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MEDITATIONS

AMONG THE

T O M B S.

IN A

L E T T E R

TO A

L A D Y.

By *JAMES HERVEY*, A. B.

*Every Stone that we look upon, in this Repository
of past Ages, is both an Entertainment, and a
Monitor.*

Plain Dealer. Vol. I. N^o 42.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. and J. RIVINGTON, in *St. Paul's
Church-yard*; And J. LEAKE, at *Bath*.

M D C C X L V I.





T O

Miss R—— T——.

M A D A M,



THESE Reflections, the One on the *deepest*, the Other on the *gayest* Scenes of Nature, when they proceeded privately from the *Pen*, were addressed to a Lady of the most valuable Endowments: Who crowned all her other endearing Qualities, by a cordial Love of CHRIST, and an exemplary Conformity to his Divine Pattern. She, alas! lives no longer

ii *DEDICATION.*

longer on Earth ; unless it be in the Honours of a distinguished Character, and the bleeding Remembrance of her Acquaintance.

IT is impossible, Madam, to wish You a richer Blessing, or a more substantial Happiness, than that the same Spirit of unfeigned *Faith*, the same Course of undefiled *Religion*, which have enabled Her to triumph over Death, may both animate and adorn your Life. And you will permit me to declare, that my chief Inducement in requesting your Acceptance of the following Meditations, now they make a public Appearance from the *Press*, is, that they are designed to cultivate the same sacred *Principle*, and to promote the same excellent *Præctice*.

Long, Madam, may you *bloom* in all the Vivacity and Amiability of
Youth,

DEDICATION. iii

Youth, like the charming Subject of one of these Contemplations. But at the same Time remember, that, with regard to such inferior Accomplishments, You must one Day *fade*, (may it prove some very remote Period!) like the mournful Objects of the other. This Consideration will prompt You to go on, as You have begun, in adding the *Meekness* of *Wisdom*, and all the *Beauties of Holiness*, to the Graces of an engaging Person, and the Refinements of a polite Education.

AND might — O! might the ensuing Hints furnish You with the least Assistance, in prosecuting so desirable an End; might they contribute, in any Degree, to establish your Faith, or elevate your Devotion; they would, then, administer to the Author such a Satisfaction, as Ap-

iv DEDICATION.

plause cannot give, nor Censure take away : A Satisfaction, which I should be able to enjoy, even in those awful Moments, when all that captivates the Eye is sinking in Darkness, and every Glory of this lower World disappearing for ever.

THESE Wishes, Madam, as they are a most agreeable Employ of my Thoughts, so they come attended with this additional Circumstance of Pleasure, that they are also the sincerest Expression of that very great Esteem, with which I am,

MADAM,

Your most Obedient,

Most Humble Servant,

JAMES HERVEY.



P R E F A C E.



HE first of these occasional Meditations begs Leave to remind my Readers of their Latter End; and would invite them to set, not their Houses only, but, which is inexpressibly more needful, their Souls, in Order: That they may be able, through all the intermediate Stages, to look forward upon their approaching Exit, without any anxious Apprehensions: And, when the great Change commences, may bid Adieu to terrestrial Things, with all the Calmness of a chearful Resignation, with all the Comforts of a well-grounded Faith.

The

The other attempts to sketch out some little Traces of the All-sufficiency of our Redeemer, for the grand and gracious Purposes of everlasting Salvation; that a Sense of his unutterable Dignity and infinite Perfections, may incite us to regard Him with Sentiments of the most profound Veneration; to long for an assured Interest in his Merits, with all the Ardency of Desire; and to trust in his powerful Mediation, with an Affiance not to be shaken by any Temptations, not to be shared with any Performances of our own.

I flatter myself, that the Thoughts conceived among the Tombs, may be welcome to the serious and humane Mind; because, as there are few, who have not consigned the Remains of some dear Relations, or honoured Friends, to those silent Repositories; so there are none, but must be sensible, that this is the House appointed for all Living; and that they themselves are
shortly

P R E F A C E. vii

shortly to remove into the same solemn Mansions. — And who would not turn aside, for a while, from the most favourite Amusements, to view the Place, where his once-loved Companions lie? Who would not sometimes survey those Apartments, where he himself is to take up an Abode, till Time shall be no more?

As to the other little Essay, may I not humbly presume, that the very Subject itself will recommend the Remarks? For who is not delighted with the Prospect of the blooming Creation, and even charmed with the delicate Attractions of Flowers? Who does not covet to assemble them in the Garden, or wear them in a Nosegay? Since this is a Passion so universal, who would not be willing to render it productive of the sublimest Improvement? — This Piece of holy Frugality I have ventured to suggest, and endeavoured to exemplify, in the Second Letter; that while the Hand is cropping the transient Beauties of a Flower, the attentive Mind may be enriching itself with

I *solid*

viii P R E F A C E.

solid and lasting Good. — And I cannot but entertain some pleasing Hopes, that the nicest Taste may receive and relish religious Impressions, when they are conveyed by such lovely Monitors; when the instructive Lessons are found, not on the Leaves of some formidable Folio, but stand legible on the fine Sarcenet of a Narcissus; when they savour not of the Lamp and Recluse, but come breathing from the fragrant Bosom of a Jonquil.



MEDITA-



MEDITATIONS

AMONG THE

T O M B S.

In a LETTER to a LADY.

MADAM,



RAVELLING lately into *Cornwall*, I happened to alight at *Kilkhampton*, a considerable Village in that County: Where, finding myself under an unexpected Necessity of resting a little, I took a Walk to the *Church*. The Doors, like the Heaven to which they lead, were wide open; and readily admitted an unworthy Stranger. Pleased with the Opportunity, I resolved to spend a few Minutes under the sacred Roof.

B

IN

IN a Situation so retired and awful, I could not avoid falling into serious Meditations. Which, I trust, were in some Degree profitable to *me*, while they possessed and warmed my Thoughts; and, if they may administer any Satisfaction to *you*, Madam, now they are recollected, and committed to Writing, I shall receive a fresh Pleasure from them.

HAVING adored that eternal Majesty, who, far from being confined to Temples made with Hands, has Heaven for his Throne, and the Earth for his Footstool — Having observed the regular Range of the Pillars, and a sort of magnificent Plainness in the whole Structure; which were rendered more affecting, by a certain Air of Solemnity peculiar to Places of this kind — I took particular Notice of a handsome *Altar-piece*, presented by the Master-Builders of * *Stow*, out of

* The Name of a noble Seat, erected in this Parish, belonging to the late Earl of *Bath*; remarkable formerly for its excellent Workmanship, and elegant Furniture; once the grand Resort of the Quality and Gentry of the West; but now demolished, laid even with the Ground, and scarce one Stone left upon another. So that Corn may grow, or Nettles spring, where *Stow* lately stood.

Gratitude, I presume, to that gracious God, who carried them through their Work, and enabled them to “bring forth the Top-stone with Joy.”

O! how amiable is *Gratitude!* especially, when it has the supreme Benefactor for its Object. I have always looked upon Gratitude as the most exalted Principle that can actuate the Heart of Man. It has something noble, disinterested, and (if I may be allowed the Term) generously devout. *Repentance* indicates our Nature fallen, and *Prayer* turns chiefly upon a Regard to one's self. But the Exercises of Gratitude subsisted in Paradise, when there was no Fault to deplore; and will be perpetuated in Heaven, when “God shall be *All in all.*”

THE Language of this sweet Temper is, “I am unspeakably obliged: What Return shall I make?” — And, surely, it is no improper Expression of an unfeigned Thankfulness, to decorate our Creator's Courts, and *beautify* “the *Place* where his Honour dwelleth.” Of old the Habitation of his Feet was glorious: Let it not now be sordid

or contemptible. It must grieve an ingenuous Mind, and be a Reproach to any People, to have their own Houses wainscoted with Cedar, and painted with Vermilion; while the Temple of the LORD of Hosts is destitute of every decent Ornament.

HERE I recollected, and was charmed with, *Solomon's* fine *Address* to the Almighty, at the *Dedication* of his famous *Temple*. With immense Charge, and exquisite Skill, he had erected the most rich and finished Structure, that the Sun ever saw. Yet upon a Review of his Work, and a Reflection on the transcendent Perfections of the Godhead, how he *exalts* the one, and *abases* the other? — The Building was too glorious for the mightiest Monarch to inhabit; too sacred, for unhallowed Feet even to enter; yet infinitely too mean, for the Deity to reside in. It was, and the Royal Worshipper acknowledged it to be, a most marvellous Vouchsafement in uncreated Excellency, to “put his Name there.” The whole Passage breathes such a Delicacy, and is animated with such a Sublimity of Sentiment, that I cannot persuade myself to pass
on

on without repeating it. * *But will GOD indeed dwell on Earth? Behold! The Heaven, and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this House that I have builded?* — Incomparable Saying! Worthy the wisest of Men. Who would not choose to possess such an elevated Devotion,

* *But will.* A fine abrupt Beginning, most significantly describing the Amazement and Rapture of the Royal Prophet's Mind. — *GOD:* He uses no Epithet, where Writers of inferior Discernment would have been fond to multiply them: But speaks of the Deity, as an incomprehensible Being, whose Excellency is exalted above all Praise. — *Dwell:* To bestow on sinful Creatures a propitious Look, or favour them with a transient Visit of Kindness, would have been an unutterable Obligation: Will he then vouchsafe to fix his Abode, and take up his stated Residence among them? — *Indeed:* A Word, in this Connexion, exceedingly emphatical; expressive of a Condescension, wonderful and extraordinary almost beyond all Credibility. — Then, a most important Reason is suggested for the preceding Admiration: *Behold:* Intimating the continued, or rather the increasing Surprise of the Speaker, and awakening the Attention of the Hearer. — *Behold! The Heaven:* The spacious Concave of the Firmament, that wide-extended Azure Circumference, in which Worlds unnumbered perform their Revolutions, are too scanty an Apartment for the Godhead. — *Nay, The Heaven of Heavens:* Those vastly higher Tracts, which lie far beyond the Limits of human Survey, to which our very Thoughts can hardly soar; even These (unbounded as they are) cannot afford an adequate Habitation for *Jehovah*; even These dwindle into a Point, when compared with the Infinitude of his Essence; even These “are as nothing before him.” — *How much less* proportionate then is this poor diminutive Speck, which I have been erecting and embellishing, to so august a Presence, so immense a Majesty?

tion, rather than to own all the glittering Materials of that sumptuous Edifice?

WE are apt to be struck with Admiration at the beautiful Grandeur of a masterly Performance in Architecture. And, perhaps, on a Sight of the antient Sanctuary, should have made the superficial Observation of the Disciples, “What manner of Stones, and what Buildings are here?”—But what a nobler Turn of Thought, and juster Taste of Things, does it discover, to join with *Israel's* King in celebrating the *Condescension* of the Divine *Inhabitant*? That the High and Lofty One, who fills Immensity with his Glory, should, in a peculiar manner, fix his Abode there! Should there manifest an extraordinary Degree of his benedictive Presence; permit sinful Mortals to approach his Majesty, and promise “to make them joyful in his House of Prayer!”—This should more sensibly affect our *Hearts*, than the most curious Arrangement of Stones can delight our *Eyes*.

NAY, the everlasting GOD does not disdain to *dwell* in our *Souls*, by his Holy *Spirit*, and to make even our *Bodies* his Temple.—Tell me, ye that frame critical Judgments, and
balance

balance nicely the Distinctions of Things, "Is this most astonishing, or most rejoicing?" He *humbleth* himself, the Scripture assures us, even to *behold* the Things that are in *Heaven*. 'Tis a most condescending Favour, if he pleases to take the least approving Notice of Angels and Archangels, when they bow down in Homage from their celestial Thrones: And yet will he graciously regard, will he be *intimately united* to poor, polluted, breathing Dust? — O! unparallel'd Honour! Invaluable Privilege! Be This my Portion, and I shall not covet Crowns, nor envy Conquerors.

BUT let me remember, what a *Sanctity of Disposition*, and *Uprightness of Conversation*, so exalted a Relation demands: Remember this, "and rejoice with trembling." — Durst I commit any Iniquity, while I tread these hallowed Courts? Could the *Jewish High-priest* allow himself in any known Transgression, when he made that yearly Entrance into the Holy of Holies, and stood before the immediate Presence of *Jehovah*? No, truly. In such Circumstances, a thinking Person must shudder at the most remote Solicitation to any wilful Offence.

I should now be shocked at the least Indecency of Behaviour, and am apprehensive of every Appearance of Evil. And why do we not carry this *holy Jealousy* into all our *ordinary* Life? Why do we not, in every Place, * *reverence ourselves*, as Persons dedicated to the Divinity, as living Temples of the Godhead? For, if we are real, and not merely nominal Christians, the GOD of Glory, according to his own Promise, † *dwell's in us, and walks in us*. — O! that this one Doctrine of our Religion might operate with an abiding Efficacy upon our Consciences! It would be instead of a thousand Laws to regulate our Conduct, instead of a thousand Motives to quicken us in Holiness. Under the Influence of such a Conviction, we should study to maintain a Purity of Intention, a Dignity of Action, and “ to walk worthy

* ——— παντων δε μαλιστα φοβουνοσ' αυτον,

Was the favourite Maxim of *Pythagoras*, and supposed to be the best moral Precept, that was ever given to the heathen World. With what superior Force, and infinite Advantage, does the Argument take Place in the Christian Scheme? Where we are taught to regard ourselves, not merely as *intellectual Beings*, that have *Reason* for our Monitor; but as *consecrated Creatures*, who have a GOD of the most consummate Perfection ever *with us, ever in us*.

† 2 Cor. vi. 16.

“ of

“ of him” who has called us to such a sacred Union with his blessed Self.

THE next Thing that engaged my Attention was the *Lettered Floor*: The Pavement, like *Ezekiel's* Roll, was written over from one End to the other. I soon perceived the Comparison to hold good in another respect, and the Inscriptions to be Matter of “ Mourning, Lamentation, and “ Woe.” They seemed to court my Observation, and silently invite me to read them.— And what would these dumb Monitors inform me of? — Why, That beneath their little Circumferences were deposited such and such Pieces of Clay, that once lived, and moved, and talked : That they had received a Charge to preserve their Names, and were the remaining Trustees of their Memory.

AH! said I, is such my Situation? The adorable Creator around me, and the Bones of my Fellow-creatures under me! Surely, then, I have great Reason to cry out with the revering Patriarch, *How dreadful is this Place!* Seriousness and Devotion becometh this House for ever. May I never enter it

C

lightly

lightly or irreverently; but with a profound Awe, and godly Fear!

*Oh! that they were wise**! said the inspired Penman. It was his last Wish for his dear People: He breathed it out, and gave up the Ghost. — But what is Wisdom? It consists not in refined Speculations, accurate Researches into Nature, or an universal Acquaintance with History. The divine Lawgiver settles this important Point in his next Aspiration: *Oh! that they understood this!* That they had right Apprehensions of their spiritual Interests, and eternal Concerns! That they had Eyes to discern, and Inclinations to pursue, the Things which belong to their Peace! — But how shall they attain this valuable Knowledge? I send them not, adds the illustrious Teacher, to turn over all the Volumes of Literature: They may much more expeditiously acquire this Science of Life, by *considering their latter End*. This *Spark* of Heaven is often lost under the *Glitter* of pompous Erudition; but shines clearly in the gloomy Mansions of the Tomb. Drowned is this gentle *Whisper*, amidst the *Noise* of mortal Affairs; but
speaks

* Deut. xxxii. 29.

speaks distinctly in the Retirements of serious Contemplation. — Behold! How providentially I am brought to the School of Wisdom! The Grave is the most faithful * Master, and these Instances of Mortality the most instructive Lessons. — Come then, calm Attention, and compose my Thoughts! Come, thou celestial Spirit, and enlighten my Mind; that I may so peruse these awful Pages, as to become “wise unto Salvation.”

Examining the Records of Mortality, I found the Memorials of a † *promiscuous Multitude*. They were huddled together, without any Distinction of Rank or Seniority. None were ambitious of the uppermost Rooms, or chief Seats, in this House of Mourning. None lay in fond and eager Expectation of honourable Greetings, in their darksome Cells. The Servant was lodged in the same Story with his Master. The Man of Years and Experience was paired with an Infant of Days. He who was reputed as an Oracle in his Generation, slept at the Feet of a Babe.

* Wait the great Teacher, Death. *Pope.*

† *Mista Senum ac Juvenum densantur Funera.* Hor.

WHY then, said my working Thoughts, oh! why, should we raise such a mighty Stir about *Superiority* and *Precedence*, when the next Remove will reduce us all to a State of equal Meanness? Why should we exalt ourselves, or debase others, since we must all one Day be upon a common Level, and blended together in the same undistinguished Dust? Oh! that this Consideration might humble my own, and others Pride; and sink our Imaginations as low, as our Habitation will shortly be!

AMONG these confused Relicks of Humanity, there are, without doubt, Persons of *contrary Interests, and contradicting Sentiments*: But Death, like some able Daysman, has laid his Hand on the contending Parties, and brought all their Differences to an * amicable Conclusion. Here Enemies, sworn Enemies, dwell together in Unity. They drop every imbittered Thought, and forget that they once were Foes. Perhaps their crumbling Bones mix as they moulder;

* *Hi Motus Animorum, atque hæc Certamina tanta
Pulveris exigui factu compressa quiescent.* Virg.
and

and those who, while they lived, stood aloof in irreconcilable Variance, here fall into mutual Embraces, and even incorporate with each other in the Grave. — Oh! that we might learn from these friendly Ashes, not to perpetuate the Memory of Injuries, not to foment the Fever of Resentment, nor cherish the Turbulence of Passion; that there may be as little Animosity and Disagreement in the Land of the Living, as there is in the Congregation of the Dead! — But I suspend for a while such general Observations, and address myself to a more particular Inquiry.

YONDER *white Stone*, Emblem of the Innocence it covers, informs the Beholder of one, who breathed out its tender Soul, almost in the Instant of receiving it. — There the peaceful *Infant*, without so much as knowing what Labour and Vexation mean, “ * lies still and is quiet; it sleeps “and is at Rest.” Staying only to wash away its native Impurity in the Laver of Regeneration, it bid a speedy Adieu to Time

* Job iii. 13.

and

and terrestrial Things. — What did the little hasty Sojourner find so forbidding and disgustful in our upper World, to occasion its precipitant Exit? 'Tis written, indeed, of its suffering Saviour, that when He had tasted the Vinegar mingled with Gall, He would not drink: And did our new come Stranger begin to sip the Cup of Life, but, perceiving the *Bitterness*, turn away its Head, and refuse the Draught? Was this the Cause, why the wary Babe only open'd its Eyes, just looked on the Light, and then withdrew into the more inviting Regions of undisturb'd Repose?

O! fortunate Voyager, that wast no sooner *launched*, than *arrived* at the *Haven*! — But more happy they, who have passed the Waves, and weathered all the Storms, of a troublesome and dangerous World; who, “through many Tribulations, have entered “into the Kingdom of Heaven;” and thereby brought Honour to their Divine Convoy, administred Comfort to the Companions of their Toil, and left an instructive Example to succeeding Pilgrims.

O! happy Probationer! *accepted* without being *exercised*! It was thy peculiar Privilege

lege not to feel the slightest of those Evils which afflict thy surviving Kindred ; which frequently fetch Groans from the most manly Fortitude, or most elevated Faith. The Arrows of *Calamity*, barbed with Anguish, are often planted deep in our choicest Comforts. The fiery Darts of *Temptation*, shot from the Hand of Hell, are always flying in Showers around our Integrity. To thee, sweet Babe, both these Distresses and Dangers were alike unknown. — Consider this, ye mourning Parents, and dry up your Tears. Why should you lament, that your little ones are crown'd with Victory, before the Sword was drawn, or the Conflict begun ? — At the same time, let Survivors, doomed *to bear the Heat and Burden of the Day*, reflect, for their Encouragement, That it is more honourable to have enter'd the Lists, and to have fought the good Fight, before they come off Conquerors. These, having glorified their Redeemer on Earth, will, probably, be as *Stars of the first Magnitude* in Heaven. They will shine with brighter Beams, be replenished with stronger Joys, in their LORD's everlasting Kingdom.

HERE lies the Grief of a fond Mother, and the blasted Expectations of an indulgent Father. — The *Youth* grew up, like a well-watered Plant ; he shot deep, rose high, and bid fair for Manhood : But just as the Cedar began to tower, and promised ere long to be the Pride of the Wood, and Prince among the neighbouring Trees ; — behold ! The Ax is laid unto the Root ; the fatal Blow struck ; and all its branching Honours tumbled to the Dust. — And did he fall alone ? O ! no : The Hopes of his Father that begat him, and the pleasing Prospects of her that bare him, fell, and were crushed together with him.

DOUBTLESS, it would have pierced one's Heart, to have beheld the tender Parents following the breathless Boy to his long Home : Perhaps, drowned in Tears, and all overwhelmed with Sorrows, they stood, like weeping Statues, on this very Spot. — Methinks, I see the deeply-distressed Mourners attending the sad Solemnity : How they wring their Hands, and pour Floods from their Eyes ! — Is it Fancy ! or do I really hear the passionate *Mother*, in an Agony of Affliction, taking her final Leave of *the*
wring

Darling of her Soul? Dumb she remained while the awful Obsequies were performing; dumb with Grief, and leaning upon the Partner of her Woes. But now the inward Anguish struggles for Vent; it grows too big to be repressed. She advances to the Brink of the Grave. All her Soul is in her Eyes. She fastens one more Look upon the dear doleful Object, before the Pit shuts its Mouth upon him. And as she looks she cries; — in broken Accents, interrupted by many a rising Sob, she cries, “Farewell, my Son! “ my Son! my only Beloved! — Would “ to GOD I had died for thee! — Fare- “ well, my Child! and farewell, all my “ earthly Happiness! — I shall never more “ see Good in the Land of the Living. — “ Attempt not to comfort me. — I will “ go mourning all my Days, till my grey “ Hairs come down with Sorrow to the “ Grave.”

FROM this affecting Representation, let Parents be convinced, how highly it concerns them to *cultivate the Morals, and secure the immortal Interests* of their Children. — If you really love the Offspring of your own Bodies; if your Bowels yearn

over those amiable Pledges of conjugal Endearment; O! spare no Pains; give all Diligence, I intreat you, to “bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the LORD.” Then may you have Joy in their Life, or Consolation in their Death. If their Span is prolong’d, their unblameable and useful Conduct will be the Staff of your Age, and a Balm for declining Nature. Or, if the Number of their Years be cut off in the midst, you may commit their Remains to the Dust, with much the same comfortable Expectations, and with infinitely more exalted Views, than you send the Survivors to *Places of genteel Education*. You may commit them to the Ground, with chearing Hopes of receiving them again to your Arms, inexpressibly improved in every noble and endearing Accomplishment.

’Tis certainly a severe Trial, and much more afflictive than I am able to imagine, to resign a lovely blooming Creature, sprung from your own Loins, to the gloomy Recesses of Corruption; after having been long dandled upon your Knees, united to your Affections by a thousand Ties of Tenderness, and now become both “the Delight

“ of your Eyes,” and Support of your Family: To have such a one torn from your Bosom, and thrown into Darkness, doubtless, it must be like a Dagger in your Hearts. — But O! how much more cutting to you, and confounding to the Child, to have the Soul separated from GOD; and for *shameful Ignorance, or early Impiety*, consigned over to Places of eternal Torment! How would it aggravate your Distress, and add a distracting Emphasis to all your Sigh if you should follow the pale Corpse with such bitter Reflections? — “ This dear
“ Creature, though long ago capable of
“ knowing Good from Evil, is gone *out*
“ of the World, before it had learned the
“ great Design of coming *into* it. A short-
“ lived momentary Existence it received
“ from me; but no holy Instructions, no-
“ thing to further its Well-being in that
“ everlasting State, upon which it is now
“ entered. The *poor Body* is nailed up
“ in a Coffin, and carried out to putrefy
“ in the Earth. And what Reason have I
“ to suppose, that the *precious Soul* is in a
“ better Condition? May I not justly fear,
“ that, sentenced by the righteous Judge,

“ it is going, or gone away, into the Pains
 “ of endless Punishment? — Perhaps, while
 “ I am bewailing its untimely Departure, it
 “ may be cursing, in outer Darkness, that
 “ ever to be deplored, that most calami-
 “ tous Day, when it was born of such a
 “ careless ungodly Parent as I have been.”

NOTHING, I think, but the Gnawings
 of that Worm which never dies, can equal
 the Anguish of these self-condemning
 Thoughts. The Tortures of a Rack must
 be an easy Suffering, compared with the
 Stings and Horror of such a Remorse. —
 How earnestly do I wish, that as many as
 are intrusted with the Management of Chil-
 dren, would take timely Care to prevent
 these intolerable Scourges of Conscience,
 by endeavouring to conduct their Minds
 into an early *Knowledge* of Christ, and a cor-
 dial *Love* of his Truth!

ON this Hand is lodged one, whose Sepul-
 chral Stone tells a most pitiable Tale indeed!
 Well may the *little Images*, reclin'd over
 the sleeping Ashes, hang down their Heads
 with that pensive Air! None can consider
 so mournful a Story without feeling some
 Touches

Touches of sympathizing Concern. — His Age Twenty-eight; his Death sudden; himself cut down in the *Prime* of Life, amidst all the Vivacity and Vigour of *Manhood*; “ while his Breasts were full of Milk, and “ his Bones moistened with Marrow.” — Probably, he entertained no Apprehensions of the evil Hour: And indeed, who could have suspected, that so bright a Sun should go down at Noon? To human Appearance his Hill stood strong: Length of Days seem'd written in his sanguine Countenance: He solaced himself with the Prospect of a long, long Series of earthly Satisfaction. — When, lo! an unexpected Stroke descends! descends from that mighty Arm, which “ overturneth the Mountains by the Roots, “ and crushes the imaginary Hero * *before the* “ *Moth* ;” as quickly, and more easily, than our Fingers squeeze such a feeble fluttering Insect to Death.

P E R-

* *Job* iv. 19. לפניו — *Ad instar, ad modum Tinea.* — I retain this Interpretation, both as it is most suitable to my Purpose, and as it is patronized by some eminent Commentators; especially the celebrated *Schultens*. Though I cannot but give the Preference to the Opinion of a judicious Friend, who would render the
Passage

PERHAPS, the *nuptial Joys* were all he thought on. — Were not such the Breathings of his enamoured Soul? “ Yet a very “ little while, and I shall possess the utmost “ of my Wishes: I shall call my Charmer “ mine; and, in her, enjoy whatever my “ Heart can crave.” — O! dreadful Vicissitude! to have the *bridal * Festivity* turned into the *funeral Solemnity*. O! deplorable Misfortune! to be shipwrecked even in the Haven! and perish in Sight of Happiness! — What a memorable Proof is here

Passage more literally, *Before the Face of a Moth*. Which, besides its closer Correspondence with the exact Import of the *Hebrew*, presents us with a much finer Image of the most extreme Imbecillity. For it certainly implies a far greater Degree of Weakness, to be crushed by the feeble Flutter of the feeblest Creature, than only to be crushed as easily as that Creature, by the Hand of Man. — The *French* Version is very expressive and beautiful; *à la Rencontre d'un Vermisseau*.

* A Distress of this Kind is finely painted by *Pliny*, in an Epistle to *Marcellinus*: *O triste planè acerbumque Eunus! O Morte ipsâ Mortis Tempus indignius! Jam destinata erat egregio Juveni; jam electus Nuptiarum Dies; jam nos advocati. Quod Gaudium quo Mærore mutatum est? Non possum exprimere Verbis, quantum Animo Vulnus acceperim, quum audiivi Fundanum ipsum (ut multa lætuosa Dolor invenit) præcipientem, quod in Vestes, Margaritas, Gemmas fuerat erogaturus, hoc in Thura & Unguenta, & Odores impenderetur.*

Plin. Lib. v. Epist. 16.

of

of the *Frailty of Man*, in his best Estate! Look, O, look on this Monument, ye Gay and Careless! Attend to this Date; and boast no more of To-morrow!

Who can tell, but the Bride-maids, girded with Gladness, had prepared the Marriage-Bed? Had decked it with the richest Covers, and dressed it in Pillows of Down? When — Oh! trust not in Youth, or Strength, or in any Thing mortal; for there is nothing certain, nothing to be depended on, beneath the unchangeable GOD. — Death, relentless Death, is making him another Kind of Bed in the Dust of the Earth. Unto this he must be conveyed, not with a splendid Procession of joyous Attendants, but stretched in the gloomy Hearse, and followed by a Train of Mourners. On this he must take up a lonely Lodging, nor ever be released, “till the Heavens are no more.” — In vain does the consenting Fair-one put on her Ornaments, and expect her Spouse. Did she not, like *Sisera's* Mother, look out of the Lattice; chide the Delays of her Beloved; and wonder “why his Chariot was so long in coming?” Little thinking, that the intended Bridegroom had for ever done with
transitory

transitory Things! That now everlasting *Cares* employ his Mind, without one single Remembrance of his lovely *Lucinda*! — Go, disappointed Virgin! go mourn the Uncertainty of all created Blifs! Teach thy Soul to aspire after a sure and immutable Felicity! For the once gay and gallant *Fidelio* sleeps in other Embraces; even in the icy Arms of Death! Forgetful, eternally forgetful, of the *World* — and *thee*.

HITHERTO one is tempted to exclaim against the *King of Terrors*, and call him *capriciously cruel*. He seems, by beginning at the wrong End of the Register, to have inverted the Laws of Nature. Passing over the Couch of decrepit Age, he has nipped *Infancy* in its Bud; blasted *Youth* in its Bloom; and torn up *Manhood* in its full Maturity. — Terrible indeed are these Providences, yet not unsearchable the Counsels.

*For us they sicken, and for us they die.**

SUCH Thoughts must not only *grieve* the *Relatives*, but *surprize* the whole Neighbourhood. They sound a powerful Alarm to heedless dreaming Mortals, and
are

* Complaint.

are intended as a *Remedy* for our *carnal Security*. Such Passing-Bells inculcate loudly our LORD's Admonition: "Take ye heed, watch, and pray; for ye know not when the Time is." — We nod, like intoxicated Creatures, upon the very Verge of a tremendous Precipice. These astonishing Dispensations are the kind Messengers of Heaven, to rouse us from our Supineness, and quicken us into timely Circumspection. I need not, surely, accommodate them with Language, nor act as their Interpreter. Let every one's Conscience be awake, and this will appear their awful Meaning — "O! ye Sons of Men, in the Midst of Life you are in Death. No State, no Circumstances, can ascertain your Preservation a single Moment. So *strong* is the Tyrant's Arm, that nothing can resist its Force; so *un-erring* his Aim, that nothing can elude the Blow: *Sudden* as Lightning sometimes is his Arrow launched, and wounds and kills in the Twinkling of an Eye. Never promise yourselves Safety in any Expedient, but constant Preparation. The fatal Shafts fly so promiscuously, that none can guess the next Victim.

E

There-

“ Therefore, *be ye always ready ; for in
 “ such an Hour as ye think not, the final,
 “ Summons cometh.*”

No sooner turned from one *Memento* of my own, and Memorial of another's *Decease*, but a second, a third, a long Succession of these melancholy Monitors crowd upon my Sight. — That which has fixed my Observation, is one of a more *grave* and *sable Aspect* than the former. I suppose, it preserves the Relics of a more aged Person. One would conjecture, that he made somewhat of a Figure in his Station among the Living, as his Monument does among the Funeral Marbles. Let me draw near, and inquire of the Stone, “ Who or what is
 “ beneath its Surface?” — I am inform'd, He was once the Owner of a considerable Estate ; which was much improved by his own Application and Management : That he left the World in the busy Period of Life, advanced a little beyond the Meridian. — Probably, replied my musing Mind, one of those indefatigable Drudges, who rise early, late take Rest, and eat the Bread of Carefulness, not to secure the Loving-kindness of
 7 the

the LORD; not to make Provision for any reasonable Necessity; but only to amass together ten thousand times more than they can possibly use. Did he not lay Schemes for enlarging his Fortune, and aggrandizing his Family? Did he not purpose to join Field to Field, and add House to House, till his Possessions were almost as vast as his Desires? That then he would * sit down, and enjoy what he had acquired; breathe a while from his toilsome Pursuit of Things temporal, and, perhaps, think a little of Things eternal.

BUT see the *Folly of worldly Wisdom!* How silly, how childish, is the Sagacity of (what is called) manly and masterly Prudence, when it contrives more solicitously for Time, than it provides for Eternity! How strangely infatuated are those subtil Heads, that weary themselves in concerting Measures for *Shadows of a Day*, and scarce bestow a Thought on *everlasting Realities!* — When every Wheel moves on smoothly; when all the well-disposed Designs are ripening

* *Hac mente laborem*

*Sese ferre, senes ut in otia tuta recedant,
Aiunt, cum sibi sint congesta cibaria.*

Hor.

apace for Execution ; and the long-expected Crisis of Enjoyment seems to approach ; behold ! GOD from on high laughs at the Babel-builder ; Death touches the labour'd Bubble, and immediately it breaks. The Cobweb, most finely spun indeed, but more easily dislodged, is swept away in an Instant ; and all the abortive Projects are buried in the same Grave with their Projector. So true is that Verdict, which the Wisdom from above passes on these *successful U'nfortunates* :
 “ They walk in a vain Shadow, and disquiet
 “ themselves in vain.”

SPEAK, ye, that attended such a one in his last Minutes ; ye, that heard his expiring Sentiments ; did he not cry out, in the Language of disappointed Sensuality, “ O Death !
 “ How bitter is the Remembrance of thee,
 “ to a Man that has devoted himself to
 “ the Pursuit of *present* Satisfactions, and
 “ exercised no Concern for the never-end-
 “ ing *Hereafter*. Where, alas ! is the Pro-
 “ fit, where the Comfort, of entering deep
 “ into the Knowlege, and of being dextrous
 “ in the Dispatch, of earthly Affairs, since
 “ I have neglected *the one Thing needful* ?
 “ O destructive Mistake ! I have been atten-
 “ tive

“rive to every *inferior Interest*, but have
“disregarded *Heaven*, have forgot *eternal*
“*Ages!*” — May the *Children of this*
World be warned by the dying Words of an
unhappy Brother, and gather Advantage from
his Misfortune. Why should they pant with
impatient Ardor after White and Yellow
Earth, as if the Universe did not afford suf-
ficient for every one to take a little? Why
should they lade themselves with thick Clay,
when they are to “run for an incorruptible
“Crown, and press towards the Prize of their
“high Calling?” Why should they over-load
the Vessel, in which their everlasting All is
embarked; or fill their Arms with Super-
fluities, when they are to swim for their
Lives? Yet, so preposterous is the Conduct of
those Persons, who are *all Industry*, to heap
up an Abundance of the Wealth which
perisheth; but are scarce so much as *faintly*
desirous of being rich towards GOD.

O! that we may walk from henceforth
through all these glittering Toys, at least
with a wise Indifference, if not with a supe-
rior Disdain! Having enough for the Con-
veniencies of Life, let us only *accommodate*
ourselves with Things below, and *lay up*
our

our Treasures in the Regions above. — Whereas, if we indulge an anxious Concern, or lavish an inordinate Care, on any transitory Possessions, we shall rivet them to our Affections with so firm an Union, that the utmost Severity of Pain must attend the separating Stroke. By such an eager Attachment to what will certainly be ravished from us, we shall only insure to ourselves accumulated Anguish against the agonizing Hour: We shall plant aforehand our dying Pillow with Thorns.

SOME, I perceive, arrived at *Threescore Years and ten*, before they made their Exit; nay, some few resigned not their Breath, till they had numbered *Fourscore* revolving Harvests. — These, I would hope, “remember’d
“ their Creator in the Days of their Youth;” before their Strength became Labour and Sorrow; before that low Ebb of languishing Nature, when they had too much Reason to say, “We have neither Pleasure nor Vigour left.” If their Lamps were unfurnished with Oil, how unfit must they be, in such decrepit Circumstances, to go to the Market, and buy? For, besides a Variety of Disorders arising from the
enfeebled

enfeebled Constitution, their Corruptions must be surprisngly strengthened by such a long Course of Irreligion. Evil Habits must have struck the deepest Root, must have twisted themselves with every Fibre of the Heart; and be as thoroughly ingrained in the Disposition, as the Soot in the *Ethiopian's* Complexion, or the Spots in the Leopard's Skin. If such a one, under such Disadvantages, surmounts all the Difficulties that lie in his Way to Glory, it must be a great and mighty Salvation indeed. If such a one escapes Destruction, and is saved at the last, it must, without all peradventure, be *so as by Fire*.

THIS is the Season that stands in need of *Comfort*, and is very improper to enter upon the *Conflict*. The Husbandman should now be putting in his Sickle, or eating the Fruit of his Labours; not beginning to break up the Ground, or scatter the Seed. — Nothing, 'tis true, is impossible with GOD: He said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*: Instantaneous Light, diffused, as quick as Thought, through all the dismal Dominion of primeval Darkness. At his Command, a Leprosy of the longest Continuance,
and

and utmost Inveteracy, departs in a Moment. He can, in the Greatness of his Strength, quicken the Wretch, that has lain dead in Trespases and Sins, not *four Days* only, but *four score Tears*. — Yet trust not, O trust not, a Point of such inexpressible Importance, to so dreadful an Uncertainty. GOD may suspend his Power; may withdraw his Help; may swear in his Wrath, that such Abusers of his Long-suffering shall “never enter into “his Rest.”

YE therefore, that are *vigorous in Health*, and *blooming in Youth*, improve the precious Opportunity. Improve your golden Hours to the noblest of all Purposes. Stand not, all the *Prime* of your *Day*, idle; but make Haste, and delay not the Time, to keep GOD'S Commandments. While you are loitering in a gay Insensibility, Death may be bending his Bow, and marking you out for speedy Victims. — Not long ago I happened to 'spy a thoughtless *Jay*. The poor Bird was idly busied in dressing his pretty Plumes, or hopping carelessly from Spray to Spray. A Sportsman coming by, observes the feather'd Rover. Immediately he lifts the Tube, and levels his Blow. Swifter than Whirlwind flies the leaden

them; will never depart from them; but make them glad for Ever and Ever in the City of their GOD. Their Treasures were such, as no created Power could take away; such as none but infinite Beneficence can bestow; and (Oh! comfortable to consider!) such as I, and every indigent longing Sinner, may obtain; Treasures of heavenly Knowledge, and saving Faith; Treasures of atoning Blood, and imputed Righteousness.

HERE * lie their *Bodies* in quiet Resting-places. Here they have thrown off every
Burthen,

* SOME, I know, are offended at our burying Corpses within the Church, and exclaim against it as a very great Impropriety and Indecency: But this, I imagine, proceeds from an excessive and mistaken Delicacy. Let proper Care be taken to secure from Injury the Foundations of the Building, and to prevent the Exhalation of any noxious Effluvia from the putrefying Flesh; and I cannot discover any Inconveniencies attending this Practice.

THE Notion, that noisome Carcases (as they are called) are very unbecoming a Place consecrated to religious Purposes, seems to be founded on an antiquated *Jewish* Canon: Whereby it was declared, that a dead Body imparted Defilement to the Person, who touched it; and polluted the Spot, where it was lodged. On which Account, the *Jews* were scrupulously careful to have their Sepulchres built at a Distance from their Houses; and made it a Point of Conscience not to
suffer

Burthen, and are escaped from every *Snare*.
The Head ach's no more; the Eye forgets
to weep; the Flesh is no longer racked with
acute,

suffer any Cemeteries to subsist in the City. But as this was a Rite purely ceremonial, it seems to be intirely superseded by the Gospel Dispensation.

I CANNOT forbear thinking, that, under the Christian Œconomy, there is a Propriety and Usefulness in the Custom. ——— *Usefulness*, because it must render our solemn Assemblies more venerable and awful. For when we walk over the Dust of our Friends, or kneel upon the Ashes of our Relations, this awakening Circumstance must strike a lively Impression of our own Mortality. And what Consideration can be more effectual, to make us serious and attentive in Hearing, earnest and importunate in Praying? ——— As for the *Fitness* of the Usage, it seems perfectly suitable to the Design of those sacred Edifices. They are set apart for GOD; not only to receive his Worshippers, but to preserve the Furniture for holy Ministrations, and what is in a peculiar Manner appropriated to the Divine Majesty. And are not the *Bodies of the Saints* the *Almighty's Property*? Were they not once the Objects of his *tender Love*, and still the Subjects of his *special Care*? Has He not given Commandment concerning the Bones of his Elect, and charged the Ocean, and enjoined the Grave, to keep them till *that Day*? Are they not precious in His Esteem? So precious, that when Mountains bright with Gems, or rich with Mines, are abandoned to the devouring Flames; These shall be rescued from the fiery Ruin: These shall be translated into JEHOVAH's Kingdom, and, conjointly with the Soul, made "his Jewels," made "his peculiar Treasure;" made to shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for Ever and Ever.

acute, nor pines away under lingering, Distempers. Here they find a final Release from Pain, and an everlasting Discharge from Sorrows. Here Danger never threatens them with her terrifying Alarms; but Tranquillity softens their Couch, and Safety guards their Repose. — Rest then, ye precious Relicks, within this hospitable

IS not CHRIST *the LORD of our Bodies?* Are they not bought with a Price? Bought, not with corruptible Things, Silver and Gold, but with his Divine Blood. And if the blessed JESUS purchased the Redemption of our Bodies at so infinitely dear a rate, can it enter into our Hearts to conceive, that he should dislike to have them reposed under his own Habitation? — Once more; Are not the Bodies of the Faithful *Temples of the Holy Ghost?* And is there not, upon this Supposition, an apparent *Propriety*, rather than the least *Indecorum*, in remitting these Temples of Flesh to the Temple made with Hands? They are Vessels of Honour, Instruments of Righteousness, and, even when broken by Death, like the Fragments of a golden Bowl, are valuable; are worthy to be laid up in the safest, most honourable Repositories.

UPON the Whole; since the LORD JESUS has purchased them at the Expence of his Blood, and the blessed Spirit has honoured them with his in-dwelling Presence; since they are right dear in the Sight of the adorable Trinity, and undoubted Heirs of a glorious Immortality; Why should it be thought a Thing improper, to admit them to a transient Rest in their Heavenly Father's House? Why may they not lie down and sleep in the *outer Courts*, since they are soon to be introduced into the *inmost Mansions* of everlasting Honour and Joy?

Gloom;

Gloom; rest in gentle Slumbers, till the last Trumpet shall give the welcome Signal, and sound aloud through all your silent Mansions, “ Arise; shine; for your Light is “ come, and the Glory of the LORD is “ risen upon You.”

To these how *calm* was the *Evening of Life!* In what a smiling Serenity did their Sun go down! When their Flesh and their Heart failed, how reviving was the Remembrance of an All-sufficient Redeemer; once dying for *their* Sins, now risen again for *their* Justification! How cheering the well-grounded Hope of Pardon for their Transgressions, and Peace with GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD! How did this assuage the Agonies, and sweeten the Bitterness of Death! — Where now is *Wealth*, with all her golden Mountains? Where is *Honour*, with her proud Trophies of Renown? Where are all the *vain Poms* of a deluded *World*? Can they administer any Support in this last Extremity? Can they compose the affrighted Thoughts, or buoy up the departing Soul amidst all the Pangs of Dissolution? — The Followers of the Lamb seem pleased and triumphant even at their last Gasp. “ GOD’s everlasting Arms are
“ under-

“ underneath” their fainting Heads. His Spirit whispers Peace and Consolation to their Consciences. In the Strength of these heavenly Succours, they quit the Field of Battle, not *Captives*, but *Conquerors*; with “ Hopes full of Immortality.”

AND now they are gone. — The Struggles of reluctant Nature are over. The Body sleeps in Death; the Soul launches into the *invisible State*. — But who can imagine the delightful Surprize, when they find themselves surrounded by guardian Angels, instead of weeping Friends? How securely do they wing their way, and pass through unknown Worlds, under the Conduct of these celestial Guides! — The Vale of Tears is quite lost. Farewel, for Ever, the Realms of Woe, and Range of malignant Beings! They arrive on the Frontiers of inexpressible Felicity. They “ are come to the City of the Living GOD:” While a Voice, sweeter than Music in her softest Strains, sweet as the Harmony of hymning Seraphims, congratulates their Arrival, and bespeaks their Admission: “ Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates; and “ be ye lift up, ye everlasting Doors; that “ the Heirs of Glory may enter in.”

HERE,

HERE, then, let us leave “ the *Spirits and Souls of the Righteous* ;” escaped from an entangling Wilderness, and received into a Paradise of Delights! escaped from the Territories of Disquietude, and settled in Regions of unmolested Security! Here they sit down with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, in the Kingdom of their Father. Here they mingle with an innumerable Company of Angels, and rejoice around the Throne of the Lamb; rejoice in the *Fruition of present Felicity*, and in the *assured Expectation* of an inconceivable Addition to their Bliss; when “ GOD shall
“ call the Heavens from above, and the
“ Earth, that he may judge his People.” —
“ Fools accounted their Life Madness, and
“ their End to be without Honour: But how
“ are they numbered among the Children of
“ GOD, and their Lot is among the Saints!”
However, then, an undiscerning World may despise, and a profane World vilify, the truly Religious; be this the invariable Desire of my Heart! “ Let me live the Life, and die
“ the Death, of the Righteous. Oh! let
“ my latter End, and future State, be like
“ theirs!”

WHAT

WHAT Figure is That, which strikes my Eye, from an eminent Part of the Wall? It is not only in a more elevated Situation than the rest, but carries a more splendid and sumptuous Air than ordinary. Swords and Spears, murdering Engines, and Instruments of Slaughter, adorn the Stone with a formidable Magnificence. — It proves to be the *Monument* of a *noble Warrior*.

Is such Respect, thought I, paid to the Memory of this brave Soldier, for sacrificing his Life to the *publick Good*? — Then what Honours, what immortal Honours, are due to *His* most precious Name, who willingly gave Himself a bleeding Propitiation for Sinners! The *One* died, being a Mortal; and only yielded up a Life, that was long before forfeited to Divine Justice; which must soon have been surrendered as a *Debt to Nature*, if it had not fallen as a *Prey to War*: — But CHRIST took Flesh, and gave up the Ghost, though he was the Blessed and Only Potentate. He, who thought it no Robbery to be *Equal with God*; He, whose Outgoings were *from everlasting*; even He, was made in the *Likeness of Man*,
and

and *cut off* out of the Land of the Living. Wonder, O Heavens! Be astonished, O Earth! *He* died the Death, of whom it is witnessed, that He is "true GOD, and eternal Life."

THE *one exposed* Himself to Peril, in the Service of his King and Country; which, though it was glorious to do, yet would have been ignominious, in such Circumstances, to have declined. But CHRIST took the Field, though he was sure to drop in the Engagement. CHRIST put on the Harness, though He knew before-hand, it must reek with his Blood. CHRIST resigned Himself not to the *Hazard*, but to the *inevitable Stroke*; to certain Death. — And for whom? Not for those who were in any Degree deserving; but for his own disobedient Creatures; for the Pardon of condemned Malefactors; for a Band of Rebels, a Race of Traitors, the most obnoxious and inexcusable of all Criminals; whom He might have left to perish in their Iniquities, without the least *Impeachment* of his *Goodness*; nay, to the advantageous *Display* of his avenging *Justice*.

THE *One*, 'tis probable, died *expeditiously*; was soon wounded, and soon slain: A Bullet lodged in his Heart, a Sword sheathed in his Breast, or a Battle-ax cleaving the Brain, might put a speedy End to his Misery; dispatch him "as in a Moment:" — Whereas, the Divine Redeemer expired in *tedious* and protracted *Torments*. His Pangs were as *lingering*, as they were *exquisite*. Even in the Prelude to his last Sufferings, what a Load of Sorrows overwhelmed his sacred Humanity! till the intolerable Pressure wrung Blood, instead of Sweat, from every Pore; till the crimson Flood bathed his Body, stained all his Raiment, and tinged the very Stones. — But when the last Scene of the Tragedy commenced; when the Executioner's Hammer had nailed him to the Cross; Oh! how many dismal Hours did that illustrious Sufferer hang! centered all the while on the keenest Edge of mortal Pain. So long he hung, that Nature, through all her Dominions, was thrown into sympathizing Commotions. The Earth cou'd no longer sustain such barbarous Indignities, without trembling; nor the Sun behold them, without

out

out Horror. Nay, so long did he hang in this Extremity of Torture, that the Alarm reached even the remote Regions of the Dead. — Never, O my Soul, never forget the amazing Truth: The Lamb of GOD was worried, was slaughtered with the utmost Inhumanity, and endured *Death* in all its *Bitterness* for thee. His Murtherers, studiously cruel, so guided the fatal Cup, that he tasted every Drop of its Gall, before he drank it off to the very Dregs.

ONCE again; The *One* died like a *Hero*, and fell gallantly in the Field of Battle. — But died not CHRIST “*as a Fool dieth?*” Not on the *Bed of Honour*, with Scars of Glory in his Breast; but, like some execrable Miscreant, *on a Gibbet*; with Lashes of the vile Scourge on his Back. Yes, the blessed JESUS bowed his expiring Head on the accursed Tree, and poured out his Soul betwixt two infamous Felons; suspended between Heaven and Earth, as an Outcast from Both, and unworthy of Either.

OH! what suitable Returns of inflamed and adoring Devotion can we make to the *Holy One of GOD*, thus dying, that *we* might live? Dying in Ignominy and Anguish,

44 MEDITATIONS .

Anguish, that we might live for ever in the Heights of Joy, and sit for ever on Thrones of Glory. — Alas! it is not in us, impotent, insensible Mortals, to be duly thankful. He only, who confers such inconceivably rich Favours, can enkindle a proper Warmth of grateful Affection. Then build thyself *a Monument*, most gracious *Immanuel*, build thyself an everlasting Monument, *of Gratitude* in our *Souls*. Inscribe the Memory of thy matchless Beneficence, not with Ink and Pen, but with that precious *Blood*, which streamed from thy wounded *Veins*. Engrave it, not with the Hammer and Chisel, but with that sharpened *Spear* which pierced thy blessed *Side*. Let it stand conspicuous and indelible, not on outward *Tables of Stone*, but on the very inmost *Tables of our Hearts*.

ONE thing more let me observe, before I bid Adieu to this entombed Warrior, and his garnished Sepulchre. How mean are these ostentatious Methods of *bribing* the *Vote of Fame*, and purchasing a little posthumous Renown! What a poor Substitute for a Set of *memorable Actions*, is *polished Alabaster*, or the Mimickry of
sculptured

sculptured Marble! The real Excellency of this * bleeding Patriot is written on the Minds of his Countrymen: It would be remembred with Applause, so long as the Nation subsists, without this artificial Expedient to perpetuate it. — And such, *such* is the Monument I wou'd wish for myself. Let me leave a *Memorial* in the *Breasts* of my Fellow-Creatures. Let surviving Friends bear Witness, that I have not lived to myself alone, nor been altogether unserviceable in my Generation. O! let an uninter-

* Sir *Bevil Granvil*, slain in the Civil Wars, at an Engagement with the Rebels, and interred in this Church. — It may possibly be some Entertainment to the Reader, to subjoin Sir *Bevil's* Character, as it is drawn by that celebrated Pen, which wrote the History of those unfortunate Times: — “ That
“ which would have clouded any Victory, says the
“ noble Historian, and made the Loss of others less
“ spoken of, was the Death of Sir *Bevil Granvil*. He
“ was indeed an excellent Person, whose Activity,
“ Interest, and Reputation, were the Foundation of
“ what had been done in *Cornwall*: His Temper and
“ Affections so publick, that no Accident which hap-
“ pened, cou'd make any Impression upon Him:
“ And his Example kept others from taking any
“ Thing ill, or at least seeming to do so. In a Word,
“ a brighter Courage, and a gentler Disposition, were
“ never married together, to make the most chearful
“ and innocent Conversation.”

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46 M E D I T A T I O N S

rupted Series of beneficent Offices be the *Inscription*, and the best Interests of my Acquaintance the *Plate*, that exhibits it.

LET the *Poor*, as they pass by my Grave, point at the little Spot, and thankfully acknowlege, “ There lies the Man, whose
 “ unwearied Kindness was the constant
 “ Relief of my various Distresses; who
 “ tenderly visited my languishing Bed, and
 “ readily supplied my indigent Circum-
 “ stances. How often were his Counsels
 “ a Guide to my perplexed Thoughts, and
 “ a Cordial to my dejected Spirit! ’Tis
 “ owing to God’s Blessing on his season-
 “ able Charities, and prudent Consola-
 “ tions, that I now live, and live in Com-
 “ fort.” — Let a Person, once *ignorant*
and ungodly, lift up his Eyes to Heaven, and say within himself, as he walks over my Bones, “ Here are the last Remains of
 “ that sincere Friend, who *watched for*
 “ *my Soul*. I can never forget, with what
 “ a heedless Gayety I was posting on in the
 “ Paths of Perdition; and I tremble to
 “ think, into what irretrievable Ruin I
 “ might have been plunged, had not his
 “ faithful Admonitions arrested me in the
 “ wild

“ wild Career. I was unacquainted with
“ the Gospel of Peace, and unconcerned
“ about its unsearchable Treasures: But
“ now, enlightened by his *instructive Con-*
“ *versation*, I see the All-sufficiency of my
“ Saviour; and, animated by his *repeated*
“ *Exhortations*, I count all Things but
“ Loss, that I may win CHRIST. Me-
“ thinks, his Discourses, seasoned with Re-
“ ligion, and blessed by Grace, still tingle
“ in my Ears; are still warm on my Heart;
“ and, I trust, will be more and more ope-
“ rative, till we meet each other in the
“ House not made with Hands, eternal in
“ the Heavens.”

BUT the only *infallible way of immortalizing our Characters*, a Way equally open to the meanest, and most exalted Fortune, is, “ To make our Calling and Election sure;” to gain some sweet Evidence, that our *Names are written in Heaven*. Then, however they may one Day be forgotten among Men, they will not fail to be had in everlasting Remembrance before the LORD. — This is of all Distinctions far the noblest: This will issue in never-dying Renown. Ambition, be this thy Object, and every Page of Scripture will sanctify

sanctify thy Passion; even Grace itself will fan thy Flame. — Every earthly Memorial will shortly be obliterated. The Tongue of those, whose Happiness we have zealously promoted, must soon be silent in the Coffin. Characters cut with a Pen of Iron, and committed to the solid Rock, will ere-long cease to be legible*. But as many as are inrolled “in the Lamb’s Book of Life,” He himself declares, shall never be blotted out from those Annals of Eternity. When a Flight of Years has mouldered the *triumphal Column* into Dust; when the *brazen Statue* perishes under the corroding Hand of Time; *these Honours* still continue; still are blooming and incorruptible in the World of Glory.

Make the extended *Skies* your Tomb,
 Let *Stars* record your Worth:
 Yet know, vain Mortals, all must die,
 As Nature’s *sickliest Birth*.

Wou’d bounteous Heav’n indulge my Pray’r,
 I frame a nobler Choice;
 Nor, living, with the pompous Pile,
 Nor, dead, regret the Loss.

* — *Data sunt ipsis quoque Fata Sepulchris.*

JUVEN.
 In

In thy fair *Book of Life* divine,
My GOD, inscribe my Name:
There let it fill some humble Place,
Beneath the slaughter'd Lamb.

Thy Saints, while Ages roll away,
In endless Fame survive;
Their *Glories*, o'er the *Wrongs of Time*,
Greatly triumphant, *live*.

YONDER Entrance leads, I suppose, to the *Vault*. Let me turn aside, and take one View of the Habitation, and its Tenants: — The sullen *Door* grates upon its Hinges: Not used to receive many Visitants, it admits me with Reluctance and Murmurs. — What meaneth this sudden Trepidation, while I descend the Steps, and am visiting the pale Nations of the Dead? — Be composed, my Spirits; there is nothing to fear in these quiet Chambers: “ Here even the Wicked cease from troubling.”

GOOD Heavens! what a solemn Scene! How dismal the *Gloom*! Here is perpetual Darkness, and Night even at Noon-day. — How doleful the *Solitude*! Not one

H

Trace

Trace of chearful Society; but Sorrow and Terror seem to have made This their melancholy Abode. — Hark! how the hollow Dome resounds at every Tread. The *Echo's*, that long have slept, are awakened, and whisper along the Walls.

A BEAM, or two, finds its Way through the Grates, and reflects a feeble Glimmer from the Nails of the *Coffins*. So many of those sad Spectacles, half concealed in Shades, half seen dimly by the baleful Twilight, add a deeper Horror to these gloomy Caverns. — I pore upon the *Inscriptions*, and am just able to pick out, That These are the Remains of the *Rich* and *Renowned*. No vulgar Dead are deposited here. The *most Illustrious*, and *right Honourable*, have claimed this for their last Retreat. And, indeed, they retain somewhat of a shadowy Pre-eminence. They lie, ranged in mournful Order, and in a sort of silent Pomp, under the Arches of an ample Sepulchre; while meaner Corpses, without much Ceremony, “ go down to the Stones of the Pit.”

MY Apprehensions recover from their Surprise: I find, here are no Phantoms,

but such as Fear raises. — However, it still amazes me, to observe the *Wonders* of this *nether World*. Those who received vast Revenues, and called whole Lordships their own, are here reduced to a *few Sheets of Lead*. Rooms of State, and sumptuous Furniture, are resigned, for no other Ornament than the *Shroud*, for no other Apartment than the gloomy *Niche*. No splendid Retinue attend this solitary Dwelling: The lordly Equipage hovers no longer about the lifeless Master; nothing but a fable *Plume*, that seems to nod over his Tomb; or a *Statue*, which the Sculptor's Hand has taught to weep. Instead of the Star, that blazed upon the Breast; or Coronet, that glittered round the Temples; the only Remains of departed Dignity are, the Weather-beaten *Atchievement*, and tatter'd *Escutcheon*. — Those who gloried in high-born Ancestors, and noble Pedigree, here drop their lofty Pretensions. They acknowledge Kindred with creeping Things, and quarter Arms with the meanest Reptiles, “ They say to Corruption, Thou art my
“ Father; and to the Worm, Thou art my
“ Mother and my Sister.” — O mortifying

lying Truth! Sufficient, one wou'd think,
to wean the most sanguine Appetite from
this transitory State of Things; from its
sickly Satisfaction, its fading Glories, its
vanishing Treasures.

For now, ye lying Vanities of Life!
Ye ever-tempting, ever-cheating Train!
Where are ye now? And what is your Amount?

Thomf. Wint.

WHAT is all the World to these poor
breathless Beings? What are their *Plea-
sures*? A Bubble broke. What their *Ho-
nours*? A Dream that is forgotten. What
the *Sum-total* of their *Enjoyments* below?
Once, perhaps, it appeared to in-experienced
and fond Desire, something considerable:
But now Death has measured it with his
Line, and weighed it in his Scale, what
is the Upshot? Alas! 'tis shorter than a
Span; lighter than the dancing Spark; and
driven away like the dissolving Smoke.—

INDULGE, my Soul, a serious Pause.
Recollect all the gay Things, that were
wont to dazle thy Eyes, and inveigle thy
Affections. *Here* examine these *Baits of
Sense*;

Sense: Here form an Estimate of their *real* Value. Suppose thyself *first* among the *Favourites of Fortune*, who revel in the Lap of Pleasure, who shine in the Robes of Honour, and swim in Tides of inexhausted Riches: Yet how soon wou'd the Passing-Bell proclaim thy Exit! And when once that Iron Call has summoned thee to thy future Reckoning, where would all these Gratifications be? At that Period, how will all the Pageantry of the most affluent, conspicuous, or luxurious Circumstances vanish into empty Air? And is this a Happiness so passionately to be coveted?

I THANK you, ye Relicks of sounding Titles, and magnificent Names: Ye have taught me more of the Littleness of the World, than all the Volumes of my Library. Your *Nobility* arrayed in a *Winding-sheet*, your *Grandeur* mouldering in an *Urn*, are the most invincible Proofs of the *Nothingness* of created Things. Never, surely, did Providence write this important Point in such legible Characters, as in the Ashes of *My Lord*, or on the Corpse of *His Grace*. Let others, if they please, pay their obsequious Court to your wealthy
Sons,

Sons, and ignobly fawn, or anxiously sue,
 for Preferments: My Thoughts shall often
 resort, in pensive Contemplation, to the
 Sepulchres of their Sires; and learn, from
 their sleeping Dust, to *moderate* my *Ex-
 pectations* from Mortals; to stand *disen-
 gaged* from every *undue Attachment* to
 the little Interests of Time; to get above
 the delusive *Amusements* of Honour, the
 gaudy *Tinsels* of Wealth, and all the empty
Shadows of a perishing World.

HARK! What *Sound* is That? — In such
 a Situation, every Noise alarms. — Solemn
 and slow, it breaks again upon the silent
 Air. — 'Tis the *Striking of the Clock*:
 Designed, one would imagine, to ratify all
 my serious Meditations. Methinks, it *says*
Amen, and sets a Seal, to every improving
 Hint. It tells me, That another Portion of
 my appointed Time is elapsed. One calls
 it, “The Knell of my departed Hours.”
 'Tis the Watch-word to Vigilance and
 Activity. It cries in the Ear of Reason,
 “Redeem the Time. Catch the favourable
 “*Gales of Opportunity*: O! catch them
 “while they breathe, before they are irre-
 “coverably

“ coverably lost. Thy Span of Life shortens
“ continually. Thy Minutes are all upon
“ the Wing, and hastening to be gone. Thou
“ art a Borderer upon Eternity, and making
“ incessant Advances to the State thou art
“ contemplating.” — O! may the Ad-
monition sink deep into an attentive and
obedient Mind! May it teach me that *Hea-
venly Arithmetic*, of “ numbering my
“ Days, and applying my Heart unto Wis-
“ dom!”

LET me now emerge from this damp and
dreadful Obscurity, and revisit the chearing
Day. — Having cast a *superficial View*
upon these Receptacles of the Dead, Curio-
sity prompts my Inquiry, to a *more intimate
Survey*. And could we draw back the Co-
vering of the Tomb; could we see, What
Those are Now, who *Once were Mortals*
— Oh! how would it surprize and grieve
us! Surprize us, to behold the prodigious
Transformation that has taken place on
every Individual; grieve us, to observe the
Dishonour done to our Nature in general,
within these subterraneous Caverns!

H·E·R·E

HERE the sweet and winning *Aspect*, that wore perpetually an attractive Smile, grins horribly a naked, ghastly Scull. The *Eye*, that outshone the Diamond's Lustre, and shot her lovely Lightening into the most guarded Heart; Alas! Where is it? Where shall we find the rolling Sparkler? How are all these radiant Glories totally eclipsed! — The *Tongue*, that once commanded all the Charms of Harmony, and all the Powers of Eloquence, in this strange Land has “ forgot its Cunning.” Where are now those Strains of Melody, which ravished our Ears? Where is that Flow of Persuasion, which carried captive our Judgments? The great Master of Language, and of Song, is become silent as the Night that surrounds Him. — The pampered *Flesh*, so lately cloathed in Purple, and fine Linen, how is it covered rudely with Clods of Clay! There was a Time, when the timorously nice Creature would scarce “ *ad-
 “ venture to set a Foot upon the Ground,
 “ for Delicateness and Tendernefs;” but is now enwrapped in clammy Earth, and sleeps on no softer a Pillow than the ragged Gravel-

* Deut. xxviii. 56.

vel-stones. — Here “ the *strong Men* “ bow themselves:” The Nervous Arm is unstrung; the brawny Sinews are relaxed; the Limbs, not long ago the Seats of Vigour and Activity, lie down motionless; and the Bones, which were as Bars of Iron, are crumbled into Dust.

HERE the *Man of Business* forgets all his favourite Schemes, and discontinues the Pursuit of Gain. Here is a total Stand to the Circulation of Merchandize, and the Hurry of Trade. In these solitary Recesses, as in the Building of *Solomon's Temple*, is heard no Sound of the Hammer and Ax. The Winding-sheet, and the Coffin, are the utmost Bound of all earthly Devices. “ Hi-
“ therto may they go, but no farther.” — Here the *Sons of Pleasure* take a final Farewel of their dear Delights. No more is the Sensualist anointed with Oil; or crowned with Rose-buds: He chants no more to the Melody of the Viol, nor revels any longer at the Banquet of Wine. Instead of sumptuous Tables, and delicious Treats, the poor Voluptuary is Himself a Feast for fattened Insects; “ the Worm feeds sweetly on Him.” — Here also *Beauty* fails; bright Beauty

drops her Lustre here. Oh! How her Roses fade, and her Lilies languish, in this bleak Soil! How does the grand Leveller pour Contempt upon the Charmer of our Hearts! How turn to Deformity what captiyated the World before!

COULD the *Lover* have a Sight of his once-inchanting *Fair-one*, what a startling Astonishment wou'd seize him! — “ Is
 “ This the Object, I not long ago so passion-
 “ ately admired! I said, she was divinely
 “ fair, and * thought her more than mortal.
 “ Her Form was Symmetry itself: Every
 “ Elegance breathed in her Air; and all
 “ the Graces waited on her Motions. —
 “ 'Twas *Music*, when she spoke: But when
 “ she spoke Encouragement, 'twas little less
 “ than *Rapture*. How my Heart danced
 “ to those charming Accents! — And can
 “ that, which, some Weeks ago, was to
 “ Admiration lovely, be now so insuffer-
 “ ably loathsome? — Where is that Ivory
 “ Neck, those blushing Cheeks, the coral
 “ Lips, with ten thousand other matchless

* *O quam te memorem, virgo! namque haud tibi vultus
 Mortalis, nec vox hominem sonat. O Dea certe!*

Virg.

licitude to polish the Jewel, than to varnish the Casket. It might then become their highest Ambition, to have the Mind decked with Divine Virtues, and dressed after the amiable Pattern of their Redeemer's Holiness.

AND would this prejudice their Persons, or depreciate their Charms? — Quite the Reverse: It would spread a Sort of *Heavenly Glory* over the finest *Set of Features*, and heighten the Loveliness of every other engaging Accomplishment. — And, what is yet a more inviting Consideration; these Flowers would not *wither* with Nature, nor be *tarnished* by Time; but open continually into richer Beauties, and flourish even in the *Winter of Age*. — But the most incomparable Recommendation of these noble Qualities is; That from their hallowed *Relicks*, as from the fragrant Ashes of the *Phœnix*, will ere-long arise an *illustrious Form*, bright as the Wings of Angels, lasting as the Light of the new *Jerusalem*.

FOR my Part, the Remembrance of this *sad Revolution* shall make me *ashamed* to pay my *Devotion* to a Shrine of perishing Flesh; and *afraid*, to expect *all* my Happiness from so brittle a Joy. It shall teach
me,

me, not to think too highly of well-proportioned Clay, though formed in the most elegant Mould, and animated with the sweetest Soul. 'Tis Heaven's last, best, and crowning Gift; to be received with *Gratitude*, and cherished with *Love*, as a most valuable *Blessing*; not worshipped with the Incense of *Flattery*, and Strains of fulsome *Adoration*, as a *Goddeſs*. — It will cure, I trust, the *Dotage* of my *Eyes*; and incline me always to prefer the *ſubſtantial* “Ornaments of a meek and virtuous *Spirit*,” before the *transient* Decorations of White and Red on the *Skin*.

HERE I called in my roving Meditations, from their long Excursion on this tender Subject. *Fancy* listened a while, to the Soliloquy of a Lover; but now *Judgment* resumes the Reins, and guides my Thoughts, to more near, and self-interesting Inquiries. — However, upon a Review of the whole Scene, crouded with Spectacles of Mortality, and Trophies of Death, I could not forbear smiting my Breast, and fetching a Sigh, and lamenting over the nobleſt of all viſible Beings, lying in Ruins
under

under the Feet of “ the *pale Horse*, and “ *his Rider*.” I could not forbear that pathetic Exclamation, “ O! *Thou * Adam*, “ *what hast thou done!*” What Desolation has thy Disobedience wrought in the

Earth— O! the destructive Malignity of *Sin! Sin* has demolished so many stately Structures of Flesh: *Sin* has made such Havock, among the most excellent Ranks of GOD’S lower Creation: And *Sin* (that deadly Bane of our Nature) would have plunged our *better Part* into the execrable Horrors of the nethermost *Hell*; had not our merciful Mediator interposed, and given Himself for our Ransom. — Therefore, what grateful Acknowledgements does the whole *World* of *penitent Sinners* owe; what ardent Returns of Love will a whole *Heaven* of *glorified Believers* pay, to such a Friend, Benefactor, and Deliverer!

MUSING upon these melancholy Objects, a faithful Remembrancer suggests from within — “ Must this sad Change succeed in “ *me* also? Am I to draw my last Gasp, “ and become a breathless Corpse? Is there “ a Time

* 2 *Esd.* vii. 48.

“ a Time coming, when this Body shall
“ be carried out upon the Bier, and com-
“ mitted to its long Home? While some
“ kind Acquaintance, perhaps, may let fall
“ one parting Tear, and cry, Alas! my
“ Brother!” — Nothing is more certain.
A Decree, much *surer* than the Law of the
Medes and *Persians*, has irrevocably deter-
mined the Doom.

SHOULD one of these *ghastly Forms* burst
from his Confinement, and start up in fright-
ful Deformity before me; should the *hag-
gard Skeleton* lift a *clattering* Hand, and
point it full in my View; should it open
the *stiffened* Jaws, and, with a hoarse tre-
mendous Murmur, break this profound Si-
lence; should it accost *me*, as *Samuel's* Ap-
parition addressed the trembling King —
“ *The LORD shall deliver Thee also into*
“ *the Hands of Death; yet a little while,*
“ *and Thou shalt be with me*” — The
solemn Warning, delivered in so striking a
Manner, must strongly impress my Imagi-
nation. A Message in Thunder would
scarce sink deeper. — Yet there is abun-
dantly greater Reason to be alarmed by that
express Declaration of the LORD GOD
Almighty,

Almighty, "*Thou shalt surely die.*" — Well then, since Sentence is passed; since I am a condemned Man; and know not when the Dead Warrant may arrive; let me die to *Sin*, and die to the World, before, I die beneath the Stroke of a Righteous GOD. Let me employ the little uncertain Interval of Respite from Execution, in preparing for a happier State, and a better Life; that when the fatal Moment comes, and I am commanded to shut my Eyes upon all Things here below, I may open them again to see my Saviour in the Mansions above.

SINCE this Body, which is so fearfully and wonderfully made, must fall to Pieces in the Grave; since I must soon resign all my bodily Powers to Darkness, Inactivity, and Corruption; Oh! let it be my constant Care to *use* them well, while I *possess* them! — Let my *Hands* be stretched forth to relieve the Needy, and always be "more ready to give, than to receive." — Let my *Knees* bend, in deepest Humiliation, before the Throne of Grace; while the Eyes are cast down to the Earth, in penitential Confusion; or devoutly looking up to Heaven, for pardoning Mercy! — In every friendly

friendly Interview, let the " Law of Kindness dwell on my *Lips*;" or rather, if the Seriousness of my Acquaintance permits, let the Gospel of Peace flow from my *Tongue*: Oh! that I might be enabled in every public Concourse, to lift up my Voice like a Trumpet, and pour abroad a more joyful Sound, than its most melodious Accents, in proclaiming the glad Tidings of free Salvation. — Be shut, my *Ears*, resolutely shut, against the malevolent Whispers of Slander, and the contagious Breath of filthy Talking: But be swift to hear the Instructions of Wisdom; be all Attention, when your REDEEMER speaks; imbibe the precious Truths, and convey them carefully to the Heart. — Carry me, my *Feet*, to the Temple of the LORD; to the Beds of the Sick; and Houses of the Poor. — May *all* my *Members*, devoted intirely to my Divine Master, be the willing Instruments of promoting his Glory.

Then, ye *Embalms*, you may spare your Pains: These Works of Faith, and Labours of Love; these shall be my *Spices* and *Perfumes*. Enwrapped in these, I would lay me gently down, and sleep sweetly in the blessed

K

JESUS;

JESUS; hoping, that GOD will “ give
 “ Commandment concerning my Bones;”
 and one Day fetch them up from the Dust,
 as Silver from the Furnace, purified, “ I
 “ say, not seven times, but seventy times
 “ seven.”

HERE my Contemplation took Wing;
 and, in an Instant, alighted in the *Garden*,
 adjoining to Mount *Calvary*. Having view-
 ed the Abode of my deceased Fellow-Crea-
 tures; methought, I longed to see the Place
 where our LORD lay. — And, Oh! what
 a marvellous Spectacle was once exhibited
 in this memorable Sepulchre! *He*, * “ who
 “ cloathes Himself with Light, as with a Gar-
 “ ment, and walks upon the Wings of the
 “ Wind,” was pleased to wear the Habiliments
 of Mortality, and dwelt among the pro-
 strate Dead. — Who can repeat the won-
 derous Truth too often? Who can dwell
 upon the transporting Theme too long? *He*,
 who sits enthroned in Glory, and diffuses
 Bliss among all the Heavenly Hosts, was

* *Darkness his Curtain, and his Bed the Dust,
 Though Sun and Stars are Dust beneath his Throne.*

COMPL.

ONCE

once a pale and bloody Corpse, and pressed this little Spot.

O DEATH! how great was thy Triumph in that Hour! Never did thy gloomy Realms contain such a Prisoner before. — *Prisoner*, did I say? No; He was *more than Conqueror*. He arose, far more mightily than *Sampson*, from a transient Slumber; broke down the Gates, and demolished the strong Holds, of those dark Dominions. — And This, O Mortals, This, is your only Consolation and Security. JESUS has trod the dreadful Path, and smoothed it for your Passage. — JESUS, sleeping in the Chambers of the Tomb, has brightened the dismal Mansion, and left an inviting Odour in those Beds of Dust. The dying JESUS (Never let the comfortable Truth depart from your Minds! The dying JESUS) is your sure *Protection*, your unquestionable *Passport* through the Territories of the Grave. Believe in Him, and they shall prove a “High-way to *Sion*,” shall transmit you safe to Paradise. Believe in Him, and you shall be no Losers, but unspeakable Gainers, by your Dissolution. For hear what the Oracle of Heaven says upon this important Point:

Whoſo believeth in Me, ſhall never die.

— What ſublime and emphatical Language is This! Thus much, at leaſt, it muſt import: The Nature of that laſt Change ſhall be ſurpriſingly altered for the better. It ſhall no longer be inflicted as a Punishment, but rather vouchsafed as a Blessing: To ſuch Perſons it ſhall come attended with ſuch a Train of Benefits, as will render it a kind of *happy Impropriety*, to call it *Dying*. Dying! No, 'tis Then they truly begin to live: Their Exit is the End of their Frailty, and their Entrance upon Perfection: Their laſt Groan is the Prelude to Life and Immortality.

O YE *timorous Souls*, that are terrified at the Paſſing-Bell; that turn pale at the Sight of an opened Grave, and can ſcarce behold a Coffin, or a Skull, without a ſhuddering Horror; Ye that are *in Bondage* to the griſly Tyrant, and tremble at the ſhaking of his Iron Rod; cry mightily, to the Father of your Spirits, for *Faith* in his dear Son. *Faith* will free you from your Slavery*.

Faith

* Death's Terror is the Mountain *Faith* removes;

'Tis *Faith* difarms Deſtruction. —

Believe, and look with Triumph on the Tomb.

THESE,

Faith will imbolden you to tread on (this fiercest of) Serpents. Old *Simeon*, clasping the Child *JESUS* in the Arms of his Flesh, and the glorious Mediator in the Arms of his Faith, departs with Tranquillity and Peace. That bitter Persecutor *Saul*, having won *CHRIST*, being found in *CHRIST*, longs to be dismissed from cumbrous Clay, and kindles into Raptures at the Prospect of Dissolution. Methinks I see another of *Immanuel's* Followers, *trusting in his Saviour, leaning on his Beloved, go down to the silent Shades with Composure and Alacrity. In

These, and some other Quotations, I am proud to borrow from *The COMPLAINT*; especially from *Night the fourth*: In which, Energy of Language, Sublimity of Sentiment, and the most exquisite Beauties of Poetry, are the least Perfections to be admired: Almost every Line glows with Devotion; rises into the most exalted Apprehensions of the adorable Redeemer, and is animated with the most lively Faith, in His All-sufficient Mediation. The Author of this excellent Performance has the peculiar Felicity of ennobling all the Strength of Style, and every Delicacy of Imagination, with the grand and momentous Truths of Christianity. These Thoughts give the highest Entertainment to the Fancy, and impart the noblest Improvement to the Mind: They not only refine our Taste, but prepare us for Death, and ripen us for Glory. I never take up this admirable Piece, but am ready to cry out —
Tecum vivere amem, tecum obeam libens.

* 2 *Pet.* i. 14.

This

This powerful Name, an innumerable Company of sinful Creatures have set up their Banners, and “overcome through the Blood of the Lamb.” Authorized by the Captain of thy Salvation, *Thou* also mayst set thy Feet upon the Neck of this King of Terrors. Furnished with this Antidote, *Thou* also mayst play around the Hole of the Asy, and put thy undaunted Hand on this Cockatrice-Den. Thou mayst * feel the Viper fastening to thy mortal Part, and fear no Evil: Thou shalt one Day shake it off by a joyful Resurrection, and suffer no Harm.

· RESURRECTION! That cheering Word eases my Mind of an anxious Thought, and solves a most *momentous Question*. I was going to ask, “Wherefore do all these
“Corpses lie here, in this abject Condi-
“tion? Is This their final State? Has Death
“conquered? and will the Tyrant hold
“Captivity captive? How long wilt Thou
“forget them, O LORD? For ever?” —
No, saith the Voice from Heaven, the Word of Divine Revelation; *The Righteous* are all “*Prisoners of Hope*.” There is an Hour
(an

* *Acts* xxviii. 3; 5.

(an awful Secret That, and known only to all-foreseeing Wisdom, but), an appointed Hour there is, when an *Act of Grace* will pass the *Great Seal* above, and give them an universal Discharge, a general Delivery from the Abodes of Corruption. Then shall the LORD JESUS descend from Heaven, with the Shout of the Arch-angel, and the Trump of GOD. *Destruction* itself shall hear the Call, and the obedient *Grave* give up her Dead. In a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, they shake off the Sleep of ten thousand Years, and spring forth, like the bounding Roc, to “ meet “ their LORD in the Air.”

AND, Oh! with what cordial Congratulations, what transporting Endearments, do the Soul and Body, those affectionate Companions, reunite! But with how much greater Demonstrations of Kindness are they *both* received by their *compassionate Redeemer*! The awful Judge is their Friend, their Father, their Bridegroom. They have nothing to fear from all the Pomp of his Appearance. Those *tremendous Solemnities*, which spread Desolation and Astonishment through the Universe, serve only to
in flame

in flame their Love, and heighten their Hopes. Their Master confesses their Names before all the Inhabitants of Heaven, and the whole assembled World. — Will not that adorable Being, whose *Favour* is better than *Life*, whose Acceptance is a Crown of *Glory*; will not He lift up the Light of his Countenance upon them, and, with Words of the most intire Approbation, say,

“ I accept you, O my People? Ye are they
 “ that believed in my Name. Ye are they
 “ that renounced *Yourselves*, and *are com-
 “ plete in Me*. I see no Spot or Blemish
 “ in you; for ye are washed in my Blood,
 “ and cloathed in my Righteousness. Re-
 “ newed by my Spirit, ye have glorified me
 “ on Earth, and have been faithful unto
 “ Death. Come, then, ye Servants of Ho-
 “ linefs, enter into the Joy of your LORD.
 “ Come, ye Children of Light, receive the
 “ *Kingdom*, that shall never be removed;
 “ wear the *Crown*, which fadeth not away;
 “ and enjoy *Pleasures* for evermore.”

THEN it will be one of the smallest Privileges of the Righteous, that they shall languish no more; that *Sickness* will never again shew her pale Countenance in their

Dwellings. *Death itself* will be “swallowed up in Victory.” That fatal Javelin, which has drank the Blood of Monarchs, and finds its Way to the Hearts of all the Sons of *Adam*, shall be utterly broken. That enormous Scythe, which has struck Empires from their Root, and swept Ages and Generations into Oblivion, shall lie by in perpetual Uselessness. *Sin* also, which filled thy Quiver, thou insatiate Archer!—*Sin*, which strung thy Arm with such resistless Vigour — which pointed all thy Shafts with inevitable Destruction — *Sin* will then be done away. Whatever is *frail*, or *depraved*, will be thrown off with our Grave-cloaths. All to come is perfect Excellency, and consummate Happiness; the Term of whose Continuance is Eternity.

O ETERNITY! *Eternity!* How are our boldest, our strongest Thoughts, lost and overwhelmed in Thee! Who can set Landmarks to limit thy Dimensions, or find Plumbets to fathom thy Depths? *Arithmeticians* have Figures to compute all the Progressions of Time: *Astronomers* have Instruments to calculate the Distances of the Stars: But what Numbers can state,

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what

what Lines can gauge, the Lengths and Breadths of Eternity? "It is higher than Heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than Hell, what canst thou know? The Measure thereof is longer than the Earth, broader than the Sea." Mysterious, mighty Existence! A Sum, not to be lessened by the largest Deductions: An Extent, not to be contracted by all possible Diminutions. None can truly say, after the most prodigious Waste of Ages, "That so much of Eternity is gone." For when Millions of Centuries are elapsed, it is but *just commencing*; and when Millions more have run their ample Round, it will be *no nearer ending*. Yea, when Ages, numerous as the Bloom of Spring, increased by the Herbage of Summer, both augmented by the Leaves of Autumn, and all multiplied by the Drops of Rain which drown the Winter — when these, and ten thousand times ten thousand more — more than can be represented by any *Similitude*, or imagined by any *Conception*, are all revolved; Eternity, vast, boundless, amazing Eternity, will only be beginning. Beginning, did I say? rather *only beginning to begin*.

WHAT

WHAT a pleasing, yet awful Thought is this? Full of Delight, and full of Dread. O! may it alarm our Fears, quicken our Hopes, and animate all our Endeavours. Since we are soon to launch into this endless and inconceivable State, let us give *all Diligence* to secure our Entrance into Bliss. *Now* let us give all Diligence, because there is no Alteration in the Scenes of Futurity. The Wheel never turns: All is stedfast and immoveable beyond the Grave. Whether we are then *seated on the Throne*, or *stretched on the Rack*; a Seal will be set to our Condition by the Hand of everlasting Mercy, or inflexible Justice. — *The Saints* always rejoice amidst the Smiles of Heaven; their Harps are perpetually tuned; their Triumphs admit of no Interruption. — The Ruin also of the *Wicked* is irremediable. The Chains of their Woe are rivetted by an irrepealable Sentence.

THE *Wicked* — * My Mind recoils at the Apprehension of their Misery. It has studiously waded the fearful Subject, and

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seems

* — *Animus meminisse horret, luctuque refugit.*

seems unwilling to pursue it, even now.— But 'tis better to *reflect upon it* for a few Minutes, than to *endure it* to eternal Ages. Perhaps, the Consideration of their aggravated Misery may teach me more highly to prize the Saviour, who “delivers from “going down into the bottomless Pit;” may *drive me*, like the *Avenger's Sword*, to this only *City of Refuge*, for obnoxious Sinners.

THE Wicked seem to lie here, like Malefactors, in a deep and strong Dungeon, reserved against the Day of Trial.—“*Their Departure* was without Peace.” Clouds of Horror sat lowering upon their closing Eyelids; most sadly foreboding the “Blackness “of Darkness for ever.” When the last Sickness seized their Frame, and the inevitable Change advanced; when they saw the fatal Arrow fitting to the Strings, saw the deadly Archer aiming at their Life, and felt the envenomed Shaft fastened in their Vitals — Good GOD! what Fearfulness came upon them! What horrible Dread overwhelmed them! How did they stand shuddering upon the tremendous Precipice, excessively afraid to die, yet utterly unable to live.

live. — O! What *pale Reviews*, what *startling Prospects*, conspire to augment their Sorrows! — They look *backward*; and, behold! a most melancholy Scene; Sins unrepented of; Mercy flighted; and the Day of Grace ending. — They look *forward*, and nothing presents itself but the righteous Judge; the dreadful Tribunal; and a most solemn Reckoning. — They roll *around* their affrighted Eyes on attending Friends; and, if *Accomplices in Debauchery*, it sharpens their Anguish, to consider this further Aggravation of their Guilt, That they have not sinned alone, but drawn others into the Snare: If *religious Acquaintance*, it strikes a fresh Gash into their Hearts, to think of never seeing them any more, but only at an un-approachable Distance, separated by the unpassable Gulf.

At last, perhaps, they begin to *pray*: Seeing no other possible Way of Relief, they are constrained to apply unto the Almighty: With trembling Lips, and a faltering Tongue, they cry unto that Sovereign Being, “ who “ kills and makes alive.” — But why, O! why, have they deferred their Addresses to Heaven so long? Why have they despised
all

all his Counfels, and flood incorrigible under his incessant Reproofs? How often have they been forewarned of these Terrors, and most importunately intreated to turn to the LORD! I wish, they may find Favour at this late Hour; and be snatched from the very Brink, the breaking Brink, of Damnation. But, alas! Who can tell, whether affronted Majesty will lend an Ear to their Complaint? He may, for aught any Mortal knows, “laugh at their Calamity, and mock “when their Fear cometh.”

THUS they lie, groaning out the poor Remains of Life; their Limbs bathed in Sweat; Pains insupportable, throbbing thro’ every Pulse; and innumerable Darts of Agony transfixing their Conscience. — If *this* be the *End* of the *Ungodly*, “My Soul, “come not Thou into their Secret! Unto “their Assembly, mine Honour, be not “Thou united!” — Oh! how awfully accomplished is that Prediction of inspired Wisdom! “Sin, though seemingly sweet “in the *Commission*; in the *Issue*, biteth “like a Serpent, and stingeth like an Ad- “der.”

HAPPY

HAPPY Dissolution! were This the Period of their Woes. But, alas! all these Tribulations are only "the *Beginning of Sorrows*;" one small Drop of that "Cup of Trembling," which is mingled for their future Portion. — No sooner has the last Pang dislodged the reluctant Soul, but they are hurried into the Presence of an injured angry GOD: Not under the conducting Care of beneficent Angels, but exposed to the Insults of *accursed* Spirits; who lately tempted them, now *upbraid* them, and will for ever *torment* them. — Who can conceive their Confusion and Distress, when they stand guilty and inexcusable before their incensed Creator? They are received with Frowns: The GOD that made them, has no Mercy on them. The Prince of Peace, the Fountain of Felicity, hides his Face from them. He consigns them over to Chains of Darkness, and Receptacles of Despair, against the severer Doom, and more public Infamy, of the Great Day. Then all the Phials of Wrath will be emptied upon these wretched Creatures. The *Law* they have *violated*, the *Power* they have *defied*, the *Goodness*

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they have abused, will all get themselves Honour in their *exemplary Destruction*. Then GOD, the GOD to whom Vengeance belongeth, will draw the Arrow to the very Head, and make them the Objects of his inexorable Displeasure. Resurrection will be no Privilege to them, but *Immortality* itself their *everlasting Curse*. — Would they not bless the Grave, “ that “ Land where all Things are forgotten,” and wish to lie eternally hid in its deepest Gloom? But the Dust refuses to conceal their Persons, or draw a Veil over their Practices. They also must awake, must arise, and appear at the Bar, and meet the Judge : A Judge, before whom “ the Pillars of “ Heaven tremble, and the Earth melts “ away :” A Judge, once long-suffering, and very compassionate, but now unalterably determined to teach stubborn Offenders, what it is to provoke the Eternal Godhead ; what it is to trample upon the Blood of his Son ; and offer Despise to all the gracious Overtures of his Spirit.

OH ! the Perplexity, the Distraction, that must confound the impenitent Rebels
 “ What can they do in this Day of Visita-
 “ tion?”

“ tion?” — Whither shall they betake themselves? — *To fly*, will be impossible; *to justify* themselves, impracticable; and *now*, to *make* any *Supplications*, unavailing. — The jealous GOD, who has been about their Path, and about their Bed, and spied out all their Ways, “ sets before them “ the Things that they have done.” They cannot answer Him, one in a Thousand; nor stand in the awful Judgment. They are speechless with Guilt, and stigmatized with Infamy, before all the Angels of Light. What a Favour would they esteem it, to hide their ashamed Heads in the Bottom of the Ocean, or even to be buried beneath the Ruins of the tottering World!

IF the *Contempt* poured upon them be so insupportable, O! “ How will their “ Hearts endure,” when the *Sword* of infinite *Indignation* is unsheathed, and fiercely waved around their defenceless Heads, or pointed directly at their naked Breasts! How must the Wretches scream with wild Amazement, and be at their Wits-end, when “ the right-aiming Thunderbolts go abroad,” with a Commission to drive them from the

M Kingdoms

Kingdoms of Glory, and plunge them into a Lake of unquenchable Fire !

MISERY of Miseries! too shocking for Reflection to dwell upon. But if so dismal to *foresee*; and that at a *Distance*; together with some comfortable Hopes of *escaping* it — O! how bitter, how inconceivably bitter, to *bear*, without any *Intermission*, or any *Mitigation*, for *Ever and Ever*.

WHO has any Bowels of *Pity*? — Who has any Sentiments of *Compassion*? — Who has any *tender Concern* for his Fellow-Creatures? Who? In GOD'S Name, and for CHRIST'S Sake, let Him shew it, by warning every Man, and beseeching every Man, to *seek* the LORD while He may be *found*: “ To kiss the Son, before his Anger is kindled:” Submissively to adore the Lamb, while he holds out the golden Sceptre. — *Here*, let us act the friendly Part to Mankind: *Here*, let the whole Force of our *Benevolence* exert itself; in exhorting whomsoever we are likely to influence, to take the Wings of *Faith* unfeigned, and *Repentance* undelayed, and “ flee away from this “ Wrath to come.”

UPON the Whole; What stupendous Discoveries are these! Lay them up in a faithful Remembrance, O my Soul. Recollect them with the most serious Attention, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. When thou *walkest*, receive them for thy *Companions*; when thou *talkest*, listen to them as thy *Prompters*; and whatever thou *doest*, consult them as thy *Directors*. Influenced by these Considerations, thy *Views* will greaten, thy *Affections* be exalted, and thou *thyself* raised above the tantalizing Power of perishing Things. Duly mindful of these, it will be the Sum of thy *Desires*, and Scope of thy *Endeavours*, to gain the *Approbation* of that Sovereign Being, who will then fill the Throne, and pronounce the *decisive* Sentence. Thou wilt see nothing worth a Wish, in Comparison of having His Will for thy Rule, His Glory for thy Aim, and His Holy Spirit for thy ever-actuating Principle.

WONDER, O Man, be lost in Admiration, at those *prodigious Events*, which are coming upon the *Universe*: Events, the

Greatness of which, nothing finite can measure. Such as will cause whatever is considerable or momentous, in the Annals of all Generations, to sink into Littleness and Nothing : Events (JESUS, prepare us for their Approach ; defend us when they take place !) big with the everlasting Fates of all the Living, and all the Dead. I must see the *Graves* cleaving ; the *Sea* teeming ; and *Swarms* unsuspected, *Crouds* unnumbered, yea, Multitudes of *thronging Nations*, rising from both. — I must see the *World* in *Flames*, must stand at the *Dissolution* of all terrestrial Things, and be an Attendant on the *Burial* of *Nature*. — I must see the vast Expanse of the *Sky*, wrapt up like a Scroll ; and the incarnate GOD issuing forth from Light inaccessible, with Ten thousand times ten thousand *Angels*, to judge both *Men* and *Devils*. — I must see the *Curtain* of *Time* drop, see all *Eternity* disclosed to View, and enter upon a *State* of *Being*, that will never, never, have an End.

AND ought I not (let the vainest Imagination judge ; ought I not) to try the Sincerity of my *Faith*, and take Heed to my *Ways* ? Is not this an infinitely pressing Call,

to

to see that my Loins are girded about, my Lamp trimmed, and myself dressed for "the Bridegroom's Appearance?" That, washed in the Fountain opened in my Saviour's Side, and clad with the Marriage-Garment wove by his Obedience; I may "be found in Peace, unblameable, and unreprieve-able." — Otherwise, how shall I *stand* with Boldness, when the Stars of Heaven *fall* from their Orbs? How shall I come forth *erect* and *courageous*, when the *Earth* itself *reels* to-and-fro like a Drunkard*? How shall I look up with *Joy*, and see my Salvation drawing near, when the Hearts of Millions fail for Fear?

Now, Madam, lest my Meditations set in a Cloud, and leave any unpleasing Gloom upon your Mind; let me once more turn to the brightening Prospects of the *Righteous*. A View of Them, and their delightful Expectations, may serve to *exhilarate* the Thoughts, that have been musing upon melancholy Subjects, and hovering about the Edges of infernal Darkness: Just as a spacious Field, arrayed in *cheerful Green*, relieves and re-invigorates the Eye, that has
fatigued

* *Isai.* xxiv. 20.

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fatigued itself by poring upon some *minute*, or gazing upon some *glaring* Object.

THE *Righteous* seem to lie by, in the Bosom of the Earth, as a *wary Pilot* in some well-sheltered Creek ; till all the *Storms* which infest this lower World, are blown over. Here they enjoy *safe Anchorage* ; are in no Danger of *foundering* amidst the Seas of prevailing Iniquity, or of being *shipwreck'd* on the Rocks of any powerful Temptation. But, ere-long, we shall behold them hoisting their *Flag of Hope*, riding before a *sweet Gale* of atoning Merit, and redeeming Love, till they *make*, with full Sail, the blessed *Port* of eternal Life.

THEN may the *honoured Friend*, to whom I am writing, rich in good Works, rich in Heavenly Tempers, but inexpressibly richer in her Saviour's Righteousness — O ! may She enter the happy Harbour, like some gallant stately *Vessel*, conspicuously and gloriously ! While my little *Bark* glides gladly after, and both rest for Ever in *the Haven where we would be*.

The E N D.

E R R A T A.

P*AG.* 5. *Line 21. of the Note, for are, r. is. p. 16. l. 6. for tour, r. tower. p. 19. l. 11. r. Sighs. p. 24. l. 22. for Thoughts, r. Strokes.*