.

ZAMOR.

Alzira,

Can it be true? Is Guzman then thy husband?

ALZIRA.

To plead a father's undisputed right,
 To say how long I struggled with my duty,
 To number o'er the fruitless tears I shed
 For three long years lamenting Zamor's death,
 That still I lov'd thee, that I left in wrath
 Those pow'rless gods that had deserted thee,
 And from despair alone became a christian,
 Perhaps might mitigate Alzira's crime;
 But I disdain it, I acknowledge all,
 Confess my guilt, and sue for punishment.
 Who shall absolve the wretch whom love condemns?
 Take then a life that is not worth my care
 Without thee; dost thou not abhor me, Zamor?

ZAMOR.

No: if thou lov'st me still, thou art not guilty:
 May I yet hope that Zamor has a place
 In his Alzira's heart?

ALZIRA.

When old Alvarez
 And Montezuma led me to the altar

I thought on Zamor, thought him then no more,
 But rev'renc'd, but ador'd his memory:
 Our tyrants, our usurpers know I lov'd thee;
 I told 'em all, told heav'n and earth, nay told
 My husband — and O take this last farewell,
 I love thee still.

ZAMOR.

Is this then our last hour
 Of happiness, and must we part so soon,
 So lately met? O if the voice of love —

ALZIRA.

'Tis Guzman and his father.

S C E N E V.

ALVAREZ, GUZMAN, ZAMOR, ALZIRA, Attendants.

ALVAREZ. [To Guzman.
 Son, behold

With thy Alzira stands my great preserver,
 My benefactor, my deliverer.

O noble youth, to thee I owe my life,

[To Zamor.

Let me embrace thee, be my second son,

And share the pleasures of this happy day

With Guzman and Alvarez.

ZAMOR.

ZAMOR.

He thy son ;
I Guzman then thy son, that proud barbarian ?

ALZIRA.

Avert the terrors of this dreadful moment,
Indulgent heav'n !

ALVAREZ.

In what astonishment —

ZAMOR.

How cou'd a father, brave and good, like thee
Be curs'd with such a son ?

GUZMAN.

Insulting slave,
Who gave thee license thus to spurn thy master ?
Thou know'st not who I am.

ZAMOR.

I know thee well ;
And thou among the wretches thou hast made
Perhaps may'st one day meet the injur'd Zamor.

GUZMAN.

And art thou he ?

ALVAREZ.

Ha ! Zamor !

ZAMOR.

ZAMOR.

'Tis the same,
 'Tis Zamor, whom thy cruel hand oppress'd
 With ignominious tortures, he whose eye
 Thou dar'st not meet ; thou tyrant ravisher,
 Com'st thou at last to rob me of my best
 And dearest treasure ? with thy ruthless sword
 Make sure thy vengeance, and prevent the fate
 Which thou deserv'st, e'er Zamor, who preserv'd
 The father, shall chastise the guilty son.

ALVAREZ. [To Guzman.

What say'st thou, Guzman, can'st thou answer this ?

GUZMAN.

It were beneath me ; punishment alone
 Shoud answer insolence, and, but for thee,
 E'er this he shou'd have met with it.

[Turning to Alzira.

You, madam,

For your own honour might have more regard,
 If not for mine, than thus to parley with
 A traitor : come, no more of this, Alzira,
 Thy tears offend me : husbands may be jealous ;
 Remember that and tremble.

ALZIRA. [To Guzman.

Cruel Guzman !

My kind protector,

Turning

(Turning to Alvarez.

Good Alvarez, hear me :

And thou,

[To Zamor.

In better days my dearest hope,

O look with pity on the lost Alzira !

[Pointing to Zamor.

Behold the husband whom my father chose,

Long e'er this hapless country bow'd the neck

To European tyrants, Zamor fell,

So fame reported, and with him Peru,

Then first subdued : my wretched father, old

And full of sorrows, to the christian's God,

Forfaken by his own, indignant fled ;

The christian altar saw Alzira's hand

Giv'n to her lover's murth'rer : thy new faith,

Which yet I know not, may condemn Alzira,

But virtue will forgive me when I add,

That still I love thee, Zamor ; but my oath,

My marriage vow, rash fatal marriage ! says

I never must be thine—nor can I now

Be Guzman's—false to both, ye both have cause

To hate me : which of you will kindly end

My wretched being ? Guzman's hand, already

Stain'd with the blood of my unhappy race,

Were

Were fittest to revenge the injur'd rights
Of honour and of love; be just for once,
And strike the guilty.

GUZMAN.

Dar'st thou thus abuse
The goodness thou deserv'st not? but remember
'Twas thy request; thy punishment is ready:
My rival dies; — away with him.

ALAREZ.

Inhuman!

O stop, my son, consider what is due
To him who sav'd thy father — ye are both
My children — let that tender name inspire
Your breasts with pity for an aged father:
At least —

S C E N E VI.

ALVAREZ, GUZMAN, ALZIRA, ZAMOR,
Don ALONZO, a Spanish officer.

ALONZO.

My lord, the foe is at our gates;
On ev'ry side their brazen bucklers ring
With barb'rous dissonance: aloud they cry,
Revenge, and Zamor, whilst with measured steps,
Solemn and slow, the close-wedg'd phalanx moves,
As

As if these savages had learn'd from us
The arts by which we conquer'd them.

G U Z M A N.

Away :

Let us be gone ; my presence soon shall teach
These slaves their duty—heroes of Castille,
Ye sons of vict'ry, this new world was made
To wear your chains, to fear, and to obey you.

Z A M O R.

To fear and to obey ? 'tis false, proud Guzman ;
Ye are but mortals like ourselves, no more.

G U Z M A N.

Guards, drag him hence.

Z A M O R.

[To the Spaniards surrounding him.

Ye dare not : are ye gods,

And must we worship deities thus bath'd
In our own blood ?

G U Z M A N.

Obey me, slaves.

A L Z I R A.

My lord !

A L V A R E Z.

Remember, son, that Zamor sav'd thy father.

G U Z-

GUZMAN.

My lord, I shall remember your instructions,
 You taught me how to conquer, and I fly
 Once more to victory : farewell !

S C E N E VII.

ALVAREZ, ALZIRA.

ALZIRA,

[Kneeling.

My Lord,

Behold me at your feet, accept the homage
 Due to thy virtues ! Guzman's injur'd honour
 Calls for revenge, Alzira was to blame ;
 But I was bound to Zamor by the ties
 Of sacred love, long e'er I knew thy son ;
 We cannot give our hearts a second time :
 Zamor had mine, and ever must preserve it :
 O he is good and virtuous, for he sav'd
 Thy life, Alvarez—O forgive me !

ALVAREZ.

Rise

Alzira, I forgive and pity thee ;
 Feel as a father and a friend thy sorrows,
 Lament thy Zamor's fate, and will protect him :
 But let the solemn vow thou mad'st to Guzman,
 Be grav'd within thy heart ; thou art no longer

The

The mistress of thyself : remember well
 Thou art my daughter—Guzman was most cruel,
 I know he was, but still he is—thy husband :
 Perhaps he may relent ; heav'n grant he may !

ALZIRA.

Alas ! why art not thou my Zamor's father ?

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

ALVAREZ, GUZMAN.

ALVAREZ.

Fortune, my son, has crown'd thee with success,
 Endeavour to deserve it ; do not stain
 The laurel wreath with blood, but let fair mercy,
 That adds new lustre to the conqu'ror's glory,
 Inspire thy breast with pity ; be a man,
 A christian, and forgive : Alvarez asks thee
 To pardon Zamor, shall a father plead
 In vain ? O Guzman, shall I never soften
 Thy savage manners, never teach my son
 To conquer hearts ?

GUZMAN.

Alvarez has pierc'd mine
 Most deeply ; ask my life, and it is yours,

But leave my honour, leave me my revenge ;
How can I pardon Zamor, when I know
Alzira loves him ?

ALVAREZ.

Therefore he deserves

Thy pity more.

GUZMAN.

O to be pity'd thus,
And thus belov'd, Guzman wou'd die with pleasure.

ALVAREZ.

With all that fierce resentment, feel'st thou too
The pangs of jealousy ?

GUZMAN.

And can'st thou blame
An injur'd husband ? I have too much cause
For jealousy, and yet thou pity'st not
Th'unhappy Guzman.

ALVAREZ.

Thou art wild, impetuous,
And bitter in thy wrath ; Alzira's virtues
Deserve a milder treatment ; when oppos'd,
Her open heart, rough as her native soil,
Resists with stubborn firmness, but wou'd yield
To soft persuasion ; gentle means, my son,
Are ever the most pow'rful.

·G U Z·

GUZMAN.

Must I sooth

The pride of beauty, wear a brow serene,
 And cover my resentment, to expose
 My easy heart to new indignities?
 I shou'd have thought that jealous of my honour
 You wou'd approve, and not condemn my rage:
 Is it not shame enough that I am wedded
 To a proud slave, who hates me, braves my pow'r,
 And owns her heart is given to another?
 Whom yet, to make me more accurs'd, I love.

ALVAREZ.

Why blush at that? it is a lawful passion,
 Indulge but keep it within proper bounds,
 For all excess is guilty—only promise
 You will determine nothing till I've seen her
 Once more.

GUZMAN.

A father's will must be obey'd;
 I will suspend my wrath, but urge me, fir,
 No further.

ALVAREZ.

All I want is time : farewell.

[Exit.

GUZMAN alone.

And have I liv'd to envy Zamor's fate,
 To envy a vile slave, who scarce deserves
 The name of man!—What do I see? Alzira!

M 2

S C E N E

S C E N E II.

GUZMAN, ALZIRA, EMIRA.

ALZIRA.

'Tis I, my lord, 'tis the afflicted wife
 Of Guzman; she who honours, who reveres,
 And yet has injur'd thee: I come, my lord,
 To throw me at your feet, to own my crime,
 And beg forgiveness: nought have I disguis'd,
 My open heart confess'd its fatal passion
 For the unhappy Zamor; if he dies,
 He dies because Alzira was sincere;
 But I shall more astonish thee, I come
 To plead for him: I know that Guzman's proud,
 Resentful, and severe, and yet I hope
 He may be gen'rous, 'tis a conqu'ror's pride,
 His glory to forgive: an act like this
 Wou'd gain thee more than conquest can bestow,
 Win ev'ry heart, perhaps ev'n change Alzira's.
 A fawning Spaniard might have promis'd more,
 Have sigh'd, and wept, and soften'd thee with tears,
 Which I disdain; the hand of nature form'd
 My plain untutor'd heart, if ought can move it,
 'Tis generosity: let Guzman try
 If it is made of penetrable mould.

G U S-

GUZMAN.

If you're so fond of virtue, 'twould become you
 To know and practice it, to study, madam,
 Those manners you condemn, to learn your duty,
 To treat yourself, your honour, and your fame
 With more respect; nor dare to name a rival
 Whom I abhor, but wait in humble silence
 Till I determine what shall be his fate;
 It is enough if I forgive Alzira:
 This heart is not insensible; but know,
 Those who believe shall always find me cruel.

S C E N E III.

ALZIRA, EMIRA.

EMIRA.

He loves you still, and yet may be persuaded.

ALZIRA.

Ay, but he's jealous, that destroys my Zamor,
 I lost his life by asking it; but say,
 Emira, canst thou save him? shall he live,
 Tho' far from his Alzira? didst thou try
 That soldier?

EMIRA.

Yes; the grand corrupter, gold,
 Has bought him to our interest; he is ready.

M 3

ALZIRA.

ALZIRA.

Thank heav'n, that metal doth not always prove
The instrument of ill : but haste, Emira.

EMIRA.

Is Zamor then devoted to destruction ?
Cannot Alvarez save him ? have the council—

ALZIRA.

I have a thousand fears for him : alas !
These tyrants think the world was made for them,
That they were born the sov'reigns of mankind,
That Zamor is a rebel and a slave :
Barbarians as they are—this cruel council —
But I'll prevent their murth'rous purposes :
That soldier, my Emira, how he lingers !

EMIRA.

Be not alarm'd ; night's friendly shade protects him,
And he will soon be here with Zamor ; sleep
Hath clos'd the tyrant's eyes, and we are safe.

ALZIRA.

O let him lead me to the prison gate
That I may set him free.

EMIRA.

Behold, he comes :
But shou'd ye be discover'd, foul dishonour,
Disgrace, and infamy —

A L Z I.

ALZIRA.

Attend on her

Who wou'd betray the man she loves ; this shame
 Thou talk'ft of is an European phantom,
 Which fools mistake for virtue ! 'tis the love
 Of glory not of justice, not the fear
 Of vice but of reproach ; a shame unknown
 In these untutor'd climes, where honour shines
 In its own native light, and scorns the aid
 Of such false lustre ; honour bids me save
 A lover and a hero thus deserted.

S C E N E IV.

ALZIRA, ZAMOR, EMIRA, a Soldier.

ALZIRA.

O Zamor, all is lost, thy punishment
 Already is prepar'd, and thou art doom'd
 To instant death ; lose not a moment's time,
 But haste away, this soldier will conduct thee :
 Alas ! thou see'st my grief and my despair,
 O save my husband from the guilt of murder,
 Save thy dear self, and leave me to my fate.

ZAMOR.

Thou bid'st me live, I must obey Alzira ;
 But wilt thou follow the poor friendless Zamor ?

A defart and this heart are all I now
Have left to offer, once I had a throne.

ALZIRG.

What were a throne and empire without thee?
Alas! my Zamor, to the gloomy defart
My soul shall follow thee; but I am doom'd
To wander here alone, to drag a life
Of bitterness and woe, to spend my hours
In sad reflections on my wretched state,
To be another's, and yet burn for thee:
I bid farewell to Zamor and to joy;
Away, and leave me to my duty; fain
Wou'd I preserve my honour, and my love,
They both are sacred.

ZAMOR.

What's this idol honour,
This European phantom, that deludes thee;
This christian altar, those detested oaths
Extorted from thee, this triumphant God;
What have they done to rob me of Alzira?

ALZIRA.

My sacred promise —

ZAMOR.

'Twas a guilty vow,
And binds thee not; perdition on thy oaths,
And thy false God, whom I abhor! farewell!

A L Z I-

ALZIRA.
O stop my Zamor.

ZAMOR.
Guzman is thy husband.

ALZIRA.
Do not upbraid but pity me.

ZAMOR.
O think
On our past loves.

ALZIRA.
I think but on thy danger.

ZAMOR.
Thou hast betray'd me.

ALZIRA.
No; I love thee still:
If 'tis a crime, I own, nay glory in it;
But hence, and leave me here to die alone;
Some dreadful purpose labours in thy breast:
How thy eyes roll! O Zamor —

ZAMOR.
'Tis resolv'd.

ALZIRA.
Where art thou going?

ZAMOR.
Glorious liberty,
I'll use thee nobly.

ALZIRA.
If thou dy'st remember
I perish with thee.

ZAMOR.

In this hour of terror

Thou talk'st to me of love : but time is precious,
Conduct me, soldier : fare thee well.

S C E N E V.

ALZIRA.

He's gone ;

But where I know not : dreadful moment ! Guzman,
For thee I quitted Zamor : haste, Emira,
Follow him, fly, return, and tell me all.

Think'st thou that soldier will be faithful to us ?

[Exit Emira.]

I know not why, but something tells me here,
This day, for me, will be a day of horror.
O God of christians, thou all conqu'ring pow'r,
Whom yet I know not, O remove the cloud
From my dark mind ; if by my fatal passion
I have offended thee, pour all thy vengeance
On me, but spare my Zamor ; O conduct
His wand'ring footsteps thro' the dreary desert !
Is Europe only worthy of thy care ?
Art thou the partial parent of one world,
And tyrant o'er another ? all deserve
Thy equal love, the victor and the vanquish'd
Are all the work of thy creating hand.

-But

But hark ! what dreadful cry is that ? methought
They call'd on Zamor—hark ! again that noise !
It comes this way : my Zamor's lost.

S C E N E VI.

ALZIRA, EMIRA.

ALZIRA.

Emira,

I'm glad thou'rt come : what hast thou seen, what
done,

Where is he ? speak, and ease my troubled soul.

EMIRA.

O it is past all hope ; he cannot live :

Conducted safely by the faithful foldier

He pass'd the guards, then darting from him rush'd

Towards the palace ; trembling I pursued him,

Amidst the horrors of the silent night,

Almost to Guzman's chamber ; there he 'scap'd me,

Tho' oft I call'd on him, oft look'd in vain :

I heard a dreadful shriek, some cry'd aloud,

He's dead : the palace is in arms : fly, madam,

And save yourself.

ALZIRA.

Let us begone, and help

My Zamor.

EMIRA.

What can we do for him ?

ALZI-

ALZIRA

Die.

S C E N E VII.

ALZIRA, EMIRA, Don ALONZO, Guards.

ALONZO.

I've orders, madam, to secure you.

ALZIRA.

Slave,

What mean'st thou? where's my Zamor?

ALONZO.

That I know not:

Permit me to conduct you.

ALZIRA.

cruel fate!

I must not die then? Zamor is no more,
 And yet I live, a captive, and in chains:
 O ignominious!—dost thou weep, barbarian?
 I must indeed be wretched, if my woes
 Can touch a heart like thine; I'll follow thee;
 If death awaits me, I obey with pleasure.

. END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V. S C E N E I.

ALZIRA, Guards.

ALZIRA.

PRepares your tortures, you who call yourselves
 The judges of mankind ; why am I left
 In dread suspense, uncertain of my fate ?
 To live, or die ? if I but mention Zamor
 The guards around me tremble, and look pale,
 His very name affrights them.

S C E N E II.

MONTEZUMA, ALZIRA.

ALZIRA.

Ha ! my father !

MONTEZUMA.

○ my Alzira, what a scene of woe
 Hath thy imprudent fatal passion brought
 Amongst us ! we were pleading for thy Zamor,
 The good Alvarez had well nigh prevail'd,
 When on a sudden an arm'd soldier rush'd
 With violence in, and bore down all before him ;
 'Twas Zamor's self ; with fury in his aspect,
 And wild distraction, on he sprung to Guzman,
 Attack'd, and plung'd the dagger in his breast :
 The blood that issued from your husband's wound

Gush'd

Gush'd on your father: Zamor then resign'd,
 With calm submission at Alvarez' feet
 Fell humble; "take," he cry'd, "this guilty sword,
 "Stain'd with thy Guzman's blood, I am reveng'd;
 "Now nature calls on thee to do thy duty,
 "As I have mine; strike here:" then bar'd his breast
 To the expected blow: the good Alvarez
 Sunk breathless in my arms; confusion follow'd
 And cries and horror; Guzman's friends uprais'd him'
 Bound up his wounds, and try'd by every art
 Of med'cine to preserve his life; the people
 Accuse thee as accomplice in the deed,
 And call for justice on thee.

ALZIRA.

And could'st thou —

MONTEZUMA.

O no; my heart suspects thee not, Alzira,
 Thy soul I know is capable of error,
 But not of guilt: alas! thou did'st not see
 The precipice before thee: Guzman dies
 By Zamor's hand, thy husband by thy lover;
 They will condemn thee to a shameful death,
 But I will try if possible to move
 The council in thy favour.

A L-

ALZIRA.

Do not sue

For me, my father, of these cruel tyrants,
 Let but Alvarez live, and love me still,
 I ask no more : Guzman's untimely fate
 I must lament, because 'twas horrible,
 Because, more dreadful still, he had deserv'd it :
 Zamor reveng'd his wrongs, I cannot blame
 Nor can I praise him for it ; he must die ;
 Alzira wishes but to follow him.

ALVAREZ.

O heav'n, assist me in this work of mercy !

S C E N E III.

ALZIRA.

Now end all gracious pow'r, this wretched being !
 Alas ! Alzira, the new God thou serv'ft
 Withholds thy hand, and says thou must not finish
 Thy hated life ; the deities I left
 Deny'd me me not the privilege to die.
 Is it a crime to hasten on, perhaps
 A few short years, the universal doom
 Appointed for us all ? and must we drink
 The bitter cup of sorrow to the dregs ?
 In this vile body is there aught so sacred
 That the free spirit shou'd not leave at will

Its

Its homely mansion? this all-conqu'ring nation,
 Shall they dispeople earth, destroy my race,
 Condemn Alzira, and I not be mistress
 Of my own life? Barbarians! Zamor then
 Must die in tortures.

S C E N E IV.

ZAMOR in chains, ALZIRA, Guards.

ZAMOR.

Yes, it is decreed;

We both must die; beneath the specious name
 Of justice, the tribunal hath condemn'd us;
 Guzman yet lives, my erring hand had left
 Its work unfinish'd; the barbarian lives
 To glut his vengeance with Alzira's blood,
 To taste a tyrant's savage joy, and see us
 Perish together — to pronounce our doom
 Alvarez comes: I am the guilty cause;
 Thou dy'st for me, Alzira.

ALZIRA.

Then no more,
 For death is welcome if it comes with Zamor:
 O bless the happy hour that shall dissolve
 My ties to Guzman; I may love thee now
 Without a crime, without remorse; receive

The

The heart that's due to thee, and thee alone :
 Yon dreadful scaffold, for our death prepar'd,
 Shall be the altar of my love ; there, Zamor,
 I'll offer up my faith, and expiate there
 My crime of infidelity — the worst
 Of all our sentence is, that it must come
 From good Alvarez.

ZAMOR.

See, he's here ; his cheeks
 Are bath'd in tears.

ALZIRA.

Alas ! who most deserves
 Compassion ? this will be a dreadful parting.

S C E N E V.

ALZIRA, ZAMOR, ALVAREZ, Guards.

ZAMOR.

From you we both expect to hear our fate,
 Pronounce it, we are not afraid to die :
 Zamor deserves it, he has slain thy son,
 The son of good Alvarez, of my friend ;
 But what, my lord, has this fair innocent,
 What has Alzira done ? thou art not cruel,
 Proud, and revengeful, like thy countrymen,
 Distinguish'd by thy clemency, we lov'd
 Alvarez ; wilt thou give up the fair title
 Of just and good, and bathe thee in the blood
 Of innocence ?

ALZI-

ALZIRA.

Revenge thyself, revenge

Thy son; but do not thus condemn the guiltless:
 I am the wife of Guzman, that alone
 Shou'd tell thee, I wou'd save, and not betray him,
 Ev'n tho' I hated, I respected him,
 And swerv'd not from my faith, thou knowst I did not:
 Careless of what the stand'ring multitude
 May think, I rest my character on thee,
 Acquitted by Alvarez, for the rest
 'Tis equal all: if Zamor dies, Alzira
 Must go with him: I pity thee alone.

ALVAREZ.

Amazing scene of tenderness and horror!
 That he should be the murth'rer of my son
 Who was my kind deliverer! O Zamor,
 To thee I owe a life which I abhor;
 It was a fatal gift, and bought too dear:
 I am a father, yet I am a man;
 Spite of a parent's grief that cries aloud
 For vengeance on thee, gratitude pleads strongly;
 She will be heard:—and thou who wert my daughter,
 Whom yet I call by that dear tender name;
 Think not I joy in the inhuman pleasure
 Of fell revenge; I lose a friend, I lose

A daughter, and a son: the council dooms thee
 To death, and bids a wretched father pass
 The cruel sentence; I cou'd not refuse
 The dreadful task, and now am come, my children,
 To save you both: it is in Zamor's pow'r.

ZAMOR.

To save Alzira? say, what's to be done?

ALVAREZ.

Believe in him who now inspires Alvarez;
 One word will change your fate: the law decrees,
 Whoe'er becomes a christian meets forgiveness,
 The God of pardon will himself o'er shade
 Thy ev'ry crime, and take thee to his mercy;
 Spain will protect and love thee as a brother;
 Alzira shall be safe, ye both shall live;
 I'll answer for her life as for thy own;
 Zamor, to thee I speak; of thee I ask
 Another life, I owe thee one already;
 A father asks thee only to be happy,
 To be a christian, and to save Alzira.

ALZIRA.

What says my love? say, shou'd we purchase life
 So dearly? Shall I quit my gods for Guzman's,
 And be a traitor? tell me, thou sage tyrant,
 When I was master of thy fate, wou'dst thou,

Had

Had Zamor sued, have quitted thy own gods
For mine?

ALVAREZ.

I shou'd have done as now I do,
Implor'd th' almighty being to enlighten
A heart like thine, and make thee a true christian.

ZAMOR.

O cruel contest! what am I to choose,
Or life or death, Alzira, or my gods,
Which must I leave? Alzira, 'tis thy cause,
Determine it; I think thou wou'dst not bring
Dishonour on thy Zamor.

ALZIRA.

Hear me then :

Thou know'st that, to obey a father's will,
I gave another what to thee alone
I had devoted; I embrac'd his faith,
And worshipp'd Montezuma's God; perhaps
It was the error of my easy youth,
And thou wilt blame me for it; but methought
The law of christians was the law of truth,
And therefore only did I make it mine
But to renounce those gods our heart adores;
That is no venial error, but a crime
Of deepest die; it is to give up both,

The

The God we worship, and the God we leave ;
 'Tis to be false to heaven, to the world,
 And to ourselves : no, Zamor, if thou dy'ft,
 Die worthy of Alzira ; hear the voice
 Of conscience ; act as she alone directs thee.

ZAMOR.

Thou hast determin'd as I thought thou wou'dst,
 Zamor shall die with honour.

ALVAREZ.

Then ye scorn
 Our proffer'd mercy : hark ! those mournful cries—

S C E N E VII.

ALVAREZ, GUZMAN, ZAMOR, Americans, Soldiers.

ZAMOR.

O save Alzira ; let me perish.

ALZIRA.

No :

I will be join'd to Guzman, and to thee.

ALVAREZ.

My son is in the agonies of death ;

O Guzman, hear me.

ZAMOR.

Look on Zamor, learn

Of him to die.

G U Z-

GUZMAN.

[To Zamor.

Perhaps I may teach thee
 Another lesson : I have ow'd the world
 A good example long, and now I mean
 To pay the debt.

[Turning to Alvarez.

My soul is on the wing,
 And e'er she takes her flight but waits to see
 And imitate Alvarez ; O my father,
 The mask is off, death has at last unveil'd
 The hideous scene, and shew'd me to myself ;
 New light breaks in on my astonish'd soul :
 O I have been a proud ungrateful being,
 And trampled on my fellow-creatures : heav'n
 Avenges earth : my life can ne'er atone
 For half the blood I've shed : prosperity
 Had blinded Guzman, death's benignant hand
 Restores my sight ; I thank the instrument
 Employ'd by heav'n to make me what I am,
 A penitent : I yet am master here ;
 And yet can pardon : Zamor, I forgive thee,
 Live and be free ; but O remember how
 A christian acted, how a christian dy'd.

[To Montezuma, who kneels to him.

Thou, Montezuma, and ye hapless victims
 Of my ambition, say my clemency

Sur-

Surpass'd my guilt, and let your sov'reigns know,
That we were born your conquerors.

[To Zamor.

Observe

The diff'rence, Zamor, 'twixt thy God and mine :
Thine teach thee to revenge an injury,
Mine to forgive and pity thee.

ALVAREZ.

My son,

Thy virtue's equal to thy courage,

ALZIRA.

Heav'n!

How wonderful a change ! amazing goodness !

ZAMOR.

Thou wilt oblige me to repent.

GUZMAN.

Yes, Zamor,

I will do more, thou shalt admire and love me :
Guzman too long hath made Alzira wretched,
I'll make her happy ; with my dying hand
I give her to thee, live and hate me not,
Restore your country's ruin'd walls, and bless
My memory.

[To Alvarez.

Alvarez, be once more

A father to them, let the light of heav'n

Shine

Shine forth upon them ; Zamor is thy fon,
Let him repair my los.

ZAMOR.

Amaz'd, confounded,
And motionless I stand ; can christians boast
Of such exalted virtue : 'twas inspir'd
By heav'n ; the christian's law must be divine :
Friendship, and faith, and constancy I knew
Already ; but this soars above them all :
I must indeed admire and love thee, Guzman
[Falls at his feet

ALZIRA.

My lord, permit me to embrace thy knees :
O I cou'd die for Guzman ; will you then
Forgive my weakness ?

GUZMAN.

Yes : I pardon all,
I cannot see thee weep and not forgive thee.
Come near, my father, take my last farewell ! [dies.

ALVAREZ. [To Montezuma.

I see the hand of God in all our woes,
And humbly bend myself before that pow'r
Who wounds to heal, and strikes but to forgive.

END of the SIXTH VOLUME.



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