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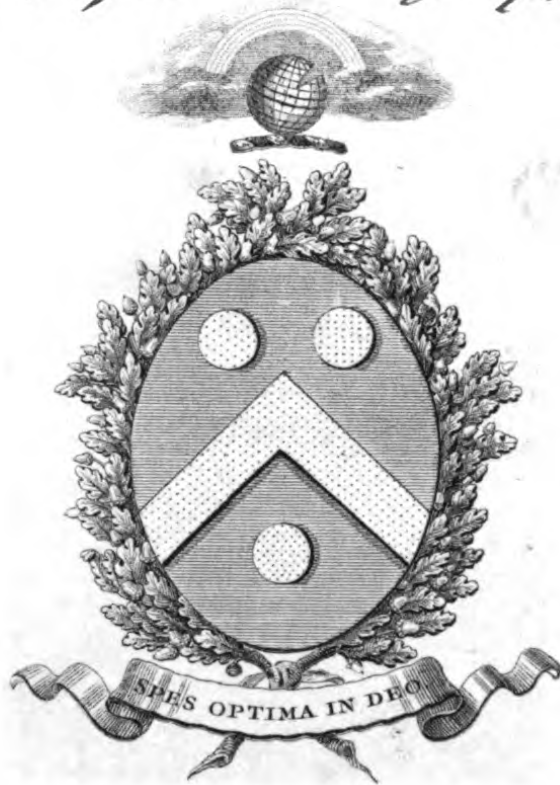
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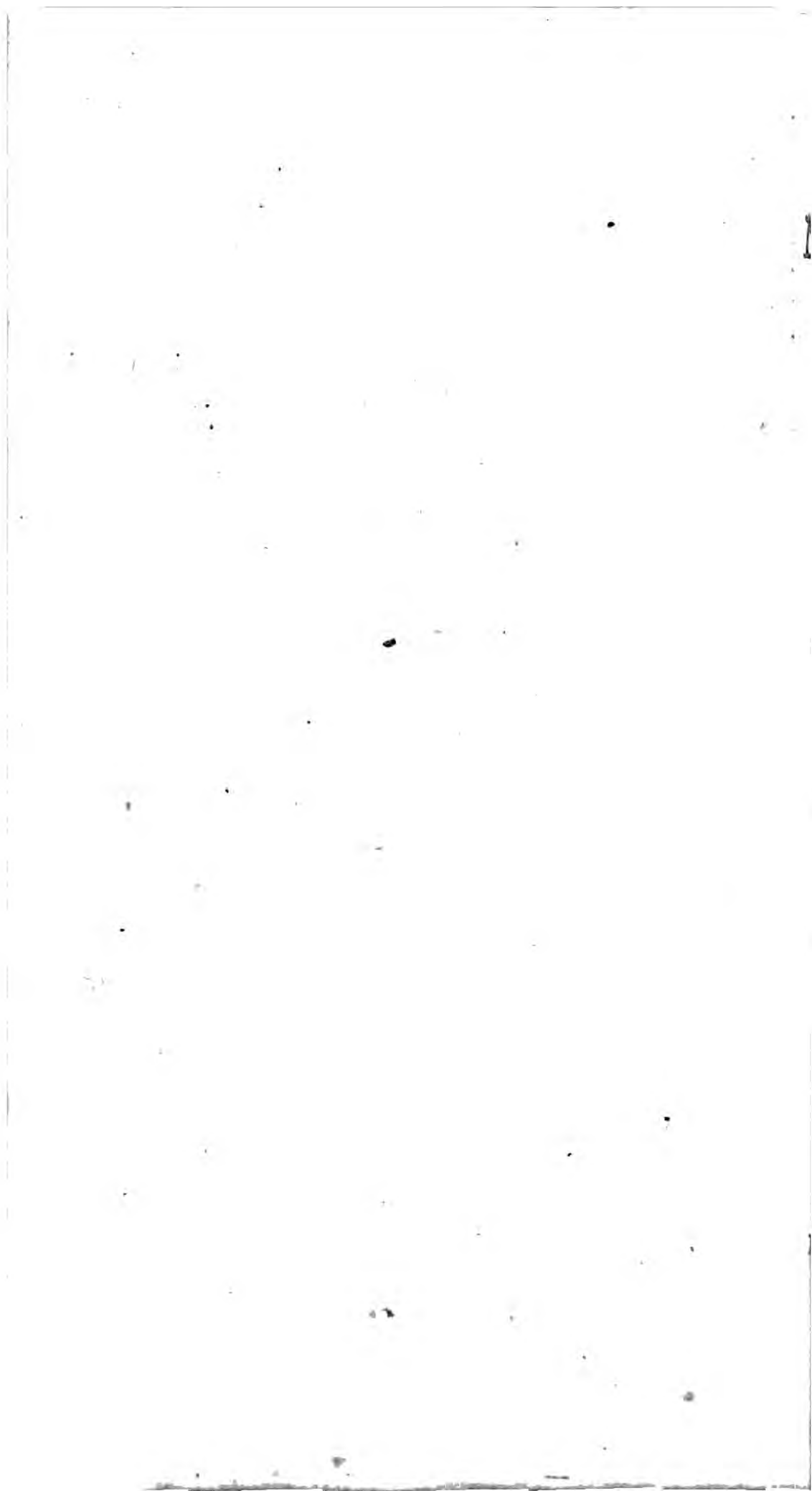
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John Thomas Hope.



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T H E
N I G H T C A P.

Humnoek

BY MR. M E R C I E R.

St Andrew,

I N T W O V O L U M E S.

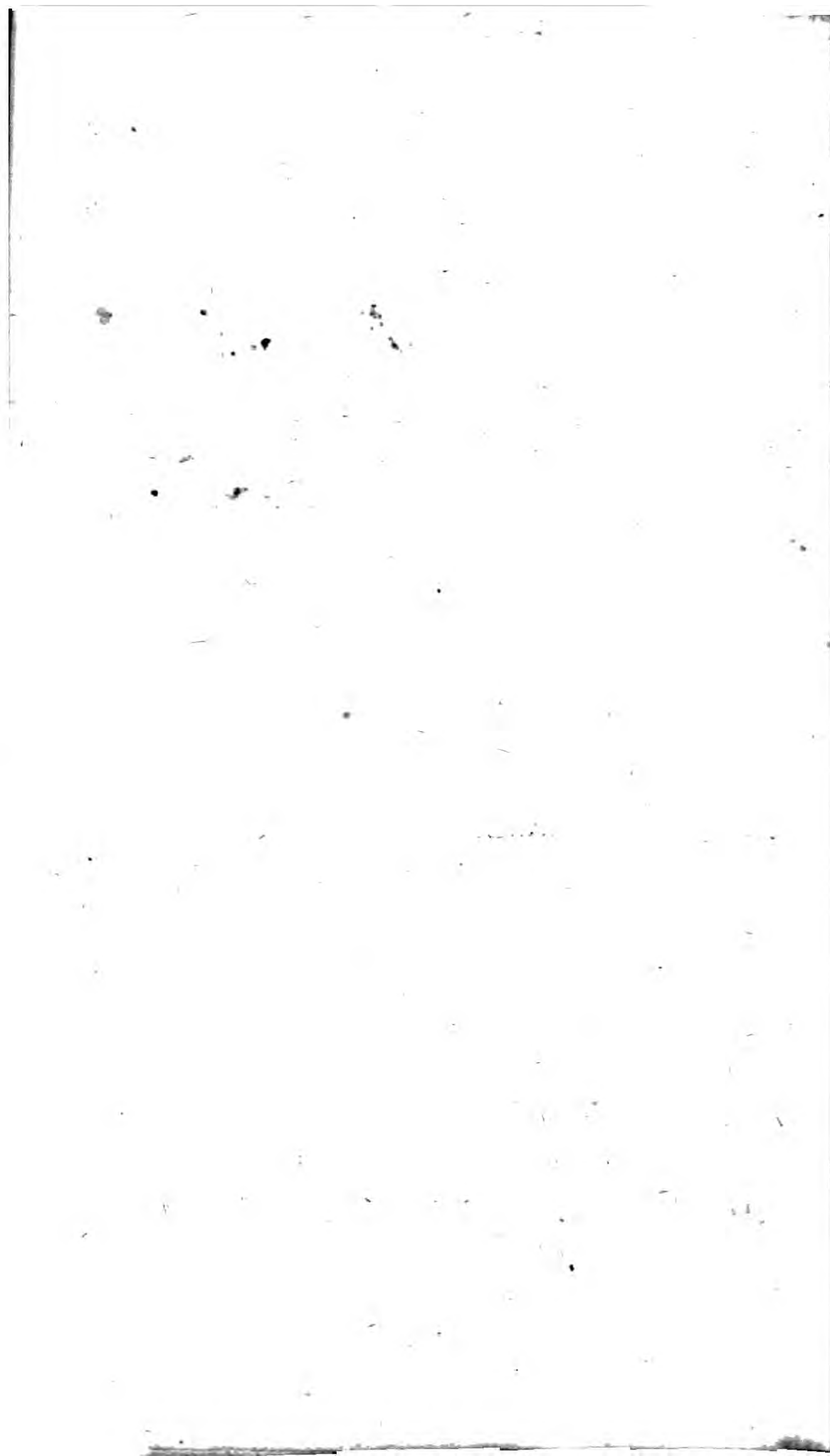
V O L U M E I.



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THE
N I G H T C A P.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

I Habituated myself to write every night before I lay down to rest, what remained in my mind of the impression of the day. — My pen was ready, and what I felt, saw, thought, heard, finally the result of my reading and conversation, every thing was put upon paper.

How delectable it is to converse alone with one's pen, the night cap on the head! — One is master of his ideas, of his expressions — a man delivers his thoughts in his own idiom; no critic, no purist present; one writes copiously and luxuriously.

What can be more useful than to recal to one's self what one has experienced, to pronounce what decrees we please on events, and, what flatters the vanity of an author above all, the reasonings that are circulated? Ah! ye solemn Aristarchuses, let me every night enjoy my pen one hour before I sleep!

4 THE NIGHT CAP.

Sometimes the most laughable tales offer themselves to my imagination; — then, like Democritus, I smile at human folly, and pass sentence for myself only, dealing out censure or praise; saying, Such a one, who spoke so big, in such a pompous style, knew not what he said; and another in the company was not noticed, was thorough master of the subject.

To conclude, during the silent night, my pen has prepared for my awaking a fresh enjoyment of the past day: — that day, lost to so many others, is not totally annihilated for me.

As I am pleased with this method of writing, I intend to pursue it. — An author must pay himself beforehand, unless he means to be reduced to the state of an injured creditor; for sometimes one receives nothing from a trifling and scornful public, who so arbitrarily judge us, and who, whether they praise or depreciate, never rate us according to our expectations. — It is right to be satisfied in the form, the ton, the style, and even in the title one gives his book.

On those principles, one cannot exclaim against the injustice and ingratitude of the age, who do not hear us; no interruption from envy or enmity, and contempt for the hireling scribblers; — one writes as one pleases, without reserve, without constraint. — The public give their opinion after, according to their judgement. — Every one has been at liberty — every one may estimate his enjoyment.

Now

Now I maintain it, that if an author is to do as he likes, he would be the dupe if he did not exert his right of serving the public as he pleases, and not as they haughtily require.

How pleasing is it, the head on the pillow, to say to one's self, I have fulfilled my duty, and when I give the public a great deal more than I receive, they are indebted to me.—On the whole, they are indebted to me, and not I to them. I have provided for them pleasing sensations; and what can they add to those I have experienced in writing?

THE OCEAN.

THIS day, for the first time in my life, I have seen the ocean, where old Neptune of the antients, who have depicted him armed with a trident, wounds the sides of the earth—the image is certainly just; the ocean seems to be the despot of the globe. Notwithstanding this unknown strength that breaks the fury of its waves against the sands on the shore, it appears, at certain intervals, it has impetuously surmounted its limits, the traces of which are still easy to be known:—they are imprinted in the minds of men, the terror of antient disasters, well founded by an uninterrupted tradition, and by visible traces of profound ruins and devastations, which are spread over the surface of the earth. At first sight, it appears dreadfully rent on all sides by the terrible element which preys upon,

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upon, undermines, sweeps away several parts, and swallows up in its abyss, at different periods, more or less remote spaces of land which supported towns, and sometimes kingdoms; it is, in a manner, only a weak crust that covers the large shells or timber work of the globe; it is torn to pieces by volcanos like a weak roof, and from the crevices the fire has opened, torrents pour forth their inundations, and cause those enormous large breaches which dig hollows for gulphs and lakes, where the majestic foundations of mountains before rested; their sunken tops are transformed to islands, where a scanty verdure replaces the snow-capp'd summits.

But it is the eye only that views ages as instants, that can reckon the sudden revolutions the globe has undergone; the equilibrium of water could not support itself on a moving theatre, perpetually hurled from west to east, and influenced besides by the motion of the heavenly bodies. As slow as ages, this motion has not escaped the modern sagacity of man. The earth has a visible tendency to rectify its axis, which has undoubtedly been disordered by some ancient revolution; — the activity of all those great bodies surrounding and incessantly pressing upon it, must displace the ocean, and successively impel its billows over all the points they can cover.

Can we, then, wonder if the proud elephant, who basks under the magnificent shades of Asia, has left his remains in the now frozen deserts of Siberia? — Mountains exhibit petrified

trified fish, and shells which preserve their colour and shades ; — sandy deserts present us traces of maritime towns ; in a word, whole forests have been buried under strata of stone, which time has formed over their tops. All inform us, the ocean, as sovereign, disposes of this earth as his dominion, over which he exerts at will his inevitable right. The hand of the bold Hollander, which has repelled the tyranny of the ocean, will not, alas ! always be able to keep this furious despot within bounds. Oh ! direful day, when its dikes will be levelled, when this magnificent, vigilant, laborious, wise, œconomical republic, will disappear from the face of the earth ; when the billows will erase the most glorious monument of courage and industry ! Avert this period, Divine Providence ! But if the eternal laws thou hast ordained cannot pass without their effect, at least suspend them, and delay this destructive irruption.

The physical laws have an unsurmountable force in their progression : what extraordinary and rapid effects would not this immense collection of waters have, when the dissolving power, a power no less active, is joined to its mass of weight.

Can the ocean, which is always on a balance, remain in a stagnated inactivity ? It must incessantly wash away our clay, and its greedy bosom seems to demand all the riches of the earth ; the outlines of mountains also seem to tell us, here flowed that fluid which girt us with an equal pressure. Every thing

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presents to our sight traces of the eternal combat of two rival elements, which yet are made to be united.

You have seen the devastation the ocean makes, let us turn our eyes to its good offices; the band of mankind renders all climates tributary to each other for their respective gifts, two distant worlds are blended together; — the waves seem to wash indiscriminately every coast, and roll on every shore, only to invite man to trust to their fluctuation, which will convey him in the twinkling of an eye to the opposite shore. — Again, contemplate the boldest, the most astonishing work of the daring genius of man, the moving bridge, the vessel, the sounding axe constructed in the port. At sight of this frail machine, we are astonished how they dare encounter all the dangers that await them on this perfidious element; — yet they will conquer it; — they will subdue the surge that threatens to swallow them, and the wind that threatens to dash them on the shoals; they will manage those destructive elements, the one by skilfully trimming their sails, the other by the ingenious shape of their machine; the leviathan, organized by nature to dwell in the sea, does not seem to be more powerful in the ocean than this inanimate machine guided by the weak hand of man. He flies victorious over the deep in as much security as the chariot that rolls on the solid level land.

But what preparations are necessary before she is masted, rigged, and fit to go to sea! the
flag

flag is hoisted; how much knowledge required to shape the course! Is there under heaven a more interesting sight, and that places the dignity of man in a finer point of view?

If the philosopher regrets seeing so superb a structure so frequently used for the purpose of covetousness, and to carry fetters to the most distant regions, let him remember man's meanness accompanies his greatness. In order to console him, let him only fancy this vessel crowded with a number of public-spirited men, led by the desire of new discoveries, looking out for a new world and unknown regions, only to aggrandize the influence of knowledge; that he sees philosophers visiting a new people, surprised at the astonishing structure, and carrying to shores scarce thought of, the consolatory arts, bringing back in exchange new and singular ideas, which astonish our moral systems, and derange those with which we are most familiarised.

If, on a revision of the disasters occasioned by the active mass of the ocean, one was asked how it happens so many scourges should be reunited against the habitation of man, where he dwells but for an instant; how nature is subjected to those violent extremities which tend to the destruction of the ancient generation of her children; how the human species subsist after those pending ravages, and how often they have been renewed from these ruins; finally, how an entire globe, peopled with twelve hundred millions of sensible, thinking beings, depend on the brutal action of the

elements of which he is the sport? Pope will answer, *a bubble of water that bursts, a world destroyed*, are equal to the eye that sees all.—Where does this globe fall? Into the hand that created it.

THE LAST JUDGEMENT.

THE picture of the last judgement is the most sublime that ever was drawn by the hand of man;—it is so grand, so magnificent, so awful, it ought to make a part in the plan of the universe. All hearts laid open before the universal assembly of mankind, guilty thoughts, crimes unveiled in broad day light, and the wretch who usurped the homage due to virtue crushed under the weight of infamy. The Judge of the Universe leaving to each of his creatures, as a punishment or a reward, the picture of his past life, a faithful living picture that the deceitful hand can no longer palliate with artifice or error; truth blazing forth with all its rays, piercing into the most secret folds of the human heart; the innocent, who stood condemned, triumphs in the face of the universe, whilst the guilty, who escaped by the false opinion of mankind, hears his sentence pronounced by the Judge who sees all; falsehood has disappeared from the earth; all darkness is dissipated,—no more shades; a pure light which expands over the utility of the eternal decrees; an authentic reparation of the transient calamities the good man experienced;

THE NIGHTCAP. II

perienced ; a loud publication of what secret treachery imagined was buried in the silent grave. All crimes arising from the deep abyss on the surface of the glass where Divine Justice presides ; the lightning of his glance punishes or rewards ; the monarch on a level with the meanest of his subjects ; the sword of ambition and the sceptre of pride alike shivered ; the hand that offered the glass of water through charity, striking out the proud one that formed the most splendid monument of genius.—What ideas more grand, more magnificent, more consoling, more proper to encourage virtue, to deter vice, to draw a man nearer to eternity, which he forgets ! Where shall we find in Homer, Pindar, Virgil, in any ancient or modern poet, a description any way equal to the majestic grandeur of this.

F I R E.

WHAT is this element that, by the prodigious activity with which it is gifted, escapes examination and the observing mind ? Soul of nature ! it is at the same time the most violent, and the most rapid destroyer of its forms. Whilst kept within bounds, it increases vegetation, it adorns the earth with fruits and verdure, it transforms sand into diamonds, it nourishes the strength and life of the universe ; but when let loose, it decomposes all parts of nature, it throws the

elements into confusion, and so alters them as not easily to be known again; even the chymist, whilst imploring its aid in the bottom of his crucible, is astonished at its ravages; its effects are terrible on the globe; it displaces foundations of mountains, it changes beds of rivers; and, to contemplate the mouths of volcanos, it threatens to set fire, at some time or other, to the planet we inhabit.

It is a portion of this element, more or less diffused in bodies, that fires the lion and causes his roaring; it is it makes the courser bound, and fills his nerves and muscles with a subtile flame; it incessantly puts the lively squirrel in motion; the young man's heart expands under the impresson of this ignious matter, which, being weakened in the veins of the aged, renders them cold and heavy. The brilliancy and energy of nature are due to this fire which preserves and devours.

S L E E P.

NEWTON sleeps! In an instant, that active and penetrating quality which gave life to the most abstruse sciences, which unravelled the system of the universe with so much clearness and precision, falls into darkness and confusion, and no longer forms any other than a heap of confused and erroneous ideas. Instead of those firm and fertile principles, it follows fleeting phantoms, and is given up to ridiculous perceptions. The mind of the
man

man of genius, who pursued truth with such astonishing sagacity, is abandoned to the most inordinate irregularity. Grotesque figures replace the most sublime geometrical lines; there is no longer any harmony in that head which astonished his fellow creatures—even the motion and duration of time is lost to it.—But a ray of the sun opens Newton's eyes; he awakes; and instantly resumes his vigorous faculties; they rally like dispersed soldiers, who, at the first beat of the drum, are no longer scattered, but form one body. By what power is it the most enlightened order of ideas succeeds the most foolish visions? How is it reason shines suddenly after so long an eclipse, and which seemed so durable? What is that state which deprives man of every mark of distinction without changing his nature, and which restores to him his soul and thought with a rapidity equal to that which carried them away?

Œ C O N O M Y.

DOMESTIC œconomy is not a shining virtue, but it is a solid one, and one of the best I know. It lays the foundation of buildings, as also of all great establishments and enterprises for the good of the public.—It is the obscure root that nourishes the pompous foliage of those trees which rear their heads to the clouds.

Poverty is the constant spring of preying care, uneasiness, a disordered mind, and painful

ful restlessness; it is the stimulative to low and base actions. Economy, which drives far away all those torments, which shelters us from those ever-growing thorns, is at once the consoling support of life, and the safeguard of virtue; it is a soft pillow where we slumber without dread of what is to happen, always in obscurity, and therefore formidable. Upon the whole, economy is the most useful virtue to the rising generation; it takes in two ages at once,—a privilege which seldom belongs to any other.

H O R A C E.

WHAT is the vilest thing in the world? It is a courtly poet, who bends his genius to the language of slavery,—who by his verses, both mean and sublime, for ever brands his baseness, forgetful of solid fame, begs a shameful pension for a venal song,—who flatters an Emperor he dreads or despises, and endeavours to deceive posterity, not being able to deceive himself—well!—this man, this despicable poet, is Horace;—artful, greedy, and pliant; he makes use of morality in order to corrupt it; veiling his meanness under careless epicurism; he possesses the vigour of imagination of a freeman, and the expression of a slave. I am sensible he is acute, ingenious, and delicate, and that is the reason I am in pain when I read him: in my opinion he pollutes his wit. Aid me, Jevenal, aid me to shield me from the
 darts

darts of corruption! — Seduced by his wit I might cherish his manner. I will not admire him. No, the true satirist, who sticks to morals, who humbles vice by naming the vicious; he is the useful man to the age he chastises, who is respectable to posterity by transmitting morality in its utmost purity. They would grow negligent were it not for the avengers of public decency.

C O N S C I E N C E.

WHAT treasure so comfortable as that of a good conscience, which, as a faithful mirror, reflects nothing to us that can create uneasiness!

What a heart-felt and glorious delight to survey all one's life in an uniform point, and not to have to reproach ourselves the tears or misfortunes of others! There are undoubtedly weaknesses inseparable from humanity; but the recollection of those faults does not destroy our interior peace, when one can say he has not offended himself or others.— The good man is absolved in his own breast, and forms the design of rising to greater perfection.— Compare this happy state to the storm that remorse, fear, and dread drag after them, and you will see realized the true and terrible picture of the furies that pursue the profligate wretch, and overwhelm his soul with hellish despair.

H Y M N

HYMN TO SPRING.

SEASON of love and hope, receive my homage! Thy return manifests itself to the mute inhabitants of the billows, as well as the roaring brutes of the forest, the country and the cities. The fresh, odoriferous, and harmonious air, that surrounds me, totally electrify me; a subtile flame invades my sensations; and thy presence kindles in my softened soul that celestial, that creative desire, which impious fanaticism has too long insulted.

How lively this horizon which my greedy eye surveys, and of which I am the center! Or rather my soul shoots rapidly like lightning on the different objects within its circumference; it respire, it favours, it feels them, it considers them in every sense, even to the imagination of being quite indentified with them.

Ye tender flowers! is this the first time the phenomenon of regeneration is wrought in you? Endowed with both sexes, you have no dread of the faithless or seducer; divested of alarms or impatience, you wait nature's impulse without resistance.

Ye lilies! adorable emblem of innocence, neither my breath nor finger shall pollute your nuptial robe; the pure rays of the sun alone are permitted to touch thy celestial whiteness without tarnishing. Suffer me, at least, to adore thee! — What a temple in the midst of this calix — both sexes bloom, — the depository

tory organs of the fruitful dew already feel an intestine commotion; a vortex of living atoms descend, as a cloud, on this sanctuary; the mysterious signal is announced by an electric flame, and the ineffable work of creation is on a sudden accomplished.

Whence comes this organized tube that creeps and devours those leaves? Bristled with filken thorns, and feet, yet shapeless—of what nature is it? What is its fate? Is it an hermaphrodite, or does it precede its consort? But it wraps itself in a web that conceals it from my sight: lurking behind this curtain, he is in a state of enjoyment.—Wonderful metamorphosis! Behold him darting in the airy plains, his colours more charming than the bird of Juno; his waving wings and his delicate horns are the lively image of Zephyrus; it is Zephyrus himself, caressing every flower as he flies; and the flowers, jealous of his homage, unvailing their bosoms, and abandoning their nectar to his desires.

What dreadful echo assails my ear? Every thing shudders in those gloomy caverns. Is it war that threatens? Let us compose ourselves—Every thing is now delight, every thing is luxury:—it is the lion, who roars with love at sight of his mate, —it fires, it blazes from their sparkling eyes. Happy athletes! they bound, they compress, they embrace, and their vigorous muscles grow languid under the weight of pleasure.

Ye colossal masses that sustain the globe and the clouds, what daring hand has transported

ported you to the middle of the continent, whilst on your tops the proud oak extends far his branches to favour the sports and nests of the timid bird? At your feet, the modest vine sucks the spiritous liquor which is to be collected for Hebe's cup, and the gods await for.

God of spring! hast thou ever penetrated into those deep caverns, where reigns eternal silence, where death seems to have fixed his empire? Yes, guided by the flame of love, thou sinkest, surrounded by the elements, into those dark recesses, then all is in motion, every thing seeks, draws, and combines itself; then is produced an infinite variety of minerals which adorn themselves in the richest apparel; the silver rises as a shrub, the spath, in a transparent pyramid; the lead and emerald in light columns; the sparkling crystal and the brilliant pyrites, like Proteus in the fable, disguised in a thousand forms, and tinge themselves with all the shades in the picture of Iris.

Let us adore that once-virgin land, now fertilized by the genius of man and the father of seasons. What streams of life circulate in its entrails! I see youth and beauty ouzing from its pores. To which of those objects must I pay my tribute of love? Is it to the verdure which enchants my soul? Is to the vegetable that nourishes me? To the nightingale who enlivens me? To the lily that intoxicates me? To the linden tree that offers me his shade? Is it to the green turf that in-
vites.

vites me to sleep? Oh dream of life! do not yet fly from me.

I will wander across those corn fields with the young partridge. What a treasure! What a magnificent profusion? — Never, no never, did plenty offer itself to mortal eyes with so seducing an aspect. Emulous of the forests see how those ears of corn arise! How they press on one another! — The more I advance — their fine and elastic stems recal to my enraptured heart — What do I see? Where am I? — Asleep in this solitary place! — Yes, it is Delphina. — Love! Hymen! cover us with your wings.

THE WHALE.

CAN you catch the whale with a hook? says the book of Job. Will you make him your slave and your victim? Who can look on it without being struck with terror? Who! The Dutch sailor. He harpoons, cuts it up, and carries it away.

The majestic whale daily converts into his substance a million of herrings. Attentive nature furnishes this astonishing consumption. It opens all its sources of fertility to multiply the spawn of this species which regenerates on the coasts and surface of the sea, as the grass grows in the fields. This magnificent prodigality, after nourishing the weighty monsters of the sea, enriches a republic. — Is it not curious to see the Dutchman, on the

the coast of Greenland, catching the herring which will be eat by the peaceable Parisian?

The famished Esquimaux also attacks, fights, and conquers the weighty whale, the ferocious sea dog, and the other monsters of the ocean. Notwithstanding their strength, their activity, and the stormy abyss where they plunge, they expire and feed him who subjects the universe to his wants; his victorious industry seizes, subdues his prey on moving gulphs. He then drinks the whale oil; he devours the fish whose head broke mountains of ice; he shews he is not only the destroyer, but even master of the animals who inhabit the air, the earth, and the sea.

The northern seas contain riches which are refused to the earth. What is the chain that binds the hand-worm to the whale, and the whale to the incredible production of the kraven, animated island, monster which reason cannot admit, and whose existence is yet confirmed?

S A I L O R S.

WH Y are sailors so soon tired of being on shore? It is, because having been accustomed to the most violent effects of fear, hope, and joy, surrounded with danger, and consequently impressed with the strongest and most lively emotions, they experience in those different agitations a variety they are strangers to in an uniform life at land; they have at sea
the

the pleasure of feeling themselves more alive than elsewhere, because they are perpetually at the point of death; their minds are in continual action, and engrossed by the most important concerns. And it has been remarked, that military men and seamen are the boldest gamblers in the world; they cannot bear poor and trifling chances; the dice must give them an equivalent to the hazards on which they risk their existence. — No medium for those men who, almost in a moment, pass from the extremities of joy to fear.

THE BIRD.

IF we were permitted to be dissatisfied with the condition of man, and were allowed to chuse our rank in the animal creation, what do you think would be my choice? I would be a bird,—not a bird of prey, but a swallow, or a bird of Paradise. I repeat it, I would wish to be a bird, because of the strength and extent of its vision. — How charmed should I be to soar over towns and steeples! to view extensive forests as verdured grass plots! to gaze on the vast circumference of the firmament! to keep in view the gold and azure brilliancy of the clouds! to be able to elevate my body with astonishing rapidity, support and balance it in the air in a pliant combined flight! to turn every way, to send forth soft and melodious vibrations! — Ah, what rapture to dart towards the pompous luminary of the
the

the day, to plunge, to frolick in his rays! My eye by its structure would not be fatigued, but overjoyed; I would contemplate all the radiant colours, which to me would make the surface of the earth an enchanting landscape. In a large tract I would make long voyages, — I would run over republics and kingdoms, passing seas and visiting islands. Every night I would choose an elevated and shady repository; I would set out in the morning with the dawn, and always in the luxury of the enjoyment of vision, I would have before my eyes the rich perspective of nature in its true colours.

THE GLOBE.

EMPIRES fall, generations are annihilated, seas change their beds, continents larger than Europe are overwhelmed, mountains are opened by subterranean fires, but the substance of the globe does not seem to feel it; it is a puncture on an orange; the form, the grandeur, are unalterable, and it is the surface only that is lightly scratched.

Mankind make a great bustle about this surface; they are incessantly labouring to destroy the bent of nature which inclines to repose, to silence, to uniformity; she would soon cover the globe with brambles, thick stuff, and unwholesome forests, where all vegetables, heaped and confused together, would only open to fall into putrefaction, if man,

with his spade, his hatchet, his plough share, did not give it a new form which constitutes its ornament and beauty. Then, by the various combinations which influence the atmosphere, arises a more pure air which circulates freely, and preserves coolness and life.

The progress of the universe, of the great whole, staggers our thoughts on reflection. This great whole, in its immense and rapid course, by annihilating empires, overturns opinions, systems, destroys facts, changes appearances; and whilst the course of nature seems equal to us, its progression, which is measured by eternity, no longer will allow a distinction of time or place.

Ages are instants, nations individuals, works of genius perishable parchment; every thing falls into the abyss of infinite littleness, and the august mass of the universe seems truly independent of those accessory ages that decorate it.

Newton imagined, that nature being ruled by mechanical laws, would, in time, become old, or that this immense machine would be discomposed by the friction of its own activity. In that case, his own laws being thus weakened, would no longer so strictly bind the suns and worlds. Attraction losing its force, would no longer bind down the planetary system. The motion being slower, would cause the most terrible phenomena. The sun leaving its orbit, would sink into the utmost depth of heaven, pale and obscure; and the earth pursuing an uncertain course,
would

would soon experience cold and darkness in both hemispheres.

The wandering moon would no longer cherish the ocean, and contagion would arise from the immense corrupted waters; death would annihilate the animal race, and the earth rambling in the void space, would exhibit a barren, depopulated aspect.

This description, though dismal, has an appearance of grandeur and majesty; the death of a sovereign who had a glorious reign, has a something solemn in it; his tomb impresses respect, and engages our attention; the dissolution of the universe fills the mind with awe; and the extinction of the human race has less effect on us than that of a friend or a mother.

But could man remain inactive and insensible in the world, whilst so many extraordinary events assail his senses, and open so vast a field for employment? How could he be indifferent whilst so many miracles were wrought? Let the animal confined to vegetate, to seek his food, sleep; but can man say, time lies heavy on my hands, I do not know how to find employment?—a very extraordinary lamentation to proceed from a reasonable being.

We must not look upon the world as a piece of inanimate clay, a rude heap of stagnated parts; a true circulation every where prevails; all things are animated in this great body. Nature operates in the deepest subterraneous caverns, as well as smiles, and is verdant on the surface. Mines engender, stones

grow, waters circulate; a mild heat, a generative quality insinuates itself in the hardest rocks; the mine is organized, as well as the oak which grows on the mountain top. This mass is not an indigested chaos where matter is heaped together, — it is a true animated body, where the sea is, by its motion, a good representation of the circulation of the blood in the human body.

This soul of the universe supports at once its beauty, its harmony, its duration; and man possesses within him a celestial principle superior to the soul of the world. This is the reason why he sees and admires this great whole; this is the reason why he endeavours to understand it; — from hence arises also the love of order, and those laws which, however whimsical they sometimes are, announce, they seek to establish the rights of each being. — Were it not for the tyranny of the passions, every man would be, perhaps, a Plato, or a Marcus Aurelius.

It has been too much the custom, to delight in degrading man, who has raised such durable and beautiful monuments on earth; — he is for ever reproached with his weakness, whilst he perpetually endeavours to overcome it. Man's errors bear the stamp of his genius; he often strays because he combines too many ideas, and their frequency, their multiplicity, deprive them of the necessary perspicuity. The sphere of activity which animated the erroneous genius of the Cardans, the Paracelsuses, the Alberts, was,

perhaps, as great as that of the Bacons, the Descarteses, and the Newtons. — There are such things as sublime errors: — the more ideas we conceive, the more difficult they are to be united. Alas! the activity of human reason sooner discovers his weakness than his incapacity.

Nature, following the eternal laws that has been assigned to it, pays no regard to human labours or systems, or even to man, whose existence seems less essential to order and motion than the current of the most trifling rivulet, or the situation of the smallest hillock. — A rock is one hundred times more durable than a generation of men.

THE FIRMAMENT.

WHERE is the grand revelation? In the order and view of the heavens, it is there the Supreme Being manifests himself palpably.

Where is the book of the eternal? It is wrote in fiery characters; the stars are the splendid points of this awful book; truth is imprinted in the heavens. — How dare the impious man deny what the universe acknowledges and adores?

An invisible power is above us, which accompanies, surrounds, and visibly leaves every where the stamp of profound intelligence, and a variety of designs which increase *ad infinitum*. We cannot shun this grand idea, that a something extraneous holds

holds us in dependence. Our birth, our organization, our sensations, our thoughts, all conspire to tell us, a power incessantly in action, and perfectly enlightened, has created, disposed, arranged, supports, animates, and preserves.

Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, Newton, of different countries and rank in life, acknowledged and adored the same God. Newton bowed his head every time he pronounced the name of the Supreme Being! There must be a certain blindness of mind or perverseness of heart in him who does not imitate him.

Socrates or Anaxagoras was the first who acknowledged, from the order and motion of the universe, the visible impression of a pure and sole Spiritual Being. He exploded the words chance and necessity, which only gave birth to absurd ideas. Socrates had the honour to suffer martyrdom for the Divinity.— Never did a man die in a more glorious cause, or with more dignity.

Socrates will be ever revered by philosophers and sages :—they will adopt his maxims, and wish to end their lives as he did. They made the man drink poison who maintained there is only one uncreated God, omnipotent, just, and good; and the idolator was both judge and executioner.

There is an inscription found on a statue in Upper Egypt, which is only applicable to the Supreme Being : — “ I am all that has been, “ all that is, and all that will be; there is no “ mortal has yet drawn the veil that hides me.”

O P T I M I T Y.

A Dream.

I HAD been a whole day reflecting on the good fortune which attends the wicked, and the evil that pursues the virtuous man. Night had spread its wings : — but who can sleep on the downy bed, whilst the unhappy suffer — whilst his plaintive groans reproach our repose, and awake in our hearts the invincible sensation of pity ? It is not the philosopher, or in other words, it is not the philanthropist ; — his sensitive soul is too closely connected with the fate of his fellow creature to be unconcerned like the wicked man. The virtuous man cannot be happy whilst mankind are miserable.

My feeble senses gave way to sleep, but my free and powerful thoughts still pursued my meditations. I did not loose sight of the fate of the unfortunate ; — my imagination was awake and interested in them. I was still irritated, although in a dream, at the view this wretched earth offered me, where insolent vice is triumphant, and timid virtue scorned and persecuted.

I experienced those torments which a man cannot resist who is not wrapped up in the single point of his own existence. I walked sorrowful in a slow pace across the beautiful plains of Azora ; — but tranquillity, which reigned over the smiling face of nature, did not penetrate my heart. Scenes of in-
justice,

justice, crimes, tyranny, all rushed in my thoughts. — On the one hand, I heard cries of famished indigence dispersed in the air; on the other, the mad and blustering exultations of barbarous and insensible beings abounding with superfluities. All the miseries which load the human race, all the griefs which consume and destroy it, crowded on my memory; I sighed, and the soft, but bitter, shaft of pity wounded my heart deliciously, and briny tears flowed down my cheeks. — I gave way to my complaints, and was so imprudent to murmur against the Almighty Hand that rules the world. I exclaimed, — Oh God! let not mine ears any longer hear the sighs of misery and the groans of despair; let not mine eyes behold man destroying his fellow creature; no longer let me witness the sparkling sword of despotism or the odious chains of slavery; or give me another heart, that I may no longer suffer with an unhappy world. Alas, thou hast given life to so many innocent creatures, who did not solicit it! Was it only to see them come into the world, suffer, and die? — Sorrow sweeps over this afflicted earth like a furious hurricane, whilst pleasure is as rare and light as the inconstant wing of Zephyrus.

I was going on with my complaint, when I felt myself elevated in the air by an unknown power: the earth shook, the heavens sent forth their lightning, and my terrified sight traced the immense space beneath. I perceived I had sinned; and exclaimed: — *Mercy,*

Oh, my God, shew mercy to a poor weak creature who adores thee, but whose heart is too susceptible to human misery! Instantly my feet were firm on an unknown land; I was in a profound obscurity, where I remained some time; at length a ray more rapid and penetrating than lightning dissipated the darkness that surrounded me. A genius, adorned with six brilliant wings, presented itself before me; I knew him by the celestial lustre which shone around his head, by the divine characters imprinted on his luminous countenance, to be one of the angels of the Most High.—*Listen,* said he, with a countenance that inspired me with courage, *listen, and no longer censure Providence, because thou art a stranger to its ways:—follow me.* I followed him to the foot of a mountain, whose summit reached the skies. I ascended, or rather climbed. Figure to yourself enormous rocks, suspended one above the other, which threatened every instant to fall and crush the plain. In vain the eye sought a plant or tree in the midst of this frightful prospect, which had a resemblance to animated nature; nothing was to be seen but a range of rocks, half calcined by the thunder claps. Trembling, I followed my conductor; and the roaring of lions and tygers, more dreadful from the echo, struck me with terror; at each step I was obliged to support myself on my assistant angel, and on each side.—Oh, dreadful sight! wretched mortals were endeavouring to scale those high rocks, and hanging on their points, but soon overcome
by

by their efforts, tottered, called in vain for help, fell crushed to pieces, and became the prey of tygers, who fought for their mangled limbs in the valley.

I dreaded the same fate awaited me, when the angel said to me: — *Thus Providence punishes man's rash audacity. Why will man penetrate into what is impenetrable? His first duty is to acknowledge his weakness. Every thing turns invisibly under the hand of God; God vouchsafes to pardon you; he does more, he enlightens you.* — At that instant he touched my hand, and I was on the summit of the mountain. What an enchanting surprise! the declivity we descended was an agreeable and magnificent garden, where verdure, the harmony of birds, and the perfume of flowers, enchanted the senses; a superior charm animated the most indifferent being. My divine conductor showed me at some distance a temple of a most astonishing structure; the way that led to it was so intricate, it was impossible to get there without a guide.

At our approach, the gates of the temple opened; we entered, and they were suddenly closed by an invisible power, with a noise equal to thunder. — *No one can open them, no one can shut them, but the omnipotent voice of God,* said my illustrious protector. Awed with respect, I read the following words, wrote in letters of gold: — *God is just, his voice is bidden; who will dare fathom his decrees?* I cast my eyes on the magnificent height of this temple; — this glorious building was sup-

ported by three columns of white marble; in the middle an altar was erected; instead of the image of the Divinity, an odoriferous smoke ascended, whose effluvia filled the temple. On the right a black marble table, and opposite a glass of pure crystal. The angel said to me: — *It is here thou art to learn, that if Providence sometimes ordains the good man to be unhappy, it is to lead him more certainly to happiness.* Cold terror no longer froze my senses, a pure, mild, ineffable joy succeeded which filled my soul. I shed relenting tears; my knees bent, my arms raised themselves towards heaven, and I could only silently adore the Supreme Bounty. A majestic voice, but divested of terror, said to me: — *Arise, look, and read.*

I cast my eyes on the glass, and saw my friend Sadak; Sadak, whose constant and magnanimous virtue had often filled me with wonder, who had learned to defy indigence, and even make it respectable. I saw him seated in a room with bare walls; he leaned his languishing head on the last moveable was left him, his body shivering with hunger, and yet more cruel despair. One only tear stole from his eye, but it was a tear of blood! — Unhappy man, he dared not weep. Four children called to their father for bread, — the youngest, feeble and languishing, stretched on a handful of straw, had not strength to utter a word, — he was breathing the last of an innocent life. The wife of this unfortunate man, exasperated by misery, forgetting her

her natural tenderness and sweetness of temper reproached him for the excess of their distress. Those cruel complaints rent his heart and increased his torments. — Sadak rises, turns his eyes from his children, and, in that weak condition, creeps abroad to seek assistance. — He meets a man, to whom he had formerly rendered the most important services; — this man was obliged to him for a genteel employment he possessed. Sadak acquaints him with his deplorable situation; he describes his famished children ready to expire in his arms. — His friend, abashed to be compelled to know him, looks around with an inquisitive eye, to see if he was not observed speaking to one who bore the badge of indigence; — he gets rid of the poor suppliant by vague promises, cold civility, and retires with great expedition. — This was the tenth time he thus inhumanly treated him to whom he was indebted for all he possessed. Sadak, in despair, rambles on, meets one of his creditors, who stops him, treats him with the foulest language, gathers a mob around the miserable man, publicly threatens him, and is ready to strike him, more from contempt than anger. At last, I saw him wandering from door to door, stretching a suppliant hand, sometimes repulsed, sometimes receiving alms given to importunity. He buys a loaf, takes it home, divides it among his children, sheds tears of joy in allaying their hunger, and on his knees, gives thanks to Providence for the rich blessing she showered upon him.

I exclaimed with grief, astonishment, and dread. My eyes, replete with tears, turned to the black-marble table, and an invisible hand wrote upon it these words: — *Make an end of contemplating Sadak, and condemn, if thou dar'st, Providence that rules all things.* I turned my eyes again to the glass, and again saw my friend Sadak. — But how altered! how different was the scene! It is no longer the poor, necessitous but tender, virtuous, compassionate Sadak, full of honour and humanity; — it is Sadak in plenty, become opulent by an unexpected legacy; — it is Sadak, who, corrupted by affluence, no longer cherishes the virtues he possessed. Sunk in luxury, he is morose, gives his orders with haughtiness, and no longer in distress, forgets there are unhappy wretches in the world, and that he was of the number. I read immediately, with a respectful admiration, what the mysterious table taught me. *Virtue often suffers, because it would cease to be virtue if it had no struggles. When awful Providence sends misfortune on mortal heads, her sister, Patience, accompanies her, Courage supports her, and by this gift Virtue wants no other aid, and is even happy when misfortunes seem to overwhelm her.*

I turned my inquisitive eyes to the glass. But what an affecting object struck my heart! I observed my country, my dear country, the happy town that gave me birth! Oh, heavens, what a sight! In a moment a formidable army had overspread the

plains, had surrounded its strong works, had prepared the infernal machines of destruction for its ruin. The sword is drawn, vengeance and rage have lighted their torches.—Oh stately city, thou shakest, notwithstanding thy bold defenders. The enemy thirsts for the plunder of thy treasures. Yet you still oppose him with courageous resistance. Vain efforts!—They mount — they scale thy proud towers; blood flows, death flies, the flame rages; — thou art no more, — a thick smoke, a heap of stones cover the place of thy scite. My unhappy countrymen, who escaped the flames, wander in the woods; — but direful famine awaits them in the desert; — it slowly devours them, and prolongs their sufferings and death.

I exclaimed, Just God! shall a million fall the victims of one ambitious man, children be murdered at their mothers breasts, the gray hairs of the venerable old man be dragged in blood and dust, innocent beauty become the prey of the foul murderer, a whole city disappear, because the covetousness of a monster thirsts for its wealth! — *A country filled with prevaricators, replied the table, deserves the chastisement of a Divinity too long despised.— Those who were not guilty are torn. From the danger of becoming so, and if the hand of Providence has struck them, it is to preserve them from a more terrible fate than the suffering a transitory death; — their refuge is in the clemency of an eternal God.*

The palace of the minister Aliacin, whose gilt pyramids almost reached the skies, was

too magnificent to escape my attention. How often has my heart been filled with indignation at the sight of this happy monster, who, with a venal soul, a barbarous heart, depraved morals, a despotic mind, had, as it were, chained fortune to his chariot ! His elevation was due to his meanness, his treasures the reward of treachery. He had sold his country for gold.—An entire province groaned under his oppression. Sometimes he laughed at the weak murmurs of a people inured to slavery ; at another their stifled sighs he called revolt. Each day he committed some wicked attempt,—each day crowned his audacity.

Yet the inside of his palace, with its silken furniture, displayed only histories of generosity and virtue ; the busts of the greatest men of antiquity adorned the dwelling of the most flagitious wretch ; and those silent marbles, which should have reproached his heart, were heedlessly past over. I dwelt on this wretch, invested with power, surrounded by flatterers, dreaded by enemies, addulated by the public, but secretly cursed. Thousands of rare curiosities adorn his cabinet,—the price of each only an act of iniquity.

He was clothed in purple, at the cost of those who were naked,—and the wine he drank in a cup ornamented with precious stones, might properly be called the essence of the tears he had caused to be shed.

He rose from his pompous table, and lay at the feet of a concubine the orphans patrimony. He attends her to the window, and
there

there calmly beholds a brave and worthy citizen, who has dared to remonstrate against the abuse of his power put to death.

This good man is strangled; and within an hour a courier arrives to inform the minister, the sultan, to reward his great services, presented him a considerable tract of land. The monster smiles, and become more powerful, meditates how to be more formidable.

My hatred to this odious tyrant was so great, I turned about several times towards the table impatiently, as if to hasten the sentence it was to pronounce, — but nothing appeared as yet wrote on it. I turned my sorrowful eyes again on the wondrous crystal. I perceived Aliacin entering a private study. What a secret satisfaction penetrated my heart!—Nature, the wretched, and even the earth are revenged. This powerful man, that seemed the happiest of mortals, reads a letter, turns pale, trembles, smites his forehead with the same hand that cut the innocent throat. Distracted with unconquerable despair, he goes, he comes, he rages, rent more through fear than remorse. He tears, he tramples on the marks of his dignity, and, in his rage, weeps like a child. I endeavoured to find out the cause of this frenzy; when one of his favourites, more base than his master, enters his study, and informs me the cause of his despair. One of his confidants, a spy at court, had just wrote him a fresh storm was gathering against him; that he was on the point of losing his place and credit if he had not the address to ward the blow.

blow. This abandoned favourite instantly advised his master, in a firm tone, what any other would not have dared with impunity. This horrible advice pleased the barbarian.— He commanded his daughter to be brought into his presence.— Nouremi appeared.— She was beautiful and virtuous. Oh God! with what horror did she hear her father intended to give her up to the sultan's lascivious embraces, as an immolated victim to his insatiable ambitious views!—She falls almost senseless at her father's feet;—the tears of beauty, of nature, of innocence, find utterance.—A severe look commands her to obey;—she obeys and dies.

Was Aliacin happier? I saw him in the bosom of repose, stretched on the bed of down, or plunged in the delicious bath. One would imagine he was couched on thorns.— He is in terror for his life, — he rises, — his trembling knees bear him round his palace;— he finds his slaves asleep, and envies their peaceful slumber. The day appears:—ever uneasy,—ever suspicious,—he shudders as he eats,—he turns pale when he drinks,—uncertain whether he conveys death or nourishment to his breast. He dreads even the carcases of the women over whom he tyrannises, and whose slave he is. If any one is raised to an employment a thousand serpents gnaw his heart; it is the rival who is one day to displace him,— he is the formidable man who is to be seated in his post.

Full of respectful expectation, I consulted the table of the awful judgements of the Eternal, and read: — *Truth is terrible to the wicked; it is incessantly present to their eyes: it is it that causes all their torments; this dreadful glass is ever before them, where they see their bad actions and the deformity of their souls.*

Suddenly a rumbling noise, like distant thunder, was heard; I turned and saw the palace of Aliacin. His gardens, his pyramids, his statues, himself even, all had disappeared. — In the room of this mansion, where every luxury had been collected, — nothing was to be seen but a receptacle of filthy snakes, crawling in muddy marshes: Such is the foundation of palaces raised by foul deeds. The following words, engraved on the black marble, acquainted me with Aliacin's fate: — *He is swept off the earth like the vile dust, and future generations will doubt if he existed.*

This dreadful picture will never be erased from my memory, and from that time I fetch a sigh whenever I see a man in power. The world admire his elevation, and I view him exposed to the arm of Divine Justice. My eye grown more attentive, flew again to the glass, and I beheld Mirza and Fatmé, two noble and tender lovers, just in their prime, when the enthusiasm of virtue displays itself. That day had united their hands, and a mutual tenderness promised a series of happy days. The soft intoxication of bliss blazed in their countenances, their hands were twined,
and

and their sighs mingled with enchanting softness.—Fatmé was possessed of virgin beauty—its chastity, its graces, and its fugitive soft carnation lustre. The most beautiful bosom enclosed the noblest heart. Silenced by love, his soul plunged in inexpressible rapture, Mirza embraced his Fatmé, and broken sentences were the only feeble interpreters of the emotions of his soul. Fatmé rewarded her lover's tenderness with an enchanting smile;—she blushed, and this adorable blush was the effect of the purest love. As their silence expressed what the tongue could not, my heart was enraptured at the bewitching picture of virtue crowned by love. How could the friend of man see two hearts happy and united, without feeling exquisite pleasure and applauding their happiness.

Those lovers congratulated themselves on their union, as they had the power of jointly doing a great deal of good.—They were rich and pleased with being able to relieve a multitude of unfortunate beings.—Their wedding day they wished, that sensible hearts like their own should enjoy the same felicity;—they married young girls to their lovers, when fortune was the only obstacle to their union. Mirza wanted every heart to be in unison with his own;—his sublime soul would spread over all nature an universal and unalterable voluptuousness.—“Dear Fatmé,” said he, “in the height of bliss we can say—We are not the only happy beings; we are now in enjoyment; for at this instant some one is showing
ring

“ ring blessings on us; we have brought down
 “ the hymeneal torch on dreary cottages; in-
 “ nocent hearts are opened to joy; consoling
 “ love has effaced the image of misery; and
 “ we, ourselves, shall see their children smile
 “ at our approach.—My dear Fatmé, their ca-
 “ resses will be our most pleasing recompence.”

Those tender and virtuous persons, already formed the plan of an useful and beneficent life: their children were to be educated in the holy maxims of wisdom; they were to be taught above all things, simplicity and goodness of heart, because they are the foundation of all virtues; they intended to impress in their flexible and tender minds humanity and commiseration, because a man should have feelings. This charming and respectable couple, giving way to the transports of their hearts, anticipated the joy of seeing their children inherit the generous blood that flowed in their veins. In this happy ecstasy, inspired by love, virtue, and happiness, they fall on their knees before the Supreme Being.—“ Great God!” exclaimed they, “ give us children worthy of
 “ thee! let them be humane, that they may walk
 “ in the paths of thy justice; or if they must err
 “ from the holy laws we cherish, strike us rather
 “ with sterility, and do not suffer them to have
 “ an existence they would disgrace in our eyes
 “ as well as thine!” Their suppliant arms were entwined, when lo! the ceiling of the room cracked and gave way.—Fatmé fainted, Mirza could have escaped;—but how could he abandon his dear Fatmé? He would carry her off

in his arms; the wall totters, falls, crushes, and buries the lovers. The world loses its greatest ornament, and mankind the example of the brightest virtues.

I hid my face to give a free scope to my tears. I wished to be buried under these melancholy ruins with Mirza and Fatmé. Some time motionless, I did not dare look on the table;—I lifted at length my trembling eyes, and read:—*Man's blind understanding sees nothing but the present moment; Providence alone sees into futurity; the most sudden death has been the reward of Mirza and Fatmé's virtues; they are taken into a state of happiness of which this world has no conception, and has saved them also from the misery of bringing forth an unworthy offspring.*

I concluded, I never should hereafter decide on any thing, such a weak atom, so limited an understanding, as not to be able to comprehend my own existence. Looking again on the incomprehensible glass, I had new cause of astonishment. I perceived Agenor, unhappy young man, abandoned to all manner of excess, and the most complete libertine of a dissolute town.—He looked pale, emaciated and violently disturbed;—he walked with hasty strides to and fro in his chamber, often putting his hand to his forehead in a passion, and, in a low tone of voice, sending forth imprecations. For some short space he seemed irresolute—but soon gave vent to rage: he flew to his desk, drew out a paper, containing a powder, which he put into a cup.—

cup.—With eyes inflamed, Yes, said he, this poison shall be my last resource; it will save me from the disgrace that awaits me. The faithless Roxana sacrifices me to the base Dabour; my father will no longer contribute to my pleasures; my creditors daily threaten me with a prison: I will at once be revenged of Roxana, my father, and my creditors.—He lifted the cup to his mouth, and I was unconcerned to see the world rid of a furious debauchee,—when suddenly he stopt.—What, cried he in a hollow suffocating tone, shall I die without being revenged!—Perfidious rival! I will stain the earth with thy blood;—I will sacrifice thee to my resentment, and thy death shall satiate my fury! So saying, he laid down the cup, takes his sword, and goes out. Scarcely had he reached the street, when his father, venerable old man, enters his son's room. Alas! he would have been happy without this son.—His countenance discovered that poignant anguish that strikes a parental heart.—He came to remonstrate with this ungrateful son on the obligations of honour, duty, and probity.—He hoped to touch his heart and recal him to virtue.—His wrinkles, his silver locks, the tears that bathed his face, all inspired pity and respect.—The sight would have melted the most obdurate heart. This unfortunate old man, fatigued and thirsty, perceived the fatal cup,—drinks, drops down, and expires in the most dreadful convulsions. I ventured to express my surprise to Supreme Justice, and with its invisible hand it wrote
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the following words on the dreadful table:—
Agenor's father, by his guilty negligence, was the cause of the loss of his son; it is then but just that Agenor should be the instrument of his distress.— Fathers! know the extent of your duty and tremble! He that tolerates vice commits it.

Scarce were these words wrote than they disappeared, and those replaced:—*Consider the whole, that you may not err.* I observed instantly in the glass a large island, divided in two parts by a river; the right was a charming plain, covered with beautiful palaces and magnificent gardens,—it was inhabited by men richly drest; the left a barren desert, full of wretched huts, whose indigent tenants led an obscure and toilsome life. This island might be looked on as a picture of the globe. The right-hand side was called the country of happiness, of singing, dancing, of festivity;—public diversion seemed to be their only business. Voluptuousness sparkled in the eyes of the soft beauties who accompanied them; they suffered themselves faintly to be won towards the solitary shades. Yet I observed, the greatest part of them thought themselves happiest who were taken notice of by the people on the other side. In the most splendid entertainments their gaiety was excessive; but their hearts being open to me, I could see them devoured by gnawing worms.—They seemed, as it were, at the feast of the gods drinking nectar, and hell was in their breast. Although in the midst of plenty, their desires were far from being satisfied; they had but
 one

one mouth to taste their food, and their wild but active imagination ransacked the earth and seas to furnish new dishes to palates vitiated by perpetual cloying. Among all this pretended happiness, there were some who quitted suddenly those pleasures to run after a certain *ignis fatuus*, accompanied with the noise of drums and cannon. They returned all over blood, sometimes maimed, and then they would be called heroes. Others made the greatest efforts to get to the top of a seat that was taken up, whilst they could have found a more commodious place a little lower. They tortured themselves in a strange manner. — Sometimes they were ridiculed, and were generally put in the last rank. Nothing discouraged them; — they climbed again, and succeeded, either from address or importunity; then they had scarcely time to sit, being entirely taken up in repelling the ambitious man, who in his turn endeavoured to usurp their place. Farther on I saw some hair-brained mortals, who ran here and there without employment or business, scattering pieces of gold most lavishly, and finishing all by setting fire to their palaces, to please for an instant a capricious concubine. Then, as fast as possible, they fled to the desert country of the unhappy. In this miserable abode nothing was heard but plaintive cries; all the inhabitants walked bent under the load of a wen of flesh which hung behind their neck. They gazed on the country of happiness with an envious and sorrowful eye. What did they gain

gain by those fruitless desires? they made the wren much heavier. If they drew near those fortunate men they were assailed with the most taunting sarcasms; they vied with each other against the wretched wren carriers. It was not an easy matter, but it was not absolutely prohibited the inhabitants of the unhappy country to swim across the river and settle in the country of happiness; but after trying the climate for some time, they generally returned voluntarily, being better satisfied to carry a heavy wren than always struggling against their own conscience. If any complained his wren was heavier than his neighbour's, he was at liberty to make an exchange; but he usually repented and took again his first load. Those excrescences did not appear to me at first so insupportable as the bearer told me. It seemed to me in general, that if in the country of happiness they exaggerated their pleasure through vanity, in the country of the unhappy they exaggerated their grief through weakness, for the passion of courting pity is very antient and ever subsists. I observed the awkwardness of these last increased the uneasiness of the load; those who knew how to carry it lightly appeared satisfied and active; custom had made the weight almost imperceptible; but those who did not endeavour to preserve a just equilibrium tottered at every step, and made their exercise much more painful. The inhabitants of the country of the unhappy had another advantage, they trusted themselves implicitly on the river in the greatest storms; their wrens

always

always supported them. — Although tossed about, the roughest weather made no impression on their situation; on the other hand, the inhabitants of the country of happiness often saw the plains of their charming country spoiled by the inundations of the liquid element, themselves swept away by the current, and not being able to keep above water, sinking with the weight of their rich dresses. I likewise took notice, that in the fortunate country they were less skilful, less industrious, less humane, less charitable, than in the country of unhappiness.

My inquisitive eye sought some other comparative object, when I observed a lowering gather over the island; thunder roared, dreadful flashes of lightning burst the clouds, and tremendous hail beat on the earth.

Every thing was in a consternation, when suddenly the sea swelled, its impetuous waves touching the skies, besieged the double island, which was soon swallowed up with all its inhabitants. I saw nothing in the glass but a pale and doleful obscurity which covered an immense heap of water, from whence some confused sighs proceeded. At that instant, a supernatural light filled the temple; the odoriferous cloud which ascended from the altar was changed into a fiery column; and the dome of the edifice suddenly disappearing, a luminous throne attracted my view descending slowly to the majestic grumbling of thunder. Affrighted, I fell before the Divinity of this awful place. — A divine arm vouchsafed to raise me,

me, and I saw standing by me the angel who had been my conductor; his voice inspired me with courage; I read those words in flaming letters on the mysterious marble:—*Death makes all men equal; it is eternity assigns to man his true lot. Justice is slow, but immutable; the just man, the good man, is in the place prepared for him, and the wicked in his. Mortals! the balance of an eternal God leans to the abyss of eternity.* Then the glass became perfectly clear, and I saw a tall and beautiful woman, cloathed in celestial majesty, seated on a half column; in one hand she held a balance, and in the other a flaming sword. Millions of men of all ages, of all nations, surrounded her. She weighed the virtues and vices, forgave defects the offspring of weakness; patience and resignation were rewarded, and indiscreet murmurs were punished. I saw, with inexpressible joy, the tears of the unhappy dried under her beneficent hand. Those people blessed their past evils, the source of their present happiness; the more they had suffered the greater was their recompence. They entered the eternal mansions, where the God of goodness is placed to exercise his clemency; the first, the greatest, the brightest, the most adorable of all his attributes. All those the Eternal had designed to animate with his divine breath, were born to be happy. The spots that the soul is stained with, by the base slime of the body, disappear before the splendour of the true Sun: his brightness absorbs those passing shades. The Creator of this

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vast

vast universe is a tender father, who collects his children after a long and melancholy pilgrimage, and does not arm his hand against their past faults. Those whose opened hearts were to justice, to soft pity, who had succoured the innocent, relieved the poor, received a double degree of glory. An immortal canticle of praise, sung by the whole race of mankind, announced the reparation of all things.

The term of grief, of fear, of despair, was for ever at an end; the beautiful days of eternity opened; the figure of this world vanished; not a sigh to trouble the celestial harmony of universal felicity. This good God, whose magnificent hand is imprinted on all nature, who has even embellished the place of our exile, embraced in his bosom all his creatures: the father and children were no longer but one family. A thundering voice was then heard; *Go, weak mortal! confined and audacious spirit! go, learn to adore Providence, even when it would appear to thee unjust. God has pronounced one only decree: it is eternal, it is irrevocable; he saw every thing before he pronounced it. Finite beings! your systems, your vows, your thoughts, entered in his plan: humble yourselves, live in hope, and do not accuse his work.* The temple then seemed to tumble on my head. I awoke, uncertain whether what I had seen was an apparition or a reality. Should I yet be filled with indignation at the prosperity of the wicked? should I still murmur at the unhappiness of

the good man ; or should I not rather patiently wait until the great curtain spread over the universe shall be drawn by the hand of death ? It is that can make us live, by discovering immutable, eternal truth, which ordained the course of events for his greater glory, and the greatest happiness of man.

The FEAR of GOD.

THE fear of God is a necessary consequence of a view of his power. One cannot contemplate in idea the greatness of this Being, which every thing proclaims, without feeling a dread, compounded of respect and fear. One cannot know oneself surrounded with the presence of the Almighty God, without profound emotion ; that is to say, without being at once amazed with the immensity of his attributes, and the meanness of our own being. We are as it were annihilated before this God, terrible and strong, notwithstanding the visible testimonies of his goodness and clemency.—This power, which nothing can resist, makes us shudder ; and it is probably to be rid of this inward fear, the atheist proudly shakes off the yoke : like the children, he shuts his eyes in presence of this open eye on nature, and thinks he is not seen.

But at the aspect of this hand that upholds worlds, this ear that is open to every sigh of the wretched, a secret dread invades the soul ;
 then

then one must deny the Godhead, not to shudder before it.

Every adorer will then exclaim with David, "In admiring thy works, I am made to fear thee, O God!" This is not the fear of the slave or the guilty; it is the impossibility of contemplating without fear, without astonishment, without dread, the immensity, the glory, and the power of him who created the universe.

The ancient writers bear the impress of this precious and salutary blending of fear and respect manifested in man, not only when the God of thunder displays his vengeance, but even when he signalises his bounties. The writer's colouring breathe every sentiment of a Majesty, whose splendour he cannot bear, even in its mildest aspect.

There is, then, in the heart of man, an inseparable union of fear and respect due to the Divinity, which has raised temples, and ordained expiations all over the face of the earth. That is the universal tenet.

But is God really hid? It is the blind or stupid eye that first pronounced this senseless word. The Divinity is always present around us; we see his footsteps every where. What mark so visible, as the extent and beauty of the creation; than the spark of life which flashes every instant, or the light of reason which shines on the countenance of man!—Nothing is wanting to enlighten us, but a heart; if it has sensation, it elevates itself to the good and majestic Being that formed it.

It is inflamed, it is affected, it adores, and nothing is comparable to the ecstasy this mild and sublime contemplation of the author of nature excites.

Considering him as preserver of beings, and lavishing to each one a proportion of pleasure, the Supreme Being is still more adorable than under that of Creator. Beneficence claims a greater right to our homage than grandeur.

Only think, mortal ! thy head is a hundred times more wonderful than the sun : it knows not itself, and thou dost ; it knows not what it is, and thou hast measured it : it enlightens the universe with material fire, and thou canst aspire to a more elevated rank. The planets are absolutely blind instruments ; and thou art allowed to know the springs nature uses. Thou knowest how to employ thyself, thou feelest thy independence of mind and servitude of body ; thou feelest thy strength and weakness ; thou knowest thy rank in the universal system.

And wouldst thou not be struck with Newton's system, when he sees in each star a sun balancing the planets, when he perceives the order that proportions their motions to the distance of their centers, when the universe, thus enlarged, has discovered to them, that the mind which unravelled those sublime relations is more august and less perishable than even those suns, which, notwithstanding their pomp and splendor, are merely material, and have no idea of where they are placed.

R U I N S.

R U I N S.

RUINS amaze us!—Why! whence arises the sensation that leads us to contemplate those remains where time has made such havock? Could it be the idea of so many ages slid away and annihilated, over which, as one may say, we walk, trampling under foot those magnificent relics? Is it the picture of the strange revolutions that the insurmountable course of years brings on earth; or is it the satisfaction of surviving the generation of all those potentates that death has successively drove from their places? Now demolished and laid open, one sees, and not without some degree of interestedness, a herdsman with his cattle, under this broken portico, near that majestic column that is thrown down, and supports the cottage of a poor wood-cutter, who formerly would not have dared approach the outer court of this same palace. This contrast creates an emotion; we feel it, and it causes great reflections to arise.

In walking over gardens in England, we find, they have laid open the ruins they have built on, by the assistance of mines, that the bold and capricious cast of a mass, disordered by the action of powder, may be more naturally preserved. Still one is not much affected at sight of these ruins; and why? because we soon perceive the artifice, and that they were created yesterday. Yet all has been imitated, even the venerable and grand taint

that time has imprinted on ruined monuments; but reflection is ever whispering to us, it is a fictitious and deceitful colour, the work of man. Then half our pleasure is destroyed; we pass on, our admiration ceases.

In the midst of so many ruined, disfigured, half-defaced monuments, it is curious to contemplate in Rome those prodigious obelisks, constructed in Egypt three thousand years ago.

The P O P E.

A Philosophical Pope, like Benedict the XIVth, should have said to himself sometimes, "Here I am, successors to the Cæsars, seated in the same town where they reigned, head of a religion which they never imagined would reach over the face of the earth. They ruled by arms; and I, like them, keep the world enslaved: they sent their edicts to all the globe, and I send my bulls. I hold the bands of all the opinions that have arisen in the course of seventeen ages. How vast is my power! I am astonished at it. Kings govern by force, by cannon, by great military bodies; and I, who dare call myself *infallible*, know how that is.

"The one kisses my feet, another begs I would absolve his sins; this one intreats me to canonize a dead person, that he may invoke him afterwards. I am in a manner surrounded

rounded with phantoms, and my dignity appears to me as a dream."

If a Pope in the Capitol is a cause for astonishment, how much greater is the wonder to see a Capuchin friar preaching in Mexico; a negro learning his catechism; an European monarch sending his orders two thousand five hundred leagues, executed as punctually as an order issued from Versailles is at Paris!

But does not a milliner of St. Honora dress a lady's head at Martinico? Are not the words and music of a comic opera shipped to enliven the idlers of St. Domingo?

And during all this, the savage attacks the shark, the most dreadful of animals; triumphs over him with weak arms; whilst we can scarce defend ourselves, with our guns, swords, and lances, against a wolf who ravages the country.

FRIENDSHIP.

THE necessity of friendship is the precious source of all human virtue; sweet necessity, prescribed by that First Cause which made it the comforter of the universe. One man only has wrote against friendship*; he wished to exhibit it as visionary; his conduct contradicted his writings.

* Helvetius.

Friendship is real ; and if there be one only man who will affirm that he has felt but for a moment the pleasure of disinterested love, his opinion is calculated to destroy all the contrary sophistry. The same sensation is doubtless more or less refined, more or less durable ; it is embellished with different shades in superior minds, and its action is regulated by their different degrees of nobleness.

Shall I hazard the thought ! Friendship exists among villains. Hands stained with blood grasp each other in a strict and monstrous union. Collected together by foul deeds, they swear fidelity to each other ; sincere tears flow from their ferocious eyes ; their horrible compact exhibits the outlines of an immaculate, though disfigured, sensation ; they support, they comfort each other, and generosity blazes, even in the dark recesses where they whet their poignards.

Behold ! one of them taken and condemned to the punishment he deserves, he does not betray the tie of mutual confidence. A compassionate courage still subsists in his degraded and guilty mind ; he refuses to name his accomplices, he wishes to preserve them from the tortures he dares with so much intrepidity. He loves them then ; he thinks himself bound by the services he has received : at the foot of the scaffold he does not belie his constancy ; and struggling between anguish and fear, he does not betray any cowardly or perfidious weakness ; a remnant of virtue breaks forth in this wretch, crushed under the executioner's bar ;

bar; he expires with his ideal glory; he descends to the grave, pleased not to have violated, in spite of torments, the covenant of secrecy and friendship.

How I love to indulge the thought of indissoluble sympathy!—And why should there not be an intimate connection between men of sensations? I will allow there is no relation between inactive and mute matter; but that hearts, formed for each other, should not fly to meet; that they should not guess, that they should not recognize one another, cannot be adopted by any one who has felt the attractive and repelling force of love and aversion.

Voltaire has defined friendship to be the marriage of two souls. That is well expressed. He who only lives for himself, cannot be happy; he who would center all in self, will be alone; whoever lives alone, is deprived of the delight of sentiment; for sentiment is only the re-action of two hearts united.

Friendship, like love, owes all its energy to strength of mind; such a sacrifice that such a one cannot conceive, is executed freely and with rapture by another.

Pyrrhus's attendants, consoling him for the loss of a friend, among other arguments, represented the inutility of grief. "I know it," replied he; "but he died before I could return him the pleasure he gave me."—A noble sentiment, and well expressed!

Ajax, when with Philostrates, spoke thus to Achilles: "Which of thy heroic actions

made thee forget danger most?" "Those," replied he, "I undertook for a friend."—"And which," said Ajax, "was the easiest?" "The same," replied Achilles. "And of thy wounds, which was the most painful?" "That which Hector gave me." "Hector! I don't know he wounded thee." "He mortally wounded me—he killed Patroclus!"

It is said, friendship may require, but not extort. That proposition is false. Friendship should extort; it ought even to be haughty, because that right is reciprocal. Abstracted from that, friendship is but a mere connection.

I know nothing but foul deeds that can put a bar to friendship: but for our friend, we should bid defiance to taunting and ridicule.

In an English comedy, one says to another, "You pretend to be my friend?"—"Yes."—"How will you prove it?"—"My purse is at your service."—"Very well! what if I was in love with your mistress?"—"I would give her up to you."—"Suppose a man gave me the lye?"—"I would fight for you."—"And if any one railed against me?"—"I would speak well of you to those who ridiculed you."—"If that's the case, thou dost love me."

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On W A R.

A Vision.

I WAS on the frontiers of a province, over-
spread with an army of one hundred thousand
men: their order; their manly, well-regu-
lated

lated march with the loud and piercing sound of warlike instruments, their stern obedience, every thing combined to render it an awful sight. I was at a loss what motive could collect so many men to discover the same standard. If they are led on by virtue, said I, if going to strike some tyrant, and cut him from the earth; if their march is intended to protect the liberties of an oppressed people, they merit our gratitude and respect; they are the sacred defenders of the rights of humanity.

On a sudden, this multitude halted, and dispersed here and there. My imagination being warmed with the thoughts which such a prodigious heap of combatants raised, I followed, and endeavoured to discover their sentiments by their gestures. How great was my surprise to see those men, natives of the same country, cloath'd in the same uniform, draw their swords against each other with the utmost fury! I ran towards one of them, but was too late: he drew his sword, reeking with his comrade's blood, from his bleeding heart. I exclaimed, "Oh, wretch! what have you done! your companion, your brother!"—"He is very worthy of being so," answered he in a firm tone, "he has died like a brave fellow!"—"But what had he done to thee, that thou couldst treat him so cruelly?"—"Nothing. He was a young recruit; we had some words; and it is the custom among us to pay entrance by some unequivocal proof of bravery: he has done the business as he

should ; this affair will do him great honour, and we shall be sorry he let himself be killed. Had he forced his parade a little more, he would have put by the thrust, and we should have been very good friends together. — “ Good God ! ” answered I, with astonishment, “ what strange barbarity ! but, you are an undone man ! make your escape ; his comrades, his officers, will be obliged to revenge his blood. ” — “ Poh ! I only follow their example ; and whoever would refuse, would be deemed a coward. Our glory is to face death at all times ; and you may well think, he who is not afraid to face his adversary, will not dread the presence of the enemy : those things are only to try a man’s mettle. ” — “ This courage is, to be sure, very useful to the nation ! ” — “ Oh ! this affair is nothing. See yonder those two companies fighting together ; what fine thrusts ! ” — “ What is the cause of this ferocious phrenzy ! have they put on the same uniform only to cut each other’s throats ? ” — “ Not at all ; it is the colour of their facings, and the difference of their buttons, is the cause of their enmity. ” — “ But they march together under the same colours ; they fight for the same cause. ” — “ Yes ; but in the mean time they decide their own private disputes : they certainly hate one another more than the enemy they are going to engage ; and every officer is a rival and jealous of his superior. We shall soon turn our arms against ****, and then we shall see fine sport. ” — “ What ! you are then going to another part of the world, to destroy
man-

mankind to death ! but if you go on thus, you will destroy yourselves, before you see the enemy."—"What is that to us ! we live only by death ; and one must be killed for another to get forward ; that is all I know of the matter."—"What a shocking trade you follow, my friend ! why cut one another's throat ! why shed your comrade's blood ! why harden your soul, without reason ! Have you never experienced commiseration, or pity ? You go in cold blood to make orphans and wretched mothers weep. Ah ! were you to attend to the feelings of your heart, it would undoubtedly condemn you."—"I know nothing of all those fine speeches ; but I will tell you the truth. I led an idle sort of life until I was five feet six inches high ; my appetite was equal to that of any ostrich, and I found much difficulty in making a proper provision for it. A man in a laced coat, with a cockade in his hat, and a cane in his hand, took measure of me, and rung in my ears a peal of about thirty crowns in a purse. I would be glad to know who could withstand such a bait ! Your fine lady of my country might have come bath'd in tears, and throw herself at my feet, imploring my assistance, she would not have made half so moving an impression. The day I lifted was the pleasantest of my whole life : I never before absolutely had a bellyful ; I had wine, girls ; I had plenty of good cheer, and made the house ring. But the following days were somewhat different : I began to feel the burden of slavery ;

very; I deserted seven times in four years, but made nothing of it. Victory or defeat were to me both alike, and as little attached to one government as to another, and losing nothing when losing all. Our fate, you know, is the same after twenty victories; the soldier seldom obtains any military distinction; the Commanding Officers reserve to themselves all the glory as well as all the profit. I was obedient to the call of each potentate that solicited me. I will give thee bread, on condition thy blood shall flow for me at the least signal I give.— Then I sold my blood as dear as I could.

“ I do not mention the hard labour I have undergone, the long and painful marches I have made in the midst of winter, how often cold and hunger have united to depress me, how often I have been forced to sleep on the ground, perishing with a sharp north-easter. I have, however, relished more than once the delicious pleasure of revenge.

“ One day, after two months fatigue, entering a town taken by assault, after breaking open the doors of twenty houses, carrying off every thing I could find, I cast my eye on a very pretty young woman, her hair all dishevelled, hiding herself with a child in her arms. My eagerness for plunder for a moment gave way to a luxurious appetite.— Every thing is allowed in a town taken by assault.— I run two of my comrades through the body who were just going to ravish her.— I stabbed the infant because his cries were
trouble-

troublesome. — I ravished the mother, and then set fire to the four corners of the house.” — “ You make me shudder.” — “ Pho ! the human species is like the grass of the field ; you mow it down, it grows again ; one night is sufficient to repair all the damage. We did not leave one stone on another ; our orders were so. I pass over many other heroic actions familiar to us brave fellows. But I must tell you, I twice ran the gantlet with great intrepidity ; my own comrades turned butchers, and made the blood run from my broad shoulders. But I had my revenge ; and my officers, who were quiet spectators, have more than once praised the vigour of my arm. At length I returned to my old colours under favour of the general amnesty ; and although I am not better here than elsewhere, yet I hope to make my way.” — “ What way, pray ? ” — “ Zounds ! this is the beginning of the war, and we will take care to keep it up. You see that regiment finely cloathed, with a new suit of colours ! In a month, perhaps, there will not be above one in a hundred left of them ; then I shall enter in that regiment, and my pay will be raised three sous a day.” — “ What ! is it possible you can thus think ? ” — “ Not I only, but all my comrades too, as well as our officers, who all wish to be promoted ; and you know some one must succeed the dead.” — I looked on this man with horror ; I made him a small present, and recommended humanity very

very forcibly to him.—He smiled, and walked on.

I met, on my way, a company marching with drums beating, who seemed ripe for mutiny. Ever deceived by the suggestions of my heart, I imagined they were execrating the war. “Undoubtedly, said I to them, humanity pleads strongly in your hearts the cause of the unfortunate people you are going to destroy?”—“Not at all, replied one of them; we are sent into a wretched country, barren and naked, where there is nothing to plunder but the peasants’ mess of broth; and leaving a plentiful one, where we could get every thing we wanted. But our Commander is in disgrace with the Minister, and we must suffer for it.”

I retired, fully resolved to ask no more questions. When I got home, I endeavoured to console myself with my books; I sought a remedy for this ancient scourge that afflicts the earth. I opened Grotius’s famous treatise; I read this great work; and the phlegmatic stile with which it is wrote, the barbarous examples that are accumulated with such incredible patience, his gloomy, long, and useless definitions, totally disgusted me; I was forced to bear it from one end of the book to the other.

Never was a finer subject so wretchedly treated. What, this globe immersed in blood! the trade of murder honoured as the height of magnanimity; the crime which is punished in an obscure villain who awaits you at the corner

ner of a wood, applauded in him who commits it with the music of drums and trumpets; this unjust and abominable piece of folly, which is generally most fatal to the innocent, instead of lighting in this philosopher's mind the torch of awful truth, instead of filling his soul with rapid and powerful indignation, inspires him with arguments to legitimate the commission of the most horrible of crimes with order, and moreover, to strengthen them with passages as disgusting as they are pedantic! Is it such authorities we want! All human authorities must be destroyed that clash with reason and humanity. Instead of tracing the subject back to its first cause, instead of using the knife and caustic to the mortification, he makes use of palliatives; he covers this monster of war with a purple robe; he covers his face with a mask; he places a diadem on his head; and, whilst human gore is trickling down him, he prostrates himself, and only sees the royal purple*. Where is the man, said I to myself, who will strip this giant of the apparel which seems to ennoble him, and expose this hideous ravenous monster devouring of children, the weak, the innocent, and greedily snuffing up the odour of death and slaughter over all empires and the vast tract of the globe?—I threw Grotius in the fire, wishing the present age might not pass away without producing a

* There is a Legitimate war, a defensive war, which reverts to natural right.

work to examine this important matter to the bottom.

Oppressed with gloomy melancholy, I threw myself on my bed, in order to forget what I had seen, and still more what I had read. Sleep had no sooner invaded my senses, than I imagined myself in an open country, in a foreign climate. Above eighty thousand men had there made themselves straw beds under cover of light and portable cloth. No prospect so magnificent, so astonishing, had ever met my eye before. Here are, said I, mankind in their primitive state and liberty; the threatening ramparts of towns do not hold them in captivity. But on examining those men a little closer, I observed they carried murdering arms; I perceived a range of thirty cannon pointed geometrically; myself even, dressed in a red coat, a knapsack on my back, I was transformed into a soldier; a long tube of iron which belched out death was in my peaceful hands, and the infernal bayonet hung at my side. The drum beat; I threw down my arms like a philosopher, as did formerly Horace and Demosthenes. I was suddenly laid hold of; I was called a perjured rascal and coward; they reproached me with the oaths I had taken the day before. "Yesterday," said they, "while you was drunk, you promised" — "I promised! who me! Ah! certainly, gentlemen, I must have been very drunk when I promised to destroy my fellow creature." I was preparing to make a fine oration, to prove I ought not to fight, when

when I was forced to march, dragged along by example and the obedient crowd. In this I resembled many others, who made a great parade of valour. The thunder of mortars, which destroys more men in one day than the thunder of heaven destroys in ages, gave the signal for battle. I saw the heavens inflamed and darkened by turns by volcanos of flames and torrents of smoke. The fatal lead whistled and flew from all parts; the Commanders, with great vociferation, encouraged and pressed on the files of soldiers; all, with blind obedience, crowded to sprinkle with their blood heaps of carcases. Being obliged to fire, I pointed the muzzle of my firelock in the air, chusing death rather than to hit a sensible being. I turned pale with horror; those who reproached me with cowardice endeavoured to drown their own with strong liquor which made them mad. What a fight! I think hell could never exhibit a more abominable one. Doleful cries, bursts of cannon, the rumbling of this dreadful thunder, deafening the ears and hardning the hearts; men lying dying and mingled with horses; others dragging themselves along half dead, with horrible shrieks which affected no one; eyes motionless and deprived of sight; pale and bloody corsets covered with dishevelled hair; suppliant wretches calling on death; all manner of scenes of sorrow, of sufferings, of cruelty; all the portraits of rage, of fury, of despair; all manner of wounds, all kinds of death, all torments united; nature and huma-

humanity contumeliously insulted in a thousand shapes, and without remorse; the birds in the air flying away in affright; the crows excepted, who expressed their joy by their croaking, following their track, and waiting their prey. Heavens! what scenes of madness and terror! I advanced over heaps of carcasses, whilst an expiring wretch in his anguish tore my leg with his teeth, when a man on horseback in armour, more fiery than the horse he rode, raised me by my hair, and was preparing his scymeter to cut off my head; a red hot ball cut me in two, and scattered far from him my mutilated members.

No one was ever so well pleased at being annihilated. I soon lost sight of the field of slaughter, and those mad men who, in their heroic folly, dealt about death to be afterwards killed themselves. I could no longer distinguish this earth but as a point feebly enlightened. I past rapidly through a humid darkness. Leaving the frightful and discordant noise of battle, I found myself in a calm and universal silence. The weak sport of the air, — I began to be uneasy at my fate, when I suddenly perceived my steps firm on a more solid base. I perceived I had assumed the form of a skeleton of amazing whiteness; but I had no idea of horror at this new metamorphosis.—And really I cannot see any reason why one should be frightened at their own bones: the timber work of a fine house is, perhaps, as beautiful as the exterior ornaments which embellish it.

My

My white skeleton was then, among a number of others, as naked as myself. Our bones, hitting against each other in the crowd, made a strange kind of clashing which resounded to a great distance. I could not overcome a secret shock at sight of this sorrowful abode. I did not much admire my companions in misery. All their motions were rough; and although reduced to the most miserable state, they still walked with a high head and haughty air. Some sparkling clouds rolled over our heads, and sent forth zig zag darts of thunder. The lightning which broke from this threatening sky, spread a gloomy and frightful glaze.

A voice, as mild as celestial, resounded in my ear, and said, "Thou art here in one of the vallies where justice descends to judge the guilty dead; this is called the *valley of murderers*."—"Oh God!" exclaimed I, "is it possible! my heart is pure, my hands are innocent. I was taken by surprise, dragged into the crowd of murderers; but I have not been guilty of any murder."—"Recover thyself," replied the voice, "there are some innocent ones, like thee, mingled with those barbarians; but I am here to comfort them until the great day, and thou art in this valley only to enhance the guilt of those who wanted to force thee to be a partner in their crimes. Justice, the eldest daughter of the Supreme Being, comes to enlighten this place once in six thousand years; thou hast no more than five hundred years to wait."—I expressed, in a lively

lively manner, my sorrow and impatience. The voice replied, "You imagine, perhaps, you are to go on, from year to year, from day to day, from hour to hour, as on the globe thou didst inhabit. Not at all; for since I began to speak to thee fifty years are elapsed." At those words hope reanimated me. I then made my observations on those walking skeletons; their hardness of heart seemed to have communicated itself to their bones; they jostled roughly against each other. I gave ear to a kind of confused murmur, and could distinguish the frightful and hollow noise of the rapid course of ages, that the hand of time hurled into the immovable lake of eternity. Oh a sudden, this impetuous torrent ceased flowing. Nature, made as it were, a pause; a hundred dreadful claps of thunder burst the clouds, and instantly a bloody rain impetuously fell on the guilty: it was all the blood which had been spilt since the beginning of the world, which fell on each murderer. At that instant, I saw all those skeletons covered with sanguinary drops, which they vainly strove to wipe away. "Do not you be uneasy about those drops," said the consoling voice to me, "they fall on murderers only. Each drop is the emblem of a murder. This blood is their shame and punishment; it imprints remorse, pain, and despair in them; — shudder for them! — the dreadful moment is at hand."

Immediately the clouds dispersed; a bright day descended from the celestial roof, and became

came gradually so resplendent, that all this multitude, tinctured with the criminal marks they bore, fell flat on the ground, and seemed to wish to be hid in the bottomless abyss. I, myself, though I preserved my whiteness, emblem of my innocency, could not resist a respectful impulse; I fell down prostrate. Bright justice appeared in the sky, but not with that angry countenance, the sword, the balance, we give here beneath; robed in a blue mantle, spangled with stars of gold, she held in one hand a sceptre of a whitish fire, whilst the other, with sorrow in her countenance, prest her forehead at the thoughts of the crimes she was obliged to punish.

On this affecting countenance, God himself had stamped all his majesty; the noble features of her face, although somewhat severe, inspired confidence, and seemed to pity the unhappy guilty whilst she condemned them. What ineffable beauty! What a contrast of grief and love! What frightful remorse in the hearts of the murderers from having insulted this majestic goddess! Surrounded with all her glory, seated on her awful throne, the remembrance of her holy laws, either violated or disregarded, brought forth an universal groan. She wore the sun of truth as a crown, which enlightened all this vast scene with the splendor of its rays. Time came and laid his glass at her feet; and repassing the sand of years, they run through a second time with inconceivable rapidity. Each one revived with horror the moments of a life for which he

he was to render an account. On the left hand of Justice, a weak tremulous voice served as intrepeter to the guilty, and used every effort to justify them. This feeble voice was called Policy, reason of state; every thing she said bordered on insanity, inhumanity and extravagance. Another voice, much stronger and more eloquent, that was on the right, overpowered its frivolous pretexts;—that was humanity. At the sound of this unconquerable voice, the murderers were struck with terror; they acknowledged their crimes, and the full knowledge of the truth caused their torment.

This multitude, trembling before the throne of Justice, sought in vain for shelter. All those potentates, once so famous, were naked and trembling like the others; several thousands of men accused one only, and made him responsible for all the murders they had committed. The voice on the left pronounced so often the name of Alexander for an excuse, that justice commanded he should appear alone. I then saw a skeleton of middling stature, the vertebre of the neck a little awry, and all over red with blood, come trembling from the croud where he had hid himself. The murmuring that was heard as he came on increased his confusion. Naked, diminutive, and bare, he was an object of compassion. “What,” said Justice, “this is he then who commanded you to commit crimes, and whom you have obeyed in preference to equity, humanity, and your own conscience! Look upon
the

the meanness of your idol; it is itself sensible of its own nothingness. By what enchantment did you become sanguinary slaves, whilst all things told you, nature did not form you to wait on the furious pride of this despot?

As for thee, who hast sacrificed my laws to the mad lust of thy ambition, thou now appearest horrible to the accomplices of thy guilt; but that is not enough,—I will shew thee to whom thou mayst be compared. She instantly made a sign with her sceptre, and another skeleton, much about the same size as Alexander, placed itself beside him.—It was not quite so bloody; but its bones were broken in several places. I observed the blows of the iron instrument of his punishment had even effaced the principal spots.—“Look, “Alexander,” said Justice, “Look upon “thy competitor;—this robber wanted only “power and strength to equal thee, and he “would have made use of the same means as “thou to ravage the world. His courage “was as great as thine; but being constrained “by obstacles, he was obliged to murder his “fellow creatures by night. Those who at- “tend to see my laws put in execution were “fortunately able to bring him to the scaffold; “there he confessed his crimes, and acknow- “ledged he deserved the most shameful pu- “nishment.

“Wretch! where is the difference between “this robber and thee; it is a pity the chastise- “ment did not fall on thy head. Power suppor-

“ ted thy iron arm that crushed mankind; thou
 “ destroyedst my laws by firing of towns; thou
 “ didst oblige terrified mortals to erect altars
 “ to thee; thou didst stab the bosom of
 “ friendship; the scandal of thy victories
 “ have led Kings astray, who, taking exam-
 “ ple by thee, have been unjust. Approach,
 “ cruel Cæsar, thou who wept before the
 “ statue of this murderer, ambitious of de-
 “ serving such another. Nothing could stop
 “ thy career, neither the genius of Rome, nor
 “ the tears of thy country. Armed with a
 “ poniard, thou stabbedst her whilst she invi-
 “ ted thee to her arms. Thou destroyedst the
 “ wisdom of six ages of glory, in order to
 “ establish on their ruins horrible despotism.
 “ Get thee gone, thy name begins to be as
 “ detestible as those of Tamerlane, Attila,
 “ Charles the XIIth, and Gengiskan.—Wise
 “ men have proscribed their odious and de-
 “ structive genius; it is only the blind multi-
 “ tude who are still seduced, and who, in
 “ their low ideas, cannot discriminate be-
 “ tween the powerful criminal who escapes
 “ punishment, and the obscure guilty who
 “ suffers justly.

“ Princes, conquerors, generals, warriors,
 “ whatever pompous titles you bear, vile am-
 “ bitious wretches, bloody men, shudder!—
 “ You have accustomed mankind to destroy
 “ each other; you have made war an habitual
 “ scourge, and ever growing trade; you have
 “ dared to embellish murder with the pompous
 “ name of glory; it is you, undoubtedly, will
 “ be

“ be answerable for the crimes you have made
 “ them commit; — but who ever comes to
 “ offer you the hand stained with blood, he
 “ that could put a stop to cruelty, or avoid
 “ being an accomplice in it, or has been a
 “ volunteer to serve your wrathful purposes
 “ for base interest, he, I say, will be as guilty
 “ as yourselves. By what authority dare a
 “ mortal inflict death? Does not his existence
 “ belong to God who created him? Destruction
 “ is an outrage against the Divine Being.
 “ Shudder, cruel murderers, in my presence!
 “ Nothing can excuse you; the blood of your
 “ brethren cries aloud for vengeance. Even
 “ he who is stained with only one bloody
 “ spot, shall be tormented several ages by the
 “ devouring fire of repentance. You will
 “ still even sob with sorrow, when the cle-
 “ mency of a merciful God will vouchsafe to
 “ absolve you; for I must tell you, that stain
 “ is indelible.

“ Your motive was to merit the admiration
 “ of future ages. Well, you are condemned
 “ to suffer until that happy period when an
 “ enlightened people will execrate war and
 “ those who light the horrible torch. Alex-
 “ ander! thy name must be held in detestation
 “ over all that country where thou wouldst
 “ be deified; all those who followed thy ex-
 “ ample must be ranked among the profligate
 “ villains before thou canst expect any for-
 “ giveness. May this time not be so distant
 “ as the reparation of thy crimes would re-
 “ quire! — Suffer patiently; you already be-

“ gin to be detestable ; thy exploits already
 “ begin to be looked upon as barbarous and
 “ unjust ; wise men have stamp’d with disgrace
 “ thy impetuous imitators.”

Another skeleton came forward from among the crowd, as if to throw itself at the feet of Justice, and the voice on the left became its interpreter. “ Ah, Supreme Justice !” it said, “ I am covered all over with blood that
 “ torments me, and thou knowest I never
 “ killed any one.” The voice on the right replied : “ Thou never committedst murder ;
 “ but, wretch, thou hast sung the murdering
 “ heroes, thou hast excited them to slaughter
 “ by immortalizing their names ; thou hast
 “ immortalized their criminal conquests ; thou
 “ hast called them lawful triumphs ; and by
 “ daringly placing the laurel on a barbarous
 “ brow, thou hast not blush’d to exhibit
 “ glory in the midst of towns destroyed ; tem-
 “ ples and palaces set on fire. Should the
 “ butchering of mankind be a subject for a
 “ conversation of the Gods ? Should the har-
 “ mony of genius be made subservient to the
 “ wicked attempts of ambition ? Does the
 “ wrath of Princes deserve to be enobled ?
 “ Ah, thou shouldst have shed tears over the
 “ fate of suffering humanity ; or rather, thou
 “ shouldst have employed that genius which
 “ nature had so profusely endowed thee with
 “ in support of its sacred and eternal rights :
 “ thy verses, then, would have been more
 “ sublime and respectable. By debasing bat-
 “ tles, rendering them odious to all mankind,
 by

“ by describing them to posterity in all their
 “ frightful shades, we should have beheld
 “ this sanguinary glory overthrown, and stript
 “ of all its deceitful rays; humanity would
 “ have embraced thee in its arms with tears
 “ of joy; the homage of all mortals endeared
 “ with sensation, and the approving eye of
 “ heaven would have been thy reward. Let
 “ thy poem be read, admired, for its harmo-
 “ nious numbers, whilst thou expiatest here
 “ the abuse thou hast made of the most pre-
 “ cious talents.”

I will confess, with sorrow, I saw Virgil,
 Horace, Ovid, those rare and fine geniuses,
 but base flatterers of arbitrary power, fol-
 low the steps of this afflicted shade. They
 were punished, as the chanter of Achilles,
 for having fawned on the monster who
 signed the proscriptions, for having abused
 the world with verses as despicable as they
 are smooth and flowing, for having been
 the first in giving the shameful example of
 deifying the diadem on whatever head it
 bound. All those shameful historians, who
 disguised the truth, the crowd of flatterers,
 who advised the crime they did not dare to
 commit; those who formed the minds of
 tyrants, or who, still more guilty, have
 corrupted the method of speaking to the
 human species, all those wicked wretches,
 were treated as if they had shed human
 blood: for they may be ranked among the
 most cruel enemies of mankind; and Ma-
 chiavel,

chiavel, with his pen, was such another as Nero on his throne.

Justice, with a majestic voice, then said:
 “Appear now, always ye beloved heroes, who
 “only combated to ascertain the repose of the
 “world! All you whose useful courage has
 “protected the weak and sheltered the inno-
 “cent; you who have been as superior to
 “your passions through wisdom, as you have
 “been to your enemies through valour. Draw
 “near, humane warriors, as brave as feeling,
 “respectable supporters of the people, who
 “drew the sword only to put a stop to the
 “murderous hand that came to destroy them!
 “You sigh over this impure blood you were
 “forced to spill; but your concern will be
 “instantly at an end; it is a tribute due to
 “nature; she will forgive you when I pro-
 “nounce your justification.” Then appeared
 Sesostris, the Epaminondas, the Scipios, the
 Marcus Aurelius, Charlemagne, and Henry
 the IVth; they were spotless; the luminous
 rays of the Sun of Truth shone around them,
 and caused the bloody drops that covered the
 guilty to appear much more horrible. Justice
 gave a signal, and the latter were plunged into
 a deep abyss, there to be purified by remorse.
 I found myself among the small number who
 could raise pure hands towards heaven. My
 joy was great; for I suffered as much, being
 near those murderers, as if I had been covered
 with blood.

Among those heroes I perceived that vir-
 tuous man who, embracing the cause of the
 human

human race with a tender and sublime affection, formed that charming project of perpetual peace which will always be the chimera of great minds. He was looked upon as the most honourable writer of all ages. A profound sentiment of beneficence enflamed his great and feeling mind. The distresses of mankind grieved his generous heart; he wished to abolish slavery, despotism, vice, and unhappiness from the world, and, above all, to tear from the hands of Kings that terrible power of the sword which they use for the purposes of unbridled ambition. His works appeared as reveries during the slumber of life; but here they wore a luminous stamp that attracted the eyes of Justice.

This philosopher was seated between Henry the IVth and the adored Duke of Burgundy, holding in his hands the universal plan of the felicity of nations. He consulted those great men, whose sincere and profound humanity was divested of ostentation, vanity, or weakness; but alas! nature refused them length of days. My ardent soul was on the wing to be united to this unspotted being which cherished harmony and order only for the good they promoted in the world. What joy! what happy moments! I had the felicity to be entertained by him on matters equally profound and interesting. He still had that enthusiasm that unfeeling souls condemn, and which is, notwithstanding, the only root of all great actions.

Suddenly a discharge of artillery started me from sleep; it was to celebrate the news of a victory. The people, who only view the present moment, were in great joy. But as I fly from public rejoicings, the noise of inflamed saltpetre, the intoxication of a blind populace, I stole from the crowd, and in a lonesome closet wrote this vision.

SELF MURDER.

HOLD, murderer, hold! thou intendest to put a period to thy life. When death approaches in a natural pace it is tranquil; the springs of life are gradually disordered; we fall into the darkness of the grave as into a lethargic slumber; but when it is violent, art thou aware of the sufferings that accompany it?

Thou wilt answer me, it is the business of a moment. Thou art mistaken; the ball that shatters thy skull must tear to pieces the membranes which inclose thy brain; the laceration of those membranes must cause the most horrible convulsions; thou mayst suffer, in what seems but an instant, torments whose duration are immeasurable. If time is to us but a consequence of ideas or sensations, the anguish that accumulates them in a dreadful instant prolongs the duration by the multitude of painful sensations; and the rapidity of the circulation of the animal spirits, that are suffering, may equal in a minute the space
of

of several hours. Thou mayst suffer, in a time that to thee appears short, all the torments that can afflict a whole life.

Why, then, so much precipitation? Let nature operate.—Think thou art sick, and that, as all things change around us, the cure of the disease will soon come.—Wait—thy courage is senseless.—I do not see the necessity of destroying thyself, while patience may dispel all thy gloomy thoughts. The motive for so great a sacrifice is uncertain. Why, then, wilt thou abandon hope. Consider thyself as in an alienation of mind, because there is no kind of connection between death that destroys thee and the event that may save thee.

Futurity is unknown to us; suicides have a very rude kind of impatience; they destroy themselves at the very instant they, perhaps, might be happy. Suicide, then, has the appearance of folly, precipitation, and a strong desire of repose. In one sense, then, it carries a great appearance of weakness; for suicide can no longer struggle with misfortune; it lacks heroism. It seems not to have analysed human life, and not to have formed its conduct on a sure foundation. Its morals are undoubtedly contracted and uncertain.

The idea of suicide is, then, a fever of the mind, an impatient disorder;—the suicide should be treated as a mad man.

The only hope of suicide is, then, annihilation; for if he believes in a God, he should submit to whatever punishments he pleases to inflict; he should adore the order

established by Divine Majesty. He forgets he received his existence on condition of suffering and expectation. Besides, if sometimes an innocent man has sought death as the lesser evil, the guilty have made it too often their asylum against conviction, justice, and impending vengeance.

P R I N T I N G.

IT is the greatest gift that Heaven, in its clemency, has bestowed on man. It will soon alter the face of the universe; printing will furnish, from its confined limits, grand and noble ideas which it will be impossible for man to resist; he will adopt them with reluctance, and the effect is already visible. Printing is yet in its infancy, and every thing has a marked propensity to perfection; the ideas are sounder, despotism more civilized, and humanity more respected. Every where they seek, they scrutinize, they examine, they work on the destruction of the old temple of error; every one's attention is turned towards the public and general good; all things carry the stamp of utility. In order to conceive this truth, one must not confine one's view within the walls of Paris; we must take in all Europe, observe the numerous and useful establishments raised every where; pass the seas, look on America, and contemplate on the astonishing revolution preparing there.

It is, perhaps, in America that mankind is to be new moulded, that they must adopt a new and sublime legislation, that they will bring to perfection the arts and sciences, and be the representatives of the people of old. Asylum of liberty, Grecian souls, bold and generous minds, will spring or be transferred there; and this great example exhibited to the world, well evinces what man can do when he puts his courage and understanding in one common stock.

The means of universal happiness are already pointed out; nothing remains but the developement, and from thence to the execution is but a step. Such an idea conceived thirty years ago we find realized in our time; think, then, on the power of human reason. When genius has assisted with the thunder of her majestic voice, what nation does not listen to it sooner or later, and does not rouse from lethargic slumber? Glorious art, thou alone canst dare the sovereign's power! Thou art the antidote to the fatal poison that was to enslave us all. Printing, thou art an invention visibly the offspring of Heaven.

A despot, surrounded with guards, with fortresses, protected by two hundred thousand men, deaf to conscience, will be struck to the quick by the dash of a pen; that shaft will pierce him in the midst of his greatness. He would wish to smile, and disguise the wound he receives; but a convulsive rage shakes his whole frame. Vain is his power—he is punished. Yes, he is punished, as are

his children also, by inheriting his detestable name, unless they retrieve it by a good reputation.

Dread then, ye tyrants ! dread the virtuous and impartial historian ! He will establish an avenging tribunal, which will, however, only be a prelude to that of posterity.

The work of several ages and the revolution of years will enlighten that which is still hid in darkness. No useful discovery will ever more be lost.

The press will immortalise books inspired by the genius of humanity ; and all those accumulated labours, and all those different ideas, wrought by reflection, will form a code of laws for nations. If even nature should not produce any more fine geniuses of which she is so sparing, yet the assiduous solicitude of common understandings will raise the edifice of philosophical knowledge.

The mind of man may be exhausted, but not that of mankind in general, says a certain poet. The human mind seems to proceed with a giant's pace, because the sparks sent forth from all parts of the globe can reunite in one focus, by the aid of printing, which collects those scattered rays. Posterity will then be astonished at our ignorance concerning objects which time will have cleared up in all its combinations. Thus one may venture to assert, it would be better to live one thousand years hence than in the present age. I have too good an opinion of man to think he would not yield when prest and surrounded by truth.

Philo

Philosophy is a pharos which diffuses its light to a great distance.—It has not an active property; it only causes its light to shine; the wind must fill the sails to drive the vessel on; it only points the way. And philosophy has never yet occasioned disturbances, seditions, or base attempts; it is only the expression of sublime reason which speaks to the world, and has no power but where it is adopted. —But man is enlightened involuntarily; it is not in his power to reject truth, when it is cut and formed like the diamond, and put into action by genius.

An opinion was spread which, like a pestilence, over-run the globe; it kindled fires in Europe, massacred in America, embrued Asia in blood, and made devastation even to the poles. The plague has had its term; it did not carry off more than two thirds of the human species; but this mad barbarism reigned twelve hundred years, and debased mankind even beneath the instinct of brutes. Philosophical writers are the beneficent beings who have put a stop and broke this moral epidemic, more dangerous than the most dreadful scourge.

When I meet a privileged book, I would lay, without opening it, the work is stuffed with political lies. The Prince may say, this piece of paper is worth fifty pounds, but he never will be able to compel mankind to believe him.

What is most to be admired in the printing art is, that those excellent works, that do
honour

honour to the ingenuity of man, are not bespoken, neither do they pay the expence; on the contrary, it is the natural liberty of the generous mind that unfolds itself in the face of danger, and makes a present to humanity, in spite of oppression. This it is that makes the man of literature so much esteemed, and secures to him the gratitude of future ages.

ON LOVE.

A Vision.

THE gloomy month of November had given the gray-headed tribe notice of the approach of winter; the great luminary of the earth resumed his palid looks, and a long night rapidly succeeded the day. Farewel, ye smiling plains, ye shady groves, ye murmuring streams! The hoary seer, mounted on storms, bristled with rime and isicles, drives expiring autumn away. To town then, to that tumultuous town, where all the passions are put in fermentation, and seem to corrupt the air we respire with their impure breath.

I quitted with great reluctance the charming country, where I had spent six months most agreeably. About the middle of my journey, I stopped one evening at an inn, where I intended to pass the night. I sat warming my benumbed hands near a large fire, when I took notice of a young person coming in, of
an

an engaging mien; her gesture and deportment gave a grace to the simplicity of her dress; she held in her arms a bundle, which she pressed softly to her bosom. She placed herself beside me, unfolded her bundle, and produced the most beautiful babe I had ever beheld. This scene, although so natural and common, gave me a most lively sensation from the grace and dignity of the representation. Being a respectful admirer of maternal tenderness, I could not avoid observing her with singular attention. The most delicate features were drawn with a kind of elevation in the outlines of a countenance at once both soft and affecting; the vivacity of her sparkling eyes was tempered with modesty; her voice was steady, though she seemed a little agitated; taking her all together, she was a picture that engrossed my whole attention. Yet being excited by a tender concern, more than a curious propensity, I ventured to ask from whence she came, and if she had yet far to walk with such a load. She replied in a soft tone, "It is not a load; my infant is too dear to me to be a burden in my arms; they will have no repose, until I have resigned him to the arms of a father tenderly beloved.— Heaven grant the happy moment may not be far! But if fate should still detain him from me, hope will inspire me with resolution to expect him." Those words uttered with vehemence, gave me a strong desire to learn more. I questioned her with that circumspection and respect, which invites the soul by integrity,

integrity, without any other kind of violence. Her open heart being at first a little perplexed by her sincerity, hesitated at each reply; but at length, whether my manner of speaking had inspired her with confidence, or whether she found a secret alleviation in acknowledging what I seemed desirous to know, she spoke thus:—"You will readily perceive by my accent, I am not a native of this province; I was born at****. I lost my mother too early; I was soon at the age when every thing has a seducing aspect, and one begins to be so themselves. Among a number of admirers who sought to fix my affection, there was one I could not refuse: when I fixed my eyes on him, I imagined I saw the summit of happiness in the purity of his mind. My heart was inflamed, we were soon agreed, and our union was completed; being obliged to conceal our loves, it only became the more violent. My father was in easy circumstances, but of a tyrannical disposition. My lover was young, genteel, sensible, and virtuous; but his fortune was by no means equal to mine. My friends would not consent to our marriage: a rich man, who had nothing engaging in him, without merit, demanded me for his wife, as one would ask for a jewel which would strike one's fancy: the match was thought to be so advantageous, that two days only were granted to my tears to take a resolution. Say what you will, a young timorous girl, accustomed to submission, cannot refuse to be led to the altar, by an imperious father.

father. I perceived I had not resolution sufficient; I consulted my lover, who was dearer to me than the world, and told him, "I see nothing but death that can relieve me from the orders of a father, who tyrannizes rather than commands. What shall we do?"—"Let us fly," said he, pressing me in his arms, "if you love me; our flight is now absolutely necessary. Other countries present an asylum against tyranny; let us set off; in the wide extent of the globe, Providence will take care of its industrious children.

"The Almighty endued us with hearts formed for each other; to his providence, then, we must trust. Come, then; my arm must hereafter direct your steps." The irresistible magic of his voice drew me on: love not only lent us his wings, but his imprudence also; in our delirium, I believe we should have gone to the farthest part of the globe, if the want of money had not suddenly put a stop to our proceedings. We looked on each other with surprise; being already in debt in this same place, it was no longer possible to get away. I then carried this child, who has attracted your eyes, and is the delight of mine. What a situation for a mother, what a situation for a husband! I call him my husband, for he is so in effect; our mutual oaths ascended before the august tribunal of the Almighty: he only was witness to them; but neither of us is so base as to break them.—My husband, in his distress, recollected he had an uncle, whose benevolent humanity he
had

had often heard praised. He was possessed of a lucrative employment not far from this country. "Canst thou consent," said he to me, "to let me set out alone, to endeavour to influence the heart of a relation to assist us; for I am overcome with grief and shame to see the state to which I have reduced thee. What I could now earn by labour would not be sufficient. Remain here as an hostage, and fear nothing."—"Go;" I replied, bathing him with my tears; "who me, doubt thy heart! No, never; thy hand will never give me the mortal stroke."—He set out. For these three months I have not had any news of him. Another would have suspected his fidelity, but I am far from entertaining so horrible an idea: my husband is not dead, for Heaven is just; I do not know where he is, but I expect him daily. I was obliged to suffer the pangs of labour far from his dear sight, who could have alleviated them; he has not yet had his infant in his arms, he has not embraced him. Oh, Heavens! what anxiety must not he suffer! In whatever condition he is, he must suffer; and the bare idea of his afflictions increases mine. It is true, I want for nothing here as yet; the people of this house are much concerned at my situation; they have never suspected either my honour or probity; but the birth of this child accumulates my debt. What a severe fate, to be under obligations to the compassion of strangers! To what a state of desperation should I be reduced, if unsupported by religion! I weep

weep as I kiss my child, when I think the first nourishment he sucks in, he receives as a favour: I tremble lest the misery that attends his dawn may accompany the rest of his life. Gracious God! protector of innocence, take pity on him. When my husband set out, he conjured me not to leave this place, but wait for him here, and above all, not to be uneasy even at his absence, if it should be long; I believe his word as I would a voice from Heaven. I have long concealed this sorrowful secret in my heart: you are the first to whom I have ventured to disclose it. People are so apt to turn their backs on the unfortunate, and are so cruelly industrious in discovering supposed faults; the compassion of some is so contumelious, so barbarous.—But I observe they begin to tire of the assistance I receive; I am asked why I have no news from my husband; whether he will return soon? I know not what to say. Every one is surprised at my resolution; but no one knows my heart.”

I silently wiped away a falling tear. She went on in a more animated tone—“Ah! if he was alive, he would be here; but this dear child, in whom I embrace him, in whom I see him, this is the tie that binds me to hope and life.” Finishing these words, she kissed it tenderly, casting on it one of those unutterable looks which so forcibly describe the energy of nature. She modestly slid the infant’s head under her handkerchief, to let it suck the delicious milk of her lovely breast, which

which was amazingly fair. I was somewhat disturbed. How charming did she then appear! I have seen the majesty with which Kings are seated on their thrones; that of a mother, in this august duty, is much more worthy our veneration.

Suddenly, a young man, a little confused, entered hastily; he flew to the arms of this tender mother, who gave a shriek; he held her long close pressed to his heart. It was not necessary to ask who he was. Struck dumb with tenderness, with astonishment, she presented him his son. This child he had not seen before. He could not contain himself any longer, when he took him in his arms; he raised his eyes to Heaven, and tears trickled down his cheeks; he expressed the sentiments with which his heart was replete, by sharp inarticulate exclamations of joy, almost resembling grief. Hurried away by the rapidity of his motions, he by turns pressed the mother and child to his bosom: the tears of this innocent creature shook his whole frame; he answered them with his kisses. He could not disengage himself from this part of himself, which was dearer to him than life; and all the bystanders felt the most lively emotion at this affecting scene. I shared in the luxury which intoxicated them. As they wished to be at liberty to converse together, they went to their chamber. The young man supported his wife, whose strength seemed exhausted with excess of joy: his watchful eye did not quit his son an instant, and his protecting arm guarded

guarded his innocent head from even the shadow of danger. I saw them retire with regret; they deprived me of the delicious pleasure I tasted in contemplating their mutual tenderness.

I was shewn into my chamber, which was next to theirs. I could hear their voices distinctly, as the door was badly shut up, and only covered over with tapestry. An involuntary inclination overpowered me to give an attentive ear to what they said; the young man spoke in an animated tone, so that I did not lose a word. "My dearest life," said he, let us abandon ourselves to the pleasure of love, since it is the only one that is left us, and has deprived us of every other advantage. Wilt thou be able to support resolutely the fate that awaits us? Dost thou think thou hast strength enough to hear what I have to say?"—"Speak boldly," she replied; "two hours ago I was the most unfortunate of women, now I am the happiest; thou art alive, and thou lovest me; my child sleeps between us, our eyes meet on his cradle; a new existence animates my soul; what can I have more to wish for! If cruel parents refuse to give us support, we will ask it all over the earth; we will work for masters, whose tyranny will at least be content to enjoy the fruits of our labour. We may love in freedom, live, work, and die together."

"Oh God!" replied the young man, "are riches given to people only to make them unjust! I went to my uncle, in whom I expected
to

to have found a father; he was already prepossessed against me by thine. At the first salute, he charged me with having violated the most sacred laws, with having dishonoured his name; of having been guilty of a crime that deserved death. I could scarce recover from my astonishment: I imagined he was delirious. He added, she whom I dared to carry away, should never be my wife; that thy father had sworn it, and that himself had promised to interpose his authority to deliver thee to him.

“ This speech was uttered with every symptom of indignation and contempt. Although touched to the quick, I concealed the violent agitation of my mind; I described our affection to him as it really was, pure innocence, imprudent perhaps, but still virtuous. He imposed silence on me, in a threatening tone; and told me, I had no other method to pursue than to deliver thee up without delay, and to withdraw myself for ever from the just vengeance of an irritated father. I answered that his anger blinded his reason, and extended the limits of parental authority far beyond their real boundaries; that matters might be very readily settled without noise or violence; that if I had committed a fault, yet it was an excusable one; the cause was love; that it would obtain forgiveness in the eyes of every sensible being, having been neither ravisher, traitor, or seducer. As he would not listen to me, I was going to take leave of this cruel relation, when the perfidious wretch had me seized,

seized, and dragged to prison, where I was closely confined; the terms on which I was to regain my liberty, and no other, was to reveal the place of thy retreat. In spite of every kind of persecution, and the most artful insinuations, I was silent. My resolution increased with my sufferings; but I was suffering for thee; and that idea alone made my restraint easy. My perseverance changed thy father's anger to fury: he came to the prison; I saw him, he put on an appearance of moderation, he even dared to promise forgiveness to us both, if I would deliver thee to him. This was telling me a cloister was to be thy doom; but the lover's eyes, who fears for what he loves, are too penetrating to fall into such a snare. I answered him haughtily, "Your daughter is no longer yours, Sir; you tyrannized over her; at this instant you are meditating how to deprive her of her liberty; you are planning how to make her miserable. She has chosen me for her husband; I will defend her choice until death; I am answerable for her liberty, her life, and her felicity. The rights of a father, who breathes revenge, must give way to mine. How dare you oppose a choice that insures her happiness? How dare you pretend to have authority over inclinations which even the heart which gave them birth cannot resist? I will die, rather than deliver up to your blind rage so dear an object; yes, I will prefer death to the disclosure of that important secret.

"For

“ For some time I was left undisturbed : the man appointed to bring me my food, seemed much concerned at my situation ; he offered to serve me, and endeavoured to induce me to confide a letter to him I had wrote ; but I never could be prevailed on to direct it.

“ To convince you,” said he, “ of the sincerity of my attachment to you, I will this night, if you please, furnish you the means to escape, provided you will be cautious.” I embraced him in my arms, as my deliverer.— He kept his word, and the night following I began my hasty journey towards thee. I walked three days, without taking any repose ; and if fatigue oppressed me, love assisted me with strength. But every thing is now forgot, that I repose in thy arms, my dearest life, and that I am once more blessed with the fragrance of thy breath. Still I must inform you, my love is not without uneasiness. Perhaps I give way too much to a fatal foreboding ; but I dread they winked at my flight, in order to follow me, and be certain of the place where I concealed thee. If it should be a stratagem ! Oh, good God !—Not far from hence, I saw a postchaise, with the blinds drawn up ; I took notice of it the very first day of my journey ; it followed the same road I took.— Let us fly, my dear angel, let us fly from this place at the dawn of day, and seek an asylum where Providence may protect us against our persecutors.—“ But how shall we leave this,” replied the young bride, “ as we are so much in debt, and cannot discharge it ? Honour, probity,

probity, will keep us here in duance. Can you tell me, my dear, how to reconcile them with our present distressed situation?"—"Yes, certainly; but I fear you will never consent to it.—Speak—my fears are all for thee. If you was to be carried off from this, we should be lost to each other for ever, and my despair would know no bounds. Fly with my son; conceal thyself in some place where thou mayst remain unknown; I will remain here until the debt is discharged; I will sell, if necessary, my cloaths, and the remainder of my effects.—Perhaps the friendly hand of some generous and compassionate mind, will be touched with our misfortunes; then I will fly to thee, never more to part; but my first care must be to withdraw you from your father's pursuit; he would bury you for life in a house of sorrow and despair. My blood runs cold at the thought!—Yet, if thy heart cannot determine on parting, remain; we will die together."—"No, said she; that would be the means of your destruction; mine shall suffice. I do not flatter myself to be able to soften an incensed father; he would tear me from thy embraces. I will fly to secure our liberty and our happiness." At these words, the young man pressed her to his breast, and they replied to each other by sighs; and a voluntary grief, which was not without its merit, threw them insensibly into a soft slumber.

My heart was so affected, that it throbbed violently; I shed relenting tears at their fate. My soul immersed in soft melancholy, I said

to myself—What is this sympathetic emotion, whose impulse, as rapid as uncontrollable, unites two beings so closely; makes the most timorous sex bold, and the fiercest heart languish? Oh, invincible power of beauty! thy influence is unquestionable, there are no rebels to thy laws! Let us not deceive ourselves; the gray-headed woman, bending under the weight of years, still more pitiable in being deprived of the necessaries of life, would not have excited so lively a sensibility in me. I endeavoured to define this active passion, whose astonishing effects every thing recalled to my memory. Is it given to man for his happiness or misery? I compared the examples of criminality and virtue it introduced into the world. By degrees I fell asleep, overwhelmed in a torrent of reflections; but soon wandering into the illusions of a dream, my feet no longer touched the earth; I felt myself carried into the clouds, in a chariot drawn by doves, who billed each other in the airy expanse, and an object, as ravishing as wonderful, suddenly attracted my notice.

A woman of tall stature, and indefinitely beautiful, crowned with stars, fleeting in the midst of a pure air, above the earth, which seemed embellished by her looks, and deliciously soaked in milk, of a dazzling brightness, which she plentifully diffused. Her bosom adorned with several fruitful breasts, arranged in the most perfect symmetry: held in one hand a flambeau, whose light was extracted from the first rays of the Sun. She
 moved

moved it with majestic grace, and millions of little sparks, in form of darts, rapidly fell from it on all parts of the earth. - In the other she held a thread, invisible to the mortal eye; this thread, which nothing could break, passed through all hearts, and held all matter on earth chained with knots harder than the diamond. The slightest emotion proceeded from this grand principle, and the most astonishing revolutions were the effect of this single spring; by its aid she unravelled the course of events with regular and constant harmony, which she conducted with magnificent ease; her spotted robe encompassed the globe, and exhibited a wonderful variety of colours, infinitely shaded. She was all-sufficient in herself, and enjoyed her own charms. Her looks were replete with maternal care and tenderness; I readily discovered her.— Oh, Nature, said I, is it thou I have so long sought after? is it thou to whom mortals are so ungrateful? Is it thee, beauty most perfect, they are every moment insulting? She cast a smile on me, replete with kindness, and said, “ All mankind are my children, but those children are inconstant and rebellious. They forget their mother; and the farther they stray from me, the weaker their sight to perceive me. I lead them gently by this thread, still hiding my supporting hand; for their pride would be hurt. I tender them flattering baits, to induce them to obedience; and I punish them only for their good, when they wander too much from my amiable laws:

they murmur incessantly against their mother; yet she loves them not the less. I watch over all their real wants, but withdraw my aid from their fictitious ones, which inflame and disorder their imagination. Those sparks thou seest proceed from the flambeau of life, are carried into the hidden bowels of the earth; I incessantly tend upon the motion, the existence, the display of all beings; those brilliant fires are so many reproductive shoots, the inexhaustible source of joy, of pleasure, of happiness, and immortality. If, my son, I do no better, believe me it is not given to me to do more."

She made me a sign, and I cast my eyes on a concave glass, of a large circumference, that lay at her feet. What was my ecstasy! I could perceive, through this celestial microscope, all the earth in one single point of view; I could distinguish each part in the utmost minuteness; the human species shewed itself, as it really is, one only and same family; all those small inflamed darts which were emitted from the creative flambeau, had an active fertility. Pleasure animated matter, and it grew visibly under this happy hand, Plants, flowers, trees, bending towards each other their lively and amorous buds; the greater bodies scattered in the expanse, were obedient to this universal motion; atoms pursued each other; every desire followed its nutriment; every spark inflamed its object, and devoured it as its prey. Metals, enlivened in the mine, extended their branches, and silently united them;

them; the hardest flint incorporated with the stone it enlarged; the birds, with extended wings, sought voluptuousness in the azure skies; the inhabitants of the watery element felt the subtle flame in their briny plains; and amidst the burning sands, the haughty lion, with bristled mane and sparkling eye, follows his mate, roaring with pleasure; whilst in the deepest cavity of the hollow den, the tygress, suckling her young, resembled a tender careful mother.

This inexhaustible flame, always the same, and yet always divided, multiplied without end the prodigious heap of beings; but this excessive population would have been dreadful, if the hand of destruction had not put a stop to this inexhaustible current. Nature sighed at seeing one half of its children sacrificed to the other; she turned away her eyes from the devouring hand which hurried them to the tomb when they were scarcely come into life; but submissive to the will of the Almighty who created her, she adored him, without endeavouring to dive into it. Individuals destroyed each other, but the species survived and seemed immortal. "Make good use, said she to me, of the precious moments granted to thee; do not let thy view wander fruitlessly over this multiplicity of objects, of which the human eye cannot comprehend the coherence: fix it on man as the most accomplished as well as the most singular of my children; it is he should interest thee in preference to all others. One

would be inclined to think him the center and end of this world, having rendered every thing so subservient to his necessities or pleasures. Fix on some one object, for your time for observation is but short."

I glanced my eye rapidly over the scene, and in a vast country, to us hitherto unknown, I saw a naked Indian, free, but not bound to it, having nothing but God and nature above him, enjoying the benefits that offered themselves, without analysing them, content with the present, and not creating to himself imaginary phantoms; his body was supple and robust, his eye lively and piercing, his ear attentive; in his deportment a certain air of haughtiness, of which we have no kind of idea in our degenerate climate. A spark of the creative flambeau had flown to his breast; inflamed with this fire, he wandered to the top of a mountain; there he anticipated the dawn; he looked up to Heaven, contemplated Nature, and demanded of each that voluptuousness whose inflaming principle they had placed in his heart. Casting his eager and impatient eyes around, he discovered in the remote part of a dale the destined object: quick as lightning he flies, and pursues the fugitive beauty; she is soon fatigued. Tired and fainting, she falls on the mossy bed; he grasps her in his arms, and her feeble resistance declares the secret desires with which she herself is consumed. It is not the phrenzy of the imagination that unites and inflames them; it is not a furious passion that is known
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by its excesses or disorders; it is rather an energetic and chaste impulse of nature, which wisely consummates the miracle of the reproduction of mankind. Voluptuousness was never more lively or pure; it deposited the beneficent flame of love in a grateful and sensible heart. The bashfulness of this swooning beauty does not consist in the dissimulation of a resistance as ridiculous as it is involuntary, but in that moderation that denotes happiness. She enjoys without fear or remorse; from henceforth she follows his steps, whom she acknowledges for her conqueror and master. It is not the fetters of slavery that make her a captive, it is the knot of love and pleasure; they wander freely over a fruitful land, which is not bartered to the demon of property. The young savage seems more graceful and majestic beside his companion; his eye is milder, his countenance more serene. The time being come, when she must bring forth with anguish the fruit of the voluptuous union: this moving scene is performed on the banks of a rivulet; she overcomes all the mother's pangs to enjoy only her pleasures. The savage's heart is affected with a new sensation, superior to all he had yet experienced; he receives his child in his vigorous arms, who already testifies his father's health and strength; he acknowledges him to be his offspring; and it will be as impossible for him to part from him, as it would be to give up that exquisite passion for liberty, which he idolizes, without being sensible he may one day lose it.

“Thou seest, (said Nature to me) the children who have most faithfully adhered to my laws; others, less rational, endeavoured to realise the whims of their fancy. They were ashamed of their nakedness and happiness; they rejected my good offices, they formed a fantastical code.—If I should abandon them to their own laws——but, no; instinct, their first guide, instinct, which, in spite of them, inclines them to good, watches, notwithstanding their proud folly, to the preservation of the species.”

I looked again in the mysterious glass, and saw men of polished manners. They almost all resembled each other; their stature was scarcely distinguishable, and all their motions appeared constrained. The same hand that adorned the outside, filled the inside of their heads, and thought was subservient to fashion. They thought themselves wise, yet they were unhappy. The two sexes, differently dressed, walked towards each other with remarkable gravity; concealed from each other at first with great care the effect of the little sparks; spoke together for a long time of quite other matters, than what they wanted to say, and after reciprocally deceiving one another, vanity finished the business begun by lying. Each one engaged on their side other persons to consent to the union they intended to form. They met together, they consulted, they scrupulously debated on the fortune; and if the inequality was ever so trifling, the agreement was broke off. Often, for a conclusion,

they

they would send three hundred leagues to Peter to know if James could conscientiously be united to the one he loved: Peter would take the money, and write his consent; then it was nothing but festivity, without end; singing in the morning, dancing at night, and they left the new-married couple alone, when desire was often gone. See, said Nature to me; after all their follies, here they are returning to me, as they all will; they put off their dresses, which are troublesome to them. But this active flame I sent them to make them happy, being blunted in its direction, has no longer the same strength; it is extinguished during those long debates. I loose by it a strong and vigorous child, and in its stead have one begot by uneasiness and constraint; their race dwindles, declines in beauty and in vigour; their minds are as feeble as their bodies; they are scarcely brought into the world, but they imprint the badge of slavery on them. Bandages and fetters are prepared; they are put on with demonstrations of joy, as they welcome a new comer to prison to share the common disgrace. What chimerical ideas they have formed! what a destructive genius! Troublesome remorse, gloomy reflections, perpetual agitations, those are the works of those haughty men. It is not long since they exercised the barbarous folly of stoning to death those, who, yielding to the power of the darts with which I inspired them, united together, without the consent or permission of any one. Now they are satisfied at

and despising those, who, at the same time, they secretly envy. They delight in treating one another with the greatest tyranny; they have spun the thread of their laws so fine over every part of the earth, that it is to be met with every where, and one must be very skilful, or very happy, not to break it. That was the certain method of promoting vice; and they have improved on it, by prohibiting a thousand lawful and innocent things. How is it possible to look on those numerous seraglios, without shuddering; peopled with eunuchs, the gloomy persecutors of the most perfect beauties, who languish in all the horrors of despair, which will only end with their days! They look for a feeble alleviation, from a pale and enervated despot, which only irritates them, whilst a seraglio of men would be more suitable to each of them. In other climes, there are other seraglios, where they seem to adore their yoke; where a sigh towards me is an act of impiety; where in long canticles they boast to the Creator of their self-denial, by refusing to perpetuate the race of mankind. They must believe him to be very mischievous, to dare address him thus. But I have my turn; and I chastise them severely; they call on me in vain from their solitary beds, drenched with their tears,—Oh, Nature, Nature!—I pass on, and their repentance revenges their contempt of my power.

“ I extend my indignation also on those debauchees, who, subservient only to their senses, inflame their imagination with lascivious

vious poetry. Unhappy wretches! they do not know that pleasure, to be relished, should be simple, natural, and easy; they are only acquainted with the torment of impotency; the voluptuous draught is not made for their lips, inflamed with a mortal poison. I also proscribe all those who make it a practice, and delight in rending a credulous heart, and those infamous corrupters of innocence, and those who make a detestable abuse of my gifts, and those monsters who furiously insult my laws. I reject all those perverse children—I will one day accuse them before the Almighty Creator, and they will be punished; for every thing that is excess, proceeds not from me.

“ There are others who would set bounds to my fertility. They calculate wrong the kindness of Providence, of which they are diffident; they are afraid of bringing into life a being, which, according to them, would not find room enough on earth, nor this earth sufficiently plentiful for their support. How wretched are their laws, since it is so difficult to dwell among such men, united in the bands of society! But although they have spoiled every thing, why cannot they perceive how insulting this interesting speculation is to me, and how criminal in the eyes of the Creator? All things call on them—What art thou? how dost thou exist? Is it thou that ripens the fruits of the earth? Dost thou know by what magic this pippin thou hast set in it will grow; rise four times thy height, cover thee with its shade, and delight thee with its fruit?”

Is it thou who hast adorned it with leaves; is it thou that giveth life? What occasion then, for so much speculation? Go, keep the road that Nature has pointed to thee; let her answer for the rest.

“ If thou art still surpris'd to see such admirable order preserved amongst such a confusion of false opinions and melancholy extravagancies, remember it is to my vigilant bounty this good order is due. I do not abandon my children, although they raise altars to folly; my industrious tenderness redoubles my care. I disguise myself under the mask that seduces them; I amuse their weakness; I borrow their language, I humour their whims, the better to lead them to the end I propose. I hide even my power from them; I always hold their hearts in my possession by this indissoluble thread, but I act without violence. I perceived they delighted in illusions, the ornaments of the imagination; I made use of them to rivet their happy chains; I melted down all the sentiments of the human heart into this primitive propensity, since they will not enjoy their pleasures without alloy. Esteem, friendship, self-love, vanity, and even fortune, have united to augment the dominion of this passion; it was free and dallying, but it is now become, it is true, serious and terrible. Art has aided to augment its ascendant; then it has caused conflagrations; but I have preferr'd some disasters to the annihilation of the species. But the business was to preserve it, under the double oppression of superstition and tyranny:
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by my skill, its invisible effects have bid defiance to the fiercest despot; and a young, bashful, and modest girl, under the yoke of constraint, speaks more feelingly to a young man with a glance of her eye, than if, at entire liberty, she was to cling round his neck, and abandon herself to all the transports of his passion.

“ Now they engrave their fantastical laws in brass and stone; and in their enthusiastic pomp, think to subdue me, and heap prejudice on prejudice, I laugh at them; I will insinuate myself into their trifling sports, their ceremonies. In vain will they dress me in twenty different colours; I will pull the invisible thread. This is my sanctuary; there will I command in spite of them; they will not be able to put me from them, without being annihilated themselves.

“ And dost thou think this solemn bond those lovers have just exchanged and ratified, would not be broke as soon as made, were it not for my aid, and the pleasure I prepared for them did not afford the means of perfecting their union? It is the band of voluptuousness, and not that of the laws, which preserves their affection, whilst the laws ostentatiously arrogate to themselves the glory.”

Whilst Nature was speaking, my eye, still fixed on the glass, flew from one object to another; I meditated, with inexpressible emotion, the astonishing effects of this vivifying flambeau. Those men who made the universe dread the power of their arms, who seemed

seemed as demigods to the affrighted world, their hands imbrued in slaughter, and grasping the thunder bolt, fell at the feet of a timorous beauty, humbling the haughty insolence of their looks, to beg a single glance. Those hearts, inured to murder, sigh'd; sometimes the addresses of the masters of the world were rejected. A shepherd prevailed over a monarch; virtuous beauty preferred the lover to treasures; and despotic tyranny retired confused at the appearance of the invincible barrier where their immense power expired.

But, alas! when this fire fell on perfidious wretches, accustomed to crimes, then rage called forth all the furies of hell; they formed dark conspiracies; they sharpened the steel; they prepared poison; they introduced the fire of hatred and revenge, amidst the peaceful darkness of night; hovels were burned, palaces reduced to ashes, and the horrible monuments of jealousy frightened even those that caused them.—Oh, Nature! why dost thou shake this sacred flambeau on such base and cruel souls?—She made me a sign, and I saw in the concave glass serpents, tygers, panthers, insects full of venom, the most frightful animals, re-producing their likeness in their hideous embraces. Nature turned away her awful countenance, and kept a profound silence.

And yet all great enterprizes, all productions of genius, had this vivifying fire for its principle; it forwarded the progress of the mind, it enlarged the circle of ideas, it made
it

it survey with astonishing rapidity a career, where we should have slowly crept on, without the assistance of this grand incentive. All sacrifices bordering on heroism were familiar to it; all elevated enterprizes were natural to it, and the universe could not exhibit a more beautiful sight than a virtuous heart, warmed by this divine flame. All the virtues of society sprung from this precious sensation, as from a refined source; it was then divested of that turbulent activity which renders it destructive; it was mild, moderate, and destroyed the afflictions of life, to let rule in its place that interior contentment which is the most certain testimony of happiness.

But what pleased me most was, to see the primitive equality of mankind resume its ancient rights in the most civilized countries; Kings descended from their thrones, and laid by the sceptre, the crown, and royal mantle. Dignities of all kinds were looked upon as uneasy burdens, detrimental to voluptuousness. Tiaras, diadems, mitres, rich robes, and helmets, president's caps lay scattered about, and were often trod under foot, in a fit of amorous dalliance; I said to myself,—They came naked into the world, and into the earth they will return naked; they put off all ornaments, to abandon themselves to the secret impulse of nature; and you would not be on an equality, oh, ye mortals! Ah! this transitory dress, with which some of you adorn yourselves, is only the badge of folly, which
you

you prudently lay by when you would be happy.

I could not conceive how they could again put on this uneasy restraint, they had just thrown off with so much delight; but custom had made it an indispensable duty, and they were obliged to keep up, through pride, what they had adopted in their first phrenzy. They carried their injustice so far, as to accuse Nature with the shackles they had put on, whilst she endeavoured to remove the obstacles that opposed their felicity.

Voluptuousness, then, with a smiling countenance, and easy air, approached her mother Nature. She discovered her daughter by her chaste eye, her countenance, which displayed a lively modesty. She delivered her, in my presence, a gold cup, and said,—“Go down among mankind; let them imbibe pleasure in your bewitching cup; let them quench their thirst, but not intoxicate themselves: even proud Ambition shall be your slave, and Heaven grant she may remain so!”—Voluptuousness descended on earth, and man dared all evils to repose a while in her arms. It was for her he learned to fight, to conquer or to die; he undertook the greatest difficulties to obtain a smile. Who could resist the attractions of this amiable Sovereign! But why resist them! every thing was languid in the world, if by a beam of pleasure she had not introduced motion and life. Soul of animated beings! she constantly repelled the absorbing hand of death; it was she supported the im-

mense

mense creation. The unfociable misantropist pursued his image in the reveries of his gloomy melancholy; he wept and blasphemed, while he adored this queen of the universe. A gentle voice was heard in the air, saying,—Mortals, do not resist her soft attractions; it appertains to the sensations of man, to his intimate and abstruse existence. Confess, ye wise Atrabilarians, confess her sweets are mild; what Nature loves must necessarily be good; pleasure is the balm of life, pleasure elevates the mind to a sense of gratitude to the Creator of the universe. Canticles of reason are cold; but when the heart fructifies and adorns them, they are then ardent, and pierce the skies; they bear the incense of a worthy homage to the majestic feet of the Eternal. Amiable and sublime Legislatrix, soft Voluptuousness!—Command, but be not tyrannical; do not permit thy gracious laws to give birth to intoxication, but deliberate sentiments. Thou hast not come down from Heaven to earth to stupify, but to ennoble mankind; do not violate thy glorious intent; thou wouldst destroy thyself, and be thy own executioner.—This was the voice of Moderation; she embraced Voluptuousness, who then appeared brighter. She seemed to enjoy a peaceable and perfect happiness, unmixed with disquietude, uneasiness, or passion; pleasure was no longer that mechanical impulse that fatigues rather than satisfies the senses; it was as durable as it was moderate; its calm delights did not enrapture the soul, so as to hinder

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its sublime functions, and no law was violated; Nature diffused her bounties to the happy mind that respected her.

I exclaimed, suddenly retiring back with horror,—Oh, tender, Oh, careful mother! what a horrible turn! what do I see! what are those livid flames that fall from thy flambeau! how can they be so bold as to mingle and tarnish the splendor of the brilliant flames of Voluptuousness? Oh, Nature! how is thy beauty faded! Heavens! how many unhappy wretches perish by abandoning themselves to their ardency. Does this impure flame proceed from the infernal gulphs! for it brings all its torments with it: the man who is infected with this impoisoned vapour, detests his existence, perpetuates it with horror, and transmits his despair to all his unfortunate progeny. He shudders whilst he embraces pleasure, and he yields to it for his misery.—Why do you grant success to his performance, and give life to innocent beings, who will one day curse with justice both thee and their father? I see the youth, in the age of imprudence, impetuosity, and pleasure, unknowingly receive this poison in his veins; he innocently communicates it to his tender lover; they perish in the flower of their youth; they expire in solitary torments, with the pressure of shame added to that of anguish. It is true, there are other scourges; the plague at least declares itself, and is but of short duration; famine leaves us some resources, and does not destroy hope; the flame of war stops; volcanos
thunder

thunder before they vomit their flames; but this, more horrid, seems immortal; it has spread all over the face of the earth, under the perfidious allurements of Voluptuousness. Devouring and hidden fire! it undermines the entire race of mankind; it silently infests with its destructive venom; it destroys pleasure, which is more than life; it corrupts our only consoling advantage, mingled among a croud of evils; it strikes the innocent, and with it future generations. Happy should we be, if it suddenly led us to death;—but no; the pure milk thou distillest, turns into a slow poison in thy own breast, and thou nourishest thy children with this woeful and murderous food.

“ My son,” replied Nature, “ do not enhance the miseries, which are the greatest cause of my sufferings. God has permitted evil to shed its bitterness in my bosom, and I felt it at the same time torn by this ever-renewing tormentor. I had hid this contagion in islands almost inaccessible; the daring imprudence of man has surmounted all. You may judge my amazement, when I saw the greedy European carry desolation into the bosom of America, wanting to mingle his barbarian blood with the same innocent blood he had spilt in torrents! For this he was punished, and America revenged. The progress of the contagion was as rapid as horrible. I thought myself undone, and lifted up my eyes towards that abode, where severe justice and smiling mercy, with arms entwined, support together
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the Eternal's throne in all its majestic brightness. He vouchsafed to make a sign to Hope, and that forerunner to happiness came, and supported me in her arms; her balmy words penetrated my wounds."—"Tender daughter of the Eternal," said she to me, "confide entirely in his clemency; the Almighty's plan is immense, and it is not given thee to know all; courage and submission are thy duties and virtues. If the ardent fire of grief purifies thy flesh, it is the operation of an instant; it is an imperceptible minute, in comparison of ages, that slide away. Nature, thou art in the sight of God, as a child before its mother; sometimes she seems to abandon it for a moment, to see which way it will go; but if it smiles, extends its feeble hands, as to its only hope, she then catches it in her maternal arms, and then presses it to her bosom with redoubled ardour; she for ever after calls it her dear child, her well-beloved child, who recognized her, who confidently and tenderly smiled on her. In a little while, let me tell you, you shall be initiated in all the secrets of the Supreme Being; you shall read the plan of the creation in his enlightened bosom; you shall no longer be obstructed by either shadow or cloud, and thou wilt even possess the Divinity. The physical evil is the hammer that strikes on eternity, to beat out the spring of moral good."

A jarring and plaintive noise, which came from the adjoining room, where the two unhappy

happy

lovers were, whose adventure had so much affected me, awoke me suddenly. I hasted thither. What a moving and terrible scene! A man, who I soon found to be the father of the young woman, in the greatest rage, endeavouring to strangle her; her lover held him vigorously, with all his might, though with decency. Sometimes he implored, then struggled; he was both the protector of this distressed woman, and a submissive and suppliant son. The whole house was raised with the noise; several people, urged on by the enraged father, endeavoured to overpower the young man, while the other spectators, moved and affected, joined in his defence: but at the appearance of an officer, who produced a formidable order, and the angry countenance of a man who claimed the rights of a father over his daughter, every one gave way, and force succeeded.

The lovers were torn from each other's embraces. They sunk from the pinnacle of despair into a sullen silent sorrow; they seemed annihilated, and like two victims dragged to execution.

The young child, half awoke by the noise and tumult, lay struggling in the cradle. I was suddenly seized with an extraordinary emotion, being still full of my dream, and the image of nature. I took the infant in my arms, and presenting it to this inflexible father,—Sir, said I, in a firm tone, here is an infant, who wants a father; it is your blood that flows in its veins, and beats in that little heart,

heart, which will one day bless the hand that cherishes its weakness, or curse the one that abandons it. This is he in whom you are to revive, and who will one day be your greatest glory or reproach : look upon this innocent babe that your barbarity would deprive of every assistance ; would you wish him to curse you ! Your daughter's crime is to have yielded to an impulse which has subdued you more than once, and you have not been able to conquer. She has brought into the world, without your consent, perhaps without her own, a son, who should not be guilty in your fight ; it depends on you, then, to repair this fault, by legitimating this son, who will respect and cherish you. Shall barbarian prejudice force you to sacrifice every thing dear to you in this life ! As to this young man, he loves, and is beloved ; he tenders you a virtuous hand ; what greater riches do you require ? Confess it ; the smile of this infant has more real charms and value than the greatest treasures ; its mother is your daughter ; what other title ought the father of this child bear than her husband ! he is worthy of it, as he has fulfilled its duties ; set a proper value on his resolution, and high-spirited feeling soul, that loves you, notwithstanding your severity.

The father, struck more with the aspect of the child than with my remonstrance, contemplated him stedfastly. It had thrown off part of its clothes ; and whether it was the effect of the minute, or a fortunate accident, he fixed

his eyes on his grandfather with the same tender earnestness as he did on his mother; he even held out smiling his two little hands to him. I ventured to put him in his arms, and said,—Behold his asylum! he is in the bosom of nature, and shall not depart from it; this breast must not be shut against his cries. Could he spurn him from him! his countenance began already to betray the emotions of his heart; he vainly endeavoured to conceal it. In his confusion, he could not help kissing the child; the afflicted mother, attentive to all his motions, seized the instant; she flung herself at his feet; and supporting her child with one hand, while she pressed him gently to her father's lips, with the other she grasped his hand, and bath'd it with a torrent of tears. The young man, at a little distance, put one knee to the ground; and I, standing with extended arms, and tears in my eyes, excited the already relenting father to pity and compassion. It was not long before he put up his hand to wipe away a falling tear; and his silence presaged some grand event.—“Thou hast conquered,” said he suddenly to his daughter; “I did not expect this thunder-clap; it is from Heaven, which over-rules all. His holy name be for ever blest! Rise up; my anger is past; I forgive you, and I feel my tears mingle with thine.—This child—Ah!—leave me, you soften me too much—take your child, he is now mine—love me both of you.” He spoke, and kissing the child with redoubled transport, gave him back to his

his mother. The young man then ventured to approach, took him by the hand and kissed it with a respectful air; and I, giving way to the force of example, fell at his knees, as if I had been his own son, or as if he had pardoned me. He did not raise us up; he wept bitterly a long time, hiding his face, now and then returning to the child's cradle, whom he gazed on with wondrous and relenting eyes. The witnesses to this affecting scene, astonished, gave way to the different emotions of surprise, tenderness, and joy.

Love and gratitude were never more strongly marked by lively and tender expressions; the victorious triumph of nature, peaceable and melting, was as great as the furious rage that had burst forth an hour before. This hard-hearted and inflexible father seemed abashed at the excesses to which he had abandoned himself; his confusion between a son, a daughter, and a grandson, would form a portrait which would require a better pencil than mine. Thus the innocent action of an infant disarmed an enraged man of his wrath, which any other would in vain have attempted to work upon.—Oh, Nature, Nature, said I to myself, this is one of thy strokes: thou hast pulled the secret thread that unites the hearts of thy children, and they have obeyed thee! We must return to thee to be feeling, to be humane, to be happy. The father could not satiate his eyes with his dear child, who had disarmed his anger; twenty times did he return to caress him; the mother's heart enjoyed

enjoyed the sight, without losing a single circumstance. He anticipated the pleasure of presenting him to all his family. The mother wiped away her tears, but they were the tears of gladness. The young man silently embraced me; and I, overjoyed at the victory obtained by Nature, set out, enjoying the delicious pleasure of having seen every thing changed according to their wishes and mine*.

A DIALOGUE

Between a PHILOSOPHER and his GARDENER†.

Paradoxil.

WHAT's the news with thee, Maturin?

Maturin. Good news, Sir! The good wife is lately brought to bed of a chopping boy, who is to be baptized this night; and this business being well over, I feel I shall work better to-day than usual.

Par. Why then I find you are well pleased, Maturin?

Mat. Lord, Sir! who would not be so in my situation? If I had time I would dance by myself.

* A player, called Armand, in a piece, entitled, *The Call of Nature*, has appropriated to himself the plan, the character, and expressions of the author.

† The author exposes the different systems on generation, by exhibiting the ridiculousness and futility of them.

Par. But how canst thou be so merry, when thy child is just come into a scene of misery and trouble ?

Mat. Oh ! let him not be more unhappy than his father, and all will go well. — If he has troubles, he will also have some pleasure. Can one be without the other ? If he is not lazy, if he works, he will not be sorry to have been born. For my part, I am not sorry to find myself here.

Par. What ! you are happy ?

Mat. And why not, pray ? Yes, I am happy.

Par. Poh ! you only fancy so.

Mat. But why not ? I feel, I hope, what I feel. Do you want to make me believe I am miserable ? No, no, I am very well satisfied, especially now the good woman is delivered ; for I am relieved from a burden. I don't complain of what I cannot help ; I chuse rather to enjoy what God Almighty sends me, than to be murmuring and grunting to no purpose ; that is the reason I married, because it is a great satisfaction to have a pretty little woman who loves and caresses one, and a greater still to kiss the child she nurses on her lap.

Par. Dost thou know how thy child came into the world ?

Mat. Odds bobs ! he came in like all others ; the King's children don't come otherwise ; it's all one : and, zooks ! when I think on it, it's a good lesson for your proud folks.

Par.

Par. But that's not what I would say.— How dost thou think thou hast been able to beget a being like thyself?

Mat. That's a very strange question! when I plant a tree, I put the shoot in the earth, and then go about my business; it grows when God gives it a blessing. It is not those that make the finest arguments are the wisest men.

Par. But what idea hast thou of the mystery of generation?

Mat. Since you say it is a mystery, I cannot know any thing of the matter. It has pleased God to conceal his secrets from us, since he executes them before our eyes, and we cannot see into them.

Par. But still what dost thou think on this subject?

Mat. I know nothing, I think nothing: I only know when to plant a tree, but I do not know how it grows. It is the same with children, I suppose: after having been fond of one another of a night, one must send of a morning for the midwife, and the child cries. How those children came into the world, is beyond our conception; in short they do come; that is the principal business; what signifies the rest to us?

Par. How! what signifies it to us? Dost thou not know, then, if this science was thoroughly known, it would furnish us the means of bringing the human species to greater perfection; and instead of so many silly fools, we should have nothing but people of genius and philosophers?

Mat. But if every one was a wit and a philosopher, there would be no more block-heads ; then who would there be to admire learned men and philosophers ? Truly, sir, they would be finely taken in. But they are a good sort of people necessary to have about us, like you, my dear master ; for observe me, you are a very good man : and give me leave to tell you, I like your actions more than your speeches.

Par. Psha, if I am not better, the reason is, I am not yet enlightened enough. But I wish you would tell me freely your thoughts on generation.

Mat. Why, I tell you, I have none ; it is your business, that know all about it, to tell me. But, between ourselves, it would be better to get a child than rack your brains how it is got. — But, since you have got so much knowledge, let us hear, tell us all your doctrine. In the mean time I will go on with my work, not to lose time. — Now for it. How do you settle the fabricating of man ? Have you ever been in the manufactory ?

Par. Why, pretty nearly.

Mat. What the devil ! what's that you say ?

Par. I have opened some two or three hundred goats after copulation, and, by the assistance of the scapel, I have pursued, in the ramifications of the veins—

Mat. What ! you have made those cruel experiments ! you are become an executioner to be learned ! Instead of sparing those poor animals, you have committed a
slaughter

slaughter that has answered no purpose. — By Jove! I am glad of it; for it is not by destroying that one will discover the cause of life.

Par. I am pleased with thy good sense. It is with regret I made this philosophical slaughter, but the desire to know nature—

Mat. Remain in ignorance rather as I am, and do no harm to any thing. Zookes, if you was suffered to go on with the curiosity that excites you, perhaps you would begin to embowel our —— excuse my freedom — and only to see better.

Par. Oh! always speak thy mind. I like that words should be as free as thoughts; and I prefer thy conversation to that of many of the learned.

Mat. Well, then, listen to me, — you are a very good man while you are not curious. — You would not hurt a child. — But when the demon of knowledge possesses you, you are more cruel than all the huntsmen together. — They are in the right to say all over the village you are a little cracked. — You laugh. — I said nothing of it to any one; but I know the ugly experiments you made with those glasses that make every thing so large. — Fie upon it! the operations of the black art are not so diabolical. All the secrets in the world are worth nothing when compared to the shameful means of acquiring them. I have often blushed for you.

Par. Well, faith, friend Maturin, I never thought of blushing: I have seen all those things

philosophically, as a scrutinizer of nature; and every thing that has existence is formed to be seen and considered by man.

Mat. Come, come, that is not the way to become learned.—Go see where——But you will be punished for your curiosity; you will know nothing. Here you are in the world; what the devil signifies it how you came here?

Par. I wish to discover the origin of so extraordinary an animal as man. The instant of casting a statue is that which impresses for ever its grace and beauty. If we knew well the mould of the human species, we might shape it; and art, which in every thing else wonderfully assists nature, might second her in this circumstance. If thou didst but know all that has been thought on this subject, it would seem to thee very curious, and would certainly make thee have a better opinion of those experiments.

Mat. Well, relate them all to me: I shall then be as knowing as you, and shall have nothing to reproach myself with.

Par. That is a very subtil distinction, Master Maturin; you will know every thing and pay nothing.

Mat. You make arguments; that's your trade; I grow cabbages; you eat my cabbages, let me taste of your arguments.

Par. That is all right.—Well, my friend, you must know it was a mere chance that thou and all the human race never had existed.

Mat.

Mat. Ah! Ah! Egad that's very comical. — The world had a great escape then! But how happened that?

Par. We must proceed regularly. Listen to me. There are millions and hundreds of millions of shoots more innumerable than the sands of the sea, which being formed to expand themselves, perish and never come into life. Thy shoot, fortunately or unfortunately, I do not know which, has expanded.

Mat. I am not sorry for it.—

Par. Thou art grown, thou hast understanding, whilst so many millions of others have sunk into nothing. All proceeds from the first man, and even the universe was originally, but a favoured shoot among so many thousands of others.

Mat. What! did the world grow as I did? How! do you believe that?

Par. Yes, the world may have begun by a shoot no bigger than an egg.

Mat. (*laughing*) This same philosophy is a very comical thing!—But the hen that laid this egg?

Par. The sun, the moon, the earth, the sea, present and future generations, all those things, I tell you again, depended, as thou didst, on small beginnings.

Mat. (*laughing louder*) But the hen, I say the hen?

Par. Very well; thou, for example, were in thy father; and thy father was in thy grand father; and thy grand father and father were in thy great grand father; and thy great great

grand father and thy great great great grand fathers and thou were in the loins of our father Adam when he walked in the garden.

Mat. What, then, I was walking with him? By Jove, then, I have followed my father's trade—I am a gardner too.

Par. Right. But what was thy dependance then, thee and the whole human species?

Mat. Oh, heavens, I was so small then!

Par. Why, you wretch! do you think yourself bigger now? What is thy form of five feet four inches on the globe? Thou wilt scarcely have appeared before thou art swept away. The first step thy child takes pushes thee towards the grave. There is no rest in nature; as thou walkest through life thou art hastning to death; an irresistible power drives thee on; thou sufferest through thy state, and thou diest through necessity.

Mat. A fine consolation, truly! and is this what you call philosophy? it does not wear a rose-coloured complexion at least.

Par. Do you want to be deceived?

Mat. No.

Par. Well, attend to truth.

Mat. Let us for once, then, see her countenance.

Par. Thou art like the flowers thou didst dress.

Mat. Who me?

Par. Yes. Thou art a walking plant; they shoot forth, they grow, they perish in thy

thy garden by the same laws that make thee live.

Mat. What ! I am a walking plant then ?

Par. Doubtless. Thy stomach, which thou fillest with gross food, represents the roots that suck the juices in the earth which makes them grow. Flowers respire and perspire as thou dost, they feed and discharge their superfluities as thou dost ; they visibly unite together and make love.

Mat. My flowers make love ! Oh, no ! that won't do.

Par. Yes, thou fool, that has eyes and can't see.

Mat. Into what, master ?

Par. Lay down thy spade, draw near, and learn to reverence philosophy.

Mat. I do not understand a word ;—I ought to reverence ?

Par. Look on the calix of that tulip ; the top of the stamina, or rather the little male flower that leans amorously towards the female flower, and endeavours to dart its dust. Thou wilt every where see the eagerness of the male flower to find out the one of the other sex : if thou hast an inclination to see this amusement, squeeze dextrously and suddenly a close male flower, and thou wilt see spout from it a smoaky dust that will cover the pistil. Palm trees incline towards and embrace each other, notwithstanding every obstacle ; they squeeze and compass one another forcibly : thus flowers come by the same principle thou art come into the world.

There is an uniform system in generation; and minerals, which are so hard, or rather appear so, experience in themselves a perpetual action; every thing is animated and alive in this matter which you think lies dormant. Stones, marbles, are produced exactly like man, all by the help of a matrix, strings, cuticles, and placenta.

Mat. Lord! my head is distracted with all those hard names. What, my spade is come into the world just as I did?

Par. Yes, and the iron in the mine is expanded by the same laws that have expanded thy body. Fire, water, and earth, are sprung from particular atoms; they are all gifted like thee with the faculty of reproducing themselves. The innumerable number of vortices, of suns, of habitable earths, a system which I explained to thee the last time.—

Mat. Oh! I remember it well; I did nothing but dream all night of stars bigger than the village.

Par. Be sure, then, remember my lessons. All this I say, (no thou wilt not believe it yet) all this may formerly have been contained in a grain whose bigness would scarce equal a pea.

Mat. Say a bean, at least, my dear master.

Par. No.—The milky way I showed thee with my telescope is a groupe of little worlds that are only come out of the shell about sixty or eighty years ago. Planets produce planets, and the greatest globe has had an embrio like the smallest fly, or the smallest insect, the sport

sport of the winds. The winds scatter the universal seeds of being.—

Mat. And make the apricots fall.

Par. What's that to the purpose? Do not interrupt me.—It seems Venus has lately produced a fattellite; our earth formerly brought forth the moon, a nation called Egyptians, have the certificate of its birth, which has since been lost. But as the earth is not yet worn out with age, it may very possibly procreate a second moon.

Mat. And who will make good to us the expence of lanterns which we have lately purchased so dear? Will they return us our money again, fir?

Par. Money is never returned, let what will happen, my honest fellow.

Mat. In that case, you would do better to exert yourself in recovering it than in racking your brains with planets which get children.

Par. Why will the magnitude of this globe hinder thee from seeing and acknowledging what thou every day perceivest in the beings which surround thee? Thou canst not conceive that every thing in nature unfolds itself as well as in the confined space of thy garden; that the sun generates other suns as the seed of the salading generates salad? Even thyself would suffice if the entire race of mankind were destroyed to renovate their existence.

Mat. What, I alone?

Par. Yes; I mean with thy fat wife.

Mat. Very well—let it be so, for goodness sake.

Par. Thou art a world in miniature; having in thyself every thing necessary for its re-production; and the universe is a great living being, subject to the same laws which direct thee. In the mean time, it is only more or less of matter; and what thou callest great or small, is no more than an illusion of thy eyes. From the moment thou hast existence thou art as great as the greatest thing in the world. There is no standard to measure thee by, thou art both totality and part.

Mat. Devil take me if I understand a single word of all you say!

Par. Listen to me, however. — Sometimes a vortex sickens, dissolves, and decays, like a peach thou wouldst pick up; sometimes it is in the vigour of youth. Its duration is some millions of years, and thine is eighty or a hundred; that is all the difference. But no reason why this vortex had not a beginning, as I told thee, by an egg, as well as thee.

Mat. What! was my beginning in an egg;

Par. Yes; that is thy origin. It is common to all beings. The size is nothing! — There must have been a beginning, whether it is the sun or a gnat.

Mat. (*pausing*) I began by being shut up in a shell! I have before now heard some of your companions, when walking with you, say so. But I am not of that opinion, I must tell you. I do not like the notion of being a prisoner in a shell. I am afraid of having a

beak ; I prefer the opinion of those who are for breaking all those eggs, and leave me a round, unpointed visage.

Par. No bad reason. I very well knew I should make something of thee. Thou preferest the system of organical particles of matter !

Mat. What is that, pray ?

Par. They are small, similar, and material points, which form a nose, an eye, an arm, a foot, a finger, a toe, and gather together through affinity.

Mat. Through affinity ! what does that mean ?—I do not understand it.

Par. Didst thou never play at prison bars ?

Mat. Yes, when I was a school boy ; and since too, at the village feast.

Par. Well, at this play thou knowest the comers take their stations and dislodge those who come after them. Thus, then, the brisk eye and vigilant nose drives away all the heavy eyes and lazy noses. They place themselves wonderfully in order in their mould when they are not double and of equal strength ; for then there is a great struggle, and the result is the production of a monster with two heads and four arms. But most commonly those particles of matter, as polite as the most civilized persons, who will not intrude themselves in a chair already taken up, place themselves on one side, or retire if there is no room ; they take possession under a form similar to that they had when they floated in the individual

individual that furnished them, they frame themselves on this individual.

Mat. But if all those little beings are alive, why do they sacrifice themselves to form only one and the same animal? if they have life, let them play their gambols by themselves; if they are dead, being reunited, they can do nothing of themselves. Moreover, when placed, something will be necessary to unite them. There must be cement with stones which form a building. Then where is the cement of your organized particles? I confess I cannot comprehend it.

Par. Since thou wilt not believe in the production of several small, distinct, and similar beings, made to compose man, wouldst thou rather admit, that the primitive parts of matter should have sentiment and intelligence? It costs nothing in the supposition; and, in proportion of their mass and their power, they co-ordinate together from the ideas they have had.

Mat. This is all Hebrew to me, and to you also, perhaps.

Par. Well, wouldst thou rather have a successive progression by exaltation of the seed?

Mat. I shall not get a child the more with all those fine words.

Par. Then wouldst thou prefer the human brain, which gradually forms the rest of the machine?

Mat. I do not concern myself much about what is said on that subject.

Par.

Par. Let us try one more system to satisfy thee. — What dost thou think of the entire man being originally abridged to an incomprehensible smallness, and that, in proportion to the contraction he experiences, he tends to dilate himself, and actually does dilate with the greatest spring, when the compressive power ceases to act?

Mat. Stop a little; I understand this something better; but it is not yet quite clear enough.

Par. Well, then, thou must be satisfied with the *spermatic animalcule*, that are every where in the atmosphere, that we swallow, more especially when we are hungry, and which are afterwards so friendly to the philosophy of love. Thou knowest how to distinguish celery from another plant?

Mat. When you talk of celery, I know what that means. — But I will prepare you a salad this night to cool your blood; for, with your good leave, my dear master, you are a little mad or so.

Par. How, when I argue with thee?

Mat. All you have said to me is certainly only to be laughed at. — If I knew how to write as well as read, I could soon strike out a dozen systems like yours.

Par. Who, thou?

Mat. Yes me. We can give things what meaning we please. It is so with nature; she says nothing to any one, and still your learned gentlemen will make her speak. — Why the secret to destroy dormice that eat our fruits,
is,

is, by many degrees, more useful than guessing how we came into the world; for we know nothing of the matter, either coming or going out of it. I kill no goats out of curiosity; I destroy as many caterpillars as I can, because they really are our enemies; if we were to let them go on we should not have a pear left. Tell me now, why your academicians do not employ themselves in finding out a way to destroy this cursed breed, instead of gazing all night at stars that fly from them in the morning? Is not the peach one eats better than the world one can scarcely see at the end of a glass? For you have filled my head with all those fooleries, and we see worlds above us now as thick as apples in Normandy.

Par. You see, then, there is some pleasure in contemplating the universe in its full extent; thou breathest more freely when thou lookest up to heaven; and say to thyself, there are gardeners above there just like me, who dig the earth and plant vegetables.

Mat. Zooks! I wish I was in a planet in summer, where it would rain only half an hour every day. — What joy it is to see a fine small rain now and then! — That would be charming, and every thing would be the better for it in our garden; we should not be obliged, then, to be always fatiguing ourselves drawing water; which hinders us also from musing on your fine systems.

Par.

Par. You enter now, Master Maturin, on a very great subject. What, do you complain of physical evil and moral evil?

Mat. What is all that, I pray you, sir. — We have never heard of those disorders, do you see; they may be fit for your city libertines.

Par. Thy mistake makes me smile, although it is not yet so great.—Well, my honest Maturin, some other time I will explain to thee how every thing is connected in the origin of things; I will show thee the concatenation of beings.

Mat. The concatenation of beings! — But would it not be better to enjoy what we have than to be raving on such flighty matters? — I'll tell you what, when I embrace my wife, I hold a most charming truth, I will not seek any other. There is one thing, however, I would be glad to know, and after that another; why does the Lord of the manor despise me so much as he passes along, and why are we so many months without rain.—If I could come at the knowledge of this, I think I should know enough.

Par. My honest fellow, that Lord, with all his pride, has a gloomy countenance, has he not?

Mat. Yes, truly, he never smiles.

Par. He is not pleased with himself, and, therefore, swells with pride. — Believe me, thou art worth more than he, by thy utility in life, and, above all, by the goodness of thy heart.

Mat.

Mat. Come, now, I love you when you speak to me so. Yes, I feel I am better than he; for if I was as rich, I think I would do a great deal of good; and he gives all the neighbourhood a deal of trouble, what with his hunting, which tears up all our ground, and his footmen, who corrupt all our girls. That shoot should have remained in its primitive nothingness as well as those of dormice and caterpillars.

Par. Thou shalt know another time why his breed is come into the world.

Mat. No matter why; it is the means to destroy them I would wish to find out.

Par. At our next conversation I will explain every thing to thee.—At present I must go meet a comet that is coming to pay us a visit.

Mat. And I will go pick a fallad.—But now I think on't, master, ought I to be afraid of this same comet? They say the tails of those ladies are apt to bring inundations upon us.—Do endeavour to make her shew us her face.

Par. There is not the least appearance, my honest fellow, that it can do us any harm; but if it should approach a little too near the earth, make yourself easy before hand, it would be only the business of a moment. An universal earthquake of a minute or so, and all would be over.—Thou wouldst perish with all the emperors, potentates, and philosophers of the world.

Mat.

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Mat. A fine consolation, truly ! But is it not still putting an end to us ? I value my life as much as they do theirs.—I beg, fir, you will remove my fears about this comet ; otherwise I shall have no heart to work.

Par. Do not be frightened ; the road those planets travel in is so broad there is no danger of their jostling one another.

Mat. So best ; for if they should take a fancy to make love to one another, as you was saying a while ago, and should draw near each other in a little gamesome sport, like my flowers, what would become of us ?

Par. Poh, those majestic planets, in their vast and magnificent rotation, send each other tokens of tenderness at immense, not to say immeasurable, distances.

Mat. Very good. I am much obliged to their majesties ; but I would not be a planet, because at my wife's uprising we shall come to a right understanding together ; we won't make love as your planets do.

Par. Well, thy thick head is more useful to her than all the suns and planets in the world, which are incapable of thought.

Mat. Well, fir, you have stunned this poor head. You will tell me the rest by and by before we go to bed. Supper is almost ready, and you will not have a desert unless I leave you.—Adieu.

Par. Think of my strawberries.

Mat. (*going*) Thank God, I think more of them than of all your worlds.

ON FORTUNE AND GLORY.

A Vision.

MORPHEUS had touched my eyelids with his wand; gloomy care and uneasiness had fled far from me. Every thing, even love, was enwrapped with my heart in the soft charms of repose, when suddenly a croud of fancies seized my imagination; but it soon unravelled a regular system in this tumultuous scene, and this is the true picture my memory has preserved of it.—I imagined myself in a temple, filled with an immense concourse of people; on every side I could hear these words: “She is coming—Here she is.—No—Yes—it is she—No.” They were all in motion. They came, they went, they jostled each other. Men and women, young and old, magistrates and warriors, tradesmen, citizens, strangers, all in confusion and bustle. All on a sudden they gave a great shout. I turned my head and saw a naked woman, with a bandage over her eyes; she stood with one foot on a wheel that turned round with inconceivable rapidity; underneath was seen this inscription: *To the Sovereign of the Universe.* All decency was immediately banished; they ran against each other without any respect to persons, and, forced to give way to the enormous impulse, I was dragged along with

with the crowd. They roared out, "to me, to me, to your most faithful servant, your slave; Oh, goddess, look on me! I cringe, I flatter, I serve these ten years."—Every countenance then exhibited eagerness, harshness, and anxiety. They trampled on those that fell, without mercy. However, pieces of gold showered down from all quarters; it was sufficient to gather one to be rich; it multiplied in the hand of the possessor; but none was satisfied with only one. Some complained of the severity of the goddess, others seemed to have collected more violent desires as soon as they had obtained favour; but she, without taking notice of their praises, reproaches, or clamours, went on scattering as she turned her various gifts to this eager crowd, the greatest part of which were deceitful. One thought he gathered a treasure, he took up only a taste for chimeras and prodigality. Another, in building himself a palace, prepared the poison his greedy heir intended for him. In the continual flux and reflux that pressed upon me, my only wish was to save my frail existence. Whilst a mad joy burst on my right, tears of rage flowed on my left. Neither beauty, morals, nor genius, attracted the attention of the blind goddess. The strongest, the most artful, or rather the most deceitful, ran away with her presents. Every one held up in his hand a piece of paper containing his demands; they were all petitions. I read several of them; the first said, "I am possessed of only one hundred thousand livres a year;

a year, Oh, goddess! How can I live? I spend that in china and baboons: Oh, thou, who art the only blessing of the age, grant I may oppress a province, and my affairs will go well."

Another: "Oh, goddess, is it fit a man of my rank and family should be here among these wretches? Is it not your business to anticipate my desires? Of what use are laws, only to confirm my peaceable and slothful enjoyment of an opulence which is suitable to my grandeur, to lavish on those who know how to flatter my whims?"—That of a young girl was worded thus: "A lover, Oh, goddess! if even he should not be my husband; or a husband, if even he should not be my lover!"—That of a poet: "Thou who nurdest the god Plutus in thy lap, and carest him familiarly, I do not require thou shouldst solicit him in my favour; only grant your faithful companion persuasion, and the little winged rogue, Love, who never leaves you, to accompany me; that I may find favour with the players and courtezans, whose insolent ignorance no longer knows any bounds; that my piece may be acted and applauded, and two or three of my brethren burst with envy. Oh, Fortune! thou more than any other goddess presidest at new representations, let the benign influence of thy star shine on me in that dreadful night."

Another: "I am just arrived, Oh, goddess! from the borders of the Garonne, in the most flourishing city in the world, the most intriguing,

ing, the most busy, where all manner of means are used to obtain riches and preferment, where the most glaring vices are fashionable; and what is still better, the art of making them pleasing and estimable: I am possessed of the most consummate impudence; I am the greatest of liars and braggarts; I have set off my faint merit with all imaginable address; but, alas! I am yet unsuccessful. Oh, goddess! is the race of fools extinct; are there no longer any dupes in this immense city? or if there are still some men of understanding who can discover a knave at the first glance, by what fatality have I always fell in their way? Am I then to be the first of my generation, and of my country, to whom impudence has been useless?"

Another again: "My protector trifles with me for these fifteen years, Oh, dear goddess! I despise him; yet I do not miss a single audience, where I feed him with the most fulsome flattery; I take upon me the most mortifying and burdensome commissions; I dedicate my books to him; I dine at his table, when there is room; I make myself as low as he thinks he is high; what am I then to do? I have neither wife, daughter, niece, or cousin. Oh, goddess, create a female relation from my rib, that the barbarian may be softened."

The last said: "I would gladly exchange my honour, my reputation, and my probity, for a little money; but I cannot find any one who will take the burden off me. Truly, if things

things remain so, I shall be forced to keep my reputation, my honour, and probity."

All these petitions, raised by so many hands, were equally foolish, low, and extravagant; they were full of overstrained complaints, chimerical wishes, and strange schemes. Suddenly, a man, very richly dressed, said, as he went out of the croud. "Heark'e, you simple gentry, I have done my business, follow me; be my sycophants; I keep open house for my amusement; whoever has a mind to come to dinner, shall be welcome, whether he diverts me or not, do you understand?" He was immediately surrounded; being curious, I followed the crowd, and we went to Mirmons. It was a palace, where taste vied with magnificence; the workmanship of the furniture was exquisite, in which the greatest luxuriousness was displayed. On the one hand, Genius exhibited on the canvas every thing tender and majestic; on the other, grotesque works exhibited their tricks and other modern inventions. The number of slaves equalled the capriciousness of the master: intoxicated with his opulence, he esteemed himself a citizen of the first rank; frequently mentioned the meanness of his birth; but, who would have thought it, it was from a sentiment of pride! — "What a fortune have I acquired! said he; that rarely happens but to those, who, like me, have the knack of raising themselves. — Your blockheads stand gaping and staring; whilst a man, who knows the world, breaks through and overleaps all obstacles. He is envied;

envied; that is a tribute due to merit."— Replies a flattering parasite, "Your good taste, the elegance of your house, and the delicacy of your table, are every where the topic of conversation; every one applauds those superior talents which distinguish you from the rest of mankind; your happiness is complete, therefore enjoy it. The goddess having raised the corner of her bandage, perceived you in the crowd, and has rewarded your extraordinary merit."

Elated with those adulations, he spoke to every thing, and piqued himself not only on a taste for the fine arts, but being also a cognoscenti.—"I should certainly have excelled, replied he, in a peremptory tone, if I had given any application to them; but I chose the most substantial part, and have no reason to complain. Now I can open another field; when one has discovered the most delicate and ingenious methods of acquiring riches, one must be awkward indeed, not to find the road to Parnassus."

Every one unanimously agreed, it depended only on himself to be a poet, musician, painter, engraver, architect, translator, comedian, indeed every thing he wished to excel in, as perfectly as he was an excellent financier.

I retired; but being again carried away by my invincible curiosity, returned to the temple. I made a stop at the portico, desirous to observe at a distance the shocking bustle they were all engaged in. The appearance of a man, of a most noble and open countenance,

in a plain dress, attracted my attention: he did not seem inclined to mix with the crowd; on the contrary, he leaned against a column, and viewed those shameful struggles with a dejected eye; he exclaimed by intervals, in a melancholy tone, "What a despicable race of beings! what a multitude devoted to the vilest slavery! those wretches acknowledge no divinity but Fortune. Observe their eagerness; their furious passions! they were never so active for virtue and glory. Even the ministers of the Most High abandon their quiet retreats, and philosophers the elevated speculations of their closets; wisdom is despised; and riches are preferred to merit and talents. Every good withers, is defaced, and portends approaching ruin. The mind of man has neither strength, capability, nor vigour; the moral life of states fall to decay, and is extinguished."—The Pontiff of the Temple of Fortune, his brows adorned with his tiara, who was then walking to and fro, heard those words. He was dressed most sumptuously; his fingers loaded with rings, his robes sparkled with diamonds. He replied to the stranger, in that frivolous tone so suitable to his exterior,—“It is a great pity, is it not, Mr. Patriot? but it is so; mankind are weak, extravagant, ridiculous, unhappy; they are born so. Examine men separately, you'll find their understanding obscured by a thousand errors: they set out by deceiving themselves as soon as they begin to think; and why? because they have found the natural order of things re-
versed.

versed. The pledge of all advantages is found to be in a certain yellowish metal; they pursue it greedily as the barter for all manner of pleasures—Man will be absolutely happy—According to your system, he does not know in what happiness consists—Agreed; he considers it only as embellishing his retreat, to diffuse plenty, and all the conveniencies of life in it, to enjoy all the sensations that nature, obedient to the power of gold, crowds upon him.—He is, I own, unreasonable to think thus; he is wrong to indulge such feelings, to love voluptuousness; let us pity his unfortunate taste.”—“What” answered the other, “a little matter will satisfy him; his wants are limited; he has but one stomach, and but a moment to live, and can he be a stranger to moderation, to temperance, to equity? shall he obey all the capricious sensations the sallies of a heated imagination inspire him; shall he sacrifice, if necessary, the whole universe for the agreeable tickling of a fibre? No, so heinous and so cruel a piece of injustice will only be countenanced by his accomplices. If my arm cannot subdue those gigantic figures of pride and inhumanity, my voice shall curse them. Wretched Fortune, be for ever accursed!”—“She is superior to the murmurs of men,” coolly replied the Pontiff; “it is necessary the spring that sets the moral world in motion, should have all the play on which depends its strength, its duration, and its splendor. It is necessary that society, which is nothing more than a perpetual fermentation, not to fall into

a state of inaction, should experience this smart shock which communicates itself to all its members, and gives them heat and life. This inequality, which to you seems so absurd, is the active principle of beings; it is the vilest passions which fructify the rich picture of the universe. Among the infinite combination of beings who have existence, there should be some of all sorts. The hideous animal, bloated with livid poison, has its rank; groveling in the mud, it cannot be the proud eagle soaring in the sky."—"You will never convince me it is necessary millions of men should crawl in miserable obscurity, to support the scandalous luxury of the favourites of your unworthy Goddesses. Blind barbarians! who do not even enjoy what they plunder from indigence, those cruel men will never be countenanced by awful morality, affecting, eternal morality, which ever will condemn them, and revenge the wrongs committed on the poor by those tyrants, who in a short time must return to dust and infamy. But if gold and silver are really the source of happiness, why are they not the reward of genius, virtue, honour, and probity? Why is poverty and obscurity the portion of good men, and men of merit?"—"Oh! have they not, by your own confession, received more precious gifts? Can they, ought they, have all? And in the real state of things, are you not happy that eager men should scour the seas, and expose themselves to innumerable perils, in search of treasures in a new world to enrich

enrich their country? Don't you yourself enjoy a share of those riches; don't you enjoy them as much as they? They have heaped up gold; but you count for nothing the dangers they have been exposed to. Would they have taken the trouble, would they have fatigued themselves in the uncertain hope of repose, were they not actuated by a supernatural blindness? A Crito takes upon him the office of Commissary in time of war; he devotes himself voluntarily to public execration, for the pleasure of building a palace: another is a financier, treasurer and manager of the public money, at the hazard of feeling one day the weight of Themis sword on his head; and all those cares, those perplexities, to gain an envied, despised, and too often dangerous, opulence. I think the philosopher ought even to be obliged to them; for indeed the State has had great occasion for their activity, in cases of necessity; the State would be undone, if our dependance then was on peaceable and moderate men. Remove the means of raising fortunes, patriotism is a senseless word; emulation and industry are at an end. Opulence must then share in the politic order, being in itself a shade of the universal order. The field is open to all, and the boldest efforts are generally the most successful; those excesses would be blamable in the theory of an empire perfectly polished; but where does it exist? Can dead matter be stirred without a lever? Have not nations occasion for a leaven, which, being poisonous in itself, extends their sphere, assists circulation, and gives them

a kind of life and motion? and if the good it produces is mixed with evil, where is the order of things where those opposite elements do not meet? In the figurative, as in the physical, nothing prepares the corruption of things more than this peaceable state, called equality, and which announces the death of the republic."—"Your ideas and reasons of government and policy and mine do not agree: but I know a thing anterior to government, called justice, honour, and probity; for you will acknowledge cupidity easily breaks the ties those virtues impose on mankind, and the example of those who are plunged in luxury is contagious. What, then, will become of those sacred props of human nature? Those virtues will shine more splendidly, if even there were none to admire them but the crowd of malcontents! Inhuman avarice sometimes jests, but it is always meanly. If it be allowable to procure one's self necessaries, it is sordid and culpable to be over anxious for superfluities, unless it be to disperse them immediately. Those who cause the people's miseries, deserve their contempt. One has only to attend to the voice of the nation to hear their decree. The first duty of man is to know how to set bounds to his desires.——The impulses of the heart of man are like those of nature; they are strong and rapid; and the better to hit the mark, sometimes go beyond it. Weak and ridiculous virtue, reason still weaker! You never had the fortitude to resist the seducing attractions of riches; on their approach, your
pomp

pomp vanishes, desire returns with more vehemence to its old course; they were in suspense, because there was not any thing to determine their propensity, but it would be unnatural to return to their source; moreover, the reciprocal cupidity of men mutually serves them as weight and counterpoise: and if it is broken, it is soon repaired. All mortals are equal in the presence of Fortune, therefore she distributes her gifts at random. Of two brave men, one shall mount the throne, the other the scaffold: she sees them with equal indifference reign, or die in torture. If men of virtue, men of genius, would court her smiles, she would undoubtedly reward their assiduity; but one must always have some small pretensions to her favour: it is more agreeable to exclaim against her, than to bow down to this goddess, the queen of the human species, who has a right to treat them at her pleasure."—"What! are you a stranger even to the haughtiness attendant on Virtue? Know, then, she never stoops to ask; bold solicitations are meannesses that insult her. Satisfied with her mediocrity, she never appears in a profane court; her happiness consists in fulfilling her duties; they are much dearer to her than the acquisition of riches; she cherishes that tranquillity which accompanies moderate desires; she knows how to enjoy, but she also knows how to bear the privation of enjoyment, without murmuring. If the rewards Fortune grants were proportioned to the time given, the cares and solici-

tude employed, and above all, the real services rendered our country; I should then be the first to bend the knee to this righteous divinity."—"I perceive the idea of chimerical perfection is predominant in you: I again repeat it, Nature gives us desires without bounds."—"If it is so, it is our business to rectify the disorders of Nature."—"Can we?"—"I believe so."—"But is not Fortune at least a means to induce, and from that prerogative only ought she not to be cherished by the Philosopher?"—"He who knows no other inducement but gold, will never lay an obligation: the most indigent mortals are those who render the most essential services to their fellow creatures. The heart is hardened, when it finds itself independent of general calamities: it is like a man in port, viewing a vessel tossed about in a storm; to him it is but a mere view. I will be poor from inclination, to preserve my virtue and sensibility with greater certainty."—"I perceive we do not understand each other."—"I perceive it with grief. Senseless mortals! replied the sage, raising his voice, is it possible you cannot draw any thing from your own fund, find nothing in reflection, in fortitude of mind, in the love of virtue, to make you happy? Happiness is in ourselves, in good and lawful actions, which our hearts acknowledge with pleasure. Must you incessantly pay your addresses to this fickle goddess, so changeable, so capricious, who rules with blind despotism, and only smiles on you to hurry you into the abyss of folly

folly and imprudence!"—The Pontiff smiled at those words, and taking him by the hand, wanted to put a diamond ring of great value on his finger. The Sage drew back his hand, but not in anger, and said, smiling, "What are you about; those baubles are made for children; amuse them with diamonds, variegated stones, and party-coloured ribbands; they must be diverted, to prevent them from casting a serious look on those trifles which dazzle and deceive them. I do not want gold or silver. Stern virtue, steadiness of mind, deep study, which elevates the life of man into thought, come to my aid, and possess my soul! let me make this moment that is given me, and which slides away in the depths of eternity, useful! let it not be lost to me; let me be entirely alive; let me dive into those just, elevated ideas which are fit to fortify the soul against the inevitable misfortunes of life! Those are the only valuable treasures which I ardently wish to enjoy. Yet to acknowledge the favour you intended me, follow me, and I will shew you where I preside."

I followed them in great emotion. The tone, the deportment, the generous wrath of this Sage, had struck me: he introduced us into a majestic temple, which shone with lustre. There was no crowd; the vivified marble everywhere presented statues of several great men; it bore the characters and fire of their minds. The expression was inimitable; the chisel had animated it; they had been little known in their life-time, but after death

shouts of admiration had wafted their names to this awful dome; a multitude of lamps hung in this new empirium, and their splendor was to be endless. In the middle, I saw an immense body, formed of a substance merely ætherial; it was the image of grateful Posterity. It knelt before a diadem, a truncheon, and a book. It was Henry's crown, Turenne's sceptre, and the Spirit of Laws. On the right was the bust of Socrates, in front that of Richardson. There were the Solons, the Epaminondases, the two Brutuses, with the Fabii, the Scipios, the Catos, the Antonines. Also the heroes who had possessed true greatness of mind, illustrious writers, wise men of all ages; their exterior plainness, their modest mien, announced the candour and simplicity of their souls. They said to Posterity, "Goddeſs, we never ſought your praiſe, we never wiſhed for your gifts. The only reward of our actions has been the pleaſure we taſted in performing them. To follow virtue, no aid is neceſſary, but the love of virtue."—Posterity replied, "You, my true friends, will live eternally: My will is, that all mankind may know and revere you. My greateſt pleaſure ſhall be to ſpread abroad your virtues: for ever ſeparated from the lethargic ſleep of death, the daughters of memory will for ever celebrate your great actions." A celeftial harmony was immediately heard; it began ſoftly in the air; but by a well-managed gradation, ſoon ſwelled the ſonorous dome of the temple, and from thence
spread

spread all over the universe. Every ear was ravished with so delightful a harmony. I felt the delicious intoxication the Muses pour into feeling hearts. I exclaimed, Oh, I am in the temple of glory! here are neither conquerors nor ambitious men, or those scourges of war which fear has deified; I see eminent virtues, extraordinary talents, that are the delight and consolation of the human race. How base are the propensities of those who despise glory!

The more those great men were ill treated by fortune, the more resplendent were their actions. Tasso and Milton, crowned with the same laurels, smile at the weak efforts of fate; they trampled under foot their Zoiluses. The Pontiff of the Temple of Fortune cast down his eyes with confusion. Those radiant fronts had so mild, so natural, so powerful an authority over hearts, they attracted love and respect in so forcible a manner, the most vicious minds dreaded their contempt. The Sage raised his voice, which resounded majestically under this elevated dome, and said, "Glory does not spring from pride, ambition, pomp, power, or intrigue; if one prostrates himself before the idol of power, his show of respect is forced and transitory; there must be distinguished virtues, acknowledged talents, to obtain this public approbation, which rewards deservedly; it is it discharges the debt man can no more pay. Glory does not consist in eternising syllables, but in leaving behind a great example. She shuns the forward pursuer, and delights in honouring the

plain modest man, who daily discloses his virtues in the performance of his duties : you will also find here the brave and generous Phocion, who, after commanding numerous armies, was a prey to age and indigence under his laurels ; he died poor, he died deserted : what end more glorious ! Again, look upon Aristides, that excellently just man ; he constantly persevered in his duty ; he was banished ; he did not give way to the whims of the people, or the allurements of the magistrates. The fate reserved for virtue awaited him. View, Catinat, his warlike heroism, his calm philosophy ; he was accustomed to say in his retreat, " I have served my country with zeal and courage ; when she thought my services useless, I began to live for myself ; the most ardent wishes of my heart are hers." This great man, in his unexpected disgrace, had nothing to reproach himself. His enemies, who attacked him by the darkest and most sinister methods, plumed themselves in his obscurity. Virtue, and that equanimity which virtue alone inspires, were his only defence. A little lower, see Fenelon, who, in the vortex of wild and impetuous passions, recovered by his moderation that peace which the jealous fury of his adversaries wanted to deprive him of. Such are the men who merit the admiration of future ages. One would wish to resemble them ; they will hereafter form great minds yet unborn.

Now that the Luculluses, the Crassii, the Financiers, enjoy their fortunes ; that they
collect

collect around them all the sensual pleasures which affluence procures; that they are encircled in dissipation; let them have their ease, their conveniencies, their superfluities: be it so; such is their lot. No one of a liberal mind will, I believe, envy their guilty opulence. But let an everlasting bar separate them from those who have had honour in view, for food and end of all their labours; never let them be on a line with the magistrate who protects the laws; the warrior, whose smallest effort is to dare death; the illustrious writer, who adds to the ideas of his own age, and those of the human race. Where would be the reward of disinterested and patriotic virtue, if the venal man and the hero were put on a level! Let not the stain impressed on the hands that collect the public taxes, be washed away by rivers of gold; never let them enjoy honourable distinctions; let them enjoy every thing but the portion of great men."

The Pontiff of Fortune, humbled, overcome, felt the force of these words, to which he could not reply:—"What, then, are the pleasures annexed to this same glory you boast of so much?"—"That is the secret of great minds, replied the Pontiff of the Temple of Glory; those who adore her are happy by her: Fortune is exhausted and weakened by sharing herself; glory is a patrimony as extensive as inexhaustible; the Conqueror's crown does no injury to the palms gathered by another conqueror. There are men on earth,

earth, whose very name flatter my ear; I await them here, to receive them, to embrace them, and to extend with them the empire of reflection, reason, and virtue." At these words, a divine flame sparkled in his eyes; I viewed him more attentively; what a strange contrast did those two persons present! The Pontiff of the Temple of Fortune was Bourvalais; that of the Temple of Glory was Cornelle.

A N A T O M Y.

LET us enter this amphitheatre without shuddering, where man, before he descends to the grave, pays a last tribute to admiration, and again evinces the glory of the Creator. The man is no more, and yet his beauty still subsists: the pure and sacred flame that animated this body, now motionless, has left on it the stamp of its divine essence; the devouring insects wait until the decree of destruction is repeated; and the interval between death and corruption, testifies with how much reluctance nature discomposes its most magnificent work.

Hence, pale grave-digger, more greedy than thy tombs! Await, before thou dar'st seize on thy prey, till all the features of this masterpiece are defaced. Let not thy rude hand hide in the bosom of the earth what the astonished eye may discover with rapture in this

this labyrinth, where every glance will meet a prodigy.

Let us go in, my friends, let us enter without dread, since death is repose, and the soul, in springing towards immortality, is the first to smile on what it has cast off. The mind that comprehends the power and goodness of the Supreme Being, blesses death as well as life; and under his all-powerful and extensive hand, what matters it where the thinking principle acts, which is indistructable as its author! He is great, he is good; terror insults him; it belongs to the vile slave. And thou, young fair one, to whom I devote this article, it is for thee I colour those funeral objects! Thou couldst not bear the sight of this cold and inanimate body, but through the magic of the pencil. I trace out to thy imagination what thy delicate eye would turn from. Draw near; it is a young man stretched out on this black marble: approach, he is no longer to be dreaded; his eye, which caught as thou passed along the assemblage of all thy graces, is closed; his ear will no longer hear thy enchanting voice; this heart, which perhaps thou hast rent, has found a fence against thy charms. If thy beauty has always made thee inflexible, do not be so haughty at this moment; death, you see, saves him from thy charms, and subdues love. Ah, my friends! you have seen the active suppleness of his motion, whilst he sported lightly on earth; you would have shuddered to have hurt the delicate texture of his skin; a drop of blood
from

from his veins would have frightened you into paleness. Now cast down and extended, the smooth and polished exterior of this body is the least object of attention. The insensibility of marble overspreads this body, whose every fibre was susceptible of pleasure or pain.— Pain no longer has power over him. Draw near, young artist, get the better of your secret horror; take the scapel, I hold the light. Let the living man contemplate himself in the dead one. Steady your hand; turn down the sheet that covers the wonderful springs of the human machine, that my curious eye may dive into the astonishing mechanism. Others will go to pray in vast and gloomy inclosures, built of stone by the hand of man; but I, before the sanctuary where dwelt the pure breath of the Divinity, will prostrate myself and adore.

The eye is puzzled in the choice! Where shall I begin my examination of this surprising machine? It is opened, and I perceive that valvular, the principle of health and strength. It is there the food dissolves, is resolved, is metamorphosed into a nutritive liquor, white as milk, it passes through different channels, where it undergoes a new metamorphose. All liquids with which the body is moistened, receive in those different laboratories their degree of perfection; for there is formed, is purified, is subtilized, that nervous humour, that precious balm, which imbibes the nerves, and preserves them in that degree of flexibility, from

from whence results that wonderful sensibility, motive of all the operations of the soul.

But let us get up to the most noble part, where resides the understanding. Under an impenetrable arch is a marrowy substance, traversed by innumerable, almost imperceptible vessels. It is a labyrinth composed of filaments which cross each other *ad infinitum*. The seat of the soul is as inexplicable as its essence; and as it is in this maze thoughts are formed, and ideas are preserved, the character of man, almost always inexplicable, seems to partake of the nature of the place where resides the depth of reflection: The physical is as compounded as the moral.

All the nerves, in which alone the principle of sensibility resides, reunite at this substance which lengthens itself into the vertebre, from which it divides itself into a multitude of interwoven branches; it forms the origin of this admirable texture dispersed over the whole animal; so that the least shock which any one part suffers is communicated to the whole.

The soul, standing in need of perpetual information, has close beside her two ready and faithful overseers, the sight and the hearing. The globe of the eye moving, turns, in every sense, with the aid of six muscles which facilitate its motion. It is a true telescope; the light collects in the center which reunites its rays. They cross a lenticular crystal, and go to delineate the object on a kind of very slender net work. The soul perceives and forms
a judge-

a judgement of the picture. Three different humours moisten this precious organ, which, without them, would be inflamed and worn out by the constant rubbing its own preservation requires, obliged, as it is, perpetually to examine all the objects that surround it.

The ear, a cartilaginous funnel, receives the shaking air, and carries it by the sinuosity of a shell resembling that of a snail, on a membrane properly called a drum. Underneath, a small nerve, of exquisite sensibility, gives the membrane more or less tenseness. It is there Gluck's melody and Piccini's harmony repair to enchant the soul; the auditory nerve transmits all those sounds which flow from the instruments, and would be fruitlessly lost in air.

There are delights less perfect, but still luxurious. When the flower blows, when it exhales its perfumes, they pass through two ducts, separated by a partition, towards a bone perforated by a thousand holes, where cartilaginous membranes, turned in a spiral form, meet. Happy he who, at the foot of the Alps or the Pyrennees, snuffs the odour of the aromatic plants, which the mountainous soil feeds with its sweet efficacy!

You who, in preference, delight in the enjoyments of the table, pleasures which no apprehension disturbs, and which are every day renewed, contemplate this obedient organ, source of your delights. Ten muscles put the tongue in motion in every possible direction.—It is never slow or refractory.—It
lays

lays hold of the food, extracts the finest juices; its quick motions are insensible and strong; it carries under the teeth what should be ground; it presses against the palate, that which only wants to be slightly bruised; it reaches the most relishing things the skilful hand of the cook has blended; it distinguishes the mixtures, and tastes their efficacy; it moistens only, as much as is requisite, the penetrating succulency of the meats. This succulency that rouzes all the nervous tufts, and those small nipples, those glands, those salival vessels, put in action, furnish the saponaceous fluid that dissolves aliment, reduces it to a liquid paste, and prolongs the pleasure for a considerable time. The stomach has often said, *enough*; let the tongue forbear, and enjoy, by mere suction, pleasures which might give her the name of indefatigable.

The pouch that receives the food is fastened with strong ligaments. It has often occasion for them to resist the excesses of intemperance. It is furnished interiorly with small glands or sponges, from whence flows a dissolving liquor. There, by fermentation and trituration, is performed the astonishing metamorphosis, which, of many blended substances, forms at length but one. Sanguification is performed in the lungs; being carried into the heart, the blood is purified; carried into the brain, it is subtilized again; and, by a last and more wonderful depuration, at length forms that incomprehensible matter which reproduces man. It is the subtile part of the ali-
ments

ments which compose those different juices : but the eye, in vain, endeavours even with the aid of the microscope to search into the secrets of nature ; there it finds nothing but deceitful appearances, ever destroyed by new observations.

In order to facilitate, in all its courses, the flowing of matter more or less perfect, the liver converts into bile a part of our aliment ; the bile serves to lubricate the intestines, and is also useful in the last concoction, at the same time that it assists in discharging the different secretions.

The intestines form a meander, and in their windings are a prodigious length ; they are supported in their position by the mesentery. Endowed with a multitude of veins, nerves, attracting fibres, they also pump up a deal of chyle before they perform their last office.

Let not false delicacy blush to observe the mechanism of the operation that expels from the body a matter which retained longer would disturb the animal œconomy, and cause the greatest ravages by remaining in the passages where it lately flowed mildly, balsamic and kind. Let us admire all the objects of nature ; there are none despicable in her sight ; no one is more noble than another ; she has employed the same care and attention for every thing that composes the human body. All things are equally necessary, if not for life, at least for health and strength, without which life is a burden ; and when one sees that heap of intestines, after a thousand windings,

dings, terminated in that opening folded like a purse, which opens and draws together by the assistance of muscles which perform the office of strings, one is astonished at the attention of nature and the magnificent prodigality she displays in objects our ignorance does not distinguish, or marks, with contempt, the child of our trifling and frivolous ideas.

There are objects interdicted and inaccessible to my pencil. If I could paint all, I would analyze the sixth sense, so distinct from the others. I would unveil the throne where this lively and transient pleasure, to which man is hardly equal, is seated; but the voluptuousness of a sensible being, real voluptuousness, dwell in the heart; and the merely physical emotion, separated from the transports of sentiment, is too trifling a matter, or debases man too much to merit our attention.

Let us speak of that universal sense, the feeling which so often makes up for the others. Dispersed over all parts of the body, its power is universal. But what is the vehicle of this exquisite sensibility? It is a web of small filaments which serves as strings, and which, crossing the skin in every sense, produce the whole of all the parts when in motion. One is never disturbed without suffering; for besides the web of skin which covers all the flesh from head to foot, it is re-covered itself with another web a great deal finer; and the epidermis has yet a more delicate feeling, being formed of little hollow passages,

ges, perpetually moistened with a fluid proper to them. When the hand softly squeezes the hand of the beloved object, it is the little nervous tufts that shudder under this soft voluptuous touch; and the lover readily conceives it is in embracement entire voluptuousness resides.

But what is most astonishing, is, in the intervals of those webs are planted an innumerable quantity of bulbous substances resembling those of flowers. It is the stems of those bulbs that is called hair. Some, more humid, grow long as the hair of the head. They are real vegetables that have hollow roots to suck humidity; the sap circulates in those small pipes; what, then, must be the extreme fineness of those nutritive tubes of a downy hair!

Even the skin is no more than a double sieve, which admits the air on one side, and aids the colours of surrounding objects, and on the other has the means of discharge for the blood and extraneous humours. Hence, the torrent of perspiration that flows and never ceases for a moment. When interrupted, it is the cause of all disorders, and health is not restored until this flowing is perfectly re-established. Thus, besides the membranous bag that receives the lees of the blood, it also makes its way through the skin when in violent agitation; and what we call sweat is nothing more than the watry and ferous parts of the red humour which flows so rapidly in our veins.

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The constant action kept up by the motion of the heart, a muscle endowed with prodigious strength, causes the fluid to circulate from the head to the feet at least sixty times in a minute. Death only puts a stop to this motion, which puts the whole mechanism of the machine in motion. The slightest hurt done this organ puts an end to life; and it is by contemplating the fragility of those vessels which cause respiration, that life seems a miracle, and imagination can scarce conceive so frail a being can exist a hundred years, which contains within itself the principles of its dissolution still more than that of its regeneration. Yet it is this weak being, incessantly tottering on the borders of the grave, who has violently dragged the iron from the mine, to shorten, in a senseless manner, the duration of life, who has bruised saltpetre to add wings to death and sharper points to grief.

Grief! Oh! how forcibly it acts on this nervous center, on this *plexus*, the seat of sensibility! How all the emotions of the soul reply to those muscular rays called the diaphragm, when fear or uneasiness agitate the mind! How does the least word strike on those tendinous fibres, susceptible of all the emotions the mind can suffer! It is from thence, doubtless, proceeds that sudden redness which enflames the face, and that frightful paleness which covers it. It is there are produced those soft or bitter, plentiful or scarce, tears; those tender or cruel tears, which dilate or compress, flatter or devour. When
the

the jealous or insulted man furiously raises the vengeful steel, from thence the dreadful storm proceeds that drives him on to crime ; but, by a contrary effort, pity and compassion stop the uplifted arm ; and in those opposite and sorrowful moments the man suffers and sometimes expires.

But what is that spongy substance, so closely united to the diaphragm ? It receives the outward air, warms it if too cold, and incessantly refreshes the blood enflamed by the rapidity of its course, in mixing fresh air with it ; this substance constantly receives air by a kind of valve placed at the bottom of the mouth. Sixty-five muscles dilate and contract the organ that respire and distributes the air. Tones are produced by the extension or contraction of the fibres of the glottis ; and Ferriën has demonstrated, that voice is the result of a wind and corded instrument. This organ is peculiarly appropriated to man, distinguishes him, and the animal does not partake his privilege ; it seems to belong to him as the thinking being, exclusively gifted with speech. Even death does not perfectly destroy the action of this organ ; for a bellows, introduced into the tracheal artery, will bring forth sighs, groans, the sounds of the deceased's voice.

Do not be terrified, my friends, this body is no longer his ; it is a stranger. He received all from nature, he has returned all again. Thus we shall be one day or other. No humiliating terrors ; let us enjoy our understanding

ding and our judgement. Let us pursue our examination of this wonderful machine. Let us run over the universe, where infinite, and to us unknown, ways attest with what majestic materials our being is composed. Such a collection of prodigies, for a character that seems so short, announces, that this transitory life is not the performance, and that we only see the curtain. Let us destroy the veil as much as we can; every thing under the eye of man belongs to his deepest disquisition. In vain does nature work, with the greatest care, on objects infinitely small, to conceal them as it were from the strictest scrutiny. We have already discovered many of her secrets; and the time will come when more skilful hands, more ingenious and experienced eyes, more laborious attention, and, above all, chance, will bring the light of new discoveries. By anatomizing each other, we shall learn to know ourselves. Our bodies will not contain a fibre that will not be known; we shall bequeath our knowledge to our descendants, and they will excel us, as we have excelled our fathers. Go on, young artist, and as a proof of my love for so useful an art, remember, from this moment I bequeath my body to your amphitheatre.

How the anatomist pants with admiration, how overjoyed when he follows the ramification of all those vessels that correspond with each other! The least little nerve that has not yet been discovered fills him with as much rapture as the discovery of an inflamed comet

in the plains of Ether to the eager eye of the astronomer. Let every one perform his part, the one with the scapel, the other with the telescope. Let every one soar to expand the dominion of the Creator. Where ends this immense profound? What are we, and what an universe! My sight is wearied, my imagination exhausted, my head turns, and I am forced to return to objects within my comprehension, less fatiguing to the measure of my understanding.

Now let us observe the ossified building, which is the base or support of all the parts of the human frame; they are hollow, and the sap which circulates is an emanation of the brain. The marrow descends, and is formed into an oil which serves to maintain solidity and suppleness. This particular circulation seems disinclined to retain its own produce: it cannot exceed certain bounderies; for a membrane, called the periosteum, does not leave the least opening. This membrane adheres closely to the bones; it is a close web which suffers nothing of the medullary substance to escape. It seems to nourish the bones, to receive its nourishment from them; and when the wretch suffers amputation, it is when they come to this sensible membrane his torture extorts his groans.

You have, at times, been surpris'd at the number of attitudes the human body can writhe itself into; you may have observed the hams of those rope-dancers, the incredible strength of their springs, and the frightful

ful gracefulness of their motions, the astonishing equilibrium they preserve on a fixed and narrow spot; observe in what manner those feats of activity are performed; it is by the assistance of those joints, some fixed, others immovable, fit to turn in every shape, by the aid of those muscles, true levers, of different forms, length and breadth, the body lowers, bends, extends. Those rotundities are pulleys, these supporters are pins. The eternal geometrician's hand is stamped in the length, be it more or less, of the tendon; lengthen it, shorten it, place it at the least distance; a line lower, and the gracefulness, the motion, and the strength disappear;—so much astonishing and exact precision is required. It is said the head can form only a semicircle; that being capable of lowering itself to such a degree, it can throw itself back to the same degree. I can see the ligaments which permit such an effort, and wisely refuse such another; and those daring tumblers, by displaying all the motions of the vertebre, give me a lively idea of a skeleton; all the springs are full in my eye; but, however astonishing it may be, I yet know an attitude they cannot bound.

All the void space of this building is filled with a soft substance, itself supported by an innumerable multitude of animated joints, which, under the appellation of muscles and tendons, contribute to give each part a particular direction and motion, at the same time they assist in the general motion, the circu-

lation proper to each object, though distinct, aids the universal circulation; and the number of veins and arteries, by their variety of intermixture, surpasses all imagination. One tegument only covers the veins, a double tegument infolds the arteries, and the blood and lymph flow in those two channels, distinct substances, though perpetually mingling. The fibres, which often do not equal the size of a large hair, are the threads spread in all parts, which, on the least inclination, obey and cause the part confided to them to obey.

Who would not be struck with astonishment at the extreme minuteness and delicacy of this multitude of imperceptible fibres and vessels! They are, moreover, endued with amazing elasticity. See the porter, whose head and neck is burdened with a weight four times greater than his body; he walks obedient to the laws of equilibrium; he bears up a long time against so great a weight, but intemperance and excess cause more havock in the machine than the repeated efforts which conquered physical resistance. Organization is truly astonishing! The sagacity of a Winslow, during the whole life of man, has not been able to discover the tenth part of them; this body is under the icy hand of death, and its structure fills the anatomist with surprise and admiration. What, then, is this same body while animated with the breath of life, while a subtile and unknown fluid gives an elasticity to all its parts which display all its beauties,

beauties, while his eye glows with a soft flame, grace accompanies his motions, the smile exhibits the soul on his lips, whilst inflamed with love, he reproduces himself in the bosom of voluptuousness.

Now, having overcome the dread raised by the image of death, I have commanded my pen to trace this picture, and to banish the lived colours, the hours of night fly with the sound of the bell; all is calm, every thing around me is at rest; the stars glitter in the firmament, the earth exhales an odoriferous incense. Oh, nature, if with one hand thou bringest destruction, thou reparaest with the other. Life and death constitute both ends of the chain with which thou enclorest every being, thy historian tells us the individual dies, and the species subsists immortal. At this instant, chaste Hymen and tender love subdue the feeling heart. I enjoy the pleasures my fellow creatures taste. The transports of the young bride, the ecstasy of her happy bridegroom, give a smiling aspect to the universe, and blot out the gloomy tints on which my eye has too long dwelt.

Restoring love, spread life and joy, sentiment and felicity, perpetuate the beneficent and glorious race of those who contribute to the honour and happiness of mankind. Perhaps, at this instant, a new Pergolesi is conceived by a lively Italian; another, Newton in the womb of a chaste Englishwoman; a Rubens will be brought to light by a modest Fleming; and a La Fontaine and a Fenelon

will be regenerated at Paris to enchant us by an improvement in our tongue. Oh, nature! after genius do not forget beauty; return us an Heloise, the model of lovers; return us an object no less scarce, the Ninon, who discovered how to deprive love of its thorns, and re-establish the fine and delicate shades that can exist between savage laws and a neglect of decency. Finish, Oh, nature, those charming beings which pleasure sketches. Let none but such minds escape; but if in some remote corner of the north, in the midst of rude and severe climes, some warlike Prince should beget a Charles the XIIth, a new Attila, mow them down in the flower of their age; let them fall, that those sons of Kings and their brutal passions may not disturb the peace and harmony the sciences and arts begin to spread over the face of the earth. Instead of living for the misery of human nature, let them be inclosed like embryos in a phial, for the inspection of the curious. I would rather see them thus, than behold their tombs loaded with trophies, murdering instruments, and revered only by weakness and folly.

AGAINST THE HOMER,

Translated into French.

I AM of opinion, the modern fairy tales are full as good as the antient tales, and those of Homer in particular; that the divinities of
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the Iliad, who slide instead of walking, who mount and descend on clouds, who visibly fight the battles of their favourite warriors over their heads, and, notwithstanding, now and then receive a wound of the lance which draws their divine and rose-coloured blood, are not a whit better than those powerful beings, who, with their wand in hand, fly through the immensity of air more expeditiously than all the gods and goddesses of Olympus.

If prodigies of imagination and the marvellous are in question, the honour certainly belongs to the fairy tales. Homer makes Golden Tripods march to the counsel of the gods, makes his horses speak, &c. Those are trifles! The other's imagination is far more excellent. Who can read the *Green Serpent* without admiration?—his address and eloquence equal that of Ulysses. Nothing is left us to wish but the erection of an academy, to comment emphatically on the beauties of this tale; it might vie with Homer, and this assertion would no longer appear a paradox; for it is agreed to give this appellation to every novel truth which has not yet received its passport.

The moral of the Iliad is much praised; but one must have the penetrating eye of Horace to see it; for his Jupiter, his Juno, his Venus, his Mercury, as well as the rest of his gods, are always at variance, are, in general, unjust, mischievous, licentious.—The magicians of our tales have undoubtedly

more dignity in their wrath, more resolution in adversity, and more magnanimity in the distribution of their favours.

Such blasphemies will revolt, all the mad enthusiasts of antiquity.

Being curious to collect, to read, and to compare once for all the translations of this famous Iliad, on which so much praise has been lavished, I have the misfortune to think this poem destitute of plan or connection, divested of unity and interest, full of verbose, descriptions, and monotony in the turn of the speeches and recital of battles; and those gods who always conclude in the same form, and all those heroes with long laboured speeches before they come to action, and those perpetual repetitions to tell us when it is night or day, and the minute-anatomy of the different kinds of wounds; all this tedious recital inclines me to rank this poem among the middling romances.

We don't even see the taking of Troy, which is the constant subject, and the real utility of this long work evades speculation, unless it is to prove the discord of Princes brings on dreadful consequences; a truth their people feel without the assistance of poetry.

We are in possession of twenty romances in our own language, better done, more interesting, more replete with morality, truth and moving relations, or, at least, that speak more feelingly to our minds.

It is undoubtedly the fault of our translators. In the Greek language, the Iliad is cer-

certainly an admirable poem, astonishing, divine; I have no doubt of it. It is sublime in the language of antiquity:—Well, let the ancients return to admire it with all those who naturalize themselves Grecians;—for my part, it has been tediously tiresome to me in French and Latin, and I have only been supported in the reading by curiosity to contemplate the morals of those distant ages. In this point of view, one reads a foreign narration which engages us, and has its merit like an antique picture. If a drawing of Zeuxis should be discovered, and could have been preserved, it would be a great curiosity; but, at the same time, is not to be put in competition with the pallet of a Rubens or a La Sueur. During my examination of this production, several ideas occurred to me, which every one will judge of as they think proper. I shall never be persuaded the entire Iliad was composed by the same author. It even seems to me impossible, both by the execution of the poem, and the history of the times. They probably collect *rhapsodies*, made at different periods. A more happy, or more ingenious rhapsody, like those of our rhimers, might have gratified Homer with subjects by different hands; scattered pieces which he reunited and retouched to his own mind. The place of Homer's birth is uncertain, as also the age he lived in. It was not until about three hundred years after his death his poetic works were collected. — They were in detached pieces. Plutarch says, Lycurgus was the

first who collected them in Asia. Who knows what happened in this lapse of time, a time of barbarism! It is said Homer went about chaunting his verses in the manner of our *bards*. Where is the probability he should have composed so extensive a poem, only to recite scraps of it on his itinerary expeditions? Did he chaunt his Iliad all at one time, or did he drag with him a company of subaltern strollers to retail it to those who fell in his way? This is a palpable contradiction.

It appears to me there are two epochs in this poem, that it could not be composed at the same time. The buckler of Achilles exhibits the perfection of arts and sciences, and as one may say, the result of knowledge, of a people greatly civilized. The gross language, the brutal and sanguinary acts of the heroes of the Iliad, their manner of living, pots, cookery, their greedy penury for the most trifling profit, all show, on the other hand, the infancy of society. We are apt to think we read the language of a rude and uncultivated poet, and again the soft-flowing verse of one acquainted with the most refined arts. The superb chariots, with wheels of gold, the magnificent vases, the purple carpets, are contrasted with princesses who are washerwomen, and heroes who turn the spit. He describes old Nestor as the model of wisdom, and the most respectable of his heroes; and this wise man, with his boasted eloquence, tells his soldiers: *My honest fellows, I believe none of you would chuse to return home, without first*

first having lain with the wife of some Trojan.—

This shameful speech is put into the mouth of an old man, inspired by Minerva, the most chaste of goddesses. His Achilles, whose majestic wrath punishes the Grecian heroes, by his inaction, after having pardoned the hoary head of Priam, and even relenting over this unhappy father, struck with the idea of his own aged parent, sells, as I may say, to this old man, who kissed his murdering hands, the body of his son Hector, by meanly accepting the presents brought him. This son of Thetis, this demi-god, whose noble valour disdained to spill vulgar blood, coolly cuts the throats of twelve Trojans on the tomb of Patroclus; and we dare not fathom the principle of his grief or his friendship. In a word, he only serves his country to revenge the death of Patroclus.

Agamemnon, as brutal, with his own hand kills Adrastus, who had surrendered to Menelaüs, who wished to spare him; and he endures the reproaches of this haughty chief, who is represented as the model of heroism. Things so unlike cannot proceed from the same brain.

How, again, can we reconcile the instances where Homer piously adores his gods, with others where he ridicules them? Did he believe in a Juno, who he inflames with a celestial jealous wrath; a Jupiter, who shakes Olympus with knitting his brows, while he laughs at lame Vulcan? This unfortunate god had received from his brutal and inhuman fa-

ther such a kick in the hip, that he was lamed for the remainder of his eternal days. Thus Homer by turns adores and despises his gods, and instead of raising man's imagination, which by his art he could effect, he follows the greatest extravagancies of paganism, if even he was not the principal institutor of them.

Did he receive this dose of genius and this rare talent for versification, only to confirm the ridiculousness of vulgar opinion? Do not great minds rather endeavour to destroy error? Did he create this burlesque mythology, or was he himself in illusion? His manner in general is grave and serious; and in this jumble of folly, one is astonished at the manner in which he debases the sublime idea of the Divinity, at a time when Orpheus left us that fine hymn, whose fragments we still admire; and Plato expressly says Homer was in Tartarus for having spoke ill of the gods.

What! this pretended great genius, before whom all ages have lain prostrate, had not the power to elevate itself to something more noble, more perfect, than received fictions! But he has still added to those which were fashionable. The majestic Jupiter beats and fondles his wife; and the grotesque mixture of the most ridiculous fables exhibit in proud Olympus the vilest and most inordinate passions. Probably, Homer has abused the Pagan mythology; but if even he had literally followed it, he would still be culpable; because the man truly formed to instruct the world,

world, ought to dissipate gross darkness, and form his poem on a philosophical plan, commonly adapted to the rest of mankind. He follows the enlightened flambeau, that makes falsehood vanish, as soon as it is brought forward by the hand of Genius; but the chanter or fabricator of those extravagant falsehoods could not alone invent and attribute to his gods so many manifest contradictions. There must have been many heads employed in framing such nonsense, to finish the edifice of this confused system, in which one cannot avoid discovering the traces and mixture of other worships.

The world is pretty generally agreed in acknowledging several chanters of the Trojan war—an enterprize undertaken for the ravishment of a woman; and yet in those days, women were slaves, always sacrificed to public interest; witness the immolated Iphigenia, although daughter to the General. As there was no registry kept of all the chanters, and the journal of the learned did not then exist, the name of only one chanter or poet may have swallowed up the others, in the same manner as the name of Hercules was prevalent, when they attributed to him the labours of the great men his predecessors and contemporaries. This poem having gone through the ordeal of all ages, may have received modifications, which palpably appear, and which visibly attest its having passed through several hands. Sometimes, it is fiery, rapid, as in the fourth book; at others, tedious, diffuse,

fuse, and languid; here, the same repetition disgusts; there, an uniform fall. There are verses repeated, which attest the tacks of the digester.

The rape of Helen proves moreover what kind of persons those Kings were at the Trojan war, as also the kind of guard the King of the Molossians had. The good man Priam, to all appearance, was a plain Baron; but since then, fancy has made him a proud and opulent King. But it is very necessary to remark, the morals of the poem contradict in every verse the descriptive genius of the poet, and the arts are constantly in opposition to the customs. Can any one ever believe the fine buckler of Achilles, of such exquisite workmanship, where the whole astronomical system was so wonderfully engraved, could be penetrable to arrows? Who is there so blind who cannot here perceive a frame made on purpose to receive the recent discoveries? And who can withstand the temptation of viewing this as an interpolation! We think we perceive distinctly what we still see among us, one poet appears after others, who takes the first comer for his hero, (Theseus for example) will load him with gold and silver, (as our Racine, who was French taylor to all the ancient Kings), whilst Theseus, who was nothing more than a poor knight errant, whose whole fortune consisted in a sword given him by his father, and a pair of shoes hid under a great stone, which he was obliged to raise before he could possess this great inheritance, and

and who made use of this sword as a knife to cut his meat, that is, a large ox, properly quartered for first and last course.

Thus, all those ornaments lavished in the Iliad, and which testify a kind of translation, evidently show a mixture of posterior images, united to those of antiquity. The groundwork is not disguised; one can discover the stamp of the character and customs under the foreign strata, as we may call them, which have not been able to deface the traces of a former generation.

This poem, then, has been totally, or in part composed, in the rude and obscure times that Theseus lived; since, it has been retouched, or rather repaired, in the enlightened days of Greece. This is plausible. Theseus and Gideon were nearly cotemporaries; every thing was then divided in little nations, little kings: every thing describes man, at that period, almost in a state of nature; and nothing shews us the splendor of Priam's kingdom, the majesty of Agamemnon, king of kings, the grand fleets, the accumulated riches, the marble palaces; in a word, those arts which had not existence, &c. Eschinas cites some Greek verses of Homer, as taken from the Iliad, and those verses are no longer to be found in our text; a certain proof the text has been changed, mutilated, altered, corrected. Add to this the difference of dialect acknowledged by all those who understand the language.

In Homer, the Xanthus is a rapid river that sweeps away in its majestic course helmets, cuirasses, and the arms of the heroes. View it; you will find it a small dried-up rivulet; you may step over it, as Cæsar did when he fought it, as a modern poet has well expressed it: *And unknowing, he passed the Xanthus.* Priam's palace was doubtless in unison with this so-boasted river, and the description of those sumptuous arts are visibly borrowed, either from some neighbouring people who are unknown to us, or from posterior times; which is still more probable.

There are undoubtedly some strong, grand, and majestic imagery in this poem; but the gods spoil all: bravery and courage are eclipsed under the useless and fatiguing presence of those perpetual movers, like unto the machinery of our operas. Heroes are no more than warlike automatons, who have neither will nor arms. Hector flies on foot before Achilles at least three leagues, being forced by the ascendancy of an inimical divinity; he turns again like a puppet, when by the protection of another goddess he finds himself two to one. The wrath of Achilles is idle, impotent, and unreasonable; he sculks nine years in his tent: there lies his armour, nine years inactivity, for depriving him of Briseis: pretty employment for a hero sprung from a goddess! His silent wrath is idle, and his obstinacy is celebrated more than his valour.

In fine, no one model of virtue in this long romance. Battles upon battles; assemblies of
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the gods, which terminate in nothing, and then again assemblies. A particular description of all the wounds; a long list of the killed and wounded; a faithful nomenclature of genealogies; a marked indifference for the effusion of human blood; and divinities contemplating and animating the slaughter; which is the predominant characteristic; generous forgiveness, humanity, disinterested beneficence, are qualities totally unknown. Nervous, robust, and supple arms are seen heaving large pieces of rocks; and narrow, rough, sanguinary minds, who neither know how to repress vengeance, pride, or avidity, contend with each other for wretched plunder, like the warlike companions of Clovis. When an arrow has whiz'd, has pierced the buckler and the cuirass, another bow is bent, whizes in return, and a divinity never fails to fly with the javelin, or sharpen it with a celestial hand, according to the occasion.

All nations have, however, used this imagery; but they appertain more to barbarous than civilized people. The poetry of the northern people has the greatest conformity with the ground of Homer's poetry, which shakes the heavens for the motion of a mere mortal.—Homer has been made a gigantic genius; and nothing more is to be done than to heap hyperbolical figures one over another, and make heaven and earth dance at every stroke of a lance the combatants give each other. I will agree this is very amusing to the puerile imagination of men. Battles are the province of heroes;

heroes; but it is the poet who makes them such unmerciful declaimers, and who for a nothing brings down all the gods from Olympus. In the Erse poetry, we see nothing also but gods inhabiting trees, rocks, and desert shores. All their similes are taken from the lofty pine, from the green colour of the ocean, the floating clouds, &c. but there is not, in all Homer, so sublime a speech as that of Logan, chief of a savage clan of America. Our masters, perhaps, in eloquence, without taste, without dictionary, and without academy, are still concealed in the forests of the new world.

But to return. This heap of fables that might be pleasing to the Greeks, this impenetrable mythology, whose ingenuity they were probably well acquainted with, is not formed to produce the same enthusiasm among us. All those fanatical preachers were quacks, or dupes to their own illusions, or who wished to enhance the frail merit of understanding a dead and almost useless language, or wishing always to admire, never knew how to compare their writers. How much more uniform, more moving, and more diversified, is Tasso! With how much art he gradually interests us, mixes his colours, and unites the marvellous of his time with the august truths of his religion!

But I shall be told, Behold the crowd of admirers! But don't we know, that such a book, on account of its antiquity, will have more or less favour? Commentators and translators drop in, and compare with the original,
and

and by a sentiment of pride, examples of which are so numerous and laughable, imagine they partake the honours given to the work they have disfigured.

Mention the illustrious Moliere in presence of his commentator, he shall look down, and a modest blush shall cover his face. Literary superstition, pretty much like another, admires beyond measure, and without choice, what it has in its infancy been told to admire; it is more common now than one thinks.

We have seen the excesses Mademoiselle Dacier fell into in the last age, and her pedantic fury against the philosophical good sense of her adversaries. About a hundred years ago, she wept for the death of Pindarus, and she neither understood Pindar nor Homer; witness her prolix translation, where every spark of poetic fire is extinct. In a word, we have seen a *Serenus Sammonicus*, physician and preceptor to the young *Gordien*, such an enthusiast of Homer, that he publicly ordered, for the cure of the quartan fever, the patient to lay his head on the fourth book of the Iliad, on account of the heat of action with which this book is replete, and which he said was capable to cure by melting the humours. We shall be apt to laugh at Serenus; but have we not reason to laugh at him also who finds in Homer a collection of politics, natural history, and morality, pretty much like other enthusiasts, who would find the Trinity in Plato. The history of literary prejudices would be no less amusing, extensive, or curious,

rious, than that of political errors ; and the list of parole admirers is immense, for it is full as numerous as that of fools.

As to the *Odyſſey*, it is of a milder nature ; plain colouring, a ſimplicity of conduct, and contrived more intereſtingly. The moving author of this poem was never that of the bluſtering *Iliad*. It is as if one day *Offian* and *Geſſner* were to be coupled, and we ſhould then be told they were one and the ſame.

Not but in the *Odyſſey* may be found ſome of thoſe tales to lull one to ſleep, which are appendages of all barbarous ages, whether they are antient traditions diſfigured, or new coined from whimſical imaginations. All thoſe grotesque fables eſcape the mire of ages to circulate even among poliſhed nations ; becauſe the poetic genius amuſes itſelf ſometimes in good humour, to decorate them, whether to pleaſe the people, or whether through the neceſſity of following antient and conſecrated rites. One fable ſhall ſucceed, while another miſcarries, pretty much like a fine ſubject for tragedy, which has never been treated among us, while others, leſs ſucceſſful, have met with a *Racine* to keep them in vogue yet ſome ages under the national livery. We might draw a parallel between *Polyphemus* and *Bluebeard*, *Circe* and *Melusine*, *Ajax* and *Peter of Provence*, &c. But I ſhall reſerve to myſelf this ſolemn diſſertation : it would be a kind of irreligion not to bow down to a poem admired upwards of
three

three thousand years; that about one hundred and sixty people in all Europe know how to read in the original, and that so many professors, mounted in their chairs, dressed in their doctoral robes, have pronounced sublime before their scholars.

I will now appeal to the conscience of those who read this, and first ask them if they have read Homer in the original; if they have read him through, without being wearied; if they have read him with great pleasure; and those who will be honest enough will own, as I imagine, that Homer has few beauties; his slumbers long and frequent, and notwithstanding his fifteen hundred commentators and translators, he is a monotonist, verbose, and a surfeiting describer.

When I put this question to the conscience of my readers, it is because many people resemble the Neapolitan gentleman, who drew his sword fourteen times to prove Ariosto the first poet in the world, and who acknowledged, when he was run through the body, and dying, he had never read him.

Perhaps in thirty ages, after the destruction of our arts, of our books, and the Journal of Bouillon, a romance of our days, little read or despised, escaping universal ruin, may obtain the honour of sublimity; and the crowd of commentators, with gaping mouths, will pronounce it to possess every beauty: the first learned man will give to the work the name that has survived, and perhaps several volumes will be filled with the life of a poor author,
 who

who would have had some difficulty to obtain a place in a modern bill of mortality. Who knows even if they would not go so far as to confound commentator and author, and if for example, they might not attribute Moliere's comedies to M. Brett? For indeed his name is for ever tacked to the works of the author of the *Misanthropist*. Such a mistake might very possibly happen. In such a future academy, situated in a corner of North America, some learned academician, if there were any, would perhaps assert, in a language which we should certainly not understand, that M. Brett, in the eighteenth century composed the *Tartuffe* and *Gazette of France*.

In the mean time, let who will, can, or may admire, the characters of the *Iliad*. As the translations have made me yawn, and there is no disputing with weariness, I am authorised to declare for myself, that I do not feel an agreeable sensation on reading the translation of Homer. Every man's opinion is his own, and is independent. This divine Homer tires me; I feel modern works, as judges, by excellence of the *sublime and beautiful*, feel the *Iliad*. I do not mean to judge of others' delights; but my Homer shall be Richardson; my Theocritus, Gessner; my Theophrastus, Fielding; and I shall lament to see puerile academies, repetative admirers, diabolical commentators, blindly proclaiming this Greek language, which has so few works, and even them for the most part useless; whilst in the midst of this fruitless and barren curiosity, we
forgets

forget the images, the portraits, the truly grand and useful ideas, the moral and political books which surround us, and which, adapted to speak to us in the most forcible language, find us almost insensible in a proportionable degree, as it imports us to dive into them, and come at a thorough knowledge of them.

Let us have a translator capable to make us relish the Iliad. Pope's English Homer, by the assent of many, is superior to the Grecian; because Pope, as one may say, has made a new poem of it, by the original turn he has given the particulars, by curtailing them, and by a multiplicity of fine and delicate allusions he has introduced; thanks to the energy, the liberty, and daring pliancy of his language.

Romance for romance, I would rather read a modern one than the old romance of the Iliad, which is to me tedious. It may be an admirable production in its own tongue, I grant it; but in French, whether in prose or in verse, it has much displeas'd me.

Every epic poem should begin, as every one knows, by these words, *I sing*; a tale has a great resemblance to an epic poem; then here is the beginning of a tale that has just struck me: *There was once a King and a Queen; the King was called Petaut; he was a very good kind of man, a little abrupt, a weak mind, and the best King in the world.* Here let me be a Homerial commentator for a little while.—
How simple, how energetic, how summary,
how

how lucid, this opening! Here is a character drawn in the first line. The old chanter himself has not done better. Let us compare:—
Inspire me, Goddess! and thou, immortal Muse, sing the wrath of Achilles, and that inexorable hatred that caused so many young heroes to perish, and gave up their mangled members to feed the hungry vultures. There is more simplicity in the opening of the tale, more gracefulness and truth.

Why does Homer say he is inspired by a Muse! What is a Muse? Is it not certain he himself laboured his verses? Why appear to have wrote under the direction of an imaginary being? How is this Muse immortal! why sing anger and hatred!

I could thus pursue an examination of the divine Iliad, if I thought it could be any way pleasing to any of my readers, already fatigued with hearing so much of this antient poet, whom he is neither able to read nor judge of.

DISCOURSE

Delivered by M——, at his reception into the Academy of ——.*

“**W**HAT an honour for me, gentlemen, to be admitted into this literary Areopagus, which says little, writes still less, but thinks a great deal! How much above the academies

* This trifle is the production of a man who only wanted to laugh, and not hurt the feelings of any academician whatever.

of Paris, whose annual productions fill enormous volumes! at the Louvre they write; in your Lyceum you reflect. The province formerly followed the example of the capital; but it is asserted the capital begins to follow that of the province, and feeling that the greatest glory of an academician is to ruminare twice a week in an elbow-chair after dinner. How honourable is it for you, gentlemen, to see those haughty academies, that had disdained yours, take her to-day for their model! But now I mention the model, how shall I ever equal the great man to whom I succeed? — [*Here the orator paused a moment to receive the just applause this happy transition merited.*] Oh! if I cannot equal him, I will, at least, endeavour to associate in his glory, by sketching a picture of his life.

“ You will not expect a recital of battles, for he despised glory. Neither will you find in his history the pompous cares of the magistrate, who interprets or alters the laws, and brings about revolutions in his country. He trampled on the grandeur of the world; and when he was called to an office in the corporation, he rejected the offer, not with that feigned modesty which Cæsar affected when Antony offered him the crown, but with a decided and truly philosophical frankness. *I know nothing of those matters,* he replied. How much good sense is included in those few words! Is not every thing the Greek and Roman philosophers have said on the cares inseparable from honours, contained

in this simple and laconic answer? Every man of taste will undoubtedly prefer it to those pompous lines of Racine, *Happy the man who, satisfied with his humble lot, lives in the obscure state the gods have placed him.*

“Neither enjoin me the task of analysing his works. His modesty here excuses me. He had not the ostentation of those writers who published their works, more from motives of being admired than of instructing the world. There is no doubt, gentlemen, had he been inclined to take pen in hand, he would have eclipsed Racine, Fenelon, Voltaire, and our greatest men. He has frequently said so to himself with that openness you all witnessed; ‘but,’ added he, ‘some would pursue me: I am a man, I am susceptible of weakness, and some emotions of pride might impair the serenity of my mind.’—‘Write,’ said a friend to him, ‘but be anonymous.’ ‘I should always be discovered,’ he replied, ‘and reputation would follow me, and disturb the silence of my retreat.’ He was so immovable in this system, that when he was admitted amongst you, you were obliged to dispense with the usual discourse; an exception made for him alone, which is as great a proof of your modesty as of his, as he could not have deviated from the received custom of praising you and himself also. He was great, because he despised greatness. He had talents, but he took care to conceal them. He was a profound thinker, for he always kept his thoughts to himself. His mother assures us, three days before she gave

gave him birth, she had three dreams, in which she saw three crowns of laurel placed on her infant's head by three muses, who alternately suckled him.

“ I know the academicians of Paris will reject this fact as fabulous, because their mothers had not such dreams before they were born. But what Heaven does not permit the vulgar, it sometimes does for great men.

“ He was sent early to college. Here the history of his life is rather obscure, and gives rise to a problem which I will resolve. Some pretend he shone in the classes, whilst others say he was always in the last form. If the first tradition is true, it was because his extraordinary talents already began to unfold. If we adopt the second, it was because he disdained scholastic fame, or that nature would ripen this fruit before the bud could even be perceived. However, I know he had made the syntax his study, and despised the mathematics, astronomy, natural philosophy, ethics, and all those vague sciences that are to little purpose in forming the heart and mind. When he left the college, his mother desired he would chuse a calling; nothing pleased him.—‘ What will you do then?’ said she.—‘ I will think of it,’ replied the young philosopher.—‘ Well, think,’ answered this illustrious woman, the model for mothers.— And, indeed, all his life he was thoughtful. He read little, because there are few good books; and even when he read the best, he was accustomed to fall asleep, because he

knew how much superior he was to the authors he most delighted in. The ænigmas of the journalists were his favourite lectures: How often have you seen, gentlemen, this new Œdipus seek the meaning of an ænigma with inexpressible solicitude, beat his head, tear his hair, almost in despair when he could not solve it? It is the only circumstance of his life where his temper and resolution have been inconsistent. But when he discovered this precious treasure, what joy shone on his countenance? That of a King, just proclaimed, had nothing so grand and so majestic. It is a debt I here owe to his fame to tell you, he one day made an entire sacrifice of it. I was seeking to unravel an ænigma; he found it, came and whispered it to me, gave me leave to father it, and never revealed the secret: how different from those indiscreet authors, who only lend their pen to their friends to claim again two days after the work they had given them!

“In fine, gentlemen, he familiarised himself with the people, humanised himself to them, mixed with them, and had so well imbibed the common style, that one would be inclined to think it natural to him. An agreeable guest,—the goodness of his appetite stimulated that of others. Recollect, gentlemen, the sumptuous entertainment he gave you the day of his reception, the rich soup, the *petit patées* so exquisite! those But I perceive, gentlemen, I renew the grief you feel for his loss, and I must stop to deplore
with

with you this amazing man, who gave such good dinners and did not expect any in return. Grief stops my mouth, and I have scarcely fortitude to read the sentence with which I finish. I have proposed this great man for my model, and I feel in making this discourse I have deviated from the maxim he had laid down for himself, never to write; but it is the only time I shall swerve from his footsteps, and, during the remainder of my days, I promise you and the public, I will be his faithful imitator. — One word more, gentlemen, before we separate. — There have been only the two first lines of a madrigal found among the papers of this great man; the first was wrote about ten years since, the second about four; inexorable Death put a stop to the two last, and the completion of the work. This is the fragment:

*Love is an inconstant child,
Whose eyes and playful tricks are wild.*

Which of us, gentlemen, would dare put the finishing hand to this posthumous masterpiece. Let us rather preserve it in the records of our academy, and avoid imitating the audacious commentators, who dared to fill up the *hiatus* Virgil left in the six last books of the *Eneid*.

EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

Est Deus in nobis.

WOULDST thou, my friend, thy worth and grandeur know,

What thou to thy immensity dost owe ?
 Respect thy being—thy own gifts possess,
 For in thy soul is found the pow'r to bless ;
 There Nature placed all treasure ; what is gold ?
 Go, bid the miser's hoarded heaps unfold.
 Gold is but dross—Thy heart the richest mine,
 Existence spread from pole to pole is thine ;
 By this alone ;—or else obscure or void,
 Were worlds, with all their suns to thee destroyed :
 O'er earth, o'er heav'n, a vast, immense domain,
 Thy thought, thy reason, hold th'extended reign.
 These on all objects pour their steady light,
 Nor Nature's veil eludes their piercing sight.

What gives the sun with genial heat to warm,
 The glittering host of night their pow'r to charm ?
 To flow'rs their hues, its favour to the fruit,
 Their concerts to the groves, which else were mute.
 What but thy senses ? monarchs while they sway,
 These creatures of thy pleasure still obey.
 Thy eye paints yonder azure vault above,
 Thy ear with melody fills ev'ry grove.
 The universe, this magic zone, were found,
 Nought but a lifeless chaos spread around ;
 Thou art the painter of the vast design,
 The canvas nature spreads ;—to hold the pencil's thine.

Imagination ! thy illusive pow'r,
 With pleasing wonders charms us ev'ry hour :
 Thy warmth inspires, thy glass enchants our sight,
 Enhances pleasure, and creates delight !
 Still more I owe to this thy magic reign,
 Which from my body shakes the cumbrous chain :
 Nature ! thy fairest objects far remove
 A sweeter error of my sense I prove :
 'Tis not enough that thus its viewless flight
 The present and the future brings to light.
 This could ev'n in a dungeon's deepest gloom
 Still bid new worlds arise in early bloom.

○ sacred charm ! bright fire ! my progress trace,
 And let the rose of bliss my temples grace :
 While to its choice my soul superbly springs,
 And leaves to vulgar pride the crowns of Kings.

O subtle Memory ! thy wond'rous pow'r
 Returns th'existence of the former hour ;
 Gives back the images of empires past,
 Tells the age present what befel the last !
 By thee the pomp of Nature I behold,
 By guilt's successful arm the thunders roll'd ;
 I sigh :—but death the tyrant's pride lays low,
 Transient his rage ! Time strikes the fatal blow.
 Time is the avenger ! mortals weak must own,
 'Tis by such blows he cheers our race alone.

View next the Judgment's powers, that sov'reign shine,
 Condemn, approve :—the crucible divine ;
 Receives our sentiments, refines, unites,
 Weighs all our wants, in scale of equal rights ;
 Fixes our arts and laws with steady hand,
 The edifice is rais'd by her command.
 Our refuge, when all other hopes remove,
 Which both our comforter and judge can prove ;
 From passion's tempest 'tis our sure resort,
 Our *Pharos*, and directs us to the port.

Is the soft heart to love and pity warm,
 Those tender wants ; th'intoxicating charm ;
 Th'enchancing feelings, anxious, fierce desire,
 Sensations which sweet pleasure can inspire ?
 How happy the lov'd object then to bless,
 Ev'n to the height of fond voluptuousness ;
 Each object with sweet animation fir'd,
 He looks to Heav'n, with gratitude inspired.
 Innocent Friendship, animating pure
 Pour balm into the wound ; yet do not cure !
 Leave sensibility, his virtues leave,
 Whence souls humanity's bright tints receive ;
 And ardent canticles from raptures move !
 He was an Atheist first who knew not love.

Rich in such treasures, by a choice unwise
 Our rights shall we to Plutus sacrifice ?
 Perfidious gold, like some proud despot's reign,
 Will ev'ry day impose some new-forg'd chain ;
 Wealth often is a dang'rous burden found,
 Deceitful show † that hides a hollow wound ;

Where health prevails we hold a steadier pace,
 With equal motion in life's active race ;
 The dams once broke, the waters rush amain,
 Scorning all bounds which should their force restrain.
 The meads are overflow'd ; their force they spend !
 More pleas'd I view the gentle dews descend ;
 Th'industrious bee our best instructor proves,
 Which sucks, not ravishes, the sweets it loves.

But Glory, you will say, how greatly bright !
 Chuse a true glass to view that Glory right ;
 Know its true glow from those deceitful fires,
 Which hopes like those of children oft inspires ;
 Who when they see the sun-beam dancing wide,
 In splendor o'er the bosom of the tide,
 Sink deep in mire to seize it while they try ;
 A phantom too as oft may catch our eye.
 True Glory bids thee cherish all mankind,
 Like thee immortal, for like ends designed ;
 And to regard the lowest will command,
 Since God has form'd them with his awful hand,
 Glory is enmity's strong force to tame,
 Injuries to forget, to rise to fame.

When the soul springing from all matter vile,
 Shall leave this vast, this universal pile,
 Then shall it smile on gewgaws of the world,
 And palaces by time to ruin hurl'd ;
 Death's empire now ; that with their masters lie,
 And whose unhappy tale demands a sigh ;
 Then mounting to the God of life receives
 All that the most extensive genius gives.

Thus of the universe the picture trace,
 Tall oaks decay, old things to new give place ;
 But how deceiving are the various arts,
 Which the mere force of sounding words imparts ;
 Their well-plann'd trifling, elegant discourse !
 Such play with infants only can have force ;
 Virtue our homage should receive alone,
 The ravages of Genius we must own.

Disputes with rivals fill our early days,
 How do such brave contentions merit praise ;
 'Tis but by these for mortals to retreat,
 From fear of shame that adverse fate may threat.
 But why thus wildly with the winds engage,
 When prudence better can repress their rage.

How I despise the man who e'er can deign
 To flatter the base, insolent, and vain!
 More praise to old Diogenes I owe,
 Embracing statues in the depth of snow.
 I pity him that, full of weakness found,
 Each trifle still can trouble and can wound;
 Who flies misfortune, and thinks only he,
 Of all the world, should pass from sufferings free.

No misanthrope austerely would I rise,
 Break civil bands or tutelary ties;
 Nor bid the patriot take the Stoic's road,
 Nor rank th'insensate man a demi-god;
 For well I know great Nature's ties and force,
 From whence our pleasures draw their purest source;
 I know his heart so soften'd to revere,
 That bids for others woes to shed the tear.
 Even thus the plant that sensitive we name,
 Seems to expand her breast at pity's claim.
 Its beauties faded, at one touch depart,
 And tell th'unfeeling man "he has no heart."

Pass some short time, and age brings on the hours,
 Which strew beneath our feet youth's wither'd flowers;
 Then, by degrees, shall sense and reason fail,
 Let us prevent the effects, ere they prevail.
 Less bright the setting than the rising sun,
 Departing gleams of glory yet puts on!
 Banish those tears from weakness you derive,
 And dare in converse with yourselves to live.

The * Traveller on desert isle unblest,
 Discover'd there the talents he possess.
 Be ours like industry; let us suppose
 The world but one vast desert to disclose;
 This Being, mortal! frail like all the kind,
 Cherish; but an asylum elsewhere find.
 We are the everlasting sport of fate,
 Yet gen'rous fortitude what can abate?
 What move him master of himself that reigns,
 The heart self conquer'd its own will retains;
 Its glory measur'd by its worth is known,
 It bends for that submits to Heav'n alone.
 The soul displays her author's image bright,
 And all but God before her sink in night.

* Robinson.

LAST LETTER

Of the Romance of Julia, or the new Heloisa.*

St. PREUX TO WOLMAR,

After the Death of Julia.

“ OH Wolmar, what a stab you have given me ! the stroke of death would have been more welcome. — I no longer exist ; I am insensible to every thing, even to grief ! — My heart is torn from me, or is rather annihilated. The earth sinks under me ; every object flies from me like a shadow ; and my stupid wandering soul has taken its residence in the tomb that incloses Julia ! — Divine Julia, I breathe beside, I watch over thy cold inanimate corse as over a sacred trust left to my care. — I am silent ; I revere the silence which surrounds thee. — I meditate in the shadow of death ; my piercing eye sees through the dreadful shroud that covers thee. — Oh, Julia ! thou art still the same, thy soul still animates thy eyes ; death has not frozen thy visage ; devouring reptiles dare not approach thee, they respect thee, thy mouth opens. — *My dear friend, fulfil thy duty.* — What sounds ! what a mournful affecting voice ! where am I ? the illusion is gone ; her tongue is frozen ; the lustre of her eyes is extinct ; death has shut

* The perusal of Rousseau's Romance gave birth to the idea of this letter. It was written in 1764.

up in this coffin the body that was lately the temple of virtue. — I would fly hence ; but cannot — this frightful, yet adorable, image nourishes and rends my heart. What, Julia, art thou no more ? — Oh, Wolmar, I excuse thy errors. — What Power governs this universe ? Adorable woman, thou art no more ! Where art thou ? Ah ! thy best place was amongst us. — Who could have separated thee from those thou lovedst, from those who owed their happiness to thee ? And where is thine, separated from thy husband, thy children, thy friend, and may I dare say from me ? A haughty contempt animates me, a sudden indignation arises in my breast ; while I meditate on this world, where such strange disorders reign, I discover in my heart a kind of sentiment of dignity and greatness of soul, a sort of sublime superiority, that makes me despise life and existence, and, at the same time, makes me shed tears for the unhappy state of mortals, and demonstrates to me I only want power to make them happy. I am not mad — this cruel event astonishes, surpasses, and confounds my ideas ; my eye is dry, the bitter smile is on my lip ; it is not fate has struck this dreadful blow, it was too well concerted ; it is — Oh, Wolmar, shall I end ? And thou, incomprehensible Being, too great to be irritated with the vain despair of a mortal, whose heart thou hast pierced, have Mercy ! Julia is in thy bosom ; I adore thee, but — Oh, God ! why didst thou take her from us ! or why, when the blow was struck, didst thou not

vouchsafe to strike all together? One single moment has overturned all our projects; it is not then permitted man to raise his own felicity; and when virtue begins to make us happy, Death comes to destroy the fortunate plan of our lives. My friend, we never more shall see, we never more shall be happy with that soul which animated ours, that loving heart that attracted our hearts, that sublime mind whose strength and meekness consoled us in our misfortunes and raised us above ourselves! I was indebted to her for all, virtue, temper, happiness; I am no longer any thing. I was a man, now my heart is become insensible; I have lost all, even to my good opinion of myself: involved in the shades of night, I can only see the horrors of the present moment; the past is a dream, and the future a gulph of bitterness in which I am immersed.

“ Oh, Wolmar! thy letter in one instant has filled my heart with all a heart can suffer. I experienced but one shock; but what a cruel one! my heart is pierced with it, and almost annihilated. I conceive the horror of my loss in its full extent, but I have not strength to feel my sorrow. It is you, unfortunate Wolmar, it is you who drink up the very dregs of this bitter cup. You received her last breath; you fulfilled the dearest and most sorrowful duties; you died a thousand deaths; you live! why did I not experience those desirable torments! I should be no more, or I should be consoled.

“ Oh,

“ Oh, Julia, I cannot reconcile myself to the idea of thy death. Ah! since you was to have died, why did I not see thee expiring? My lips would have pressed thy trembling hands; my cares would have retarded the fatal stroke. I would have collected thy tears, thy sighs, thy woes; and I would have sacrificed to thee my sorrows; I would have seen thy last brilliant glance; I would have carried thy soul away, and my voice should have consoled thy worthy friend. Now more to be pitied than she, I can neither give nor receive consolation; nothing can give me the fortitude necessary to fulfil thy last will; I die without being any way useful to thee; I expire without having done any thing for thee. Wolmar, thou sublime man, thou who madest me virtuous by thy noble confidence, thou possessedst the treasure to which my existence was attached, and I loved thee! I lived near Julia and was happy! If thou wast her husband, I was more, I was her chaste lover; thy generosity made my happiness; it was, perhaps, superior to thine. Oh, dear Wolmar! I reserved this acknowledgement for thy reward.

“ But that is trifling:—how shall I return what I owe thee?—I have lost all, and have an immense debt to discharge; I cannot support life, and you command me to live.—Cruel man, what a sacrifice do you require! Do not be a tyrant, do not abuse the right you have over me.—Must I return to life? live over again, to sigh and detest the light?—No—but you will have it so,—is that enough?

enough? Clara joins her voice with thine; Clara, who was Julia's friend, Clara, whom I loved, (since there is but one word to express such different affections) but whom I loved as being a part of Julia, whom I love still as being her precious remains, Clara!—Oh, Wolmar, even her voice is ineffectual.

“Adieu; detain me no longer. I will descend to the silent grave: that is my only asylum. Do not accuse me of ingratitude; think on my sorrows, and then pronounce. Thou wouldst only have with thee a gloomy man, whose heart is dead and out of his mind. Let me die in peace.

“Thou expectest me, Oh, divine Julia! suffer cold death to unite me to thee. After a life mingled with such emotions, I shall quietly sleep a sound sleep near her who has rent my heart in a thousand places, near her who has intoxicated it with a thousand delights. Alas! the grief that consumed me during a tempestuous life; the moment I lost thee, when I saw thee in the arms of another; that moment was a hundred times less dreadful than the gloomy rest, the horrible calm than accompanies me. Happy the moment when a perfect insensibility shall terminate all my pains.

“I descend into thy tomb, Oh Julia!—What holy awe penetrates me? Who stops me? I dare not proceed in this dreadful sanctuary.—I remember Julia was a mother! she arises splendidly from her grave.—Oh, Julia,
I prof-

I prostrate myself at thy feet; I dare not raise my timid eyes to thee.

“What do I see! awful and tender mother! thou presentest thy children to me, thou bathest them with thy tears, thou placest them in my arms; thy mild and sublime voice calls to me in a reproaching tone, *My dear friend, fulfil thy duty.*—Yes, I will fulfil it; I will reverence thy choice and thy confidence—thy children were dearer to thee than thyself.—I loved them as I loved thee; thou hast lost thy life for one of them!—Come, dear cruel child, to my arms; every instant thou wilt rend my heart;—no matter, give me back to sensibility by the sentiment of grief. I am overcome; I must live miserable.

“Yes, Julia, thou wilt have it so, and I obey thee, even whilst I ardently wish to rejoin thee. Thou hast not disappeared; thou commandest, and I will obey thy laws. Thou art still living, thou art ever present to me, I can always love thee with that pure flame with which I burned for thee; I still can please thee? and if even thou wert nothing, I would adore thy shade.

“Come, beloved children, pure blood of Julia, our souls are congenial, you belong to me. Julia’s virtues shall be our model; from Heaven she will watch over us, and the rectitude of our actions will be the most worthy homage we can offer her. Let us never forget her, beloved children! When I press you to my arms, I will recal Julia to
my

my mind : I will have no other reward for my toils.

Oh, my dear Wolmar ! I fly to thee. Julia has spoken. I consent to bear the burden of this life : I devote my days to thee and thy children ; happy to serve them ! Dear Wolmar, let us acknowledge a Supreme Being, who rules all ; he has his views ; let us submit to his terrible, but hidden, decrees. The day will come that will enlighten what perplexes us. Let us acknowledge a God-head. Alas ! if blind Fate governed the world, should we have a right to weep, to be moved to pity, and to hope ?”

L E T T E R

From Ovid in Exile to a Friend.

“ **Y**OU wish me to endeavour to sooth my melancholy days with the comforts of study ; you advise me not to let my talents be lost in inactivity. I approve your advice, my friend ; but the task is not so easy. Poetry requires sprightliness. The mind must be at peace for productions. I am far from enjoying it. For ever tost about in storms, there is no lot so sorrowful as mine. Do you require Priam should be playful on his children’s tomb, and that Niobe, deprived of her’s, should lead off a dance of joy ? Bannished and alone in the deserts of Scythia, should

should I write verses or rather shed tears? If you were to endue me with a heart as hard as Socrates's accusers, all my constancy would sink under the weight of my misfortunes. My calamities surpass human fortitude. The old man, who was reputed wise by the voice of Apollo, would not have had resolution to write if he had experienced my misfortunes. I must have forgot my country; I must have even forgot you, my friends, and all sensibility. Moreover, my fears would never leave me in such a state of tranquillity as to collect my thoughts. — A host of enemies surround my residence, and incessantly besiege me; to which I must add, that age has weakened my genius, and long inaction wasted my strength. Vainly a field is naturally fertile; if the plough does not sometimes renew it, it will produce nothing but weeds and brambles. The courser that has long been idle, will be less active for the race, and will see his competitors get before him. The ship that lies long in harbour, goes to decay and falls to pieces;—so with me, I despair of becoming what I have been, and recovering my feeble talents. I have lost my strength; long sufferings destroy genius. Often, however, as to-day, I endeavour to bend words to the measure of verse; yet I have not composed any other poems but those thou seest. They partake of the misfortunes of their author and the place where he is banished. I know glory gives vigour to genius, and the love of fame fertilises it. There was a time when I myself was attracted
 by

by the splendor of a name; now I am too unhappy to think of glory; and wish, if possible, to be unknown to the whole world. You will tell me, perhaps, my first verses were successful, and I ought to pursue my success? Pardon me, ye Muses! but ye are the first cause of my exile. The inventor of the brazen bull was the first who made the painful trial, and I also am punished for my talents. Should I then have any thing to do with verses? When one has been shipwrecked, is it not natural to dread the seas! and if even, always allured by inclination, I should abandon myself to a talent that has been so fatal to me, am I in a place fit to inspire me? I have not a single book; I cannot make myself understood by any one, and no one cares to listen to me. All is barbarism, the country and the language. Nothing proceeds from the mouths of the Getæ but savage and frightful sounds, like the howlings of ferocious animals; I begin even to think I have forgot the Roman language.

I have learned to articulate some Getic and Sarmatian words; and I will honestly confess, my Muse cannot help sketching some verses. I write, and when the work is finished, I throw it into the fire. The fruits of my labour are transformed into ashes. Wishing to decline versification, and not being able to refrain, I follow my propensity, and abandon the work to the flames. It is only by chance or by accident these scraps come to your hands. Ah! would to Heaven the fire had

had destroyed, as well as the work, the talent which has caused my loss and sufferings.

W R I T I N G.

OH, powerful Writing! thou dost not yet sufficiently attract our admiration. By what mechanism do words, traced on paper, and whose influence, at the first glance, seems so trifling, make such deep, such durable impressions? The ideas of reality are transitory, but the description, by the lively touches it receives from words, affects more. This power of rapidly combining ideas with the assistance of characters, has really something astonishing and supernatural; objects which never were within the comprehension of the senses, become sensible, and so far engage us, as to be really troublesome and dreadful. Words strike the imagination more forcibly than even the thing itself.

It is surely difficult to conceive how words, the same as the tone of voice, put on the tone of tenderness, anger, fear, toleration, contempt, pride, disdain; how a dead, inanimate character becomes an eloquent, expressive language, which causes tears to flow, which animates, which affects, and kills.

By a quick and rapid sympathy, we seize the fire kindled in another's imagination.—Demosthenes inflamed his republic, and hurried her, contrary to her true interest, into a fatal war. Perhaps also, words, in their primitive
origin,

origin, and when they had not received all the particular acceptations of a civilised society, had more energy and power; such words described plainly, and those who heard them, had no idea of submitting them to be analysed by a dull critic.

The still barbarous nations have certainly a more nervous precision, a more steady heat; they are nearer nature. Words in the infancy of a language have more brevity, and express more things at once; but now we confound, lengthen, *ad libitum*. When a people are civilised, words take rank as men; some are for the nobility, others for the vulgar; and this inequality proceeds, as the other, from caprice, chance, and the strange course of events.

It would be curious enough to remount to the primitive language of every nation, to find the vocabulary of each people the production of their own soil; to observe the most usual expressions of such nations applicable to philosophical objects; to find out the emigrations of words which have travelled with their conquerors; to catch an idiom, whether strong or weak, which has arose in a country where the blustering phænomena of nature exhibit themselves, or the smiling plains where they repose; in effect, to find again the sound, the accent, the expression, which denotes every particular object, we should then see what abstruse ideas have perverted; we then should see the primitive connections which governed sensible Beings and ourselves.

The

The learned Count de Gebelin says, *Ask what was the origin of speech, and it is asking, when man began to hear, to see, to walk.* The Abbé de Courdillac, in his *Essay on the origin of Human Knowledge*, has observed, after the Sacred writings, that, coming from the hand of God, Adam and Eve were, by an extraordinary assistance, endued with reflection, and a communication of thought: but afterwards, writing as a philosopher, he seeks to find how it could happen by natural means; then we evidently see that speech was acquired, and not given to man, as the Count de Gebelin assures us, without any proof.

What an incredible difference between the style of two men, born the same year, inhabitants of the same town, speaking the same tongue, viewing the same objects! How can one avoid seeing the style is the stamp of the mind, and that it cannot be learned, nor can be imitated? I open the works of ****; they are black characters, traced on white paper. I read, I see tragedies in hemistich and in rhyme; orations, dissertations, prose, great and short verses, &c. In spite of me, my mind is absent, wandering; I forget I am reading; a revery overpowers me; I gape, and throw aside the super-excellent man of taste. I take up a volume of Rousseau's new *Heloïsa*, it is still black on paper; but suddenly my attention is engaged; I am animated, I grow warm, I am inflamed, I am agitated with a thousand different sensations; I fancy myself in the groves of Clarens; I see, I hear the actors;

actors; I read over one volume; and when I am told there are six, my heart beats with joy and satisfaction, and I would wish to prolong for ever such charming reading.

W R I T E R S.

EVERY writer is particularly bound in a most solemn manner, and before every other obligation, to do justice. The infringement of justice is an injury done to human nature; for this reason, every author, worthy of the name, is sensibly affected with any wrong done to his equal: he is the avenger of the public cause; and the oppression that falls on his neighbour ought to become personally his; he cannot excuse himself from opposing it.

Whilst envy, wickedness, ignorance, attack writers, they despise their efforts, which must be vain, because nothing can counterbalance universal fame: the superiority of their minds point out to them the approbation of sensible men now existing and to be born; and the reward they expect for their labours is in the improvement of projects for the public good.

Can we, then, too much revere those superior men who enlarge our understanding, who establish the moral code of nations, and the civil virtues of individuals? A poem, a drama, a romance, which draws virtue in lively colours, models the reader insensibly
on

on the virtuous characters he represents; they interest him, and the author inculcates the moral, without speaking of it; by a skilful hidden operation, he exhibits certain qualities of the mind covered with an imagery that makes us adopt them. He compels us to love those generous actions; and the man who spurns at reflection, whose mind is soured with dogmatical lessons, is charmed with the natural pencil which improves to the best advantage the sensibility of the human heart, to instruct it in what stern personal interest commonly repels.

We must carefully examine our mind, which is the sanctuary where reside our thoughts and ideas. Science is only useful to conduct us to morality, which is necessary for us, to morality, which teaches us to be mild, patient, temperate, and which speaking of our equals, instructs us in our duty to them. A philosopher, who meditates alone, who scrutinises different objects, and examines them calmly with all their connections, is likely to be nearer the truth, than an assembly of men who discuss, deliberate, and argue.

A rich or happy man would not perhaps do well to commence writer, not only because he would risk his repose and peaceable enjoyments,* but perhaps because he would not be sufficiently exasperated against the wicked,

* When a man devotes himself to the painful office of a writer, he must, first of all, found the fortitude of his mind; he must be confident he is able to support all incidental attacks with resolution.

that

that is to say, the disturbers of public order ; he would be in a situation too apt to tolerate many abuses that would affect him but slightly, intrenched, as one may say, in the circle of his opulence ; in a word, he would find himself too much disposed to pardon several, and varnish over by reasoning many political vices of our modern governments.

How could he find out a remedy to the evils with which we are burdened, when he would be at such a distance from the suffering class ? A writer must have the misfortune to be discontented with every thing that is done wrong in his country, that he may write in a manly style to rouse attention ; his style must be emphatic, as it is to strike the ears of the obdurate and haughty. Orator of the greater number, that is to say, the crowd of unfortunate Beings, Melancholy, the mother of Pity, must preside over his gloomy pen to make it the more affecting.

Fontenelle has said of himself, that he never by any chance had thrown the least ridicule on the smallest virtue. That is truly respectable ; but he had only fulfilled half the task of a man of letters. It is more and more obligatory to redouble our exertions against every thing that debases humanity ; to brand all despotism ; incessantly to attack tyranny under its various forms ; to devote one's self for the common cause ; to possess that abstruse sentiment which so rapidly extends ; to visit the meanest citizen ; and, in fine, to become his advocate in the face of pride and power.

Who

Who must ward the blows intended against the multitude, but the eloquent voice of the just and sensible man! Who will attack blind and insolent power with reproaches, cries, and sighs, if it is not the writer! He must borrow the keen and plaintive tone of the oppressed, he must make the distant and formidable thunder of posterity roll over the oppressor's head, and he should know, notwithstanding the audaciousness some politicians have affected, there are few public men who do not dread the judgement of the public.— This courage will be called enthusiasm; but is not enthusiasm to talents the same as colouring to a picture? Without it, there is no sacrifice offered to truth; no inspiration, none of those permanent and victorious enticements that impel the writer to compose those works which are lasting monuments for future ages.

Happy then, the man who knows the enthusiasm of his art! who, while error has its heroes and martyrs, is inflamed for truth, and enjoys, in the contemplation of her chaste attractions, the sacrifices he has made to her! Truth has lovers who prefer her to all! Hear an Englishman talk of liberty: in a manly tone he will tell you he would purchase it at the expence of his life. Read Fenelon, when he talks of virtue; how he insinuates it into our souls! The author who abandons himself to the impulse of his soul, has an idiom which resounds, not to the ear, but the mind of the reader, and that is eloquence.

If a man were passionately fond of a conqueror, idolized him, and imagined it to be a glorious action to expire under his command, ah! let us forgive the generous mind, greedy of useful knowledge;—the transports it enjoys while it penetrates the sanctuary where truth is hidden, and lifts the veil that covers her.

F A B L E I.

The DYING FATHER and his TWO SONS.

A WORTHY father, and a man of sense,
 Drew near that hour the Fates for all dispense;
 Two children's moans around his couch he heard,
 And both he view'd with tenderest regard.
 Mean while a project had possess'd his head:
 Apart he call'd the younger to his bed:
 "My child, here take this private key," he said,
 "In yonder closet a rich purse is laid;
 There thou wilt find a plenteous store of coin;
 Thou hast good sense—that I for thee design."
 The son, surpris'd, cry'd, "What you would bestow
 Conscience forbids—to wrong a brother so."
 "Take it, without more words," the sire replied,
 "I know how Fate will on his lot decide;
 Go! 'tis not him I fear to suffer need;
 He is a *blockhead*, and will sure succeed."

[This Fable is imitated from the German.]

F A B L E II.

The FARTHING and the GUINEA.

A FARTHING, (since it must be called by name)
 A glitt'ring Guinea of great shew and fame,

Both

Both fallen from one pocket, were espy'd
 Upon the grass, while lying side by side :
 "What dost thou near me ?" straight the Guinea said,
 In a proud tone that arrogance display'd ;
 "Hast thou been known in circles where I shine ?
 By greatness scorn'd, the beggar's lot is thine !"
 The humble Coin reply'd, "I'm small, you see,
 But the unhappy still draw good from me ;
 And oft' those humbler sort whom you contemn,
 Change me for that which makes a part of them ;
 To horrid treason I'm not privy made,
 Nor lend to crimes nor fordid actions aid ;
 And rather would my company impart
 To rags, than the void head, or treach'rous heart.
 At gaming-tables ne'er do I appear,
 To countenance the foolish av'rice there ;
 But in the presence oft' of God I dwell ;
 In the poor's box at church I find a cell.
 Besides, to bear the impresson is my fate,
 That makes us both so useful to the State."
 A passenger prevented the reply :
 He took the gold so brilliant in his eye,
 Nor did he leave the farthing on the ground ;
 What did he ! Shall I tell the fate each found ?
 The former on a courtesan he spent,
 The latter to relieve the needy went.

F A B L E III.

The CUCKOO and the SWALLOW.

ONCE a young Cuckoo met a Swallow, come
 From distant lands, where he was wont to roam ;
 "So, you continual traveller, you're here,
 (He cries) pray with some news now feast my ear,
 Tidings on which I may for truth depend,
 For, pleasing all, I've ev'ry where some friend.
 You'll answer me, dear neighbour, where you've been,
 As various countries you no doubt have seen ;
 How think they in the other hemisphere,
 Discourse they of the winged warblers there ?
 Is Philomel's sweet voice as potent found,
 And in Japan as much as here renown'd ?

Oh, I can ne'er imagine such a thing."
 "Excuse me—just as sweetly does she sing;
 The chearful harbinger of spring she proves,
 The lovely pride of all the verdant groves,
 The winged songstrefs, whose melodious strain
 Charms most where deep embow'ring shades obtain." —
 "And the Tom-tit?" — "He has his merit due;
 That black neck, and his shape so pretty too,
 Have gain'd him friends just to his heart's desire,
 While his fine plumage numbers will admire." —
 "But what say they of ME?" — "My friend, 'tis true
 They never spoke one syllable of YOU."
 "Infensate! They would drive me to despair.
 But *my own name* to sound shall be my care."

Thus the conceited fop his *vengeance* takes,
 While of *himself* his fullsome tale he makes.

F A B L E IV.

The MAN and the THORN.

BENEATH a thorn of lofty height,
 A man lay for a cat in wait,
 And thus concealed, he sought to gain,
 Her ermine robe; but fought in vain,
 She was just caught; but ruin near,
 Strengthen'd her efforts to get clear.
 Puffs 't' d; the man in anger stood,
 His hand was cover'd o'er with blood,
 Drawn by the many-pointed thorn:
 Now reason by his rage o'erborne,
 He vows to root up and destroy
 The plant that work'd him such annoy.
 But Lutiness calls—to the next day
 Vengeance deferr'd, he goes away;
 Yet in his hand the hedging bill
 Recalls th' offence to mem'ry still.
 At length, upon a certain morn,
 He hastes in fury to the thorn.
 Oh, Heav'ns! it flow'rs! with what surprise
 He finds the grateful odours rise;

Here

Ambrosial scents, which as they bloom,
 Gives love the tribute of perfume.
 Here he surveys the beauteous rose,
 Which with unrival'd beauty blows ;
 Festoons of flow'rs their sweets dispense,
 A balm reviving to the sense.
 While he pays homage to their birth,
 His bill falls useless to the earth :
 The thorn, so hated and despis'd,
 His garden's choicest plant is priz'd.

For slight offence we should not bear
 Hatred, nor be in wrath severe ;
 In little time it will be found
 Reflection's strength will cure the wound :
 Forget the injury, and then
 Your wonted peace revives again,

F A B L E V.

The A P E and the O Y S T E R.

A Gascoon's Ape, in manners like himself,
 Viewing an Oyster, cry'd, " Poor worthless elf,
 Canst tell me by what means 'tis I must see
 Of what vile species Heav'n created thee :
 Think'st thou, or art possess'd of feeling, friend ?
 I deem that thou to neither canst pretend.
 Or where could Leibnitz, in his wisdom, place
 A stupid creature of thy doubtful race.
 But 'twixt instinct and reason I remain
 A link that joins the universal chain."
 Fir'd with the boasting of the ape gascoon,
 The Oyster answer'd thus, " Hold, vile buffoon !
 Or puff'd up so, repair to Nicolet,
 To fools thy machine-dignity repeat ;
 While, though the object of a boaster's scorn,
 Serene upon the wings of genius borne,
 To regions of philosophy I soar.
 Of Epimenides some deem'd of yore
 (Fools !) that completely forty years he slept :—
 Abderus thought himself he wisely kept

From use of mortal eyes, and chose to doom
 Himself to live within a silent tomb. [wel,
 The mind works most where sense the least intrudes : Fare-
 To contemplate, I'll shut me in my shell."

On the SHORTNESS of LIFE.

WHY must our lives be of so short duration? why don't we live two or three thousand years? this is what we daily hear.

Almost all mankind complain of the shortness of life. If it was in their option to extend their length of days as far as they would wish, those who would resolve on death at the end of two or three thousand years, would be more scarce than the suicides of our days.

Senseless men! have you well thought on the result of so long a life? If God were to grant your inconsiderate wishes, it would be necessary he should enlarge the globe, or deprive us of the power of re-production. But our globe is not capable of being enlarged, without overthrowing our planetary system, and producing its consequent ruin.

The bodies heaped on each other, in broad and deep holes, after a battle, convey but a faint idea of the confusion we should be in on this sorrowful planet, if no one was to die for fifteen hundred years only, or that the common life of man was to be of that number of years, and that he had the power of generation during seven-eighths of that long life, as is commonly seen in the present system. This is evident from the following calculation.

The

The circumference of one of the grand circles of our sphere being 7,200 marine leagues of 2,850 fathoms, and of 20 to the degree, its diameter will be $2,291\frac{5}{7}$ leagues; its surface $16,501,183\frac{7}{7}$ leagues, which being reduced into square feet, gives $4,825,110,925,148,450$. If we only deduct one half, supposed to be occupied by the sea, the lakes, and rivers, there will remain $2,412,555,462,574,225$.

Now, let us suppose this half to be inhabited by a thousand millions of men; if this number was only to increase yearly only one hundredth, it would be so great at the end of 1,476, that it would, within a trifle, fill the whole habitable surface of the earth, giving each man the space of a square foot; for $\frac{1}{100}$ elevated to its 1476th power, and multiplied by 1,000,000,000, produces the number $2,389,936,508,196,722$. If we add to this number the product of one year more, it will then give $2,413,835,873,278,689$, which will exceed that of the square feet the habitable part of our globe contains.

If instead of the hundredth, we suppose the number of men to increase a five-and-twentieth, which would not be exorbitant in a supposition of so long a life, were it even a great deal shorter, at the end of 374 years, this thousand millions of men would amount to $2,346,681,621,621,621$, a number almost equal to that of square feet contained in the habitable part of the earth. If we add one year more of such an increase, we then shall

have 2,440,548,886,486,485, a greater number than that of square feet the water leaves uncovered on the surface of the earth.

This number, great as it is, is nothing in comparison of that which would be produced by such an increase continued for 1500 years: imagination starts at it. Then would mankind be heaped on each other, were they no bigger than lemons. Here is the number calculated according to the logarithms of eight decimals; 35,481,257,359,813,084,135,514,018,691,588,785, a number above two hundred times greater than that of 162,628,999,125,937,863,623,442,432,000,000, which gives the cubical points of matter contained on the entire mass of our globe. It must be observed a cubic inch contains 2,985,984 of those points.

What must we conclude from thence? that every thing is wisely arranged; that all things, even those we dread so much, as death for example, are ordained for our good; that the Almighty, to leave us more at liberty, and give us elbow-room, has willed there should be diseases, physicians, military men, executioners, and a thousand other destructive methods, of which we are so silly as to complain, without reflecting that all this is necessary to prune the great tree of human nature, to give it air, and to husband its sap by retrenching its superfluous branches, which would soon cause it to perish without this precaution.

(This article is of M. L'Abbé Pasquet.)

A B D I C A T I O N.

HAS Supreme Greatness secret attractions we are unacquainted with? Every one enjoys it in idea, and grieves at not being seated on a throne. Is it an illusion of the mind? Is there any real enjoyment attached to the exercise of royalty? I see monarchs who cannot rest on the throne, nor can descend from it; unhappy in governing, and oftener unhappy to find themselves too well obeyed, and always dreading not to be enough so. What is there, then, so sweet in a crown? Why does a private life seem so dreadful to one who has experienced royalty?

The pleasure of commanding and directing vast operations, must give the mind a certain elevation, and flatter it in its utmost extent.— To which we may add, a king knows all he wants to know, he may gratify his inexhaustible curiosity, that all arts are at his command, that he gives to justice a vigour which renders it the image of eternal justice. How glorious are these prerogatives! How great is such a man among his fellow creatures! Other men can only offer impotent wishes for the public good; but the monarch, when he wills, destroys abuses from one end of his kingdom to the other, and tears them up by the roots.

From hence, then, I conceive those political duties which embrace great objects, al-

ways interesting, fill the soul, nourish it, habituate it to profound and majestic points of view, and, consequently, fill it with a delight unknown to us, who are without power.

Charles the Vth having abdicated the crown with every necessary formality, is astonished and afflicted at his arrival at Burgos, no longer seeing the numerous and officious court that surrounded him while he swayed the sceptre. The monarch knew little of mankind and his rank; he, perhaps, had persuaded himself, all those honours were addressed as much to the person as to the prince.

The throne was insupportable to Charles the Vth, to Christina, to Philip the Vth, to Victor Amadeus; they wished to descend from it, and they repented they could be neither kings nor subjects.

What condition of human life would a man then wish to personate unto the end of his life? The warrior, the magistrate, the trader, the writer, even deviate from their course to seek repose; but if nature condemned a prince to live an hundred years or more, he must then reign at the age of one hundred and ten over a sixth generation. — Every other man can change his condition, his cares, and occupations, kings alone are condemned to remain tied down to the uniform circle of homage and respect.

To be insuperably fixed to one central point, and not be able to quit one's station, seems to me one of the greatest inconveniencies
of

of royalty. If a crowd of enjoyments belong to kings, how many others are forbidden them! There must be a strong head to support this elevation, the work of Policy and not of Nature, to an advanced age.

But if the toils of kings are great, if they are perpetually tied down to the course of public events, what delights may not their labours give them in return! Important occupations become pleasures to minds that have the sentiment of order and harmony.

When one thinks he can diffuse comfort for the whole life of a man, a family, a people; that each stroke of his pen may be an act of universal benevolence, more particularly in this age, when the authority of sovereigns is strengthened, when their persons are secure, and they are, without opposition, depositaries of the public power; then, it must be confessed, kings taste the most delicious enjoyments of a reasonable Being. The power of curbing the wicked and relieving the weak, to soften a part of the evils Nature imposes, and then to smile on their work, has a something with it that inspires a religious respect. What other employment offers, at once, such utility and such recompence?

Monarchs, assisted by philosophy, can now be gods amongst mortals; and we weak individuals, deprived of strength and power, scarcely seem to be ranked among men.

It was Socrates who first said, that philosophy should rule kings; I must still revert to that man; he has explained the political ænigma.

Whilst philosophers are not kings, or kings are not philosophers; whilst philosophy and the sceptre, instead of acting in concert, are separated from each other, public happiness can never exist.

CONVERSATION.

SOME men, in conversation, are animated, and display the happiest thoughts; thoughts which are sometimes more delicate and applicable to circumstances and events than those we see in print. The incident, the *a propos* stamp expression, and charms us with its conciseness and originality. Should they write, they are absolutely deficient in art and method, and they prove, to the surprise of those who know them, that they only know how to speak. On the other hand, such an author is dry, heavy, or at a loss in conversation. Such was Corneille, such was Richardson, such was La Fontaine; and it has been said of more than one man of genius, after he has been heard:—What, is that he?

Talents are divided; they are very rarely united in the same degree. To write and to speak are two distinct endowments, and this double advantage may very possibly not belong to the same man.

Authors,

Authors, whose works are read and esteemed, are certainly men of wit; but is it so clearly demonstrated, they are those who are possessed of the most spirit and eloquence? Sometimes we meet those unexpected characters who astonish us, characters who surprise us the more as they are very wide of the current ideas; they seem as if they belonged to another world; their manner of viewing objects, their diction have no resemblance to what we know; it is not the style of literary men, it is their own; it moves us, it strikes us, it makes us think; we ask ourselves, how we come to be so much agitated by the conversation of so wild and uncultivated a man; he neither adopts the words nor usual turns of phrase. His idiom is novel, and yet it affects us.

Tyrannised over by custom, we return the day after to our accustomed habit, to the factitious taste, to the shreds of fashion, to the *routine*, or else our favourite author, whom we have once praised, and will ever praise, not to appear inconsistent.

We credit more the books than the sentiment of our admiration: we know not how to preserve, to ripen, to propagate it; we forget the most forcible, the newest, the truest ideas, because we have not the talent of grasping them, and treasuring them up, as Montaigne says. "Such a one is a wonder," says Montaigne again, "in whom his wife or valet never observed any thing remarkable. None
but

but the thinking person can distinguish the great from the vulgar man."

To illustrate this reflection, a man of wit is always attended to, whilst the man of genius dies unnoticed. A language is sometimes formed unintelligible to those who know not how to study it; two or three men then take in his ideas, and the rest despise what they are incapable of comprehending.

I believe there are some people of so lively and deep an understanding, that, disgusted with not being able to make themselves understood, they converse with themselves, until they find the man with whom they can communicate.

The conversation of a man of learning is better than a book, because a book can never answer one objection.

It is an easy matter to discover a writer who has the style of conversation from the retired man who is only acquainted with calm and solitary reading. One improves much better in a free and open conversation.

Party spirit has no longer admittance in disputation. One must know how to say,
I was in an error.

M I L T O N.

MILTON has depicted an ideal world. He seems to say to you, "Will you come with me and see the world I have created?"
If

If you consent, you must give yourself up to me, and you shall see the most wonderful of sights; but if you put on the armour of cold reason against my poetry, do not place yourself in the chariot which is to transport you into an unknown region; stay where you are.

LACONIC STYLE.

PHILIP King of Macedon wrote to the Lacedemonians, that if he once entered Lacedemonia he would ravage their country. The Lacedemonians, in reply to this letter, wrote only this word, *If*.

THE TRAGEDY OF BRUTUS.

I AM just returned from the representation of Voltaire's Brutus. In this piece one is interested for Brutus's son; but this son meditated a parricide, by endeavouring to replace Tarquin on the throne; which was to be done by destroying the two consuls. Why, then, does M. De Voltaire interest us for two unnatural sons, two bad citizens, who preferred a tyrant to liberty?

BATTLES.

B A T T L E S.

I HAVE never been in a battle; but after reading history attentively, in my closet I see the campaigns of the most famous generals. I read the particulars of actions, and I draw a secret induction of the frequent pannics, where often they fly on both sides.

When a man perceives death distinctly, he then ceases to be a soldier; he must be absent, ranked, encouraged, surrounded, drawn on, carried away, by example.

All officers agree, that in the heat of action there is no thought of death. In vain does it fly from rank to rank, they see without seeing; the whole mind is employed on a foreign object; a hare that should run through the ranks would make ten thousand men laugh while exposed to the fire of cannon.

But the moment one voice is raised and cries out, *we are undone, we are cut off, we are betrayed*, then, in spite of discipline, the bravery of commanders, and the presence of Kings, they all disband in an instant; the soldier's eye is fixed on the spectre death; and those men, whose trade is to bid it defiance, cannot support a distinct view of it; they fly shamefully. To make them conquer, they must be amused, and the end they are to obtain concealed from them.

Every one knows the plain speech of the Mufti, who, seeing the Ottoman troops
beaten

beaten and running away, uttered those fine words : *Since the soldiers of the sublime Sultan will fight no longer, peace must be made !*

Whoever is acquainted with the genius and springs of antient government, ought to be much surpris'd when he sees in our modern governments forced recruits. They think they make a man a soldier by putting a firelock on his shoulder ; yet, perhaps, without the flame of patriotis'm, and the opinion of a just war, the prince may have armies but not warriors. Such troops will be devoid of spirit, of spring to their actions, and will be mere machines.

But the soldiers of a free people, who engage in war voluntarily, that never fly from their colours, are those that decide victories. A man must love his country to spill his blood for it ; he must feel the advantages of the government under which he lives, to conquer it.

What impelled the Antients to conquest ? A visible national interest. Those heroes sprung forward in battle, despising death, having nothing but honour in view ; the wounded soldier comforted the dying one ; they embraced each other ; they mutually suck'd their wounds. Fathers did not lament the loss of their children ; even mothers rejoic'd to have been the happy means of giving soldiers to their country.

Great deeds were formerly accomplished with handfuls of men ; now innumerable armies melt away, perish, are dispers'd, because that ardent patriotis'm which alone works

works prodigies is wanting. Our tactics, our generals, our discipline, form a kind of mass of our armies, which, like a rock, remains immovable after it is launched.

The contentions of Europeans have made no alteration in the affairs of Europe; not one king, a captive, or dethroned; no kingdom subverted, or overleaping its boundaries; none of that shaking of thrones, whose wonderful crash would rouse and astonish us. The uniformity of battles gives a kind of monotony to our gazettes; nothing changed but the names. Peace or war, every thing has much the same appearance; states preserve their situation after those terrible and sanguinary struggles; why, then, so many battles, since there are no longer revolutions.

It will be said, let me ruin my neighbour, provided I have a crown piece left more than he, I shall think myself conqueror.—What a glorious victory! It is as if one was to strip a man stark naked at the expence of every thing but the shirt to one's back, only to have the pleasure of seeing him in that distress.

When shall we see in our gazettes new events capable to engage our curiosity? With what rapture should I learn the discovery of some new polished nation concealed in North America, which could suddenly astonish us with the discovery of some new art of their own invention!

What a surprize for us Europeans, who think ourselves the most forward in arts and sciences, to find out a cultivated nation who
should

should surpass us in understanding and happiness, a nation formed to make us suddenly alter to the most forcible ideas imprinted in our minds. The South-Sea voyages have already given our moralists room for reflection. How many subjects of comparison! What a fund of instruction and knowledge!

The history of those unconnected people would be more proper for observation than that of all antient and modern nations. Totally separated from the rest of the world, every thing there would strike us. But it is time alone that realises conjectures, and leads to transcendent discoveries.

ON DUELLING.

IT is true the antients were accustomed to duelling. What is a duel in our ideas? I think it must be defined, a premeditated combat between fellow citizens, or even among strangers, not in a state of warfare. Single combats between warriors of different nations, such as David and Goliath, Hector and Achilles, Æneas and Turnus, the Horatii and Curiatii, &c. are not properly duels. Here I see men of public character, approved by their own nation, in whom the interest of the people they represented is confided.

To

To find an example of a duel between fellow citizens, we must go back almost to fabulous times, to the duel of Hecacles and Polynices, which has not an historical foundation. The heroes of the Iliad, even those of the same time, abuse each other, but do not fight. Ajax did not cherish the design of attacking Ulysses until he was mad.

Perhaps it will not be prejudicial to morality to have it well established, that in the truly heroic times the rage of duelling was unknown.

It is a modern frenzy, grounded on a wretched point of honour, that no one has ever yet been able to explain or define, which changes a man to a brutal egotist, and makes him arrogantly assume reason and the majesty of law.

If it is to revenge an affront, what injury can authorise the effusion of blood, and where is the real injury the laws do not provide for? As to those chimerical insults, so far distant from true honour, madness only can put life and a frivolous opinion in the same scale.

But the struggle may be a rivalry which jealousy raises between two men enamoured with the same beauty; in that case we must refer to the decision which natural reason dictates to *Harlequin Savage*. The more one reflects, the more we find it answers all. The deepest philosopher could not have said more.

ELEMENTARY BOOKS.

THE solid advantages of each science are in their elements, most commonly simple and easy. Would you wish to go farther? Their utility decreases as soon as curiosity interferes.

Masters should be established every where to teach reading, writing, cyphering; this is all that is necessary to the inferior ranks of mankind.

Every man should know how to write, read, and cast accounts, to be able to have a correspondence with the age; if he knows not how to read, he will be a weak subject for the present generation; he will become a wicked and a dangerous one.

All elementary books are useful, and it is not always an easy matter to delineate clear notions within the reach of common understandings. In academies nothing is spoken of but wit, genius, imagination; and good sense, man's true prerogative, which should be the better soul of all his actions, has not a word said about it; and yet it is more scarce than wit.

It is good sense has made the useful books, on the daily practice of arts and trades, on manufactures, on grammar, geography, physic, on what is necessary for every one to know. Wit might have destroyed a crowd of popular works, by endeavouring to do better.

Good

Good sense, as with a blind man's staff, proceeds step by step: but each step is secure. Good sense waits until experience has generalised and confirmed the rule; it only proposes things practicable; it stops at the means universally adopted; rendering it easy, with the tongue or the pen, to bring men and arts to perfection; it prescribes us to cure immediately what is curable, to apply a speedy remedy instead of creating a remote speculation; it moves more slow, it improves rather than invents.

Genius, carried away by its natural vivacity, in spreading around its brightness, envelopes itself in smoke. It is after the appearance of the man of Genius that the proper understanding becomes necessary to rectify the errors which have a sort of splendour when blended in a vast system.

We cannot too often repeat ancient truths, in order to bind them with the new ones; an idea totally new would, undoubtedly, be absolutely unintelligible to mankind; what should we know without elementary books, which have opened the door to science for us? Now we despise the key, and yet the key is all.

When our descendants shall one day rebuild the edifice of human knowledge, a philosophy unknown to us, a new policy, a moral incorporated with that policy, will have destroyed those books where we think to find transcendent truths; there will remain, perhaps, of so many volumes thrown aside, only those elementary books, which, depending on
their

their solid basis, will be considered as the supporters of the magnificent columns of the reconstructed temple.

It is said, that among the Chinese, books replete with moral, political, oeconomical maxims, are in every one's hands, and contribute as much as the laws to the tranquillity of the State.

It were to be wished there were such books in France for the people; the one is too ingenious, the other too academic; this is not enough refined, that other shockingly prolix.

Our men of fine talents have not yet found the method to make a good *elementary book*; they have not even thought of it. Who would venture to delineate a course of morality, united with sentiment, for a people who do not even deserve the contempt of a philosopher? But why should not one have the laudable ambition of being at least read and understood by the greater number, like the orators and philosophers of old? Would not their applauses be as estimable as those of an academic hall, by a few persons prepossessed to admiration by the countenances and the ton of the assembly?

Would the secret of an universal idiom be more difficult to attain than the secret of an academic idiom, which pleases the smaller number?

What is man?—He is a Being that is weak by nature, and whose duty is, not to fall. Thus begins *The Catechism of the Social Man*. By the Abbé Duval Pyrau, printed in our time, with

with approbation of the censors, and the King's privilege.

S T I R R U P S.

WHO could have thought so easy an invention as stirrups should be unknown to the Romans, and that they should for six hundred years have rode on horses, and not have thought on so simple a thing? Caius Gracchus, who exhibited a genius formed for the public good, had caused to be fixed, at proper distances, stones on the roads, to assist travellers in mounting their horses; no one even suspected it could be done otherwise. An inventive genius is then scarce even in trifling objects; and we should keep our homage for this inventive faculty, so extraordinary among the crowd of imitators.

The first who carved a wooden head, similar perhaps in rudeness to those used by our barbers, made an effort of genius more astonishing probably than the finest works of our modern sculptors. Nothing is so rare as invention, and in invention alone does Genius consist.

We have lost the name of him who invented a wheel. He made a complicated machine, which now appears to us very simple; but the axle-

axle-tree was to be found. All the machines we use are only a collection of wheels.

M O D E S T Y.

WHAT is more respectable, or more sacred, than true modesty! Who will dare bring a blush on the cheek of chaste beauty, ignorant of the mysteries of which she has not even an idea! Who will dare to blemish the carnation of a chaste countenance and a pure mind; break the seal of virtue, and corrupt a peaceful heart, that shame has not yet affected! Even the depraved man feels his schemes die away; he restrains the emotions of his impoisoned tongue, and his bold hand; he is disarmed by the glance where modest assurance shines; he turns aside, as the most brutal wretch would turn the wheel of his carriage when it threatened to crush an infant stretched on the road.

Manlius gave his wife too amorous a kiss in presence of their daughter, and Cato the censor justly reprehended Manlius.

Painters and poets prepare your colouring, Albanus and Gessner lend me your pencil for a moment! You who read me, be happy with the blessing of innocence. Call back your earlier years; once more view that new and sensible heart you thought lost. Behold

that young man, with a modest inflamed eye, contemplating the beauty who has wounded his heart ; his head, gently reclined, has an air of ecstasy ; his humid, half-closed eyelids ; his eyes, with a gentle motion, run over the enchanting object from head to foot ; he admires the folds of her gown almost as much as he does her face ; she opens her lips, he breathes short ; a sigh, scarcely heard, escapes from his ; every motion of his adorable object determines his. He is struck dumb, as if by the hand of a Divinity ; yet all his motions are graceful, rapid, animated.

When he sits beside her, his arms hang negligently ; he is in a manner annihilated, and his whole soul is enwrapped in her looks ; a kind of interior languid tenderness manifests itself even in his silence ; that his silence is more eloquent than his tongue ; he feels it too imperfect for his thoughts, which he wishes could be defined.

One would imagine his sensibility wound up to the highest pitch ; but it receives an addition from the degree of complacence in the adored object. When she casts a look on him, he becomes a new man, he has something celestial about him. He would no longer be of mortal race, if there did not still seem something left to desire ; he is at the same instant intoxicated and tender, vehement and submissive, exulting and pliant ; and however affecting the beauty of the beloved object, however enhanced by the triumph excited by pride and joy, in knowing herself the object of his adoration,

ration, the young man who sighs at her feet is more charming than she ; but the most striking part of the picture is, that the most austere modesty may contemplate the representation of their chaste endearments.

T A C I T U S.

WHAT the pen can do by engraving ideas, is yet unknown to us. A man shall write ten volumes, and yet say nothing that will leave an impression on our minds, so as to read him again. Tacitus only writes two lines, and those two lines make us reflect for several days.

Let us fancy a Tacitus, who should write during three ages on different subjects, with such a genius formed to combine the most distant coherences ; we should soon see libraries vanish, whose books would be no longer distinguished from the walls. A pen equal to his, whose every word would raise several ideas, would cause many volumes to disappear, which our short sight still pry into.

The writer who has made us conceive the empire one man could have over the whole, is no more. To know how to read him now-a-days, is perhaps no less a rare merit, than knowing how to write.

The mechanism of Tacitus, his style, is truly original. With him the ellipsis is very frequent; as he bounds from one object to another, he rarely touches more than the predominant points; his delicacies must be understood; he suppresses the intermediate ideas; his is an abstruse mind, that seems to have many points of sensibility at once.

It is certainly the impulse of a writer's mind that determines his language. The motion and measure of the expression form, as one may say, the action that discovers the sentiment more or less lively.

Tacitus, with bold precision, observes the unalterable order of ideas. It has been imagined his style was perpetually abrupt, but it is for want of well understanding him: by the help of conjunctions he manages great things; and when he perceives many connections, he chains by grammatical links, his phrases all depending one on the other, although governed by the primitive idea. His constructions are of the boldest capacity; and when he probes the inmost recesses of the tyrants' heart, he imitates the sinuosities of their character, and his penetrating pen dives into the hidden recess where their crimes lie concealed.

The style of this great writer appears complex only because it is rich, rapid, vehement; that he at once gives philosophical and moral impulses; that he exposes the fibrous motives of human actions. Anatomise him, and you will constantly find him endowed with

an

an easy and rapid energy. How natural is his disorder—how genuine his wit! His tongue moulds itself to his vigorous conceptions; and one would be inclined to think he borrows the veil of policy, whilst the writer, as the last stroke of his pencil, leaves the reader to form or finish a reflection.

I will not here examine whether he gives the conduct of the Emperors the artifices of his own perceptions, and if mounted on the throne, he would not have been, if he had a mind, even as great a dissembler as Tiberius. He will have every action to proceed from a direct cause; he grants scarcely any thing to impulse; from hence it will result, a great deal of wit is necessary to be a bad emperor.

He saw clearly into the utmost recesses of the human heart; but he treats every thing as a politician; he always ascribes the depth of his own genius to characters who could not make such curious observations: one would imagine he looked upon nature and fortune as nothing, as he does not seem to entertain any idea of their power. He turns plain and common actions into subtle and complicated measures; he forgets that disposition sways our actions, and that in all the emotions of crowned heads, temper has a share. But it will be somewhat dangerous that a Prince should read, understand, and perfectly comprehend Tacitus; it is the business of a private man to sift this author, and dive into his profound conceptions.

ROMAN EMPERORS.

WHAT kind of beings were those privileged mortals, to whom the world consented to surrender such an immensity of power? How is it possible, after these Brutuses and Catos, one man alone should be absolute master over the whole human race?

Those Emperors had *only two arms like other men*, as Corneille says, yet they reached to the end of the world; all power belonged to them, and they abused it with impunity.

But how could men be subjected more than a week to a Caligula, a Nero, a Domitian, to all those monsters who sported with the lives and existence of men? Were not the executioners themselves cut off by other executioners? Ought not the blood they spilt to inform them how easy it would be to shed their own! Was there in this formidable power any magical strength that impaired the human mind? And how did this enormous power consolidate itself by its excess!

Boundless power or authority irritates men's passions, which are so active of themselves; they rise to such a degree of fury, of folly, and extravagance, that a man literally becomes a devourer of his own species.

What is most incomprehensible is, that those Emperors were applauded in their life time. When a people are entirely corrupted, the adulation offered to the throne becomes pliant, ingenious,

ingenious, and witty. Thus is flattery in its zenith, praise is delicate, and well prepared.

The Emperors who imposed the tax *prohaustu acris*, were right in collecting it, since the people were so complaisant to pay it.— There is a time when the slave is more guilty than the despot.

These Emperors gave themselves up to such abominations, as clearly prove to what a degree of depravity despotism rises, when the baseness of man has surrendered all power to it. It is true, they were an exception among sovereigns, and should be reduced, in morality and politics, to the same class as monsters are in philosophy. But let the favourers of despotism behold the living pictures of those hideous characters, which terrified human nature.

T R A D E.

IF Trade were not the cause of long, destructive, and inevitable wars, occasioned by the jealousy of States, we should have reason to deem it a blessing; it would then be an universal benefit.

It is this supplies man with the enjoyments for which he longs. This we cannot well condemn, when we reflect he has a heart that requires sensation, an imagination that out-

runs enjoyment, a soul that knows how to set a value on the blending of luxuries, and is acquainted with their worth.

All nature's productions, in fact, belong to man; pleasure is his essence; no being has been better formed to receive multiplied and delicate sensations: he is not formed for self-denial, which makes him morose and unsociable; he is more tender, more humane, more cheerful when he enjoys a more agreeable existence.

Man bids defiance to dangers, fatigue, and death, only to repose for an instant in the arms of luxury: she sympathizes with his existence too strongly to suffer him ever to be detached from it; his faculties scarcely set any bounds to his enjoyments; it would be inhuman then to prohibit him the fruits the sun has ripened in all quarters of the globe.

But, when the philosopher sees numberless evils which precede those short-lived enjoyments, the immense price they cost, as they are purchased by the effusion of human blood, with the motives of discord which subsist, and are always increasing, then he would wish to prevent communication with foreign climes, the source of so many sanguinary dispute; he would wish to bring man to look upon those riches as envenomed fruits; he would think he made an addition to his happiness, in snatching from him wants, however delightful to the senses, which may be ranked among the factitious ones, as he was not unhappy before he knew

knew them, and will not be more so in losing fight of them.

It has been a matter of discussion, whether Trade should receive honour or not. Encouragement and protection are necessary to it; but honours should be preserved for more distinguished professions. Glory for artists, and profit for merchants! The trader must be paid for his trouble, rewarded for his labours, esteemed where he is esteemable; but honour is not *his* patrimony.

This kind of glory, which forms a supplement, is made to reward the warrior, the magistrate, the writer, the inventing artist, because their salaries are bounded; and if we were to grant glory to the merchant, who is already favoured with the gifts of fortune, the others would not have any incentive for the disinterested efforts they have occasion for in the tempestuous career they experience.

O F F I C E R S.

DOES not the soldier expose his life as much as the bravest officer? Does he not engage with the same courage? Is he distinguished, is he honoured?—No: he has only risked his life, the officer has risked his life and fortune: glory awaits him; and why? because of the second sacrifice.

An officer is sometimes as great a pedant as the professor of a College; he displays the technical phrases of his art, as the other does of the names of his authors; it is allowable to appear in the livery of one's station, but the proclaiming it will be ever ridiculous.

Observe a hundred thousand men on a march; it is impossible but there must be a Turenne among them; but this man not being in the road of preferment, remains in obscurity.

Although the new tactics are different from the ancient ones, military men cannot read their history too often, and study the instructing *manœuvres* of the antient generals; they will learn the art of setting a proper value on time, place, and opportunity; but above all, they will form a proper judgement of their antagonist; for the genius of the adversary should be studied more than the ground.

It is a misfortune to the State to have so subdivided employments, that a military man has now nothing to do but study destruction; the important and daily cares of the administration of a campaign are beneath him.

Among the antients, the commander was not ashamed to furnish the necessaries of life to those who were going to battle. The business of war was not devastation only; it took in every thing that could preserve the legions, and spare the effusion of blood.— Those skilful generals took care of the soldier entirely.

Discipline

Discipline is necessary, but when too severe, it is dispiriting; it makes the soldier a puppet that knows better how to obey than fight; he will not turn his back, but will he know how to charge the enemy?

To all those great moving masses there must be a soul: if they are perpetually passive, what will become of them on the day of battle, when the soldier stands in need of supernatural strength?

It is liberty that gives energy, inspires vigour, and makes the soldier do more than is required of him. When a man risks his life, let him at least have the honour of losing it as he pleases; do not force him to be killed exactly in such a spot; let him die a little farther off. The soldier will expire without murmuring, and the general will find himself the better served.

Why have towns been taken by assault? Why has the victorious phalanx been broken? Why has the thundering artillery been attacked and carried?—Because a noble desperation, an independent transport, an instant when they bid defiance to rules, combinations, and even the general's orders, overpowered all.—They resolve to conquer!

What is the reason young officers are the most severe in command? It is because they want experience to know the soldier obeys, without murmuring the man who is not capricious in his orders, and who sees that the surest method to form the most untractable temper to obedience, is not to require any

thing, but under the sanction of law; by such means, the officers' authority will not be hated.

The great art of a general is, to be well acquainted with the genius of the nation he commands, in order to use them with propriety. The fiery and impetuous Frenchman is capable of executing what the calm courage of a phlegmatic people cannot undertake without rashness. Here is an example extracted from the Life of the brave Chevert:

“The siege of Prague was resolved on. Whilst Chevert silently prepared every thing necessary to insure the success of the escalade, Maurice covered his design, by making two false attacks. An intrepid soldier was necessary, who would not think of the danger, and be the first to mount the rampart. M. de Chevert, who knew how to address every one in their own style, gave this strange, but persuasive, instruction to the grenadier he chose to execute his plan:

“Hark'ee!” said he to him in a confident tone, “when thou art on the rampart, advance towards the centinel; he will challenge thee, *Who goes there?* No answer. He will challenge thee a second time; be sure make no answer still; he will fire and miss thee; then spring on him, and stab him; I will be there to support thee.”

What would another have done on such an occasion? One of the favourite maxims of the great, is, that every thing is possible with money, although they attempt nothing with-

out experiencing the contrary. This is the only expedient they know to put men in motion ; as they themselves would be nothing without money, they conceive nothing above money. Let us suppose, in the room of M. De Chevert, a military man, who would not fail to take out of a company of grenadiers, a tried volunteer, to whom he had promised and given a purse.—The soldier would go blind to the danger ; but the imprudent officer would lay it open by the promised reward ; and the man who knows none that is an equivalent for life, either misses his blow, or risques the success through fear or precipitation, the necessary consequence of evident danger.

We are still deficient in a constitutional, national military plan, that is to say, a plan calculated on the means, genius, and power of the nation. Who is not sensible of the necessity of governing a people according to their characteristic ! Do not those, who will not acknowledge this important truth, risque leading that part of the nation whose rank is honourable, through every degree of despair, as well as those of all European nations, who with those two means only, honour and confidence, are so easily elevated to all manner of prodigies.

COUNTRY

COUNTRY CURATES*.

THE heads of the clergy of France are prelates distinguished by birth, and who, surrounded with the pomp of luxury, peaceably enjoy their opulence: they draw our eyes upon them; but none trouble themselves about the humble parish curate, the poor country pastor, to whom the apostolical labours are confided: let us cast a look on those men, so little known, whose perpetual office it is to direct the consciences of the people, and who, by their situation, are at all times capable of seconding the benevolent views of administration.

The parish curate in towns has but a very moderate income, and the country one is scarcely in possession of common necessaries; he is moreover a burden on the poor peasants whom he is called to preside over. Would it not be good policy to grant them a little more of the comforts of life? A curate's superfluities are always scattered on those around him. Being called by his ministry to perform acts of charity, a double advantage would result from putting him in a way of relieving his parishioners himself; and their gratitude, jointly with the veneration his character imprints, would add weight to his pastoral authority.

The State, in rewarding more amply the functions of country curates, would have a

* Under this name of Curates, Parish Priests are included.

right to require from them labours, which would perfectly well agree with the leisure they enjoy. Being learned themselves, they would instruct others. They are men of letters among rude and ignorant men; they only speak to the assembled people; they possess the kind of eloquence suitable to them: what better vehicle could government chuse to spread any new idea, or cause a project to be adopted that would stand in need of the support of confidence? Who could better prepare the minds, or reconcile them to Administration, which always appears terrifying at a distance; in fine, destroy popular reports, whose origin or aim is seldom known, and which often oppose every improvement?

To teach sound morality, combat superstition and fanaticism, destroy prejudices, explain some of those phænomena that terrify the ignorant and unhappy villager, give them some notion of natural history and agriculture; what an immensity of good can a worthy country curate do, if he unites a good mind with an honest heart! He will make government be loved; he will spread useful knowledge; he will form faithful subjects and good husbandmen.

In those enlightened times, when knowledge is encouraged in all places, and every thing tends to universal benevolence, country curates should be looked upon as the hereditary comforters of the people; they can make them content with their condition. If
 government,

government, like a good pilot, is attentive to the slightest storms, they must have brisk and skilful hands to furl the sails when necessary, and stand by the rigging. Therefore, the curates, who command, by persuasion, the labouring class of society, assimilated to the spirit of public good, may contribute, on more occasions than one, to the execution of the most salutary orders. But, I must again repeat, it is necessary those spiritual conductors should be better rewarded for their daily functions, and have a more ample income to render them independent of their flock.

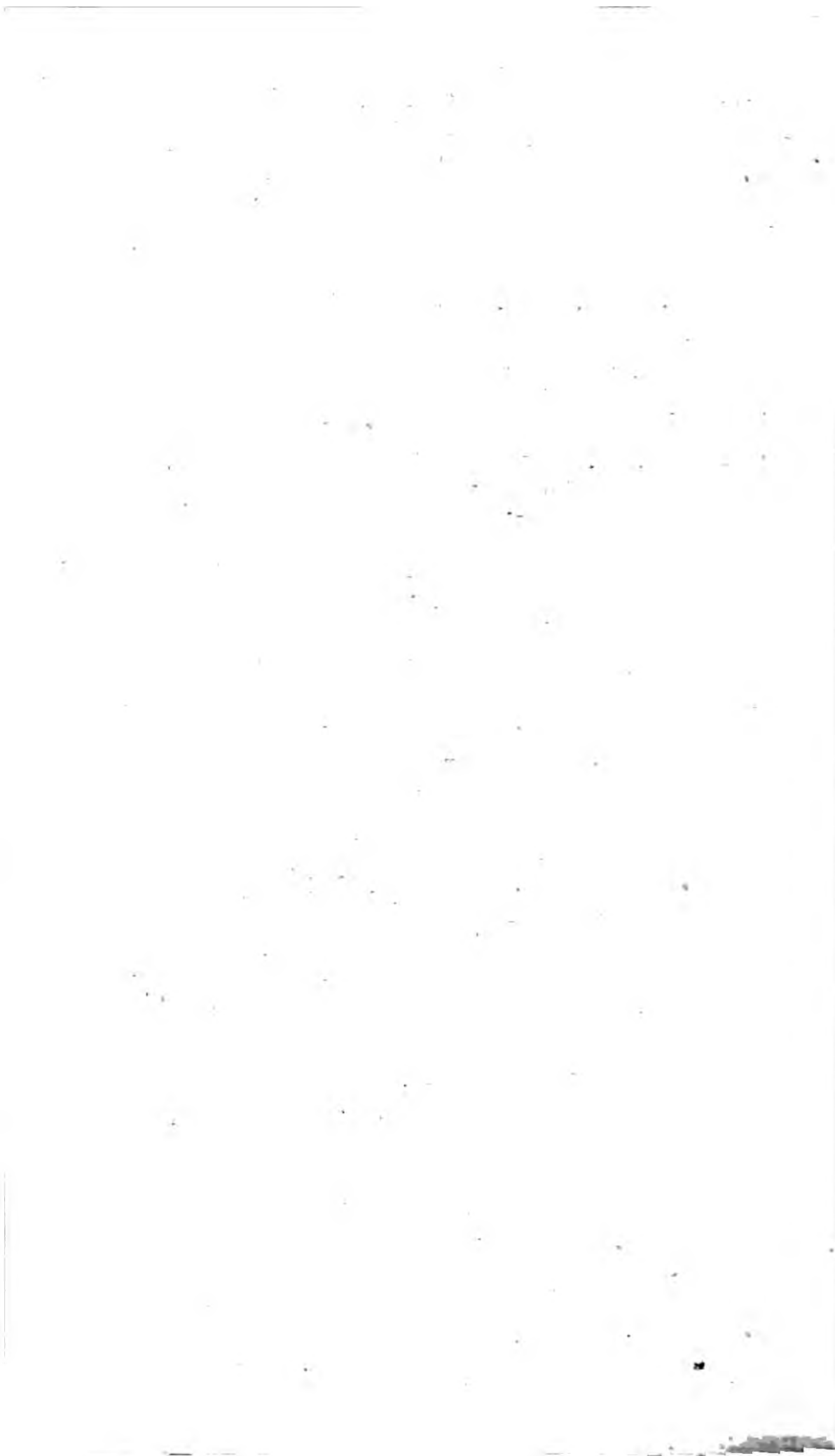
I know several of these good country curates, who, notwithstanding the extreme mediocrity of their cures, find the way to do infinitely more good, than many even generous, very rich men; their active and industrious charity creates a thousand resources. Some know how to prepare simple remedies for the sick and relieve them; some set their faces against the illusions of mountebanks; others devote themselves to agriculture, and, by their example, bring it to perfection.

In general, their lives are innocent, and their manners decent; little or no scandal is among them, because they stand in need of the esteem of their flock; these respectable men live far from the noise and the observation of the world; unknown, forgotten, and content in their obscurity, their lives pass away in the practice of duties prescribed by the Gospel.

How

How happy am I, thus publicly to do justice to a set of men that I honour, and whom government might employ as the canal to convey the most wholesome ideas! All those functions are truly paternal, and might yet embrace more objects; they only act by persuasion; what more happy or more speedy medium could there be between authority and the people!

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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