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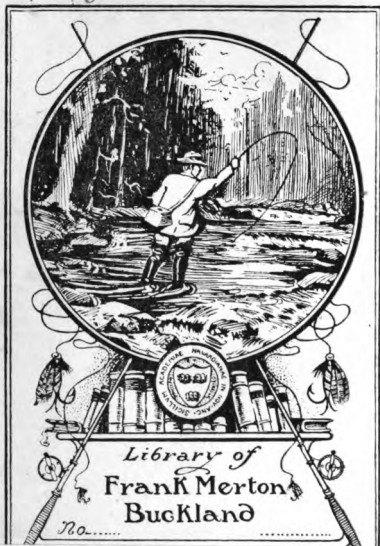
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# OCCASIONAL REFLECTIONS

UPON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

WITH

**A Discourse**

ABOUT SUCH KIND OF THOUGHTS.

BY THE

HONOURABLE ROBERT BOYLE,

SOMETIME

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY.



**OXFORD:**

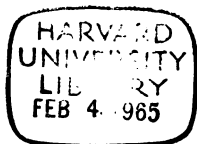
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**M.DCCC.XLVIII.**

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**LITTLEMORE:**

**PRINTED BY ALEXANDER AMBROSE MASSON.**

## NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

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**ROBERT BOYLE**, the Author of the following Reflections, was the seventh son of Richard Boyle, Earl of Cork ; he was born on the day of the Conversion of St. Paul, 1626-7, and died Jan. 7, 1692 : a few days after his beloved sister, the Lady Ranelagh, with whom he spent the later years of his life. He was sent to Eton at an early age, and it was in an interval of absence from school that he had the ague noticed in the Reflections. In 1638 he was sent to travel abroad, for some years, and visited France, Italy, and Switzerland, residing some time with his tutor, Mr. Marcombe, at Geneva. He returned to England in 1644, and retired to the manor of Stalbridge, in Dorsetshire, which had been left him by his father. He aimed at a life of quiet and study, in those troublous times, thrown as he was by circumstances amongst those whose proceedings

he could not approve.\* He visited Holland in February, 1647-8, with his brother Francis, and afterwards resided some years in Oxford, where he joined in those meetings of a few scientific men, which resulted in the formation of the Royal Society, of which he was afterwards a Fellow. He was much occupied in chemical and other philosophical experiments, and in the course of them invented the air-pump. On the Restoration, he was offered Church preferment, but declined receiving Holy Orders, thinking he could do more service to religion as a layman. He is said also to have declined a Peerage. He received a grant of forfeited impropriations in Ireland, which was obtained for him without his knowledge, and scrupulously applied the proceeds to religious uses. He was appointed, in 1662, governor of the "Corporation for Propagating the Gospel in New England and the parts adjacent in America : " he recovered its property, and managed its affairs for many years. He also promoted the translation of

\* See Section IV. and the Advertisement touching it.

the Holy Scriptures into several languages, and otherwise gave liberally toward the advancement of religion and learning, as an instance of which it may be mentioned that in 1659 he made an allowance to Sanderson, to assist him in devoting himself to the study of cases of conscience. He was very tolerant of diversities of opinion, but in his own practice adhered strictly to the communion of the Church of England. His style of writing is too much encumbered with "conceits" to be recommended as a model, but there is much worthy of imitation in his style of thought. The name "Philaretus," assumed in some of the Reflections, is the same under which he wrote a short account of his own early years, which is given at length in his *Life*, by Birch.

His own Preface and Dedication explain the manner in which the following work was composed and published. With respect to the present edition, it may be enough to say that it is grounded upon the two published in the Author's lifetime, the first in 1665, the second in 1669, which are more correct



in substance than the posthumous folio. The spelling of these is followed, usually, however, taking the more modern way, if given in either. The punctuation is rarely altered, as it is somewhat systematic in its differences from our present practice. Nothing has been added but a few references, not given in the original editions, and no material variation between them has been willingly left unnoticed. Some of the variations of the folio are palpable mistakes, and it has not been collated throughout. A recent edition omits perhaps the most beautiful part of the whole work, the "Discourse Touching Occasional Meditations," to which the Editor would refer those readers who wish to know what is the use of the book.

LITTLEMORE,  
*Vigil of S. Matthew,*  
M.DCCC.XLVIII.





## IMPRIMATUR.

Hic Liber, qui inscribitur *Occasional Reflections, &c.* quem Censeo reliquis ab eodem Cl. Autore Scriptis (neque enim quicquam majus de eo dicere possum, nec minus debeo) nequaquam cedere.

*Ex ædib. Lambetha-  
nis. Feb. 1. 1664.*

Tho. Cook, *Reverend. in  
Christo Patri ac Dom. Dom.  
Gilberto Cant. Archiepisc.  
Sacellanus Domesticus.*



OCCASIONAL  
REFLECTIONS  
UPON SEVERAL  
SUBJECTS.

Whereto is premis'd

A DISCOURSE

About such kind of Thoughts.

---

*Omnibus Rebus, omnibusque Sermonibus, aliquid Salutare miscendum est. Cum imus per occulta Naturæ, cum divina tractamus, vindicandus est à malis suis animus, ac subinde firmandus. Sen. Natural. Quæst. Lib. 2. cap. 59.*

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LONDON,

Printed by *W. Wilson* for *Henry Herringman*, and  
are to be sold at his Shop at the *Anchor* in  
the Lower-walk in the New Exchange.

*Anno Dom. MDCLXV.*





TO  
SOPHRONIA.\*

My Dearest Sister,

**Y**OU receive in this Effect of my Obedience, one of the highest Proofs I can give You of its Greatness. For when You Command but things that tend to Your Service, the Performance is wont to be accompanied with a Satisfaction, that suffers me not to find it Uneasy. But I confess it was not without Reluctancy, that I was prevailed with to venture abroad Composures, wherein, even when I publish Them, I decline Owning them, and which, (if our Names be discover'd) may I fear, not only hazzard the Reputation (if it have any) of my Pen; but, (where You are less known) bring into Question that

\* 'Tis the name given to the same Lady in the II. Section of the following Meditations.

a

of

*of Your Judgment. 'Twas easie for me to represent to You how unfinished and unpolished the Trifles You called for, were, especially considering that the Immatureness of some of them would not probably be the Chief thing that would make many think they come forth Unseasonably, since they avowedly Aim at the Persuading and Teaching men to Improve their Thoughts, as well as Husband their Time, at a season, when both those Precious Things are so Neglected, or so Misemploy'd, that the chief use, which too many make of the Former, is to devise wayes to get ridd of the Later. But though to my Unreadiness to Publish these very long neglected Papers, at the same time when a Præ-engagement oblig'd me to Dispatch another Treatise of a quite different Nature, I added all those other dissuading Considerations that I have mentioned in the Preface to the Reader ; yet what I represented proved as Unavailable, as what I had written was In-compleat. For, whilst You fancied that the following Reflections (such as they are) had Fewer Faults, and were like to do More Good, than I can presume ; Your Charity for others, and Partiality*

*tiality for me, made you so resolute and pressing to have me run a Venture, which you are pleas'd to think but a very Small One ; that I judg'd it more excusable to present you Green Fruit, than, by obstinately Refusing what you seem'd almost to Long for, lose an opportunity of Evincing, That Your Commands can Prevail, both where those of Others would have been wholly Ineffectual, and when they required me to present You, (some, if You, not many,) things that are so little worthy of that perhaps they are scarcely so, ev'n of me.*

*Wonder not, Dear Sophronia, that I appear so Sollicitous to manifest the Greatness of my Obedience ; since That implies an Urgency in your Commands, that it highly concerns me to have taken notice of. For those that, having the Happiness to converse with You, shall chance to cast their Eyes upon the following Papers, will probably think that I shew as little Discretion in the Address, as I have shewn Skill in the writing, of these Reflections ; when I expose such Censurable Things to the Judgment of a Person that has so piercing a One, and present Trifles to one, that deserves the Noblest Productions of*



*(what she is so great a Mistress of) Wit, and Eloquence. Upon whose Account she is wont to persuade Piety as Handsomely in her Discourses, as she expresses it Exemplarily in her Actions; and might, if her Modesty did less confine her Pen to Excellent Letters, both make the Wits of our Sex envy a Writer of Hers; and keep Our Age from envying Antiquity, for\* those Celebrated Ladies, who, by their Triumphant Eloquence, Ennobled the People of Rome, and taught their Children to Sway those Rulers of the World.*

*But when I can plead, that not only Your Commands, but even Your Importunity engaged me (though not to the Address, yet) to the Publication of these Papers; I may reasonably hope, that among those many considerable Persons to whom Your Attainments are not unknown, not only my Dedication will be Excused, but even my Book will not be so hastily Condemned.*

*But I dare not prosecute so Fruitful a Subject, for fear of offending Your Modesty; since that predominant Virtue gives You so great an Undervaluation for all Your other*

\* Ed. 2. "of."

Quali-

*Qualities, that it is as much Your Custome to look ev'n upon Small Praises as Flatteries, as it is Your Prerogative to keep Great ones from being so. And I should therefore have omitted that little it self which I have said, if, on This occasion, my Interest did not as well Oblige me, as the known Truth Warrant me, so to Consider Your Modesty, as not to be altogether Injurious to Your other Excellencies; since the Reader's knowledge of These (if he be not a stranger to You) will promise me this Advantage, that divers of the Criticks themselves will chuse rather to Absolve my Writings, than Condemn Your Judgment: and that at least, the Devout, to whom Your Practice has afforded so many other Examples, will be scrupulous to be more Severe to these Papers, than a Person in whom, upon the score of her own Style, Severity were more justifiable than in most Readers (without excepting the Eloquent Ones) and will imitate Her, in Considering, that this Book pretends to present them Thoughts, rather than Words, and in Supporting, for the sake of the Design, the Manner in which it is prosecuted.*

*And*

*And certainly, my Lady R's. Approbation, is a Happiness which divers sorts of Considerations may render as Advantageous as Welcome to me. For if any of these Thoughts, do (which yet I can scarce hope) derive it from Your Justice, that great measure of Esteem You do not only Merit, but Possess, may both Assure them of a General One, and much contribute to Procure it them. But if all of them owe your Approbation (as I fear they do) to your Partiality; since that must not be Small to be able to pervert such a Judgment, This it self will prove an Evidence of the Blessing of Your Affection; which is a Felicity, that I know You enough to value above all the Praises I can miss of: since Applause can make me happy but in other Mens Opinion, but Your Friendship can make me so in my own. Yet, apprehend not, Sister, That I should here endeavor, by a solemn Character of You, to justifie what I have been saying: For, though to write a Dedicatory Epistle, without a Panegyrick, be grown of late very Unfashionable; yet since 'tis as much so, to take the Praises wont to be profusely given in such Letters for Measures*

*of*

*of any thing but the Writer's Wit, I must rather reserve the Acknowledgments I owe Your Merit and Your Favors to some Occasion, where they may not be lyable to pass for a Tribute paid to Custome, not a Debt due to You ; than draw a needless Suspition upon the Sincerity of our Friendship, by endeavouring to express my Affection and Esteem in a Dedicatory Letter ; and by chusing to Profess, upon an Occasion where Custom allows men to Say what they do not Think, so Great and Real a Truth, as that of my being, far more upon the Account of Esteem and Gratitude, than of Nature itself,*

My Dearest Sister,

Your most Affectionate,  
and most Faithfull Ser-  
vant.

R. B.





AN

# INTRODUCTORY PREFACE.

**W**HEN I consider the Disadvantages, with which the following Trifles come abroad, in an Age, that is not only so Censorious, but so Intelligent, as this of ours; neither the Partiality of my Friends, nor the favourable Reception that the public has hitherto vouchsafed to what has been presented it, of mine, is able to give me a Confidence, (though they almost create a Hope) That these Papers will meet with as kind an Entertainment, as those of the same hand that have preceded them. And yet, without being wanting to my self, I canot but adde, that by the help of Their suggestions, who have urg'd the Publication of these Thoughts, I am not unfurnish'd with (at least) Tollerable Excuses for the things that seem likely to stand in need of any.

I shall not much wonder to find it said, That the Book is, in general, far short of being an Exact and Finish'd Piece. For perhaps few Readers will be  
more

more of that mind, than the Author is. But by way of Apology, it may be represented, That most of the following Papers, being written for my own private Amusement, a good deal of Negligence in them may appear as pardonable, as a Careless Dress, when a man intends not, nor expects, to go out of his study, or let himself be seen. And that which I now publish being design'd, not to satisfy the Criticks, but to gratify the Devout, I hope it will be thought a Venial Crime, if in *some* of these Meditations I have not aim'd to express Eloquence, but only to cherish Piety. I say, in *some*, because there may be *others*, (where a different style was thought fitter) in whose Favour I would produce such Suffrages, as would not be slighted, if I were concern'd to do any more for those Papers, than *Excuse* them.

And perhaps they that shall take the pains to try their skill in making Meditations, *Indifferently* upon the Occurrences that shall happen, and wander no further from the Circumstances of their Themes, nor lard them any more with Sentences and other Passages borrow'd from the Fathers, or the Poets, than in most of the following Papers, I have done ; will not find the Task so easie, but that they will think it reasonable to be Mild in their Censures, and will discern that in such Composures, some Unaccurateness is so hard to be Avoided, that it should not be hard to be Forgiven.

I know the want of Uniformity in the style of the ensuing Reflections, may speciously enough be censured. For, not to mention that some of them are very long, and others very short ; it will be said, that some  
are

are written in a very Neglected, and others ev'n in a Luxuriant strain ; and there may (perchance) appear betwixt some of them, as great an Inequality as can easily be found, betwixt Composures that are none of them Excellent. Besides, that the Incoherence of the Subjects, together with the differing Ways wherein they are handled, may make them look so little of kin to one another, as scarce to appear the Productions of the same Pen. But this Uneven way of writing will possibly be rather pardon'd than wondred at, by those that shall be informed,

That the nature of this kind of Composures requires not any other than a loose and Desultory way of writing.

That these Reflections are very far from coming abroad in the Order of Time wherein they were set down : but in that Casual order, wherein, when I was engag'd to tack them together, I was able to light on them among my loose and forgotten Papers. Many of which being discovered to have been lost when some of the rest were to be at the Press ; I was fain, for the compleating of the number, to insert here and there some of a much fresher date, among those that were made (as some know who then read them) sixteen or seventeen years ago ; when my Style could hardly be other than differing enough from what it now is.

And lastly, That the differing Natures of several Subjects required, that the Reflections on some of them should be far longer than on others ; and As my want of Leisure, and sometimes of Dispos'dness to write, induc'd



duc'd me to make some of my Considerations but short : So I thought fit to let them pass for Their sakes, to whom, for want of Time or Skill, the Brevity of *those*, may make them the fitter, and the more recommend them.

Besides, what has been alleged against the *Style*, I know it may be objected, That in some of the Meditations, the *Subjects* are very Mean, and Trivial, and that such Themes are not Worthy the being descanted on. And indeed, if I aim'd at the Writer's advantage, more than the Reader's, I could easily have left them out, and have substituted in their places some others that lye by me, less liable to Contempt. But I confess, I did not think my self oblig'd, to publish no Meditations, but the least Censurable ones that I had made ; and divers of those intimated in the objection, were purposely inserted, when I was prevail'd with to bundle up these loose sticks into Faggots. For Then, designing this Treatise for the Benefit of the Generality of Devout Readers, I thought it not amiss, amongst divers Reflections (such as most of the II<sup>d</sup> and of the IV<sup>th</sup> Sections) more suited to those Perusers that are either of the more intelligent sort, or good Proficients already ; to insert some few Meditations, of a more familiar sort, and easier to be lighted on ; to keep those from being discourag'd, from trying to make Occasional Reflections, who may chance to have either Barrenner Fancy's, or more unpractis'd Pens, than even I had then : And those (perhaps) who, without such easily imitable Examples would not be invited to make Occasional Meditations, may

may, by the Practice of composing them, grow such Proficients in the Art, as to surpass some that despise such humble Beginnings.

But as I send abroad these Papers without the Authors name, that I may have the greater Opportunity to hear other mens *Opinions* of them, and the less Temptation to wave the complying with those that shall seem Reasonable : so if I shall find, That such Readers as I esteem competent Judges in an Affair of this Nature, shall think that these Reflections wherein I have comply'd with the weaker sort of Perusers, may be better Spar'd, than Inserted : I can easily repair that fault in the next Edition (if these Trifles shall be thought worthy of another). In the mean time, I presume that those devout Readers who may be concern'd in this matter, will take it kindly that I have for their sakes adventur'd to treat of Subjects too mean and barren to furnish me with almost any thing considerable ; save the Opportunities of manifesting, how low I can stoop to gratifie such Persons.

I know it is a new thing, That I have ventured to put some Occasional Reflections into Dialogues. But the Reader will be less startled at my deviating in this, and other things, from *Bishop Hall's* way of writing *Occasional Meditations*, if I acknowledge that not to Prepossess or Byas my Fancy, I purposely (till of late) forbad my self, the perusing of that Eloquent Prælates devout Reflections. Which intimation being premis'd, I shall subjoyn, That when I wrote for my own Diverisement, I sometimes took Pleasure to imagine two or  
three

three of my Friends to be present with me at the Occasion, that set my thoughts on work, and to make them Discourse as I fancy'd Persons, of their Breeding and tempers, would talk to one another on such an Occasion. And one of these, whom I call *Eusebius*, being a Dr. of Divinity; two others (*Eugenius* and *Genorio*) being Travellers and fine Gentlemen; and the fourth, (whom I name *Lindamor*) being a Learned Youth, both well Born and well Bred; I was apt to think, that some of their Conferences, might be allow'd to pass among the other Papers; both because Novelty, and Variety, are wont to be not unwelcome things, and because this way of writing allows a Scope for Diversity of Opinions, for Debates, and for Replies, which most commonly would be Improper, where only a single speaker is introduc'd: Not to add, that possibly if this way of writing shall be Lik'd and Practis'd, by some Fam'd and happier Pen, that were able to Credit and improve it; it may afford useful Patterns of an Instructive and not unpleasant Conversation; and such Reflections, being of the nature of short and Occasional *Essays*, may afford men the opportunities, of saying the Handsomest things they know, on several Subjects, without saying any thing Else of them, or filling above a *Sheet*, or perhaps a *Side* of Paper at a Time. And the Liberty that this way of introducing Speakers, allows, brings with it a Conveniency, which 'tis more Easie for an Intelligent Reader to conjecture at, than 'twere Discreet for the Writer to mention expressly.

Another Novelty will probably be taken notice of,  
in

in the following Papers, where the second and fourth Sections, though by far the longest in the whole Book, are intirely taken up, the Former only by Meditations on Accidents relating to an *Ague* that once afflicted me, and the Latter by those that occur'd to some Anglers by the River side. But for this Matter, I presume, it will not be difficult to Apologize. For having observed Men to be inclinable, either openly to Object, or at least tacitly to Suspect, That in Occasional Meditations, that may hold true, which is (perchance not altogether undeservedly) said of Epigrams, That in most of them the Conceits were not Suggested by the Subjects, but Subjects were Pretended, to which the Conceits might be Accommodated : I thought, that to manifest, that (at least, some) Writers of this kind of Composures need not have recourse to the suspected Artifice ; the fittest way I could take was, By putting together what the Accidents of my *Ague*, and of my Angling Journey, had suggested to me, to shew, that 'tis very Possible for a person, that pretends not to a very pregnant Fancy, to Discourse by way of Reflection upon the several Circumstances that shall happen to occur to his Consideration, though one Subject should require above fifteen differing Meditations ; and the other above twenty. Not to adde, That 'twas rather Weariness and Desgn, than want of Thoughts upon other passages relating to the same Subjects, that kept me from increasing the Number of those Reflections.

As for the Similitudes, though some would make me hope that they will be at least *excus'd* ; and though it  
were

were perhaps no great Vanity, for one that do's assiduously enough converse with the Works of Nature and the Productions of Art, to think he has the means of furnishing himself with pretty store and variety of Comparisons ; yet for all this, I am not willing to quit my Pretensions to a share in the wonted Effects of that common Equity which forbids to exact too accurate a likeness in the making of Comparisons, which Orators confess ought to be judg'd with Indulgence, and without exacting a Conformity in Other Attributes betwixt the things compar'd, provided there be a competent Likeness in reference to the Particular wherein the Collocation or Parallel is made.

And if I have, on some occasions, prosecuted the Resemblance through all the particularities wherein the Parallel could be made to hold, more fully and nicely than is usual in ordinary Comparisons ; and if in so doing I may have at any time a little Strain'd the Similitude, the better to accommodate it to my present Theme, and Design ; I have this to represent, That to Display Resemblances to the full, and Insist on their particular Circumstances, is oftentimes no more than the Nature of these Composures do's *allow*, if not *require* ; and that, on such occasions, to stretch the Parallel as far as it can well be made to reach, is but a venial fault, which many Readers are dispos'd not only to Pardon, but to Like. As if, in some Cases, it far'd with similitudes as with Bows, which though they *may be* bent so forcibly as to be thereby broken or spoil'd ; yet by being strain'd somewhat more than ordinarily, they acquire a greater strength,

strength, and enable the Arrow to Pierce farther, and to make a smarter Impression, than else it would.

The *Protasis* (as Rhetoricians call the first part of a Comparison) may in some of the following Reflections appear to be too much amplified, and needlessly to lengthen the Meditation. But not to urge, that sometimes the more conspicuous Adjuncts of the Subject were so mean and barren, that there was a kind of necessity to Exaggerate, or to Expatiate upon little Circumstances to invite Attention; the *Protasis*, wherein we display and consider the minute particularities of the Theme, being the Ground-work of all the rest, and it being far more easie to say Little, than Much, with equal pertinency upon a Subject; I thought it not amiss, to afford unpractis'd Readers, the most assistance of Examples in such Cases, wherein 'tis probable they will most need it; especially since he that has accusom'd himself to write Copiously, may easily Contract his Discourse when he will, by Omitting as many passages as he pleases; and 'tis far more difficult for a Beginner to supply Barrenness, than retrench Superfluities. Which are not always such Faults, but that I remember some great Masters in the Art of Oratory, have pronounc'd Redundancy to be a good Sign in a Young Writer, as taking it for a mark of a fruitful and exuberant Phansy, that, in it's Productions, there is something to be cut off. So that if there should be found any Luxuriant Expression in some of those Thoughts that were written down, when I had not yet

\* Ed. 1. "Expressions."

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at-

attain'd my 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> year, when I might be allow'd to write not always to *employ*, but sometimes to *amuse* my self; I may hope, that the same Youth that was my Temptation to write them, may prove my excuse for having written them; as it may for leaving them Unexpung'd; That as I desire to invite as well young Gentlemen as other Readers, to pen Occasional Meditations; So I find that some of the Readers I am willing to pleasure, do as little dislike that Luxuriant way of writing Now, as I did Then: as Youths and Ladies oftentimes better relish Must than Wine.

I know too, that there may be found in some of those *Protases*, divers passages, and particularly some Descriptions (that often make a great part of them) which to some Readers will not seem Noble and Gawdy enough. But to such Perusers it may be represented, that a *sutableness* to the Theme, how mean soever it be, *may* very well, as a piece of *Decorum*, be *allow'd* to a Writer, and in few Cases more than in point of Descriptions; and that These being but Pictures drawn (with Words instead of Colours) for the Imagination, the skilful will approve those most, that produce in the mind, not the Finest Idæas, but the Likest: as a Critick in Limning will more prize the Picture of an old meagre Sybil, where the Wrinkles, and the sallow skin are drawn exactly *to the Life*, than a dozen ordinary Pictures of the Spring, (which yet are wont to charm Vulgar eyes) though the Youthful face which represents that Florid season, have as Gawdy Colours upon the Cheeks and Lips, as imbellish the Roses and Lil-

Lillies, which compose the Chaplet that adorns the Head.

And possibly there will be found *other* Readers (and those too, skill'd in Rhetorick) that will accuse some other of our Meditations, as being too Elaborate, or too Pompous, for the Themes whereunto they are accommodated. But having laid by a competent number of those lately mentioned Reflections, wherein I aim'd chiefly at inviting and assisting Readers of meaner Capacity: I confess, that in the Other Meditations, aiming either at my own Divertisement, or the gratifying Another sort of Persons, I allow'd my self to make choice of such applications of the objects I consider'd, as I thought every body would not so easily light on. And, provided the Reflections were not *strain'd*, nor too *far fetch'd*, I thought it not amiss they should be somewhat *surprising*: that I might, by the way of handling the Subjects I was to treat of, ingage an Attention, which otherwise I could scarce expect for such unpromising Themes. I know that if the Judgment of some severe Criticks, were as Infallible as themselves think it, the style of some of the following Reflections would seem disproportionate to such mean and trifling Subjects. I do not perhaps ignore what Rhetoricians are wont to teach of what they call, the *three* differing *Characters* of Writing; I have read those Discourses that *Cornificius* proposes as the Patterns of the *Sublime*, the *moderate*, and the *humble* way of expressing ones self on differing Occasions; and I have been taught, and willingly acknowledge, that all Themes are not so well capable of that Character which they call *Sublime*;



and that according to the Nature and Dignity of the Subjects that one treats of, the Manner of handling them ought to be varied. But if I were much concern'd in this matter, I might reply, that notwithstanding all this, I know, That ev'n the Artists themselves do not so perfectly agree about the *defining* of these matters, and the grand Rule about these Characters being only, That the Laws of *Decorum* (or, as the *French* call it *Bien-seance*) be not violated, in the Estimate of that *Decorum*, I see no great Reason to *confine* my self to the Magisterial Dictates of either Antient or Scholastick Writers. For, living in this Age, and in This part of the World, where we are not like to have those for Readers that dy'd before we were born, I see not why one may not judge of *Decorum* by the Examples and Practices of those Authors of our own Times and Countries, whose Writings are generally esteemed by Judicious Men.

And certainly, in the judging of what is Decent on particular Occasions, we must as well consider, Who it is that is introduc'd as the Speaker, as What it is he speaks of. And though it be Improper to do what those have done, that have unadvisedly made Shepherds and Nymphs discourse like Philosophers or Doctors of Divinity ; yet when the Writer either speaks Himself, or introduces any whom he represents as intelligent Persons ; they may be allow'd, ev'n about things Ordinary and Mean, to talk like themselves, and employ Expressions that are neither mean, nor ordinary. As *Virgil*, in his admir'd *Georgicks*,\* does in some passages, where he treats of contemptible Insects, speak of them

\* It nigrum campis Agmen.

in so noble and lofty a strain, That when he mentions Multitudes of Ants, one would think he were speaking of an Army of Moors ; and when he gives an Account of Bees, his Expressions about their Common-wealth would scarce mis-become the Majesty of that of *Rome*. Such passages do, notwithstanding the great disparity of Themes, make the Style of his *Georgicks*, as well Noble (if not strictly Heroick) as that of his *Æneids* ; and when he writes of Ants and Flies, he does it in a Strain worthy of the same Pen, that so loftily describes the Destruction of *Troy*, and the Adventures of that *Hero* whom he would have to be (though not immediately) the Founder of *Rome*.

I will not say, that since there is a Mode in Language as well as in Cloaths, I see not why the *fashion*, that now a-days allows our Gallants to wear fine Laces upon Canvass and Buckram, might not warrant the tricking up of slight subjects, with the richer Ornaments of Language : nor will I examine whether Men may not Except against the Authority of some Jejune Writers, that taking upon them to prescribe the Laws of Styles, make so many of their Precepts Negative, that one may suspect them indited not so much by Skill, as Envy, which makes such assuming Law-givers mistake the Impotence\* of a Barren Fancy for the Skilfulness of a Criticall Judgment, and (Valuing only the Idæas they think they can Reach) Condemn whatever they despair to Imitate. And, from those that would be thought to censure the Moderns, but out of a Veneration for the

\* Ed. 2. "Impotency."

Antients, one might methinks reasonably expect but Light Censures for imploying upon occasion, that noble Figure of Rhetorick call'd *Hyperbole* ; since I should be loath to use it Often, with no more Reserve than those great Orators *Tully* and *Isocrates* have Sometimes done before me. But a just debate of the Rules of Estimating Decency, would take up so much room as must make it improper for this place, where all I contend for, is, That though when one treats of Various Subjects, somewhat Differing Styles are indeed to be accommodated to them ; yet this is to be so done as still to preserve a certain Dignity in Expressions : So that a Writer may be sometimes *engaged* by his Subject to use a Lofty Style, but without ever being *obliged* to employ an Abject one ; though indeed in some cases he may be *allowed* to stoop below what he is *bound to*, and forbear Soaring, as well as avoid Creeping. Nor am I, for my own part, much concerned to Insist here on the Subject I just now declined to Debate. For if I mis-remember not, *Cicero* himself, as well as some succeeding Orators, allow in divers cases to Shift Characters, even in the same Discourse, according to the differing Particulars that happen to fall under consideration : and some of them add this reason, That hence there will arise *variety*, which is wont to be a *welcome* thing. And to apply this to the Occasional Reflections that may be concern'd in this Debate, I must desire the Reader to take notice of these two things. The one, that though the Thing itself, which sets a mans thoughts a-work may be but Mean in Other regards, yet that which

which the Reflector pitches upon to consider, may be of another Nature; as though the Glo-worm, which afforded me the IV<sup>th</sup> Reflection of the V<sup>th</sup> Section, be but a small and contemptible Insect, yet the Light which Shines in his Tail, and which makes the chief Theme of the Meditation, is a noble and heavenly Quality, and might have justified the having many things said of it, for which the *Sublime* Character would have been the most proper. The other particular I meant to point at, is, That oftentimes, when the *Protasis*, or former part of a Reflection, is spent upon considering some mean and Trivial subject; the *Apodosis*, or Reddition, contains such an Application of what one was taking notice of in the Subject, that the thing Pointed at, may be some important Moral Instruction, or perhaps some Theological Mystery; and consequently may Require and Justifie, Another then the former *humble* Style, and admit all the Quickness of Expression and the richest Ornaments, that belong to those two higher Characters which Rhetoricians call the *Subtil*, and the *Magnificent*. But if I should now and then deviate from Bounds, which, not being Conspicuous, 'tis difficult Never to swerve from; I have this Peculiar Apology to make for such Aberrations; That writing for the most part of Themes wholly New, and untreated of by others, I must needs want the assistance of Examples to Regulate or Authorize my Expressions: about which I need not yet be very Sollicitous, if I may trust a Learned and applauded Writer (whose censure I desir'd) that is both able to judge *skilfully*, and wont to judge *freely*.

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These things I have the more carefully Insisted on, because I would not have those Ingenious Persons, that may chance to cast their Eyes on these Papers, to be tempted by any imperfections of mine, to think otherwise of Occasional Meditations, than that though there be *some*, yet there are not very *many*, of their Themes so Low and Contemptible, but they are capable of affording Reflections of Another nature to Them, that are dexterous in making Application of things. And I would not have such discourag'd from hoping to find in many Themes, that seem despicable at first sight, some Hint or other that may give those that have Wit or Eloquence, Opportunity enough to display those Qualities. For as there is a great difference betwixt Such Writers, and Common ones, so 'tis very material by what Pens the Subject is treated of; and Extraordinary persons, in Estimating what they are like to perform, must not only consider the unpromising Nature of their Subject, but the Activity of their own Fancy, and the Pregnancy of their own Wit. For though the Stars *cannot*, the Luminaries *can*, cloath the light and wandering vapours of the Air, with the colour of Gold, and of Roses; And the Sun, by his piercing and improving Beams, cannot only make Diamonds sparkle, and Rubies flame, but by his action upon an obscure Cloud can make even That exhibite all those Glorious and charming Colours, for which we admire the Rain-bow.

And, that the following Papers may prove to such Persons the lesser Temptations to undervalue and misjudge of this kind of Composures; I am first to advertise the Reader, that they are capable of so much greater  
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Variety, than the following Treatise presents, that besides the vast multitudes of particulars unmentioned in it, that may be added under those Heads to which the ensuing Meditations are referr'd, there are several distinct *sorts* or *kinds* of Occasional Thoughts (*such* as those that are Made upon Texts of Scripture, or Relate to less familiar points of Divinity, or other Learning, or contain Historical Applications, &c.) upon which I have, out of haste, and other Reasons, purposely forborn (*though not to write, yet*) to *publish* Reflections. And in the *next* place, I must here frankly acknowledge, that many of the ensuing Reflections are so far from being the Best, that ev'n no better a Pen than Mine *could* make, that they are much Inferior to divers that I *have* already Made ; though (for allowable Considerations) I have forborn to Publish them. And I must confess, that I am more beholden to my Occasional Reflections than they are to me. For, whereas they have furnish'd me with Divers of the Thoughts, which have been the favourabliest entertain'd by the Readers of my other Books of Devotion, I did much impoverish these Papers, that Professedly contain my Occasional Reflections, by not only *leaving*, but *taking* out of them several things, which were the most likely to have recommended them ; that I might accommodate other Writings, for which I had a greater Kindness or Concern.

As for the *Discourse of Occasional Reflections*, all that I shall say of it, is, That considering how early I attempted that Subject, and that I was fain to repair,

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as well as I could, the unseasonable Miss of divers Papers belonging to it, when I dispatch'd it to the Press ; considering these things (I say) I despair not but that it will be thought, that I have not said nothing in favour of a Subject that hitherto had so little said to recommend it, That ev'n the Eloquent Bishop *Hall*,\* employing but some Lines, not Pages, upon the Praise and Utility of it, (which he mentions but in very General Terms) left me to find out, by my own Thoughts and Experience, the various Considerations, by which I have endeavoured to Display the Usefulness of the *way of thinking* I would invite to. Which I have further manifested, by applying to that Scope, divers passages of Scripture, (which the Reader must therefore not wonder, if he do not now meet with) as Texts, that either by way of Example, or upon other Accounts, belong to what I have written about the Method of making Occasional Reflections.

'Tis true, the Discourse may seem somewhat Incomplete, because of the Omission of this Way, that is more than once mentioned in it.

But though the loose Papers, wherein that Method, and divers Examples of it, are set down, were lying by me, when I tack'd up those that now come abroad ; yet my Occasions easily prevail'd with me to continue to suppress them. For though I did not much scruple to comply with my hast, and Avocations, by forbearing to swell a Book, whose Bulk already much exceeded my

\* In the latter part of his Proeme, whereof the whole amounts not to one Page of this Pre'face.

Intention ; because, that, as the Papers that now appear, were extorted from me ; so I confess, that I was not fond of exposing those that I had an expedient to keep back, but that I think it very fit to observe, first, whether the Reception that the following Meditations will find, will make me and others think it worth while, to have the ways published, that I was wont to use in making them.

I had almost forgotten to *intimate*, That some urgent Avocations having obliged me to send the following Treatise to the Press without reading it over my self, I now find that my haste will make me need an Apology to those Readers, that expect to have the passages and Phrases of Scripture printed in a discriminating Letter, and quoted in the Margent. For though in Books of Positive, or of Controversial Divinity, I confess I have often observed, a Margent stuffed with a multitude of Citations, to contain divers so unconcluding, if not impertinent, That the number does better shew the Authors Memory than his judgment, yet in Books of Devotion, I am not much averse from complying with the generality of Readers, who expect to be inform'd by the Margent, where they may find those Stories, and Expressions, which their being borrow'd from an inspir'd Book, make more Operative and Emphatical. But I must on this Occasion further intimate, That as to those Citations of Passages of Scripture wherein I may seem to have mis-recited the Words of the Text ; though as to some of them that were set down when I had not a Bible or Concordance at hand, my Memory may



may have deceiv'd me *as to the Words* (which is no more than has often happen'd to the Fathers themselves in the like case, and is a venial fault, where Dogmatical or Polemical Divinity are not concerned) yet oftentimes my variations from the English Version, were made on purpose. For having had the Curiosity to get my self instructed, as well by Jews as Christians, in the Eastern Tongues (especially the Hebrew) I thought I need not strictly confine my self to the words of our Translators, when ever I could render the meaning of a Text in such terms as to me seem'd proper or expressive; or without injuring the sense of the Hebrew or the Greek, could better accommodate my present purpose.

Now whereas some may think that in this Preface I employ Excuses that seem (some of them) not to agree with one another; I desire it may be considered, That the Meditations they relate to, being not only written upon differing Subjects, but (which is more) designed for very differing uses (some of those Discourses being intended to invite the more unskilful, and Incurage the more Despondent sort of Readers; and Others, to entertain Proficients) it was but Requisite that I should by very Differing, (and perchance seemingly Repugnant) Considerations give an Account of such differing Ways of writing of them, as such distant Subjects, and my Scope, required.

But what if it should fare with me Now as it has done on other Occasions, on which my friends have accus'd me, of framing more Objections against my self, than were afterwards made against me by my  
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Readers? I dare not say it is *impossible* but that this may prove the case. But if it do so, I shall not yet think my self to have Altogether miss'd my aim in what I have hitherto represented. For I have mentioned the more particulars, and Discours'd the more largely of them, that if they prove not needful Apologies for my Reflections, they may prove useful Considerations for those whom I would invite to exercise their Pens in some such way of Writing: Divers of whom will probably be encouraged to venture upon making such composures, when they find Excuses for divers of those things that are the most likely to be thought to Blemish such Essays, (or dishearten Beginners from attempting them) to be drawn up already to their Hands. But as for my own particular, if I could make none of the Apologies now insisted on, for the Imperfections imputable to this Treatise; yet I should not be destituted of a very just Excuse for the Publication of it. For divers Devout Persons, that had more Partiality for these Writings, and less Tenderness of my Reputation, than I could have wished; having long sollicit'd the Publication of those they had in their Hands, were at length so Resolved to effect it, that, in spite of the promises I at length made them to comply with their desires, when some other Writings I was then about, should be Dispatch'd: I was fain to make use of a Legal Artifice to hinder for a while at the Stationers Hall the Publication of divers Papers that I had not so much as read over.

But I confess I take notice of these passages, rather  
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to excuse those imperfections, which Haste may have Occasion'd in these immature Productions, than to Apologize for writing on Such a Subject. For so many Advantages that may accrue to a Devout and skilful Person, by assiduously making of Occasional Meditations, have been displaid in the Discourse that is premised to those that follow ; that I hope the former Part of this Book will sufficiently Apologize, for my having written the later : Especially if to the Other particulars propos'd in the newly nam'd Discourse, as things fit to Recommend that kind of Thoughts, I here be allow'd to add, That a mans Devotion may not alone be cherish'd by Occasional Meditations, upon the Account of those which every private Christian makes for Himself, but by the help also of those which he finds made By others, or intends for them. For not only whilst pious Reflections *are making*, they are proper to Instruct the Mind, and Warm the Affections ; but the *Objects\** upon which such Meditations have been made already, either by ourselves or others, do revive the Memory of those good Thoughts, that were suggested by them. So that when Diligence and Proficiency in the Practice of our *Meleteticks*, shall have supply'd us with Religious and handsome Reflections, upon the most Obvious Works of Nature, and the most Familiar Occurrences of humane Life ; Devout persons will have the Advantage to live almost Surrounded either with Instructours, or Remembrancers. And when they want Skill, or are indispos'd

\* Would we but keep our wholesome Notions together, Mankind would be too rich. Bp. *Hall* in his Proeme.

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to extract Spiritual things out of Earthly ones, they may, without racking their Invention, be furnish'd with good Thoughts, upon many Objects by their Memory. For, (as I elsewhere more fully declare,) those Truths and Notions that are dress'd up in apt Similitudes, pertinently appli'd, are wont to make durable Impressions on that Faculty, insomuch that though I am far from Pretending any of the Reflections to be met with in the following Treatise, to be of that Nature; yet such as they are, divers Considerable persons of differing *Ages* and *Sexes*, have been pleas'd to say (which is an Advantage may richly recompense more trouble than those Writings cost me) That they scarce ever see such or such particular Things on which I have written Reflections, without remembring both those Thoughts, and their Author. So that They who have so easily attainable Things, as Happier Pens than Mine, in setting down Occasional Meditation, may have the Satisfaction of making almost the whole World a great *Conclave Mnemonicum*,\* and a well furnished *Promptuary*, for the service of Piety and Vertue, and may almost under every Creature and Occurrence lay an *Ambuscade* against Sin and Idleness.

Nor is this Indirect way of instructing men, Unlawful for a Christian, or Unworthy of him. For in the spiritual Warfare, where our Adversary is the old *Serpent*, *Stratagems* are as Lawful as Expedient, and he that gets the victory, whether or no he wins Reputation

\* So they call a certain Room, Artificially furnish'd with Pictures or other Images of things, whereby to help the Memory.

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by the Manner, is sure to obtain (a greater Recompence) Glory, by the Success. A Teacher is not oblig'd to imitate *Alexander*, who upon a Disputable Punctilio of Gallantry, that was neither Wise, nor Charitable, refus'd to *steal a Victory*. For the Prophet *Nathan* scrupled not to Deceive *David*, that he might Reclaim him ; and surprise him into a Confession of the Criminousness of his fault. And the Apostles being termed by their Master, *Fishers of Men*, were warranted to make use of Baits as well as Hooks, and Nets. And our Saviour himself, by the Parable of the Wicked Husbandman that usurp'd the Vine, drew the Pharisees to an Acknowledgment, which they started from as soon as they perceived what they had done. And the same Divine Teacher, did so frequently imploy Fictions to teach Truths, that to condemn Figurative and Indirect ways of conveying ev'n Serious and Sacred matters, is to forget How often Christ himself made use of Parables. And I am the less troubled to see some Thoughts of mine, which though unpolish'd, have an natural tendency to Inveagle men (if I may so speak) into Piety and Vertue, thrust abroad into the World ; Not only because I see no reason to Despair, that ev'n as to the most Obnoxious of these Meditations, the Examples they afford may make them Useful, when the Things they contain, do not make them considerable ; and Equitable Readers will rather pity, than Admire to find, that an Author do's not Soar whilst he is Clogg'd or Depress'd by the Meanness of his Subject : but because some Experience seems to promise, that their Novelty  
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and Variety will procure the Book in general a favourable Entertainment ; And, indeed if I had written in a more usual or a more solemn way, I should perchance have had no Readers but Divines, or Humanists, or Devout Persons, or Despisers of the World, or (in a word) the Masters, or Lovers of that one kind of Learning, to which my Subject did belong : But treating, as I do, of Whatever chanc'd to come in my way, and consequently of many very Differing, and Unusual things, Curiosity will probably invite both the Learned and the Devout ; both Gentlemen, and Ladies ; and, in a word, Inquisitive Persons of several Kinds and Conditions, to cast their Eyes upon these Reflections ; which, by their Variety and Shortness, will have this advantage, towards the making them entertain'd with Patience, that scarce any of them will give him that peruses them, above half a quarter of an hours Exercise of it.

And as I thought it not any Fault to have a Regard to what was like to Please a good part of the Readers I wrote for, (though it would not else perhaps have pleas'd me, any more than it will the nicer palates of the Criticks ;) So if these Trifles chance to meet with half so kind a Reception from the Publick, as they have had from Particular Persons, I shall not, perhaps, want the Consolation, which may be deriv'd from the Judgment of a great Master of Wit, who scrupled not to affirm, That he had rather his Entertainments should please the Guests, than the Cooks. Though they that would compleat the Good Fortune of these Papers,

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may do it more effectually, by **Addicting** themselves, as considerable **Persons** have been of late induc'd to do) to **Write Occasional Reflections** (how excellent soever they may prove) than by being **Kind** to These ; since having written them, not to get **Reputation**, but **Company**, I cannot but be **Unwilling** to travel alone : and had rather be *out-gone*, than *not* at all *follow'd*, and **Surpass'd**, than not **Imitated**.

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## AN ADVERTISEMENT

### TOUCHING THE IV. SECTION.

**A** Reader that is not Unattentive, may easily collect from what he will meet with in some of the ensuing Discourses, That they were written several years ago, under an Usurping Government, that then prevail'd. And this may keep it from appearing strange, That in Papers, which contain some things not likely to be Relish'd by those that were then in Power, the Author should take occasion to speak of himself as of Another person, as well to avoid the being Suspected by them, in case his Papers should come into any of their hands, as to comply with the Design he then had ; That if these Discourses should happen to be made publick, the Reader might be left to guess, whether or no he were entertain'd with a Fiction or a true Narrative. And though a Change of Circumstances, has occasion'd the Publication of these Papers, which should have come forth by themselves (if at all) in such a way as will make most Readers look upon them as containing a Story purely Romantick : Yet they may have in them much less of Fiction, than Such will (tis like) Imagine. For being really a great Lover of Angling, and frequently diverting my  
self



*self at that sport, sometimes alone, and sometimes in Company; the Accidents of that Recreation, were the true Themes, on which the following Discourses were not the only Meditations I had made. Nor is the Intimation given at the end of this (4<sup>th</sup>) Section, of a further Continuation of such Discourses, an Artifice or shift, to steal away from a Conversation I was unable to Continue, without seeming to do so; there being in readiness divers Reflections relating to our Anglers, which had furnish'd Eusebius and his Friends with Discourses for the Afternoon, if I had judg'd, that to invite an Addition to so Prolix an Account as I had given of them already, nothing could be requisite but a Supply of Thoughts.*

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A  
DISCOURSE

Touching  
*Occasional Meditations.*

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SECT. I.

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CHAP. I.

**T**HE way of Thinking, whose Productions begin to be known by the name of Occasional Meditations, is, if rightly practis'd, so advantageous, and so delightful, that 'tis Pity, the greatest part, ev'n of serious and devout Persons, should be so unacquainted with it: And therefore, Dear Sister, your Desire to bring this way of Meditation into Request, with some of our Friends, is that which I cannot disapprove. But I am so far from having the Vanity to think, that the Trifles of this kind, your Commands make me trouble you with, would

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recommend Occasional Reflections to those, whose Eyes they were not meant for, that I think my self oblig'd to premise something touching the Usefulness of this way of Meditating, lest the careless and unpolish'd Instances you will I fear meet with, among those I now present you, should disparage and bring a Prejudice upon Composures of this kind in general; Wherefore, judging it requisite to premise something touching this way of thinking, I shall forth-with apply my self to that Task: And I should judge it a very natural Distribution to divide the following Discourse into two parts, the first of which should contain some Invitations to the Cultivating this sort of Meditations, and the latter should offer something by way of Method, towards the better framing of them. But lest I should at this time be hinder'd from treating of each of them distinctly, I will at present omit that Division, and indeavour in recompence so to deliver the Motives I am to propose, that the first part of the Discourse may not appear maim'd, though it be unattended by the second, and yet the Particulars that might compose the second, may (if it prove convenient to mention them at this time) be commodiously enough inserted in opportune places of the first.

Of Inducements to this Exercise, I might perhaps name many, but for order's sake, I shall  
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comprize them in the ensuing five ; the first whereof will take up the present Section, and the remaining four, as many others.

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## CHAP. II.

AND first, the way of Meditating, I would commend, conduces to keep the Soul from Idleness, and Employments worse than Idleness ; for while a Man's thoughts are busi'd about the present subjects of his Reflections, our Ghostly Adversary is discourag'd to attempt that Soul, which he sees already taken up, with something that is at least *innocent*, if not *good*. If I had not elsewhere display'd the Evil and Danger of Idleness, and represented it as a thing, which, though we should admit not to be in it self a sin, yet may easily prove a greater mischief than a very great one, by at once tempting the Tempter to tempt us, and exposing the empty Soul, like an uninhabited place, to the next Passion or Temptation that takes the opportunity to seize upon it : If (I say) I had not elsewhere discours'd at large against Idleness, I might here represent it as so formidable an Enemy, that it would appear alone a sufficient Motive to welcome our way of Meditation ; *That it banishes Idleness*. He that is vers'd in making

Reflections upon what occurs to him ; He that (consequently) has the works of Nature, and the actions of Men, and almost every Casualty that falls under his Notice, to set his Thoughts on work, shall scarce want Themes to employ them on : And he that can (as it were) make the World vocal, by furnishing every Creature, and almost every occurrence, with a Tongue to entertain him with, and can make the little Accidents of his Life, and the very Flowers of his Garden, read him Lectures of Ethicks or Divinity ; such a one, I say, shall scarce need to fly to the Tavern, or a worse place, to get a Drawer, or a Gamester (perhaps no better qualifi'd) to help him to get rid of his time : such a one will rather pity, than pursue those, who think it their Priviledge to spend their whole Life in Diversions from the main Business of it ; and out of an unskilful, and ill govern'd self-love, are come to that pass, that they cannot endure to be with themselves. Such a one will not need to frequent the company of those Gamesters, that are sure to lose that, which all their winnings will never be able to buy, or to redeem, and expose themselves coldly to as many Casualties, as ev'n War could threaten ; and voluntarily tempt those Passions, it is the Task of Wisdome to decline, and a Virtue to suppress ; losing nothing but their time, without losing their Patience

ence too, and commonly a great part of that Reverence and Submission *they owe to him*, of whom the Scripture tells us, that ev'n of *Lots themselves, the whole disposal is his.*\* Nor will he need, for want of knowing what to do when he is alone, to make it his almost daily Employment, to make impertinent Visits to unsanctify'd Companies, where sometimes he may lose his good Name, often his Innocence, oftner his Zeal, and always his Time.

And, as the Exercise, I would perswade, will help to keep us from Idleness, so will it, to preserve us from harbouring evil Thoughts, which there is no such way to keep out of the Soul, as to keep her taken up with good ones; as Husbandmen, to rid a piece of rank Land of Weeds, do often find it as effectual a Course to sow it with good Seed, as to cut them down, or burn them up. And indeed, the Thoughts of many a Person, are oftentimes so active, and restless, that something or other they must, and will perpetually be doing; and like unruly Souldiers, if you have not a care to employ them well, they will employ themselves ill.

Wherefore, when a Man hath once rendred this way of Thinking familiar, *sometimes* the subject of his Meditation will lead him to Thoughts, and excite Affections, full of Serenity, and Joy, like those fair Mornings, where the cloudless Beams,

\* Prov. xvi. 33.

and

and cherishing warmth of the Sun, inviting the Lark to aspire towards Heaven, make her at once mount, and sing; and when the Mind is rais'd to such a welcome and elevated state, to listen to an ordinary Temptation, a Man must forgo his Pleasure, as well as violate his Duty, and in the difference betwixt the Employment that busies him, and that whereto he is sollicitated to stoop, he will easily discern, that his Innocence will not be the onely thing that he would lose by so disadvantageous a Change; And *sometimes too*, whether or no the Employment that busies his Thoughts, happen to be so delightful, it will however appear to be so considerable, that it will seasonably furnish him with that excellent Answer of *Nehemiah*, to those that would have diverted him from building of the Temple, to come to a Treaty with them, *I am doing a great Work*, (and such indeed is the serving God, and the improving the Mind, whether we consider its Importance, or its Difficulty) *so that I cannot come down; why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?*\* Which last Expression suits very well with the present case, since, when a pious Soul is once got upon the wing of Contemplation, she must descend and stoop to exchange her converse with Heavenly objects, for one with Earthly vanities, and much

\* *Nehem.* vi. 3.

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more must she debase and degrade her self, if the things she is tempted to, be Lusts, which she will thence clearly discern to be as Low as the Hell they belong to, and deserve.

And as these Objects will afford Employment enough to our Reflector, so will the wholesome Instructions they will suggest, incline him to shun those ways of wasting his time, which they enable him easily to avoid : For I have observ'd this Difference, betwixt Ghostly dangers, and ordinary ones, that, whereas in Military hazards, those that are the most forward to thrust themselves into dangers, are commonly the best able to surmount them ; they, on the contrary, are wont to be the most fearful of Temptations, that are the most resolv'd, and best qualifi'd to resist them.

### CHAP. III.

**N**OR will the Meleteticks (or way, and kind of Meditation) I would perswade, keep Men alone from such gross and notorious Idleness, that they may be ask'd the Question, propos'd by the Householder in the Gospel, *Why sit ye here all the day idle?*\* But this way of Thinking, may in part keep Men from the loss of such smaller parcels of

\* S. Matt. xx. vi.

Time



Time, as, though a meer Moralist would not perhaps censure the neglect of them in others, yet a Devout person would condemn it in himself: For betwixt the more stated Employments, and important Occurrences of humane Life, there usually happen to be interpos'd certain Intervals of Time, which, though they are wont to be neglected, as being singly, or within the Compass of one day inconsiderable, yet in a Man's whole Life, they may amount to no contemptible Portion of it. Now these uncertain Parentheses, (if I may so call them) or Interludes, that happen to come between the more solemn Passages (whether Businesses, or Recreations) of humane Life, are wont to be lost by most men, for want of a Value for them, and ev'n by good Men, for want of Skill to preserve them: For though they do not properly despise them, yet they neglect, or lose them, for want of knowing how to rescue them, or what to do with them. But as though grains of Sand and Ashes be, apart, but of a despicable smallness, and very easie, and liable to be scatter'd, and blown away; yet the skilful Artificer, by a vehement Fire, brings Numbers of these to afford him that noble substance, Glass, by whose help we may both see our selves, and our blemishes, lively represented, (as in Looking-glasses) and discern Celestial objects, (as with Telescopes) and with the Sun-

Sun-beams, kindle dispos'd Materials, (as with Burning-glasses), So when these little Fragments, or Parcels of Time, which, if not carefully look'd to, would be dissipated, and lost, come to be manag'd by a skilful Contemplator, and to be improv'd by the Celestial fire of Devotion, they may be so order'd, as to afford us both Looking-glasses, to dress our Souls by, and Perspectives to discover Heavenly wonders, and Incentives to inflame our hearts with Charity and Zeal; And since Gold-smiths and Refiners are wont all the year long carefully to save the very sweepings of their Shops, because they may contain in them some Filings, or Dust of those richer Metals, Gold and Silver; I see not why a Christian may not be as careful, not to lose the Fragments and lesser Intervals of a thing incomparably more precious than any Metal, Time; especially, when the Improvement of them, by our Meleteticks, may not onely redeem so many Portions of our Life, but turn them to pious Uses, and particularly to the great Advantage of Devotion.

And indeed, the Affairs and Customs of the World, the Employments of our particular Callings, the allowable Recreations, that Health, or Weariness requires, and the Multitude of unforeseen, and scarce evitable Avocations, that are wont to share our time among them, leave us so little of  
it,

it, to imploy in the set and solemn Exercises of Devotion, and make those so unfrequent, that our Hearts are in great Danger, of being, by the Business, and Pleasures, and Hurry of the World, if not perverted from Aspiring to, at least too long diverted from Enjoying, Communion with God, and kept too much Strangers to Him, if in the long Intervals of our more solemn Exercises of Devotion, we be not careful to lay hold on the short, and transient Opportunities of Cherishing, and reviving, that Grace in us; and do not by the Rises given us by the Things that occur, take occasion to make frequent, though but short Flights Heaven-wards, in extemporary Reflections, serious Soliloquies, piercing Ejaculations, and other mental, either Exercises, or Expressions of Devotion, by which means, we may make those very objects, and occasions, that would Discourage, or at least Distract, our Minds, elevate and animate them: As *Jonathan* made those very things, whereby his Enemies, the Philistims, sought to intrap, or destroy him, Incouragements to fight with them, and Omens of his Victory over them. And as scarce any time is so short, but that things so Agile, and aspiring as the Flames of a Devout Soul, may take a flight to Heaven, (as *Nehemiah* could find time to dart up a successful Prayer to the Throne of Grace, whilst he stood waiting behind

hind the King of *Persia's* Chair) so by these ex-  
temporary Reflections, as well as by other mental  
Acts of Piety duely made, a Devout Soul may not  
onely rescue these precious Fragments of Time,  
but procure Eternity with them.

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SECT.

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## SECT. II.

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### CHAP. I.

**A** SECOND Inducement to the Practice of making Occasional Meditations, is, that for an Exercise of Devotion, 'tis very delightful, and that upon sundry accounts.

For first, Variety is a thing so pleasing to humane Nature, that there are many things, which it, either alone, or chiefly, recommends to us, and 'tis rarely seen, that we love the same things very much, and very long; and of things that else would appear equally good, we usually think that the *better*, which happens to be another. Now, a Person addicted to make Occasional Meditations, may be suppli'd with Subjects, whose Variety is scarce imaginable: For the works of Nature, and of Art, are not the onely Objects that often present themselves to our Reflector's Consideration; The Revolutions of Governments, the Fates of Kingdoms, the Rise and Ruine of Favourites; and on the other side, the most slight and trivial Occurrences:

rences : And in short, all that he sees happen, from the highest Transactions, to the slightest Circumstances incident to humane affairs, may afford matter of Contemplation to a Person dispos'd to it. The mind of Man is so comprehensive, and so active a faculty, that it can force its passage into those imaginary spaces, that are beyond the outermost part of the outermost Heaven, and can in a moment return back, to consider the smallest Circumstances of the meanest of humane affairs ; so that the thinking faculty, being equally fit, and dispos'd to reflect upon the works of God, and the actions of Men, how unlikely is it, that it should want Variety of Subjects to be employ'd on, whilst the whole World makes but a part of its Object : And the several Productions of Nature, and Art, of the Providence of God, and the Will of Man, may be so many ways consider'd, and so variously compounded, that they may well be suppos'd capable of affording Occasions to Notions, and Reflections, far more numberless than themselves ; so that the most vigorous, and the most active Soul, is in less danger of wanting fresh Game, than Thoughts to pursue such endless Variety of it.

Besides, whereas Men are wont, for the most part, when they would Study hard, to repair to their Libraries, or to Stationers Shops ; the Occasional Reflector has his Library always with him,  
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and his Books lying always open before him, and the World it self, and the Actions of the Men that live in it, and an almost infinite Variety of other Occurrences being capable of proving Objects of his Contemplation; he can turn his Eyes no whither, where he may not perceive somewhat or other to suggest him a Reflection.

But, that which may much indear such Meditations, is, their surprizing ev'n him, whose Thoughts they are: For one of the chief accounts, upon which Wit it self is delightful, is, in very many cases, the unexpectedness of the things that please us; that unexpectedness being the highest Degree of Novelty, which, as I freshly noted, does exceedingly gratifie most Men's minds. We need not in this case, as in most others, make an uneasie Preparation to entertain our Instructors; for our Instructions are suddenly, and as it were out of an Ambuscade, shot into our Mind, from things whence we never expected them, so that we receive the advantage of learning good Lessons, without the trouble of going to School for them, which, to many, appears the greatest trouble that is to be undergone, for the Acquist of Knowlege. But though these Irradiations of Light be oftentimes sudden, as that which we receive from flashes of Lightning, yet 'tis not always upon the single account of this suddenness, that the Instructions,  
pre-

presented us by Occasional Meditations, have an unexpectedness ; for oftentimes, the Subject that is consider'd, appears not to be any thing at all of Kin to the Notion it suggests. And there are many of these Reflections, whose Titles, though they name the occasion of them, do so little assist, ev'n an ingenious Reader, to guess what they contain, that if you tell him what is treated of, he will scarce imagine, how such Thoughts can be made to have a Relation to such remote Subjects ; And the Informations we receive from many Creatures, and Occurrences, are oftentimes extremely distant from what one would conjecture to be the most obvious, and natural Thoughts those Themes are fitted to present us, though, when the Circumstances are thoroughly examin'd, and consider'd, the Informations appear proper enough : Thus, when a Navigator suddenly spies an unknown Vessel afar off, before he has hail'd her, he can scarcely, if at all, conclude what he shall learn by her ; and he may from a Ship, that he finds perhaps upon some remoter coast of *Africa*, or the *Indies*, meet with Informations concerning his own Country, and affairs ; And thus sometimes a little Flower may point us to the Sun, and by casting our eyes down to our feet, we may in the water see those Stars that shine in the Firmament or highest visible Heaven.

CHAP.



## CHAP. II.

**A**ND, lastly, the pleasantness of these Meditations, to him that hath attain'd skill in making them, will, if he be not much mortifi'd, be much increas'd by their being *Proofs*, as well as *Effects*, of *Skill*. To be able to take up Instructions in Books that are replenished with them, and where they are purposely and distinctly exhibited in the form of Instructions, requires rather that a man be docile than ingenious; but to be able to collect Moral and Spiritual Documents out of a Book of Hieroglyphicks, or from a Landscape or a Map, is more than every attentive considerer can do, and is that which argues something of Dexterousness and Sagacity that is not very ordinary. And so, from Ethical or Theological Composures, to take out Lessons that may improve the Mind, is a thing much inferiour to the being able to do the like out of the Book of Nature, where most Matters that are not Physical, if they seem not to be purposely veil'd, are at least but darkly hinted. And me-thinks there is such a difference betwixt him that but takes up Instructions in Books of Morality and Devotion, and him that by Occasional Reflections derives them from the Book of Nature, and the Accidents he chances to take notice

notice of, as there is betwixt an Ant that contributes nothing either to the Production or Improvement of the Corn she lays up and feeds on, but onely carries away that which she finds ready form'd into its little Granary or Repository; and the Industrious Bee, who, without stealing from Flowers any thing that can prejudice them, does not onely gather, but improve and transform, her food, and live on that which otherwise would be useless, and besides, not onely has the pleasure to gather its food from Flowers, and from variety of them, but lives upon Honey, an Aliment that is as sweet and delicious as nutritive. 'Twas doubtless a very great pleasure to *Æsop*, that by his ingenious fictions he could, in a manner, lend Reason and Speech to Lions, Foxes, Crows, and other Animals, to whom Nature had deni'd both; and I know not why it should be less delightful, by Occasional Reflections, to turn not onely Birds and Beasts, but all kinds of Creatures in the world, as well mute and inanimate, as irrational, not onely into Teachers of Ethicks, but oftentimes into Doctors of Divinity, and by compelling senseless Creatures to reveal Truths to us, that they were never acquainted with themselves, perform really something like that, which was but pretended by the antient Augures and other Diviners the Heathen world admir'd, who took  
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upon them, by the casual flights of Birds, and the Inspection of the Intrails of Beasts, to learn the Will of Heaven. 'Tis a piece of skill, for which Mathematicians have been deservedly admir'd, and which is little less pleasing to those that have it, than wonderful to those that have it not, that as if Artists were able to prescribe to the Sun and Moon, and the rest of the luminous Globes of Heaven, both their pace and their stages, they can make that inexhausted Fountain of Light, at so immense a Distance, by the Shadow of a little Gnomon, fitly plac'd, give us an exact account of all the Journeys he performs in the Zodiack; but perhaps, 'tis neither a less noble nor a less delightful piece of skill, to be able, by an innocent kind of Necromancy, to consult the dead, and conjure up wormeaten Carcases out of their Mossy Graves, without fearing to hear from them such dismal Discourses as *Saul* had from dead *Samuel*, and to make, not the Stars onely, but all the Creatures of Nature, and the various occurrences that can fall under our notice, conspire to enrich us with Instructions they never meant us; since the Motion of the celestial lights are known, certain, and invariable; but these particulars are neither to be defin'd by number, nor limited by Rules. Not to say, that this Secret does as much excell that other, which recommends Astronomy,

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as Wisdome does Science, and is as much the more useful of the two, as to know how to pass away our time is more profitable, than to know how our time passes away.

But there is a fourth particular, which, though somewhat less directly than the three I have already discours'd of, may be reduc'd to the Pleasantness of Occasional Meditations; and it is, That whereas our innate Self-love is wont to make any thing that minds us of our faults exceedingly uneasie and unwelcome: in the Discoveries that, by this way of thinking, are made us of what is amiss, the uneasiness is very much allai'd, and the Pill very well gilt. For there are two main things that conduce to the sweetning of Reproofs, and to keep men from being offended at them; The one is, when they come from a person whom we love, and whom we believe to love us, and to have no other design in displeasing us than that of serving us: And the other is, That the Discovery that is made us of our faults be sweeten'd by Acknowledgments of our having Qualities of a commendable Nature, whence wise Reprovers usually mingle, and, as it were, brew their Reprehensions with praises. Now, both these pleasing Vehicles, if I may so call them, and Correctives of Reproofs, concur in those we meet with in making Occasional Reflections. For, in these cases, being

our own Instructors, and our own Consciences being the Makers of the Application, we cannot suspect the Reprehensions to come from persons, that either mistake us, or are partial against us; and that Truth which a man's Conscience applies to him, being found out by the sagacity of his own Understanding, extracting from Objects that which every Considerer would not have pick'd out thence; it may very often happen, that the same Reflection will discover to a man his Excellencies, as well as make him take notice of his faults; and that which makes him condemn the Disorders of his Affections, may argue, and thereby commend, the Goodness of his Parts.

### CHAP. III.

**I** KNOW it may be objected against the pleasantness of the Mental Exercise I have been speaking of, That to make Occasional Meditations is a work too difficult to be delightful.

In Answer to this, I might represent, That there are employments wherein their being attended with somewhat of difficulty, is so far from deterring us, that it recommends them: as we see that in Hunting and Hawking, the toil that must be undergone is so much an indearment of the Recreation, of which it makes a great part, that  
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when it happens that we do not meet with difficulties enough, we create new ones; as when Hunts-men give the Hare Law, (as they speak) for fear of killing her before they have almost kill'd their Horses, and perhaps themselves, in following her: Yet I shall rather chuse to make a more direct Answer, by observing, That the difficulties imagin'd in the practice I am treating of, seem to arise, not so much from the nature of the thing it self, as from some prejudices and misapprehensions that are entertain'd about it, especially the following two.

The first is a needless Scruple, which makes some fancy themselves obliged to confine their thoughts to the subject that set them on work. And this dwelling long upon one Theme is to many men a thing uneasie and tedious enough. But for my part, I see no necessity of such a strictness; and I have often observ'd the thoughts successfully to follow objects of a quite differing nature from those that were first started, from which, perhaps, though more obstinately pursued, very little instruction or advantage would have been obtain'd, and it not unfrequently happens, that men trouble themselves in vain to make any profitable use of the considerations of those first objects, where the thoughts being licens'd to expatiate themselves, they do often at length pitch  
upon

upon somewhat or other that is instructive, and at which, perhaps, they aim'd at the very first, though they attain'd it but by degrees, and pursu'd it by winding and untrac'd ways. As when we let a Grey-hound loose in a Warren, we confine him not to the first Rabbet he makes after, since we see it frequently happens, that one sets him a running, and another proves his Quarry. Nor do I conceive such a practice disagreeable to the nature of Occasional Meditations, nor to be excluded by their name, for that appellation may well enough be appli'd to those emergent thoughts which fortuitous Occasions did awaken or suggest to us; nor is it necessary that our thoughts be always calculated for the subject that excited them, provided we thence took occasion to think: So that in some cases, the Occasion is not so much the Theme of the Meditation, as the Rise. For my part, I am so little scrupulous in this matter, that I would not confine Occasional Meditations to Divinity it self, though that be a very comprehensive Subject, but am ready to allow mens thoughts to expatiate much further, and to make of the Objects they contemplate not onely a Theological and a Moral, but also a Political, an Oeconomical, or even a Physical use. And I doubt whether the groundless Imagination, that Occasional Reflections ought to be confined to  
matters

matters of Devotion, or, at furthest, of Morality, have not much helped to keep our Meleteticks so little cultivated as hitherto they have been. And indeed there is so perfect an harmony, and so near a kindred, betwixt Truths, that, in many cases, the one does either find out, or fairly hint, or else illustrate or confirm, the other. And 'tis no wonder that divers of them should belong to the same Object, and be deduc'd from it. And if men were solicitous to apply the things they take notice of in Occasional Objects, to the discovery or illustration of Oeconomical, Political, or Physical matters, it would probably bring such kind of thoughts more into request with several sorts of men, and possibly conduce to the improvement of those parts of Knowledge themselves.

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## CHAP. IV.

**T**HE other thing I propos'd to mention, as that which discourages many from the addicting themselves to make Occasional Meditations, is a fancy, That to practise this kind of thinking, one is oblig'd to the trouble of writing down every Occasional Reflection that employs his thoughts; and they conclude it far easier to forbear making any, than to write down all: But to do this, were  
to



to undertake a task no less unnecessary than tedious. Those Meditations indeed that have some Excellency in them, that fits them to instruct others, should for that purpose be kept from perishing, and those that were not conceiv'd without some extraordinary Affection in a man's self, should be carefully pursued,\* as Bellows to blow or rekindle Devotion, by reminding us of the devout thoughts the like Objects had excited in us. But for the rest of our Occasional Reflections, though they fill our heads, they need not employ our hands, as having perform'd all the service that need be expected from them within the mind already.

Nor would I have any man be discourag'd from this way of thinking, that cannot express so much wit or eloquence in Occasional Meditations, as perhaps he may aspire to. For, besides that much subtilty of wit is not to be expected, or at least exacted, in this kind of composures, where we commonly make use of things rather out of haste than choice, as frequently being but the first thoughts we meet with, not the best we have; besides this, I say, that which ought most to in-dear this sort of Reflections to a Christian, is rather that they cherish piety, than that they express wit, and help to make the *man* good,

\* So both editions. Perhaps "preserved."

whether

whether or no they make his *style* be thought so. 'Twere injurious to nature to fancy, that the Fig-tree derives no benefit from the Rain and Sun, because they do not make it, like other Trees, flourish with Blossoms, more gaudy than necessary, though without prævious Buds it brings forth welcome Fruits. Not to add, that the difficulty of framing Occasional Meditations, need not be estimated by that which we find when we first addict our selves to the making of them; for practice will by degrees so much lessen that difficulty, that after a while we shall find, that Occasional thoughts will need but small invitation to frequent those minds where they meet with a kind entertainment. And though men should be reduc'd to purchase this habitude at the rate of a little difficulty, I doubt not but they will find the benefit of it, when gotten, richly to recompense the trouble of acquiring it. Nor will the practice, that must contribute to the attainment of a reasonable degree of skill in making them, be half so troublesome when those Exercises but make up the habitude, as they will prove facile and delightful when they flow from it.

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SECT.

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## SECT. III.

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### CHAP. I.

**T**HE third grand Advantage that may be deriv'd from the custom of making Occasional Meditations, is, That it conduces to the exercise and improvement of divers of the faculties of the mind. And this it may do upon several accounts.

I. For, in the first place, it accustomes a man to an attentive observation of the Objects where-with he is conversant. Whereas there is scarce any thing that may not prove the subject of an Occasional Meditation, so the natural propensity we have to manage well the Themes we undertake to handle, unperceivably ingages us to pry into the several attributes and relations of the things we consider, to obtain the greater plenty of particulars, for the making up of the more full and compleat Parallel betwixt the things whose resemblances we would set forth. By which means

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a man often comes to discover a multitude of particulars even in obvious things, which, without such an ingagement to attention, he would never have minded, and which common beholders take no Notice of. And though it may seem, that the habit, produced by the practice of Occasional meditating, should accustom a man to heed only such Objects as are like to suggest to him devout thoughts; yet, not to mention now that I shall advertise you anon, that there is no necessity of confineing occasional meditations to matters Devout, or Theological, I shall only represent, that, since we know not, before we have considered the particular Objects that occur to us, which of them will, and which of them will not, afford us the subject of an Occasional Reflection, the mind will, after a while, be ingag'd to a general and habitual attention, relating to the Objects that present themselves to it. Besides, that though we should at first apply our heedfulness to circumstances of only some few sorts of Objects, yet the habit, being once acquir'd, would easily reach to others than those that first occasion'd it; as men, that by Learning to sing Anthems are come to have critical ears, will be able to judge, much better than they could before, of the resemblances and differences of Tones in other Songs, and will take Notice of divers particularities in Voices, which  
would

would not be heeded by an unpractised Ear : And as we have made it appear, that the way of thinking we would recommend, does very much dispose men to an attentive frame of mind ; so, that such a frame or disposition is a great advantage in the whole course of a man's life, will not appear improbable to him who duly considers, that since attention, like a magnifying glass, shews us, even in common Objects, divers particularities undiscerned by those who want that advantage, it must needs make the things he is conversant with afford the considerer much more of instruction than they obtrude upon the ordinary regardless beholder, and consequently, this exercise of the mind must prove a compendious way to Experience, and make it attainable without grey-hairs ; for that, we know, consists not in the multitude of years, but of observations, from Numbers and variety of which it results : nor is there any reason, why prudence should be peculiarly ascrib'd to the Aged, except a supposition that such persons, by having liv'd long in the World, have had the opportunity of many and various occurrences to ripen their judgment ; so that if one man can by his attention make, as well he may in a small compass of time, as great a number of Observations as less heedful Persons are wont to do in a longer, I see not why such a man's Experience may not be

be equal to his, that has liv'd longer ; for it matters not much whether a man make a competent Number of Observations in much time or in little, provided he have made them well.

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## CHAP. II.

II. **T**HE Practice I would recommend, accustoms a man to make Reflections upon the things he takes notice of, and so, by exercising, improves his reasoning Faculty. For, as most men have much more strength and Agility in the right hand than in the left, and, generally speaking, those Limbs of the Body that are most exercis'd, are stronger than the rest of the same kind, so the faculties of the mind are improv'd by Exercise, and those that we frequently employ, grow thereby the more vigorous and nimble. And, for my part, I have been often inclin'd to think, that the chief advantage that the reasoning faculty derives from the Institution received in Logick-Scholes comes not so much from the Precepts themselves, which are pretended to make up an Art of reasoning, as from the frequent exercises that, by occasion of such Precepts, the Students are put upon ; and perhaps, if men were oblig'd to read the controversies of subtle Wits, and to engage in frequent Dispu-

Disputations, both premeditated and extemporary, it would add little less of readiness and acuteness to their wits, though they disputed of other matters than such as properly belong to Logick, and were not before imbu'd with the Precepts of that Art; as we see, that the use of singing with those that can sing well, does much improve one's Voice, both as to strength and clearness, whatever the Tunes or Songs be that are sung, and how little soever those with whom one sings make it their Business to teach him the Art of Musick.

But this is only Conjecture; and whether it be true or no, yet this I am confident is so, That the bringing of a man to be a thinking and a reflecting Person, is to procure him so great an Advantage, as, though it were the only one, may justly endear to him the custom of making Occasional Meditations; and he that could bring this practice into the Request it deserves, would do a greater piece of service, not only to the particular Persons he perswades, but to mankind in general, than the greater part of good men themselves seem to be aware of. For though God having been pleased to make Reason the chief part of our Nature, among the various Objects that daily occur to us, it can scarce be but that some or other will in a manner obtrude some Notions ev'n upon the unattentive; yet certainly, all that has been found  
worthy

worthy of Mankind in Mathematicks, Philosophy, and other kinds of Learning, has been attain'd by thinking Men, or by a frequent and regular Practice of imploying the thoughts: And lest it should be objected, that these various and Elaborate effects of assiduous meditation were the productions only of Philosophers or other men of speculative heads; Let us but consider, that though Gallants and Courtiers do seldom love to tire themselves with thinking, and are as seldom fond of writing Books, not to add, fit to write them, and though love be not the fruitfulest Theme that may be pitch'd on, yet that Passion, and some Particulars relating to it, frequently busying their thoughts, and being several wayes consider'd by them, has been display'd and contriv'd ev'n by such writers as I have been just now mentioning, into those numerous Plays that daily imploy the Stage, and those Voluminous Romances that are too often the only Books which make up the Libraries of Gallants, and fill the Closets of Ladies. He that most truly called himself the *Truth*, tells us, that the Devil is not only a *Liar*, but the *Father of Lies*\*, that is, the great Patron and Promoter of falshood, and, as such, he studiously opposes all useful Truths; not only those for which we must be beholden to Revelation, but those also which

\* S. John viii. 44.

may



may be attain'd by Ratiocination, and the well regulated exercise of our natural Faculties: And he were much less an *Adversary* and an *Old Serpent* than he is, if his Enmity to God and Man did not justly make him think that scarce any thing is more his interest than solicitously to divert men from thinking, and discourage them in it, there being few things whereby he could more effectually oppose at once, both the Glory of God and the good of Men. And sure, if so subtile an Adversary did not think it very much his Interest to be solicitous about this matter, it could not be that men should choose for a Priviledge, the laying aside that faculty of Meditating, which is indeed so much their Priviledge, that, if Experience did not convince the contrary, I could never suspect the Non-employing of their thoughts could be their Choice rather than their Punishment; and that rational Creatures, especially professing Christianity, should either keep idle, or confine to Employments worse than Idleness so noble and improvable a *Faculty*, that enables an Ingenious Man to pry into the innermost Recesses of mysterious Nature, and discover there so much of the Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, of the Author, as are most fit to give the Discoverer a high and devout Veneration for those Excellencies. A *Faculty*, whereby an Inquisitive Soul may expiate

tiate it self through the whole Immensity of the Universe, and be her own Teacher in a thousand cases, where the Book is no less delightful than the Lessons are Instructive. *A Faculty* (to conclude) by whose help the restless mind, having div'd to the lowermost parts of the Earth, can thence in a trice take such a Flight, that having travers'd all the corporeal Heavens, and scorn'd to suffer her self to be confin'd with the very Limits of the World, she roves about in the ultra-mundane spaces, and considers how far they reach.

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### CHAP. III.

III. **B**ESIDES the two already mention'd Advantages, which the Intellectual part of the Mind may derive from the practice of Occasional Reflections, I should not scruple to add a third, if there were not too just Cause of apprehending, that my Writings may discredit any thing that comes propos'd of that Nature by no better a Pen, and that the *manner* of what I am about to deliver may disparage the *Matter*. But since, from the Experience ev'n of purblind and dim-sighted Persons, good Perspectives may be, not improperly, nor unsuccessfully, recommended, though their Native and peculiar Debility of Sight

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keep them from being able to see as clear, and as far, through such Glasses, as other Men can do, if themselves can, by the use of them, do far more than they could without them. I will adventure to speak of an improvement I cannot boast of, lest by suppressing the mention of an Advantage, because I cannot make it, I should seem either Vain, or Envious, as well as Dull. I shall then take notice, that the Meleteticks we are considering may, where it finds a capable and dispos'd Subject, much improve that nimble and acceptable Faculty of the Mind, whereby some Men have a readiness, and subtilty, in conceiving things, and a quickness, and neatness, in expressing them, all which the custom of speaking comprehends under the name of *Wit*, which pleasing, and (if well manag'd) useful Quality, the exercise I am discoursing of, may three or four several ways promote.

For (first) the accustoming ones self to make Extemporal Reflections, and that upon all kind of Occasions, do's by degrees bring the Mind to a readiness of Conception, which keeps a Man from being easily surpris'd by the Subject he has occasion to consider, and enables him oftentimes to surprise his Hearers; and that such a kind of surprise is one of the most endearing Circumstances of the productions of Wit, he must not have much consider'd the Nature of them, that ignores.

Next,

Next, the same Exercise inures a Man to draw his Conceptions from the very Nature of the thing he speaks of, which, among those that can judge of Wit, is held a far greater sign of it, than the saying things more specious, and elaborate, that appear to be Antienter than the Occasion, as is usual in Epigrams, and other solemn premeditated pieces of Wit, where oftentimes the Thoughts were not made for the Themes, but before them : Whereas, the suddenness of a good Occasional Reflection, and its congruity to that which gave it Rise, perswades the Hearers, that the Speaker's Wit is of its own growth, and is rather suggested by the Occasion, than barely applied to it.

A third way, whereby our Meleteticks may conduce to Wit, is, by bringing those that use to write their Thoughts to what may be call'd a certain *Suppleness of Style* ; for when a Man treats of familiar, or of solemn Subjects, he is so much assisted by the received phrases and manners of speaking, that are wont to be employ'd about them, that being seldome at a loss for convenient expressions, his Wit is seldome distress'd how to furnish him with words fit for his turn. But the Subjects that invite Occasional Reflections are so various and uncommon, and oftentimes so odd, that, to accommodate ones Discourse to them, the vulgar and receiv'd forms of Speech will afford him but

little assistance, and to come off any thing well, he must exercise his Invention, and put it upon coining various and new Expressions, to sute that variety of unfamiliar Subjects, and of Occasions, that the Objects of his Meditation will engage him to write of: And by this difficult exercise of his Inventive faculty, he may by degrees so improve it, and, after a while, attain to so pliant a Style, that scarce any Thought will puzzle him to fit words to it; and he will be able to cut out Expressions, and make them fit close to such Subjects, as a Person unaccustom'd to such kind of Compo-sures would find it very difficult to write of, with any thing of propriety.

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## CHAP. IV.

**I**T remains, that I mention one way more, and that a considerable one, whereby the practice of Occasional Reflections may contribute to the Improvement of Wit; and that is, by supplying Men with store and variety of good Comparisons.

How great, and how acceptable, a part of Wit that is, which has the advantage to be express'd by apt Similitudes, every Man's own experience, if he please to consult it, may, in some measure, inform

inform him. And certainly, there is no one part of Wit that is so generally applicable to all kind of Persons; for good Comparisons serve equally to illustrate, and to persuade; the greatest Wits disdain them not, and ev'n ordinary Wits are capable to understand them, and to be affected by them; and if a Sermon, or a long Discourse, be enrich'd with one apt Comparison, what part soever else be forgotten, that will be sure to be remembered. And, a but plausible Argument, dress'd up in fine Similitudes, shall be more prævalent among the generality of Men, than a Demonstration propos'd in a naked Syllogism; and therefore, the antient *Sages* did so much chuse to imploy a Figurative way of delivering their Thoughts, that when they could not furnish themselves with Resemblances fit for their turns, they would devise Parables, and Apologues, to recommend what they said to the attention and memory of those they would work upon. And those famous Orators, who, though they lived in Commonwealths, did, by their Eloquence, exercise a more than Monarchical Government there, and who, by their enchanting Tongues, rul'd those Warlike people, whose Swords had made them Masters of the World; those imperial Wits, I say, whose Oratory perform'd such Wonders, perform'd them chiefly by the help of their happy Comparisons,  
which

which alone contributed more to their success, than almost all the other persuasive Figures of their Triumphant Rhetorick: Lucky Comparisons being indeed those parts of Wit, that as well make the strongest Impressions upon the Mind, as they leave the deepest on the Memory. Now, as the being furnish'd with apt Comparisons, do's so very much conduce to the making a Man's Discourses and Writings appear Witty, so there is scarce any thing more fit and likely to supply a Man with store and variety of Comparisons, than the Custom of making Occasional Meditations: For he that uses himself to take notice of the properties and circumstances of most things that Occur to him, and to reflect on many of them, and thereby observes the relations of things to one another, and consequently discerns, how the properties or circumstances of one may be accommodated, by way of Resemblance or Dissimilitude, to somewhat that relates to the other, will often find, besides those things which afford him his Occasional Reflection, divers others, which, though less fit for the Meditation, that invited his taking notice of them, may be very fitly applicable to other subjects, and purposes, and will easily furnish him with Resemblances, wherewith he may, if he pleases, much increase the Books of Similitudes, already extant: And the Comparisons that  
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may be this way lighted on may sometimes prove strange and unobvious enough, to be surprising ev'n to Himself, as well as to his Auditors, or his Readers.

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## CHAP. V.

**B**UT, besides those Similitudes, we may be furnish'd with by the things we observe, without turning them into Occasional Meditations, we may find in those very Subjects, whereon we *do* make Reflections, Circumstances, that, though improper, or at least unnecessary, to be taken into the Occasional Meditation, may be very fitly accommodated to other things, and plentifully contribute to the store and variety of Comparisons we lately mention'd; this must appear so much a Truth, to any that is exercis'd in making Occasional Reflections, that I should perhaps forbear to illustrate it by any particular example, but that this part of my Discourse recalls into my Mind some Thoughts that were suggested to me by one of the last Occasions I had to make Reflections of this Nature. I shall add then, that being all alone, and diverted a pretty while by a sudden storm of Thunder, Lightning, Wind, and Rain,



Rain, from the imployments I had design'd my self to, I had the unwelcome leisure to make some Reflections upon the rude Objects that obtruded themselves upon my Observation.

And the chief thing that presented it self to my Thoughts, was, a resemblance betwixt Prophane or Atheistical wits, and the black Clouds that then over-cast the Sky: For, as those Clouds are rais'd to an elevated Station, and do afford flashes of Light; so these Irreligious wits are oftentimes conspicuous enough, and may bring forth Notions that are surprising, and instructive; but as the same Clouds, whil'st they give us but their own momentany Light, obscure (by darkning the Sky) and hinder us, as much as they can, from receiving that of the Sun, which reaches further, and is many other ways preferrable to vanishing Coruscations; so these Wits, whil'st they seem to enlighten those they dazle, with their own new Opinions, do really deprive them of the true Heavenly Light, that would else shine forth to them in the revealed Word of God: And as the Light that we do receive from the Clouds, may dazle and astonish us, but is not sufficient for us to Travel by; so the admir'd reasonings of these Sophisters may surprise and amaze us, but will never prove sufficient to be, like the Scripture, a constant *Lamp unto our feet, and Light unto our*

*our paths.\** And as the Light afforded by such Clouds, is not onely wont to be attended with affrighting Thunder, and hurtful Storms, but burns, and destroys, or at least, scorches, and blacks, where it passes, and oftentimes falls upon Churches, Hospitals, Colledges, and brings such frights and ruins wheresoever it comes, that 'twere a great deal better Men wanted the Light of such flashes, than that they should be expos'd to such inconveniencies by them: So the insolent and irregular Wits I am speaking of, do not onely make an unwelcome Noise in the World, but do oftentimes so denigrate the Reputation of them that oppose them, and bear so little respect ev'n to things sacred, or useful to Mankind, without sparing the Church or Seminaries of Learning, if either come in their way, that they do far more Mischiefs by their errors, or their practices, than the little Instruction they give us is able to make amends for.

This, if I forget not, was the substance of the Occasional Meditation, suggested to me by the Storm; but, besides that, there are in this some particulars, which are not necessary to the Meditation it self, and may be fitly enough accommodated, by way of Comparisons, to other Occasions. I remember, the same Subject (the Storm) had

\* Psalm cxix. 105.

other

other Circumstances in it, fit to afford Similitudes, applicable to other Subjects, and some of them unobvious enough: For instance, 'tis not easie to find so illustrious a Comparison, to set forth, how the most contrary Qualities may proceed from the same Subjects, as that which we may be suppli'd with, by considering, that, from the same Clouds, we derive both Light and Darkness; and a noble Comparison of contraries, conjoyn'd in one Subject, may be borrow'd from the same Clouds, which afford us Lightning, and Rain, shew, that they contain in them two of the eminentest and seldomest consistent contraries of Nature, Fire and Water. And another Comparison may be deriv'd from the differing productions of these Clouds, to illustrate those things which do at once both much good, and much mischief, or sometimes the one, and sometimes the other: For the same Clouds both produce the Thunder, and the Lightning, and thereby blast Trees, kill Men and Beasts, fire Houses, and ruine the noblest Buildings, without sparing Churches themselves; and, on the other side, plentifully afford us those refreshing and fertilizing Showers, that correct the heat of the sultry Air, and cure the barrenness of the parched Earth. And one that is skill'd in framing Comparisons out of Dissimilitudes, and exercised in the other ways of turning and winding

ing of Simile's, may easily enough find, in the Subject we have been considering, Circumstances capable of being conveniently enough accommodated to more subjects and purposes, than I have leisure now to take notice of. And since, as the being able to find the latent resemblances betwixt things seemingly unlike, make up a great part of what we are wont to call *Wit*; so the being able to discern the unobvious disparities of things manifestly resembling, is one of the chief things that displays the Faculty Men call Judgment; and since both these are very much assisted by the Custom of making Reflections, wherein we must take notice of the several properties, wherein things either are alike, or disagree; Me-thinks it should not a little manifest the usefulness of our Meleteticks towards the improvement of Men's parts, that they not onely instruct the more serious faculty of the Soul, but sharpen the more subtile.

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## CHAP. VI.

IV. **B**UT the Practice I have all this while been recommending, do's not onely dispose us to Attention, in observing the things<sup>s</sup> that occur to us, and accustom us to reflect on them

them seriously, and express them fitly, but do's also, though insensibly, suggest to us Ways and Methods, whereby to make the Objects we consider informative to us.

For by Example, Analogy, or some of those other ways which we may be invited, on another occasion, to insist on, we are, as it were, led by the hand to the discovery of divers useful Notions, especially Practical, which else we should not take any notice of. And indeed, the World is the great Book, not so much of Nature, as of the God of Nature, which we should find ev'n crowded with instructive Lessons, if we had but the Skill, and would take the Pains, to extract and pick them out: The Creatures are the true Ægyptian Hieroglyphicks, that under the rude forms of Birds, and Beasts, &c. conceal the mysterious secrets of Knowledge, and of Piety. And as Chymists boast of their Elixir, that 'twill turn the ignoblest Metals into Gold; so Wisdome makes all Objects, on which it operates, enrich the Possessor with useful and precious Thoughts: And since ev'n the illiterate Husbandman can, with the most abject Dung it self, give a flourishing growth to the most useful Grains, to Medicinable herbs, and ev'n to fragrant Flowers; why may not a wise Man, by the meanest Creatures, and slighted'st Object, give a considerable Improvement

provement to the noblest Faculties of the Soul, and the most lovely Qualities of the Mind?

But the particular Method of deriving Instruction from the Subjects we consider, will be more fit to be particularly insisted on, when we shall have more time, or some other opportunity, to treat of the *manner* of making Occasional Meditations, and shew, how they may be fetch'd from *Example, Analogy, Dissimilitude, Ratiocination,* and other Topicks, which we must not now take any further notice of.

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## SECT. IV.

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### CHAP. I.

**H**ITHERTO we have considered the Benefits that may be afforded by the practice of Occasional Meditations to the *Intellectual Faculties*. We will now proceed to the Advantages that may accrue from the same Practice to the *Will and Affections*. These advantages being not onely the most valuable in themselves, but those upon whose account I have been engag'd in the present Undertaking.

V. The last therefore and greatest Benefit I shall take notice of, in the practice I would invite you to, is, That it awakens good thoughts, and excites good motions, in the Will and Affections. For since we have already manifested, that it is wont to suggest variety of Notions to the Mediator, and such as are usually accompany'd with delight ; This friendly property to Devotion, which  
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I now ascribe to our Meleteticks, is a very easie and genuine off-spring of the marriage of the two others: The Beams of Knowledge, acquired by such Reflections, having in them, like those of the Sun, not onely Light but Heat. And indeed it were somewhat strange, as well as sad, if a person disposed and accustomed to observe and consider, conversing with such instructive Books as those of God's Creatures and his Providence, with an intention to take out practical Lessons, should not find hem. For amidst that rich variety of Objects that in differing manners proffer themselves to his consideration, and suggest to him a great diversity of Reflections, it cannot reasonably be imagin'd that he should not find subjects or circumstances, that are proper, *either* to afford him Examples to imitate, *or* shew him the Danger, *or* Unhandsomeness, *or* Inconvenience of some thing that he should avoid, *or* raise his thoughts and affections Heaven-wards, *or* furnish him with some new practical consideration, *or* shew him some known Truth in a varied and delightful dress, *or* (at least) recal some Notions his frailty makes him need to be put in mind of, *or*, in a word, either refresh his memory, or otherwise cherish his Devotion. Let us suppose a person, who, being qualifi'd and accustomed to reflect upon various objects that occur to him, mainly designs, in the exercise of  
that



that faculty, the warming of his Affections, and the improvement of his Piety, and we shall scarce doubt, but when he looks about him in the world, he will find it, what one of the Fathers loftily styled it, *παιδευτηρίον τῆς θεογνωσίας καὶ ψυχῶν λογικῶν διδασκαλίον*, (a Schole for Rational Souls to learn the knowledge of God.) There is scarce any thing that Nature has made, or that men do or suffer, though the Theme seem never so low, and slight, whence the devout Reflector cannot take an occasion of an aspiring Meditation; as in a hopeful morning the humble Lark can, from the lowest furrow in the field, take a soaring flight towards Heaven, and ascend thitherward with a melody that delights both her self and her hearers. If such a person considers how amongst such an admirable Variety, and such odd Antipathies of the numberless Creatures that compose the Universe, the constant observation of the Laws of their Nature makes them universally, and, as it were, unanimously, to conspire to make the Author of it appear wonderful in it, he cannot but be willingly possess'd with such an awful admiration of the matchless wisdom of their great Disposer, as made the Psalmist cry out, upon a somewhat like occasion, *How manifold are Thy works, O Lord, how wisely hast thou made them all?*\* If he have

\* Ps. civ. 24. So *Junius* and *Tremelius* translate the place, *Quàm occa -*

occasion to consider the merciful Dispensations of Divine Providence to the Godly, or to take notice of the severe Inflictions of Divine Justice on the Wicked, he will find himself powerfully engag'd to relie on the one, and to apprehend provoking the other. If he take notice that the World is but our Store-house, and that multitudes of admirable Creatures seem to have had a being given them principally for the use of undeserving Man, inso-much that many of the Beasts, and Birds, and Fishes, are but our Caters for one another, he will burst out into Mental, if not Vocal, expressions of Thankfulness and Humiliation to the Father of Mercies, for so unmerited and ill returned a Bounty, and will be apt to say with *David*, *What is man that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man that thou makest account of him?\** And if he compare this Munificence of God, in daily giving so many Creatures, that never violate the Laws of their Nature, nor endeavour to disappoint him of his ends in creating them, for the necessities, nay, for the pleasures, of rebellious and unthankful Man, he will resent an ingenuous shame, and a noble disdain, That that Creature should be of all the least grateful that has received the most *ampla sunt opera tua, O Jehova, quam ea omnia sapienter fecisti?* and so the Original will bear, if the Hebrew *Ma*, be made applicable as well to the latter, as to the former part of the words.

\* Psalm cxliv. 3.

Benefits, and that he should of all others prove the most unruly, who alone has been endowed with Reason to rule himself withall. If in a Starry night he looks upon the Firmament, and considers how many fixed Stars there are, and how many thousand times more there might be without wanting room, the least of which Astronomers teach us to be far bigger than the whole Earth, which yet, by the probablest computation, contains above ten thousand millions of Cubick German Leagues, (and consequently above three-score times as many English miles of solid measure) he will find abundant cause to exclaim with *David*, *When I consider thy Heavens, the work of thy hands, the Moon and Stars which thou hast ordained, What is man that thou should'st be mindful of him, or the Son of man that thou visitest him?\**

## CHAP. II.

**A**ND since our Discourse has led us to the mention of a Text, where the truly inspired Poet (who, by his omitting to speak of the Sun, seems to have compos'd this Psalm in the night) makes the Moon the chief subject of his

\* Psalm viii. 3, 4.

Medi-

Meditation, it will not perhaps be amiss, if, on this occasion, we add a few short Reflections on the same Theme, and thereby confirm what we lately noted about the differing Reflections, and Similitudes, which may be afforded by the same subject, as its several Attributes may be differently consider'd.

If then, in the first place, when our Contemplator takes notice of the greatest Brightness of the Moon, he remembers too, that 'tis when she is at the Full, that she is subject to be Eclips'd, it would put him in mind of the mutability of humane things, and that oftentimes Prosperity proves never the more securc for appearing the more full and resplendent.

Next, our Reflector may find in the Moon, a lively Emblem of a true Minister of the Gospel. For, as the Moon communicates to the Earth, the Light, and that onely, which she receives from the Sun; so the Apostles, and first Preachers of Christianity, and (in their measure) their true Successors, communicate to Mankind, the Light, which themselves have received from the bright *Sun of Righteousness*. And the Similitude may be advanc'd, by adding, that as the Moon shines not on the Earth, with any other Beams, than those she derives from that fountain of Light, the Sun; so the true Preachers of the Heavenly Doctrine

mingle not their own Inventions, or humane Traditions, with that pure and sincere Light of Revelation, they are employ'd to dispense; it being safest, and most desirable, for the Church, that Christians should receive the Bread of Life, as the Jews are recorded to have receiv'd the material Bread, in a passage of St. *Matthew's*\* Gospel, where 'tis said, that Christ first brake, and gave to the Disciples, the Bread, which they afterwards, from Him, distributed to the People; so that they might each of them, in a literal sense, imploy that expression of St. *Paul*, *I have received of the Lord, that which I delivered unto you.* †

And as, though the Moon be destitute of native light, yet by vertue of that borrow'd one, which she plentifully receives from the Sun, she affords more to Men than any of the Stars, which, upon the score of their vast distance from the Sun, are, by modern Naturalists, suppos'd to shine by their own Light; so those illiterate Fisher-men, whom the Sun of Righteousness call'd, and made the Light of the world, did, by vertue of the copious Irradiations he vouchsaf'd them, diffuse far more Light to mankind, than the greatest Philosophers, that, being unassisted by Divine Revelation, had onely their own native beams to shine with.

And as oftentimes the same Subject, but vari-

\* S. Matt. xv. 36.

† 1 Cor. xi. 3.

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ously consider'd, may afford both somewhat fit to be shunn'd, and somewhat fit to be imitated; so, in that which we suppose our Reflector now considering, he may easily discern the Emblem of an ungrateful person: For as the Moon, though she receive all the Light that ennobles her from the Sun, does yet, when she is admitted to the nearest Conjunction with him, eclipse that bright Planet, to which she owes all her splendour; so unthankful men abuse those very favours that should endear to them their Benefactors, to the prejudice of those that oblige them.

And 'tis like that our Reflector may, by the way, take notice, That as what passes betwixt the Moon and the Sun, does thus afford him a Simile, whereby to set forth Ingratitude; so what passes betwixt the Moon and the Sea, may supply him with an example of the contrary quality, and put him in mind, that a thankful man will be true and obsequious to his Benefactor, though the person that oblig'd him have lost that Prosperity that before made him conspicuous, and attracted vulgar eyes, as the Sea follows the course of the Moon, not onely when she shines upon it with her full Light, but when, at the Change, she can communicate little or no light to it.

To the two above-mentioned Attributes, upon whose account the Moon afforded a comparison  
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for humane Prosperity, and another for Preachers of the Gospel, we will now add, That she may afford us a Similitude to set forth a liberal Person by: For as the Moon freely communicates to the Earth the Light she receives from the Sun, so the bountiful person imparts to indigent men the Largesses he receives from the exuberant goodness of God. And as to Intellectual Communications, the Parallel will hold further, since as the Moon enjoys not the less of Light for her imparting so much to the Earth; so in Mental Communications Liberality does not impoverish, and those excellent gifts cease not to be possess'd by being imparted. And 'tis very possible, (to add that upon the By) That after the light of the Moon has (according to what I lately noted) represented to our Contemplator the qualifications of a Preacher, it may also put him in mind of the Duty of a Hearer. For, as it were very foolish in us, and unthankful towards the Father of Lights, not to make use of the great Light we receive from the Sun, by the Moon, or not to acknowledge the Moon to be a very useful Creature, upon the score of that Light, wherewith she shines upon the Earth, though, in her, that Light be destitute of Heat; so it were unwise and ungrateful for Hearers to refuse to acknowledge, or to be guided by, the conspicuous Endowments of  
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Learning and Eloquence, that God vouchsafes to great Scholars, though they themselves were but illustrated, not warmed, by the Beams they reflect. But therefore, as Oysters, and other Shellfish, are observ'd to thrive at the Increase of the Moon, though her Light be unattended with Heat, and though even when she is at Full, she wants not her spots, so devout Hearers will be careful to prosper proportionably to the Instructions they receive even from those Preachers, whose Illuminations are unaccompani'd with Zeal and Charity, and who, when they shine with the greatest Lustre, are not free from their Darkneses, as to some Points, or from notorious Blemishes.

And as the Moon may thus furnish our Contemplator with Similitudes, to set forth both a Vertue and a Vice of the Mind, so may it supply him with an Emblem of its Condition: For as the Light of the Moon is sometimes Increasing, and sometimes in the Wane, and not onely is sometimes totally Eclips'd, but even when she is at the Full, is never free from dark Spots; so the Mind of Man, nay, even of a Christian, is but partly enlighten'd, and partly in the dark, and is sometimes more, and sometimes less, Illustrated by the Beams of Heavenly Light, and Joy, and not alone now and then quite Eclipsed by disconsolate  
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Desertions, but even when it receives the most Light, and shines the brightest, knows but in part, and is in part blemish'd by its native Dark-nesses, and Imperfections. And these Resemblances are not so appropriated to the mind of Man, but that they might easily be shewn to be applicable to his condition, in point of outward Prosperity and Adversity. And to these Resemblances other Reflections on the several Adjuncts of the Moon might be also added, together with several Examples of this nature on other Subjects, were it not that I think my self to have spent time enough already upon a Theme, that fell but incidentally under my consideration; and were it not also, that the Reflections which might here be annex'd upon the Attributes of other Objects, may be more properly subjoyn'd to what may be on another occasion presented you, by way of Illustration of some Particulars, that belong to the fourth part of the precedent Section, in which my haste, and some other reasons, made me content my self, to give some few general Hints about such Reflections, and an Intimation of the Topicks whence I am wont to fetch them.

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

**A**ND having given you this Advertisement, *en passant*, we may now proceed a little further, and add, that if we suppose our Contemplator's thoughts to descend from Heaven to Earth, the far greater multitude and variety of Objects they will meet with here below, will suggest to them much more numerous Reflections. But because so spacious a Field for Meditation as the whole Earth would afford us too vast a Theme to be attempted on this occasion, we will confine our Contemplator to his Garden, or rather to any one of the Trees of it, and take notice, not of all the Meditations he might fetch thence, but onely of four or five of the considerablest of those, that the viewing it may, as he walks by at several times, supply him with.

If then, in the Spring of the Year, our Reflector see the Gardener pruning a Fruit-tree, we may suppose him invited by that Object to reason thus within himself: Though one that were a Stranger to the Art of Gardening would think that that Man is an Enemy to this Tree, and goes about to destroy it, since he falls upon and wounds it with a sharp Iron, and strikes off several of its Youthful parts, as if he meant to cut it in pieces; yet,

yet, he that knows, that the Gardener's arm is not set on work by Anger, but by Skill, will not conclude that he hates the Tree he thus wounds, but that he has a mind to have it Fruitful, and judges these harsh means the fittest to produce that desirable Effect. And thus, whatever a Man unacquainted with the ways and designs of Providence may surmise, when he sees the Church not onely expos'd to the common Afflictions of humane Societies, (for that is but like our Trees being expos'd to be weather-beaten by Winds, and Rain) but distress'd by such Persecutions, as seem to be Divine Inflictions, that invite Men to say of the Body, what the Prophet fore-told should be said of the Head, *We esteem'd him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.\** Whatever, I say, a carnal, or a moral, Man would be apt to imagine, upon sight of the Churches distresses; the knowing Christian will not from thence infer, that God hates Her, or that he has abandon'd her; since 'tis He, that lov'd his Church so well, as to give Himself for it, who declares, that as many as He loves, He rebukes, and chastens. † And this is so fitly applicable also to particular Believers, that the Divine Son of the great *γεωργὸς* ‡ do's not onely give us cause to think, that Afflictions do not suppose

\* Isaiah liii. 4.

† Rev. iii. 19.

‡ S. John xv. 1. *That is, Cultivator of the Ground.*

God's

God's Hate, but to hope that they may not always suppose Man's Guilt, but sometimes rather aim at his Improvement ; since they are the memorable words of our Saviour, speaking of his Father, *Every branch in me, that beareth not Fruit, he taketh away, and every Branch that beareth Fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more Fruit.\** And it may somewhat illustrate the Similitude, to add, that the Husbandman uses onely to prune the Trees of his Garden, not those that grow wild in his Woods : But though he oftner wound these, yet he wounds the other more fatally, imploying but the pruning Hook to pare off the superfluous Twiggs, or, at most, Branches of the one, whilst he lays the Ax to the root of the other, to fell the Tree it self.

But these are not the onely Thoughts, which the pruning of a Fruit-tree may suggest to our Reflector : For if he considers, That by cutting off several of the parts of the Tree, and by Nailing many of the rest to the Wall, the Gardener do's not onely secure the Tree from being blown down, or torn, by the rudeness of boisterous Winds, but makes it look well shap'd : So the Divine *Husbandman*, (as we have lately seen God stil'd in the Scripture) by the wise, and seasonable, though seemingly rigorous, and usually unwelcome, Cul-

\* S. John xv. 2.

ture

ture, he imploys upon those Children of his whom he afflicts, do's not onely protect them from several dangers, whereto, without those harsh restraints, they would be expos'd; but as he makes them amends in point of Safety, for what he denies them in point of Liberty, so he adorns them by Wounding them. His kind and skilful stroaks adding as much to the Beauty of a Christian's Mind, as they cut away from the Superfluities of his Fortune: For the pressures of Affliction do give so much smoothness and gloss to the Soul that bears them patiently, and resign'dly, that the Heathen Moralist ventur'd to say, That if there were any Spectacle here below noble enough, and worthy to entertain the Eyes of God, it was that of a Good Man, generously contending with ill Fortune. And the Hyperbole (though after this manner somewhat loftily expressed) will appear the less strange to him that considers, That *Job* had not onely his Patience, when it had been tried to the uttermost, crown'd with a Fortune double to that which had been the fairest in the *East*; but before his constancy was tried near so far, receiv'd that much higher recompence of an Honour never vouchsaf'd to Mortals until then, when God himself did not onely approve, but (if I may so speak with reverence) make his boast of, a Man. *Hast thou consider'd* (says he to Man's great Enemy) *my servant*

*servant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect, and an upright Man, one that feareth God, and escheweth Evil? and still he holdeth fast his Integrity, although thou moved'st me against him to destroy him without cause.\** Sure one may call him *more than happy Job*, since, if, as *David* tells us, the *Man is happy whose sins God is pleas'd to cover*; † what may that Man be accounted, whose Graces he vouchsafes to proclaim?

## CHAP. IV.

**A**ND as the consideration of the pruning of Trees, under the Notion of *that which wounds them*, may afford our Contemplator the Reflections already pointed at; so the considering of the same Action, under another Notion, may lead him to Reflections of another Nature: For if he observes, that, in certain cases, Gardeners oftentimes do not onely prune away all the Suckers, and many of the Luxuriant sprigs, but cut off some of the Branches themselves, provided they spare the Master boughs; and yet these Amputations, though they take much from the Tree, are design'd to add to the Fruit, as accordingly they are wont to do: If, I say, our Reflector takes

\* Job ii. 3.

† Psalm xxxii. 1.

notice

notice of this, it may easily supply him with an illustration of what he may have observ'd among some Men, who by Afflictions, ev'n in point of Fortune, are brought to be far more charitable than they would have been, if their peace and plenty had continued unimpair'd. As, besides that *Saint Paul*, speaking of the *Macedonian Churches*, gives them this Character, *That in a great trial of Affliction, the abundance of their Joy, and their deep Poverty, abounded unto the Riches of their Liberality*;\* We have in *Zacheus* † a memorable Instance to our present purpose, since, after his Repentance had, by his own consent, cut off from his Estate, more than all that Slander, Oppression, and other unjust ways of Getting, (which us'd to bring in but too great a part of a Publican's) had added to it; he gave away more, out of the *Remainder* of his Estate, than every liberal Man would have done out of the *Whole*. His Wealth, like a skilfully prun'd Tree bore the more Fruit to Piety, for having had some parts of it cut away; he grew Rich (in good works) by being despoil'd, and his Charity increas'd as much as his Fortune was lessen'd.

If, towards the end of the Spring, our Reflector see the Ground under his Tree strowed with the Blossoms, that Time and Winds may have cast

\* 2 Cor. viii. 2.

† S. Luke xix.

down

down thence, 'tis like it would furnish him with this consideration, That, as though the Blossoms are in themselves great Ornaments to a Tree, and oftentimes both useful and pleasant things, yet to be seasonably depriv'd of them is not a mischief to the Tree that loses them; since, till the Blossoms are gone, the Fruit, which is a better and more lasting thing, and more principally intended by Nature, cannot be had: So it will not always follow, that because certain things are in their kind desirable, and therefore may be reckoned among Goods, the loss or depravation of them must necessarily be an Evil. And so, though a fair and healthy Body may be look'd upon as a Blessing, yet it will not follow, that a *Death* (as the Scripture speaks) either *in*\* or *for the Lord*, because it throws this flourishing Body to the Ground, and makes it rot there, must needs be a deplorable Evil; since, as the Blossoms falling off, is, according to the course of Nature, necessarily prævious to the formation, or at least the perfection, of the Fruit: So the being depriv'd of this Life, is, according to God's Ordination, a necessary Antecedent to our being enrich'd with those more solid and durable blessings of perfect Virtue and Happiness.

And if, whilst our Contemplator's Tree is a-

\* Οἱ ἐν Κυρίῳ ἀποθνήσκοντες. Rev. xiv. 13.

dorned



dorned with Leaves, as well as Blossoms, (as we often see several of the former come before all the latter are gone) he chance to take notice how busie the Bees are in sucking these, whilst they leave the others untouch'd, he may peradventure make this, or some such other Reflection on it; That, though the Leaves be not onely Ornaments of a Tree, but productions, often useful to shade and shelter the Fruit, and are of a more solid Texture, and a more durable Nature than the Blossoms, which seem to be of a slighter make, and rather gawdy and delightful than lasting; yet 'tis not about the Leaves, but the Blossoms, that the Industrious Bee assiduously imployes her time, as sucking from those gawdy productions of the Tree store of that Honey which the Leaves would not afford her.

Thus, though the Books written about Dogmatical and Controversial points in Divinity, may be in their kind valuable and useful productions of skill in Theology, and may seem more strong and substantial Composures, and likely to retain their Reputations longer, than Books of Devotion; yet 'tis of these, rather than those, that the devout Christian will be a sollicitous Peruser; since 'tis not from barren, though solid Assertions or Disputes, but from florid and pathetical Books of Devotion, which first allure the Reader, and then affect

affect him, that the devout Soul extracts her Honey, I mean those Celestial pleasures that result from, as well as maintain, a free communion with God, which does at once both exercise her Devotion, and recompense it, and afford her, as Flowers do the Bee, an Aliment equally Nutritive and Delicious.

And he may somewhat illustrate, as well as continue the Allusion further, by considering, That Silk-worms that live upon Leaves, and Bees that feed on Flowers and Blossoms, do indeed both of them thrive upon their respective Aliments, and are thereby enabled to present Men with useful productions, but with this difference; That the subtile threds of Silk-worms serve principally to cloath others, whereas the Honey that is elaborated by the Bee, does not onely supply others with a healing and cleansing Medicine in some Distempers, but affords a great deal of pleasure to the Bee her self: For thus, though as well the diligent Studiers of Speculative and Polemical Divinity, as the careful Perusers of Books of Devotion, may be advantag'd by what they Study, yet this difference may be observ'd betwixt them, that the former may, by the Discourses they read, be assisted to write others of the like Nature, whereby their Readers may be enabled to talk with more Acuteness, and Applause; but the

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latter may not onely be assisted by making such Composures as they assiduously converse with, to contribute to the cleansing of Men's Consciences from Dead works, and as well pacifie the troubles of their Minds, as heal the Wounds which Schism or Scandal may have given to the Church ; but do often, in the first place, feel themselves all the Joys, and Advantages, they would procure to others, and they happily find Pious Reflections, Devout Soliloquies, Ardent Ejaculations, and other Mental Entertainments of a Religious Soul, to be of a Nature not onely so sweet, but so improving, and so advantageous, that whilst many other laudable Employments recommend us to the Students of Theology, these more especially recommend us to the Author of it, and indear us to God himself.

If when our Fruit-tree has chang'd its white Livery for a Green, our considerer chance to take notice how thick 'tis set with Leaves, of which it had not one some Months before, it may possibly put him in mind of the Instability of their condition, that are undeservedly envied for a Numerous train of such seeming Friends, and gawdy Attendants, as are so to the Fortune, rather than the Person: For, as in the Sunshiny months of Summer, when the fair weather would keep the Tree warm enough without the help of Leaves, it  
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is wont to be cover'd with those Verdant Ornaments, but loses them all in Winter, when it needs their shelter from the Rigors of that Cold season : So those, that during the Sun-shine of prosperity are beset with seeming Friends, of which they had no need, find themselves left naked, and forsaken of them all, when Adversity would make their Company of some Advantage. If our Contemplator chance to observe how his Tree flourishes with verdant Leaves, and gawdy Blossoms, at that Season of the Year, when it is providing to bring forth Fruit, it may put him in mind of the pleas'dness and alacrity, with which a Charitable person should set himself to the doing of good, and mind him, That as the God of Nature loves a cheerful Giver, so the temper of a liberal Person is pointed out by Nature her self, in a Tree, which seems to triumph in all the Ornaments it can put on, when it is about to exhaust the greatest part of its own stock of Sap to produce Fruits which onely others are to eat.

If he take notice of the order wherein 'tis usual for the Leaves and Blossoms to precede the Fruit, it may possibly invite him to look with a more favourable Eye upon the green and immature Essays of early Writers, if they discover that the Author aims at good things, though he does not yet perform great ones : For, however these Youthful

ful productions of the Pen are commonly rather pleasing and florid, than otherwise considerable, yet if they be good for their Season, and in their Kind, though that kind it self be not of the usefullest, they may deserve pardon, and perhaps encouragement ; since, though they be not yet solid, they may promise something that will be so ; and ev'n the best Trees present us their Blossoms, before they give us their Fruit.

If the same Contemplator happens to see young people first shake the Tree in vain, and then climb it to gather unripe Fruit, it may afford him a representation of Men's overeager and untimely pursuits of several desirable things, and especially of Honour : For, as green Fruit, though of a good Kind, will not easily be shaken down by them that would gather it, but reduces them either to climb the Tree, or forcibly strike it off, which commonly bruises and disfigures what it procures ; and as the Fruit, when thus obtain'd, is but sowre, and unwholesome, being neither sweetned nor concocted by Maturity, so that it usually both sets the Teeth on edge, and breeds Sickness in the Body, whereas, if the same Fruit were let alone till it were fully Ripe, and in Season, it would both readily drop into the Eater's mouth, and prove delicious, and more wholsome Food : *So*, when we greedily pursue after Honour, and Pleasure, of which this Life  
is

is not the proper Season, we not onely meet with Difficulties in acquiring them, but find not, in possessing them, either that Satisfaction, or that Advantage, that the Eagerness of our unruly Appetites promises us ; whereas, if we would stay contentedly till God's time be come, (which is always the best, and fittest) we should not steal, or force, but receive unfading Honours, and uncloying Delights, by being presented with *Incorruptible Crowns of Glory*,\* by him, *with whom there is fulness of Joy, and at whose right hand* (the Station design'd for those that overcome the World's Allurements, and their own Impatience) *there are Pleasures for evermore* ; † that is, Eternal ones.

Lastly, if towards the end of Summer, or of Autumn, our Reflector, coming to visit his Instructive Tree, find it present him store of Fruit, and perhaps observes it to be grown taller since the last Winter, each Bough will afford him a lively Emblem of a true Believer. For, as the loaded Branch makes use of the moisture it attracts from the dirty ground, to recede as much as it can from the Earth, and spends its sap in shooting up towards Heaven, and bearing Fruit for Men : so the devout Christian improves the Blessings he receives of this inferior World, to elevate his mind above it : And the use that he makes of earthly Goods and Ad-

\* 1 S. Peter v. 4.

† Psalm xvi. 11.

vantages,

vantages, is to raise his grateful Soul nearer to God, and dispense them by works of Charity to men.

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## CHAP. V.

**T**HESE (*Sophronia*) are some, and but some, of the Thoughts, which the Occasional Consideration of a Fruit-tree might suggest to a Considering Person. And if we should lead our Reflector from the Garden to the Woods, or to the River side, or into the Fields, or to the Street, or to a Library, or to the Exchange, or, in a word, to I know not how many other places I could name, I have some reason to think, that each of them would supply him with variety of Occasional Meditations. Wherefore, since the want of Themes will not, 'tis fit that somewhat else should, place Bounds to this Discourse. And since, by finding that I my self begin to be weary of writing, I have too much cause to fear that you are quite tir'd with reading, I think it high time to hasten to a Conclusion: Onely, before I make one, I must do our Meleteticks the right to advertise you, that you would do them wrong if you should imagine, that in the pass'd Discourse I have either carefully enumerated, or fully display'd, the Advantages, which a devout and ingenious Contem-

templator may derive from the Exercise of the ways of Thinking I have been treating of. For, though I have in the past Discourse, especially those parts of it that are contain'd in the third precedent, and in this present fourth Section, said enough to recommend the Subject to any that is not much indispos'd to be prevail'd with; yet I will not deny, but that, even in those two Sections, I have left much unsaid.

For, besides the several Advantages and ways of making Occasional Meditations already pointed at, there are other accounts upon which the practice I would persuade may both benefit a pious Soul, and be made use of by an ingenious one. For the respects one thing may have to another are so numberless, and the mind of a rational man, vers'd in Meditations, may compound and disjoyn Notions so many ways, and may make such Inferences from them, and such Applications of them, that it frequently happens, that besides the Reflection suggested by that which gave the first Rise to his Meditations, he lights upon Concepts differing enough from them, and perhaps better than they: As when Hounds, hunting a Hare, meet in their way with a Stag. For, though Philosophers seem to have justly enough rejected the Opinion, attributed to *Plato*, *That all Knowledge is but Reminiscence*, yet certainly the  
Mind



Mind of a Man well furnish'd with variety of Notions, is, by the Analogy or Contrariety of Things and Notions in reference to each other, so easily and readily excited to lay them together, and discourse upon them, that he is oftentimes by any slight occasion helped to light (and that with a strange and almost surprizing facility) upon things that he would else have scarce taken the least notice of. When the Mind is once set on work, though the Occasion administred the first Thoughts, yet those thoughts themselves may, as well as the Object that excited them, become the Themes of further Meditation: and the Connection of Thoughts within the Mind may be, and frequently is, so latent, and so strange, that the Meditator will oftentimes admire to see how far the Notions he is at length led to, are removed from those which the first Rise of his Meditation suggested. And by these Incidental Excursions he may sometimes be as much delighted and surpris'd as *Samson*\* was, when going aside to look upon the Carcass of a Lion, he met with a Stock of Honey.

But I can add one thing towards the inducing you to exercise your self in the way of Thinking, we have all this while been speaking of, which though I had almost forgot to take notice of, it

\* Judges xiv. 8.

will,

will, I doubt not, seem important to *Sophronia*, to whom it need not be a discouragement from aiming at one of the noblest uses of Occasional Reflections, that it supposes not a bare acquaintance with them, but springs from an entire and (if I may so speak) intimate familiarity with our Meleteticks. For this use of Occasional Meditations, though it do but gradually differ from some of those that have been already mentioned, will perhaps by the devout (and consequently by *Sophronia*) be esteemed the highest Advantage that this way of Thinking can confer; and it is, That the custom of making Occasional Reflections may insensibly, and by unperceiv'd degrees, work the Soul to a certain frame, or temper, which may not improperly be called Heavenly Mindedness, whereby she acquires an aptitude and disposition to make pious Reflections upon almost every Occurrence, and oftentimes without particularly designing it. But as this privilege will, as I was intimating, scarce fall to the share of any but those that, by long or frequent Exercise, have so accusom'd their minds to reflect upon what they see, that they continue that practice, as it were, of their own accord; so when once, by such a constant kindness and hospitableness to such thoughts, that they will, as it were, come to the mind without calling, and make themselves its guests, without

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out particular Invitations, the Soul has attain'd that desirable Frame we lately call'd Heavenly mindedness, which is a Disposition and a Readiness to make Spiritual uses of Earthly things, both the Advantage and the Delight of that frame of heart cannot but be extraordinary. It must surely afford a great deal of satisfaction to an Ingenious and Devout person, to be able to make the world both his Library and his Oratory. And which way soever he turns his eyes (not onely upon unobvious things, but even upon the most familiar ones) to behold something that instructs, or that delights him. And to find that almost every object that presents it self to his notice, presents also good Thoughts to his Mind, to be gather'd with as much Innocency and Pleasure, and with as little prejudice to the things that afford them, as Honey is gather'd by the industrious Bee from the differing Flowers she meets with in her way. Certainly, if we would carefully lay hold on, and duly manage, this help, it would prove a powerful Remedy to prevent or cure much of that Dulness and Drowsiness, that do so frequently smother or blemish our Devotion. There would scarce any thing pass us, out of which we would not strike some spark or other of that Heavenly Fire, or that would not contribute something, either to kindle it, or to feed it, or to revive it,

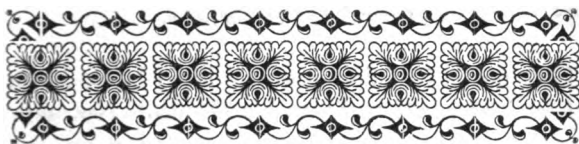
it. If but half the precious time we impertinently trifle, or squander away, upon Employments that will be sure to cost us either Tears or Blushes, were carefully laid out in the cultivating of this kind of Thoughts, it might often save our Ministers the labour of insisting so long upon the Uses of their Doctrines, when the whole World would be a Pulpit, every Creature turn a Preacher, and almost every Accident suggest an Use of Instruction, Reproof, or Exhortation. No Burial but would toll a Passing-bell to put us in mind of our Mortality: No Feast but would make us aspire to the Marriage-feast of the Lamb: No Cross but would add to our Desires to be dissolv'd and to be with Christ: No Mercy but would be a fresh Engagement unto Obedience to so good a Master as the Author of it: No Happiness of others, but would prove an Encouragement to serve him that can give That, and much greater: No Misery of others, but would awake and heighten our Gratitude, that we are priviledg'd from It: No Sin in our Neighbours, that would not dissuade us from what we see look'd so unhandsomely in others: Nor any Virtue of theirs, but would excite our Emulation, and spur us on to imitate or surpass It. In a word, when the devout Soul is come to make that true use of the Creatures, as to look upon them as men do upon water, that the Sun gilds

gilds with his Beams, that is, not so much for it self as for the Reflective vertue it has to represent a more glorious Object; and when she has, by long practice, accustom'd her self to spiritualize all the Objects and Accidents that occur to her, I see not why that practice may not be one of the most effectual means for making good that magnificent Assertion of the Apostle, That *all things work together for good to them that love God.*\* A devout Occasional Meditation, from how low a Theme soever it takes its Rise, being like *Jacob's Ladder*, whereof though *the foot lean'd on the Earth, the top reach'd up to Heaven.*†

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\* Rom. viii. 28.

† Gen. xxviii. 12.



OCCASIONAL  
REFLECTIONS.

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The I. SECTION.

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REFLECTION I.

*Upon his manner of giving Meat to  
his Dogg.*

**I**GNORANTLY thankfull Creature, thou  
begg'st in such a way, that by what would  
appear an antedated Gratitude, if it were not a  
designless Action, the manner of thy Petitioning  
before-hand rewards the Grant of thy Request;  
thy Addresses and Recompence being so made and  
order'd, that the Meat I cast thee may very well  
feed Religion in me. For, but observe this Dogg;  
I hold him out Meat, and my inviting Voice loudly  
encourages and invites him to take it: 'Tis held  
indeed higher than he can Leap; and yet, if he  
Leap

Leap not at it, I do not give it him; but if he do, I let it fall half way into his Mouth. Not unressemblingly deals God with us; He shews and holds forth to us (the Soul's true Aliment) Eternal Glory, and his most Gracious Word summons and animates us to attempt it. Alas! it is far above the reach of our Endeavours, and our Deserts, and yet if we aspire not to it, and strive not for it, in vain do we expect it; but if we faithfully do what in us lies, and our Endeavours strain themselves to their utmost, God mercifully allows the Will for the Effect, measures our performances by what they aim'd at, and favourably accepting what we can do, for what we should do, He supplies the imperfections of our faint, but yet aspiring Attempts, by stooping Condescensions; and what our Endeavours want of reaching up to, his Grace and Acceptation brings down. Piety is the condition, though not the price, of Heaven; and (like the Wedding Garment in the Parable) though it give us not a Right to the Beatifick Feast, is, yet, that without which none shall be admitted as a duely qualify'd Guest: For though we cannot reach Heaven by our good Works, we shall not obtain it without them.

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## REFLECTION II.

*Upon his Distilling Spirit of Roses in  
a Limbick.*

ONE that knew how well I love the scent of Roses, and were ignorant of the Uses of this way of Distillation, would, questionless, think me very ill advis'd, thus hastily to deprive myself of the Flowers I most love, and employ Art to make them wither sooner than Nature would condemn them to do ; but those that know both the fading condition of Flowers, (which unimprov'd by Art, delight but whilst they are, what they cannot long be, fresh) and the exalting Efficacy of this kind of Distillation, will think this Artificial way, that Chymists take, of spoiling them, is an effect as well of their Providence as their Skill : For that pleasing and sprightly scent, that makes the Rose so welcome to us, is as short-liv'd and perishing, as the Flower, that harbours it, is fading ; and though my Limbick should not, yet a few days inevitably would, make all these Roses wither. But by this way of ordering my Roses, though I cannot preserve them, I can preserve that Spirituous and Ethereal part of them, for whose sake it is that I so much prize and cherish this sort of Flowers ; which, by  
this



this means, I preserve, not indeed in the fading Body, but in the nobler and abstracted Quintessence; which purer and lastinger Portion of them, will be more highly fragrant than ordinary Roses are wont to be, ev'n whilst they are fresh, in that Season, when those Flowers, that have not been thus early and purposely destroy'd, will, according to the course of Nature, whereto they are left, wither and putrifie.

Thus he that sees a charitable Person liberally part with that Money, which others are so fond of, if he be a stranger to the Operations of Faith, and the Promises of the Gospel, he will be apt to mistake the Christian's Liberality for Folly, or Profusion, and to think that he is fallen out with his Money: But he that remembers how clear a Prospect, and how absolute a Disposal of the future, the *Scripture of Truth* (to use an Angel's expression) ascribes to him, that bid his Disciples *make themselves Friends with the uncertain (or unfaithfull) Mammon*, (for so the use I sometimes meet with of the Greek word, together with the Context, invites me to render it) *That when we fail, they may receive us into everlasting Habitations*; and he that shall likewise consider, not only the transitory Nature of Worldly Possessions, (from which *their* Perishing, or *ours*, will be sure e're long to Divorce us) but the inestimable Advantage, with

with which we shall receive in Heaven whatever we employ in pious Uses here on Earth, will conclude this way of parting with our Wealth, the surest and gainfullest way of preserving it; since the Christian, by parting but with what (however) he could not long keep, shall, through God's munificent Goodness, obtain a much more valuable Treasure, that he shall never lose: So that thus to sacrifice Wealth to Charity, is not an early loss of it, but the right way of securing it; for by this gainfull way, when we shall, in another World, be past the possibility of possessing our Riches in Kind, such an Employment of them may help us to enjoy them, though not in the capacity of *Riches*, yet in that noble capacity of *Goods*, under which Notion alone they are desirable; and thus laid up, they may *there* procure us, what they never could *here* afford us, Happiness.

## REFLECTION III.

*Upon his being in great Danger wandring, on  
Mendip Hills, among cover'd Lead Mines  
that he knew not of.*

**H**OW have I travell'd all this while upon  
the Brink of the Grave! I thought only  
to be out of my Way, but little dream'd to be so

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near

near the end of all my Journeys, in that of my Life; by Traversing to and fro amongst those deep and cover'd Pits, upon any one of which if my Horse had but chanc'd to stumble, (and the very Mine-men I at length met with, think it a kind of Miracle he did not) I had been Kill'd and Bury'd at once, and my Fate had been for ever as much conceal'd from my Friends as my Body: And all this escape a Work so totally of God's Goodness, that I did not so much as know my Danger till I was past it; so that it seem'd, sent, but to give me occasion of rejoycing in my Deliverance. How vast a Debt of Gratitude then do I owe to God? and how extremely do I fall short of acquitting my self of it? since, besides, that I make him but very unsuitable Returns for the Blessings I know I have receiv'd, I receive from him signal Blessings, that I do not so much as know of, and which consequently I am very unlike particularly to acknowledge. But this gracious Rescue, from so great and unexpected a Hazard, shall, I hope, teach me henceforth to beware, both of security, since I often fall into Dangers that I know not; and of Distrusts of God's Providence, since I have found it so watchful to deliver me from those that I fear'd not.

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## REFLECTION IV.

*His Horse stumbling in a very fair way.*

**H**ERE is a patch of way, to which any less smooth than a Bowling-green were rugged, and in which it seems not only so unlikely, but so difficult, for a Horse to trip, that nothing could have made me believe a Horse could have stumbled here, but that mine has dangerously done so. This Jade has this very Evening carry'd me safely through ways, where stumbles were so much to be expected, that they were to have been forgiven; and now in a place so smooth, that sure he could not falter in it, only out of Curiosity and Trial, he falls under me so Lubberly, that I as much admir'd my Escape as Danger: But 'tis too usual with us, unfaultringly to traverse Adversities rough ways, and stumble in Prosperities smoothest paths. The Observation is almost as Old as Prosperity, That Fortune ruins more Persons whilst she Embraces them, than whilst she would Crush them: But though the Observation be very common, it is not more so, than 'tis to see ev'n those that make it, add to the instances that justify it. I have seldome yet been so fortunate as to be obnoxious to that less frequently pitied than disarming Danger: Fortune has seldome yet

vouchsaf'd to turn Syren to pervert me ; and she has hitherto given me much more Exercise for my Constancy than for my Moderation. I think too, that without slandering my self, I may confess, that I have sometimes wisht my self in the Lists with that bewitching Enemy, Prosperity ; and increas'd the Number of those many, who never think so fair an Adversary formidable till they find themselves Vanquish'd by her : But upon second Thoughts, I judge it better, to leave the choice of my Antagonist to him, who not only best knows my Strength, but gives it me ; especially, when I consider, that as we are all of us naturally such Stumblers, that (as *Solomon* speaks in somewhat another sense) *even the just Man falls seven times a Day*, Prov. 24. 16. so it is observ'd in Stumblers, that they are most so in fair way ; into which, if Providence lead my steps, I shall think it seasonable to pray, *and lead us not into Temptation* ; and shall not think it unseasonable to remember, That Ice is at once the smoothest and the slipperiest of ways, and that (the *Jadishness* of our Natures well consider'd) there is no way wherein we ought to Travel with more heed, than that whose treacherous Evenness would divert us from taking heed to our way.

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## REFLECTION V.

*Upon two very miserable Beggars, begging together  
by the High-way.*

**B**EHOLD this fore-most Wretch, whose strange Deformity and ghastly Sores equally exact our Pity and our Horror ; he seems so fit an Object for Compassion, that not to exercise it towards him can scarce proceed from any other Cause than the not having any at all : The sadness of his Condition is augmented by his want of Eyes to see it ; and his Misery is such, that it calls for an increase of Pity, by his being so Distracted, as to desire a longer Life, or rather longer Death : He sues more movingly to the Eye than to the Ear ; and does Petition much less by what he says, than what he is : Each several Member of his tortur'd Body is a new Motive to Compassion, and every Part of it so loudly pleads for Pity, that (as of Scoulds) it may (in another sense) be said of him, that *he is all Tongue*. But yet this other Beggar thinks not his Condition the less deplorable for his Companion's being the more so : He finds in the Diseases of his Fellow as little Consolation, as Cure ; nor does he at all think himself supply'd with a deficient hand, because the other wants one. And therefore, he is as importunate  
for

for Relief, as if all Miseries were not only heap'd on him, but confin'd to him : His fellow's Burthen lightens not his Load ; and if Fortune never had persecuted any other, he could not more deplore nor resent her Persecutions ; so that, if we should judge of their Miseries rather by the Ear than by the Eye, this latter's sadder Complaints would move us to decree him the Advantage in point of Wretchedness.

Translate now (O my Soul) all this unto Spirituals ; and as we measure the straightness of Lines, not by a Rammes Horn, but a Ruler ; so be not thou so Rash, as to infer thy Health from others more forlorn and desperate Diseases : Let not the greater difficulty of another's Cure, lessen the sollicitousness of thy Care for thine, nor make thee the less earnest in the Imploring and Labouring for Relief. In so deprav'd an Age as Ours, one may (and perhaps in vain too) search Hell to find wickeder Men than are to be, but too frequently, met with upon Earth : He will scarce be innocent, that will think himself so as long as he finds a Man more culpable than he ; and he shall scarce ever judge himself Guilty, whom the sight of a Guiltier will absolve : Nor will that Man (till 'tis perhaps too late) be apt to attempt an *Escape from the Pollutions of the World*, that stays till he can see none more inextricably intangl'd in them  
than

than himself. Do not therefore, O my Soul, content thyself with that poor comparative Innocence that in Heaven (which it will never bring thee to) has no place, by reason of the absence of all vitious Persons; and in Hell itself (which it secures not from) can afford only the ill Natur'd consolation of not being altogether as Miserable as the wretchedest Person in that *place of Torment*.

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## REFLECTION VI.

*Sitting at ease in a Coach that went  
very fast.*

**A**S fast as this Coach goes, I sit in it so much at Ease, that whilst its rapid Motion makes others suspect that I am running for a Wager, this lazy Posture, and this soft Seat, do almost as much invite me to Rest, as if I were A-bed. The hasty Wheels strike fire out of the Flints they happen to run over, and yet this self-same swiftness of these Wheels, which, were I under them, would make them Crush my Bones themselves into Splinters, if not into a Jelly, now I am seated over them, and above their reach, serves but to carry me the faster towards my Journey's end. Just so it is with outward Accidents, and Conditions,  
whose



whose restless Vicissitudes but too justly and too fitly resemble them to Wheels: When they meet with a Spirit that lies prostrate on the Ground, and falls Grovelling beneath them, they disorder and oppress it: But he, whose high Reason, and exalted Piety, has, by a noble and stedly Contempt of them, plac'd him above them, may enjoy a happy and a settled Quiet, in spite of all these busie Agitations, and be so far from resenting any prejudicial discomposure from these inferiour Revolutions, that all those changes, that are taken for the Giddy turns of Fortune's Wheel, shall serve to approach him the faster to the blest Mansion he would arrive at.

## REFLECTION VII.

*Upon the Sight of a Wind-mill standing still.*

Genorio, Eusebius, Lindamor.

*Gen.* **Y**OUR Eyes, Gentlemen, have been so long fix'd upon this Wind-mill, that in spite of the Barrenness of the Subject, I cannot but suspect it may have afforded one, or each of you, an Occasional Meditation.

*Euseb.* To justify your Conjecture, *Genorio,*

I

I will confess to you, That I was considering with my self, that if one, who knew not the Miller's Trade, and Design, should look upon this Structure, he would think the Owner worthy of so incommodious a Mansion, if not of a Room in *Bedlam*; for we see he has chose to erect this Fabrick in a Solitary place, and upon the cold and bleak top of a swelling Ground, where nothing shelters it from the Violence of a Wind, whilst its high Scituation exposes it to the successive Violences of them all: But he that is acquainted with the Exigencies of the Miller's Design, and Trade, will think he has made a very proper choice, in seating himself in a place where no Wind can blow, that he shall not be able to make an Advantage of. And having consider'd this, *Genorio*, my Thoughts, when you interrupted them, were making this Application of it, That we ought not to be too forward to censure Men, otherwise Virtuous, and Discreet, for engaging themselves upon some accounts to troublesome and unsettling Employments; for if th' end be not mischosen, the means are to be estimated by their tendency thereunto; and though a calmer condition of Life, might be in it self more desirable, yet when a more expos'd one, can make him that is qualify'd for such Employments more serviceable in his Generation, this may, upon that  
account,

account, be more Eligible than the other, since, as it exposes him to more hardships, so, in those very hardships, it affords him more Opportunities of prosecuting his Aims, so that his Station is recommended to him by those very Circumstances that make other Men dislike it.

*Gen.* But may not I also know what Thoughts this worthy Theme suggested to *Lindamor*?

*Lind.* I was, *Genorio*, taking notice, that this whole Fabrick is indeed but a large Engine, where almost every thing, as well as the Sails and the Wheels, is fram'd and fitted for the Grinding of Corn: but, though this whole Structure be Artificially enough contriv'd, yet it can now do nothing in order to its end, for want of such a light and Airy thing as a breath of Wind, to put all this into Motion; And, *Genorio*, this Wind-mill, thus consider'd, brought into my Mind the condition of a great Lord, that you and I not long since Visited, and who is far from being the only Person to whom the Reflection may be applicable; for one that not knowing his Humour, and his Aims, should see how great a Provision his plentiful Fortune, and his Skill to manage it, have laid together, of those things which are wont to be thought the chiefest Instruments (and perchance the chief Parts) of Happiness, would be apt to envy his Condition, as discerning nothing that is want-

wanting to it. But alas! the Man expects and covets Esteem, and Reputation; and though Fame have these Resemblances to the Wind, that 'tis an Airy and Unsolid thing, which we must receive from others, and which we are not only unable to procure for our selves, but know not how long we shall keep it when we have it, yet the want of this alone makes all the rest utterly insufficient for his satisfaction. Thus the not so Great, as Ambitious *Alexander*, after all the Blood he had spilt in Conquering the World, is said to have shed Tears, that he had Conquer'd but one, when a Philosopher told him there were more. And all the Favours that the greatest Potentate upon Earth could heap upon proud *Haman*, were, by his own Confession, unable to make him think himself happy, as long as he could not neglect a Captives neglect of him; all his Greatness did him no good, if but one Man had the Courage not to Bow to it; and an unsatisfy'd Appetite of Revenge, quite spoil'd the Relish of the great Monarch's Favours, and the fair *Hester's* banquets. Nor do I doubt, *Genorio*, that we often marvel, if not repine, at Providence upon a great Mistake; for by refusing to be God's Servants, men usually become so to their own unruly Passions, and Affections. And therefore, we often very causelesly Envy the Great and Rich, as if *they* were as happy as the Advantages

vantages vouchsaf'd them, would make a wise and good Man; whereas perhaps the Man courts a Reputation, that is not to be acquir'd by what Men have, but by what they are, and do; or else he is in love with a Lady that loves not him, or loves another better: And the Coyness of a Mistress, the greater Title of a Neighbour, or some such trifling accident, that another would either not be subject to, or not be much concern'd for, will keep him from Enjoying any of those very things, for which By-standers Envy him: So just it is, that in Estimating a Man's condition, we should not only consider what Possessions he has, but what Desires.

## REFLECTION VIII.

*Upon his Paring of a rare Summer  
Apple.*

**H**OW prettily has curious Nature painted this gawdy Fruit? Here is a green that Emeralds cannot, and *Flora's* self might boast: And *Pomona* seems to have affected, in the fresh and lively Vermilion that adorns this smooth Rind, an Emulation at Rubies themselves, and to have aim'd at manifesting, That she can give her  
Vege-

Vegetable productions, as Lovely, and Orient, though not as lasting, Colours as those that make Jewels pretious Stones; and if, upon the hearing the Praises this Scarlet deserves, her Blushes enoble her own Cheeks with so Vivid a Colour, perhaps such a Livery of her Modesty might justify her Pride. In a word, such pure and tempting Green and Red dye this same polish'd Skin, that our Vulgar boldness must be no longer question'd, for rend'ring that Fruit an Apple, that inveagled our first Parents: But though these winning Dyes delight me strangely, they are Food for my Eye alone, and not my Stomach; I have no Palate for Colours, and to relish this Fruit well, and know whether it performs to the Taste what it promises to the Sight, and justify that Platonick definition which styles Beauty *the Lustre and Flower of Goodness*; all this Gay out-side is cut and thrown away, and passes but for Parings. Thus in Opinions, though I look with Pleasure on that neat fashionable Dress, that smoother Pens so finely Cloath them with, and though I be delighted with the pretty and spruce Expressions, that Wit and Eloquencce are wont to trick them up with; yet when I mean to examine their true Relish, that, upon liking, I may make them mine, I still strip and divest them of all those flattering Ornaments (or cheating Disguises rather) which

so

so often conceal or mis-represent their true and genuine Nature, and (before e'r I swallow them) after they have been admitted by the more delusive faculty we call Fancy, I make them pass the severer scrutiny of Reason.

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## REFLECTION IX.

*Upon his Coaches being stopt in a narrow Lane.*

HERE, for ought I can guess, my stay is like to be long enough, to afford me the leisure of a Reflection on it: For I have found already, in this narrow Lane, a very large Scene to exercise my Patience in; and this Churlish Dray-man seems resolv'd to be as tedious to me, as *Ludgate-hill* is to his Horse, when his Cart is over-loaden. They that are going on Foot to the same place this Coach should carry me to, find not their Passage hindred, or their Way obstructed, by that which keeps me here; and were I dispos'd to leave my Coach behind, and Foot it after them, I might in their Company sooner reach the place my Designs and Affairs call me to, than I shall (probably) be supply'd with hopes of getting quickly out from hence. Alas! How frequently  
falls

falls it out thus in our Journeys towards Heaven? Those whom their adverse Fortune, or a Noble Scorn, hath stript of, or releas'd from, these troublesome and intangling Externals, may tread the Paths of Life nimbly, and cheerfully, being unstoppt by many Obstacles, that intercept the Progresses of others. But those stately Persons, whose Pride or Effeminacy will not permit them to move an Inch towards Heaven, unless they may be carry'd thither in Pleasure's easie Coaches, and who will not bate a Superfluity, or lay by the least Circumstance or Punctilio of Grandezza, to lessen themselves into a capacity of entring in at the strait Gate, may soon find these treacherous and over-lov'd Conveniencies turn'd into cumbersome Cloggs, and real Impediments, that will, if not Block up, at least Obstruct the passage to the Seat of so much Joy; that ev'n to be cast Ashore there, by Shipwrack, were a Blessing; and *that* he is thought unworthy to be admitted there, that cannot think it his Happiness to reach that place himself, though he leave all behind him to get thither.

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RE-



## REFLECTION X.

*Looking through a Perspective Glass upon a Vessel  
we suspected to give us Chase, and to be  
a Pyrat.\**

**T**HIS Glass does indeed approach the dis-trusted Vessel, but it approaches her only to our Eyes, not to our Ship; if she be not making up to us, this harmless Instrument will prove no Loadstone to draw her towards us, and if she be, it will put us into a better readiness to receive her. Such another Instrument in relation to Death, is the Meditation of it; (by Mortals so much, and so causelessly, abhorr'd) for though most Men as studiously shun all Thoughts of Death, as if, like nice Acquaintances, he would forbear to Visit where he knows he is never thought of, or as if we could exempt our selves from being Mortal, by forgetting that we are so; yet does this Meditation bring Death nearer to us, without at all lessening the real distance betwixt Us and Him: If that last Enemy be not yet approaching us, this innocent Glass will no more quicken his pace, than direct his steps; and if he be, without hastning his Arrival, it will prepare us for his Reception: For my part, my Beardless Chin al-

\* Sailing betwixt *Rotterdam* and *Graves-end* on *Easter-day*, 1648.

lows

lows me to presume, that by the course of Nature, I have yet a pretty stock of Sand in the upper part of my Hour-glass; Wherefore, though I am too Young to say with *Isaac*, behold, now I am Old, *And I know not the Day of my Death*, Gen. 27. 2. yet since the Youngest and Lustiest of us all, has cause to say with the Mirrour of Patience, *When a few Years are come, then shall I go the way whence I shall not return*, Job 16. 22. and since 'tis the wise Man's Counsel, *Not to boast our selves of to Morrow, because we know not what a Day may bring forth*. I will endeavour (to use our Saviour's tearms) *To take heed to my self, lest at any time that Day come upon me unawares*, Luke 21. 34. And as the only safe Expedient in order thereunto, I will (in imitation of holy *Job*) *All the Days of my appointed time wait till my Change come*, Job 14. 24.

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The



The II. SECTION,  
Containing  
OCCASIONAL REFLECTIONS,  
Upon the  
*Accidents of an Ague.*

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MEDITATION I.

*Upon the first Invasion of the Disease.*

**T**HIS Visit, (Dear *Sophronia*,\*) which you intended but for an act of Kindness, proves also one of Charity; for though it be not many hours since we parted, and though you left me free from any other discomposure than that which your leaving me is wont to give me; yet this little time has made so great a change in my Condition, as to be, I doubt not, already visible in my Looks: For whilst I was sitting quietly in my Chamber,

\* *A name often given by the Author to his excellent Sister R. who was almost always with him during his Sickness.*

and

and was as far from the Thoughts of Sickness, as from any such disorders as are wont to be the occasions of it; and whilst I was delightfully entertain'd, by an Out-landish *Virtuoso* that came to Visit me, with an Account of the several attempts that are either made, or design'd, in foreign Parts, to produce Curiosities, and improve Knowledge; I was suddenly surpris'd with a Chilness, and a Shivering, that came so unexpected, and increas'd so fast, that it was heightned into a downright Fit of an Ague, before I could satisfie my self what it was. But I confess, that this unwelcome accident had not amaz'd me, as well as troubled me, if I had sufficiently consider'd to what a strange number and variety of Distempers these frail Carcases of ours are Obnoxious; for, if I had call'd to mind what my Curiosity for Dissections has shown me, and remembered how many Bones, and Muscles, and Veins, and Arteries, and Grisles, and Ligaments, and Nerves, and Membranes, and Juices, a humane Body is made up of, I could not have been surpris'd, that so curious an Engine, that consists of so many pieces, whose Harmony is requisite to Health, and whereof not any is superfluous, nor scarce any insensible, should have some or other of them out of order; it being no more strange that a Man's Body should be subject to Pain, or Sickness, than that an Instrument with

above a thousand Strings (if there were any such) should frequently be out of Tune, especially since the bare change of Air may as well discompose the Body of a Man, as untune some of the Strings of such an Instrument; so that ev'n the inimitable Structure of humane Bodies is scarce more admirable, than that such curious and elaborate Engines can be so contriv'd, as not to be oftner out of order than they are; the preservation of so nice and exact a Frame being the next wonder to its Work-man-ship. And indeed, when I consider further, how many outward accidents are able to destroy the Life, or, at the least, the Health, ev'n of those that are careful to preserve them; and how easily the Beams of a warm Sun, or the Breath of a cold Wind, or too much, or too little Exercise, a Dish of green Fruit, or an infectious Vapour, or ev'n a sudden Fright, or ill News, are able to produce Sickness, and perhaps Death; and when I think too, how many evitable Mischiefs our own Appetites, or Vices, expose us to, by acts of Intemperance, that necessitate the Creatures to offend us, and practices of Sin, whereby we provoke the Creator to punish us; when I say, I consider all this, and consequently how many Mischiefs he must escape that arrives at Gray-hairs; I confess, the commonness of the Sight cannot keep me from thinking it worth some wonder, to see an Old man,  
espe-

especially if he be any thing Healthy. But these kinds of Thoughts (*Sophronia*) are seldom entertain'd, unless they be excited by some unwelcome Occasions; and when we are long accustomed to Health, we take it for granted, that we shall enjoy it, without taking it for a Mercy that we are so; we are not sensible enough of our continual need and dependance on the divine Goodness, if we long and uninterruptedly enjoy it; and by that unthankful heedlessness we do, as it were, necessitate Providence to deprive us of its wonted supports, to make us sensible that we did enjoy, and that we always need them: It being but fit that Mercies should cease to be constant, which, their constancy only, that should be their indearment, keeps us from entertaining as Mercies; I will therefore (*Sophronia*) endeavour to derive this advantage from this sudden Fit of Sickness, to make me thankful for Health, when God shall be pleas'd to restore it me, and to keep me from reckoning confidently upon the lastingness of it: For though we are very unapt to take ev'n the Wise man's Counsel, where he forbids us to *boast our selves of to Morrow, because we know not what a Day may bring forth*; yet by such accidents I find, that *Solomon* spoke much within compass, and had not done otherwise, if for a Day he had substituted an Hour: For so many, and so various  
are

are the unfore-seen accidents to which we poor Mortals are expos'd, that the continuance of our Health, or Prosperity, do much more merit our thanks, than the interruption of them can deserve our wonder. And I must confess, (*Sophronia*) that though my falling Sick may be but my unhappiness, my being so much surpris'd at it was my fault.

## MEDITATION II.

*Upon the immoderate Heat and Cold  
of the Aquish Fit.*

ONE that, not knowing what Ails me, should come in, and see me in this soft Bed, not only cover'd, but almost oppress'd, with Cloaths, would confidently conclude, that, whether or no I be distress'd by the contrary Quality, I cannot at least be troubled with Cold; and if he himself were so, he will be apt to Envy me. And if instead of coming in my Cold fit, he should Visit me in my Hot one, and see me with my Shoulders and Arms quite uncover'd, and nothing but the single Sheet on the rest of my Body; he would be apt to think, that I must lye very cool. But alas! in spight of all that lies upon me, an internal Frost has so diffus'd it self through every Part, that

that my Teeth chatter, and my whole Body does shake strongly enough to make the Bed it self do so ; and, though I still wish for more Cloaths, yet those that are heap'd on me, can so little controule this præternatural Cold, that a Pile of them might sooner be made great enough to Crush than to Warm me : So that when I Travell'd ev'n in frosty Nights; the Winter had nothing near so strong an Operation on me. And as that external Cold was far more supportable whilst it lasted, so it was incomparably more easie for me, by Exercise, and otherwise, to deliver myself from it.

Thus, when a Great or Rich Man's mind is dis-temper'd with Ambition, Avarice, or any immoderate Affection; though the By-standers, that see not what disquiets him, but see what great store of Accommodations fortune has provided for him, may be drawn to Envy his Condition, and be kept very far from suspecting that he can want that Contentment, the means of which they see him so Richly supply'd with : And yet alas ! as the Colder heat of the external Air is much less troublesome to a Man in Health, though furnished with an ordinary proportion of Cloaths, than the Cold or Hot fit of an Ague, with a pile of Blankets first, and then a single Sheet; so to a Vigorous and Healthy constitution of mind, External inconveniences are much more supportable than any

Accom-



Accommodations can make the condition of a dis-temper'd Soul. Let us not then judge of Men's happiness, so much by what they have, as by what they are, and consider both, that Fortune can but give *much*, and it must be the Mind that makes that much *enough*: And that, as 'tis more easie to endure *Winter*, or the Dog-days in the Air, than in the Blood; so a Healthful mind, in spite of Outward inconveniences, may afford a Man a condition preferable to all External accommodations without that.

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### MEDITATION III.

*Upon the Succession of the Cold and  
Hot Fit.*

**W**HEN the cold Fit first seiz'd me, me-  
thought it was rather melted Snow than  
Blood that Circulated in my Veins, where it  
mov'd so Inordinately, and maintain'd the vital  
Flame so Penuriously, that the greatest Sign  
which was left to distinguish this Cold from that  
of Death, was, its making me shake strong enough  
to shake the Bed I lay on. I call'd for more and  
more Cloaths, only because I needed them, not  
because I found any relief by them: I fancy'd the  
torrid Zone to be of a far more desirable Consti-  
tution

tution than that we call the Temperate; and as little as I am wont to reverence vulgar Chymists, I then envy'd their Laborants, whose imployment requires them to attend the Fire: But when the Cold Fit was once over, it was quickly succeeded by a Hot one, which after a while I thought more troublesome than it. I threw off the Cloaths much faster than my former importunity had procur'd them to be laid on me; and I, that could a little before scarce feel all that had been heap'd on me, could not now support a single Sheet, but thought its weight oppress'd me.

I envied the Inhabitants of *Norway*, and *Iceland*, far more than those that dwell either in the richest Province of *East-India*, or of the Golden Coast it self: And of all Creatures, not Rational, I thought the Fishes the happiest, since they Live in a cool Stream, and, when they please, may Drink as much as they List.

If then (*Sophronia*) the self-same Person may, within less than two hours, have such different apprehensions of his own Condition, as now to complain of that as a sad Grievance, which but an hour before he wish'd for as a Relief; we may well acknowledge, that we frequently mistake in estimating the Hardships and Afflictions we complain of, and find them not so uneasie as we make them, whilst we not only endure the whole Affliction

fiction that troubles us, but often increase it, by repining at the envied Conditions\* of others.

An afflicted Man is very apt to fancy, that any kind of Sickness, that for the present troubles him, is far less supportable than if it were exchang'd for another Disease; and imagines his case to be so singular, that one cannot say to him in *Saint Paul's Language, No Temptation has befallen you, but that which is common to Men.* 1 Cor. 10. 13. He presumes, that he could far more easily support his Crosses, if instead of his present Disease, he had this or that other; though, if the Exchange were made, he would perchance wish for his first Sickness; if not be as much troubled at his own Folly, as with the Disease. He that is tormented with the Gout, is apt to envy any Sick man that is exempted from that Roaring pain, and able to walk about; He that is swell'd with the Dropsie, fancies all Persons happy whose Diseases allow them Drink to quench their Thirst: And the Blind man envies both these, and thinks no Persons so miserable in this World as those that cannot see the World. Feavers burn us, Agues shatter us, Dropsies drown us, Phrensies unman us, the Gout tortures us, Convulsions wrack us, Epilepsies fell us, Colicks tear us; and in short, there is no considerable Disease that is not very

\* Ed. 1. condition.

trouble-

troublesome in itself, how ever Religion may sanctifie and sweeten it: For as a Fortress, whose Defendants are not Treacherous, can scarce be taken otherwise than either by Famine, or Storm; so Life, for whose preservation Nature is so faithfully solicitous, cannot be extinguish'd, unless either Chronical Diseases do Lingringly destroy, or some Acute do hastily snatch it away. And indeed, if a Disease prove Mortal, 'tis no more than is to be expected, if it tire out the Patient with tedious Languishments, or else dispatch him with dismal Symptoms: Nor is it in point of Sickness only, that we are often more unhappy than we need, by Fancying ourselves more unhappy than we should be, if we were allow'd to exchange that which now troubles us, for any thing which does not. But there are Evils, which, though exceeding contrary in appearance, and circumstances, do yet agree in being extremely troublesome; as the possest Wretch our Saviour cured in the Gospel, though he were sometimes cast into the Fire, and sometimes into the Water, yet in both states was tormented by the same Devil, who in variety of Inflictions still express'd the same Malice. But we should make a righter Estimate of suffering, if we did but consider, that much uneasiness is annex'd to an Afflicted condition in general; and that, therefore, which we are  
sen-

sensible of, may proceed rather from the general nature of Sickneses, and Crosses, than from the particular Kind and Degree of ours. And indeed, if a Man were permitted to exchange his Disease with those of others, he would often find his granted wishes to bring him a variety of Mischiefs, rather than an Exemption from them; and many of those that we Envy, as thinking them far less Sufferers than our selves, do look with invidious Eyes on us, and do but dissemble their Grievances more handsomely than we, not find them more easie than ours. And that of Saint *Peter* may be more generally apply'd, than most Men think, where he exhorts to constancy, upon this consideration, *That the same Sufferings are accomplish'd upon our Brethren in the World*, 1 Pet. 5. 9. For 'tis all one as to the Efficacy of this Lenity,\* whether our Afflictions be the same with those of others, in Kind, or not Superiour to them in Degree: And I doubt not, but we should support many of our Grievances as easily as those for which we wish them exchang'd, if the chief account upon which they trouble us, were not rather that they are the present ones, than the greatest.

\* Read, "Lenitive."

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MEDI-

## MEDITATION IV.

*Upon the being let Blood.*

**O**NE of the most troublesome Symptoms in almost all Feaverish Distempers, is wont to be Thirst; and in mine it was importunate to a degree, that made me very much so, in frequently solliciting those that were about me for Drink, which, in the heat of the Fit, seem'd so desirable an Object, that it then much lessen'd my wonder at that parch'd King's agreement, who, urg'd with Thirst, sold his Liberty for a full Draught of cold Water. But alas! I sadly found, that the Liquor I swallow'd so Greedily afforded me but a very transient Relief, the latter being gone almost as soon as the former had pass'd thorow my Throat, so that not only it did but amuse me, not Cure me; but, which is worse, Drinking it self increas'd my Thirst, by encreasing the Feaver, whose uneasie Symptom that was. Wherefore, seeing all the cooling Juleps that could be administer'd, did free me from nothing but the Expectation of being much reliev'd by such slight and palliative Medicines; the Doctor thought himself this Day oblig'd to a quite contrary, and yet a more generous Remedy; and order'd, that, instead of giving me Drink, they should take away Blood, as judging

ing it the best and far the surest course to take away the uneasie Spmptom, by removing that which Foments the cause.

Thus when the Mind is distemper'd with turbulent Commotions, and the disquieted Appetite does too restlessly and eagerly crave Objects, which, though perhaps in themselves not absolutely Bad, are at least made, by a Conjunction of Circumstances, unfit and dangerous for the Person that longs for them: We, like unskilfull or unruly Patients, fondly imagine, that the only way to appease our Desires, is, to grant them the Objects they so Passionately tend to. But the wise and sovereign Physician of Souls, who considers not so much what we do wish, as what we should wish, often discerns, that this præternatural Thirst indicates and calls for a Lancet, rather than a Julep; and knows it best to attempt the Cure, rather by taking away somewhat that we have, than by giving us that which only a Spiritual superfluity reduces us to want: And in effect, we often see, that as a few Ounces of Blood taken away in a Feaver, does cool the Patient more than the giving him ten times as much Drink would do; so a few Afflictions, by partly letting out, and partly moderating our corrupt Affections, do more compose and appease a Mind molested with inordinate Appetites, than the Possession of a great many of the

the Objects we impotently desire. Whilst our Appetites are roving, and unreasonable, and insatiate, the obtaining of this or that particular Object does but amuse the Patient, not take away the Disease: whereas seasonable, and sanctify'd Crosses, that teach us to know our selves, and make us sensible how little we deserve, and how little the things we are so Greedy of could make us happy, if obtain'd, may reduce us to a Resignation, and Tranquility of Mind, preferable to those over-valu'd things, which, as it keeps us from enjoying, so it keeps us from needing. Thus *Zacheus*, who, whilst a Publican, never thought he had enough, when he had once entertain'd our Saviour, though he offer'd to make a quadruple Restitution of what ever he had fraudulently acquir'd, was, upon a sudden, by being freed from Avarice, grown so Rich, that he was forward to give no less than half he had to the Poor; as if his Divine Guest had wrought upon his Goods, such Miracles as he had done upon the five Loaves, and two Fishes, of which the Remains amounted to more than the whole Provision was at first.

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MEDI-



## MEDITATION V.

### *Upon the Taking of Physick.*

**T**HE last bitter Potion that I took, (*Sophronia*) was, I remember, sweetned with the hopes were given me with it, that it might prove the last I should need to take, and would procure me a settled and durable Health: But I find by sad Experience, That the benefit I deriv'd from it is nothing near so lasting as it was welcome; for I am now reduc'd to take Physick agen, and I fear must often do so, before I shall be able to dislodge this troublesome Ague that haunts me: For though the last Physick I took, wrought so well, that I hop'd it had wrought\* away not only the ill Humours themselves, but the very sources of them; yet by the effect of what I took this Morning, I not only find there is as much to be purged away now as there was then, but, what is sadder, I can scarce hope this Physick will excuse me from the need of taking more again ere long: But though 'tis a troublesome thing, and must be often repeated, yet 'tis a salutary thing too, and cannot be more unpleasant than 'tis useful; and as Loathsome as it is, a Sickness were far worse. Thus when a relenting Sinner has endeavour'd to

\* Ed. 1. brought.

wash

wash away his Sins with his Tears, he may possibly think himself so thoroughly wash'd in that abstersive Brine, (which yet owes its cleansing Virtue not to its own Nature, but to the Blood of Christ) that if he be a new Convert, and be entertain'd with those Ravishing delights wherewith God is often pleas'd to engage such returning Prodigals, (as the Kind Father welcom'd his Riotous Son with Feasting, and with Musick) that he is apt to fancy Repentance to be like Baptism, which, being receiv'd once for a Man's whole Life, needs never be renewed. But though, during such transports, an unexperienc'd Convert may be apt to cast the Gauntlet to the World, saying in his Spiritual prosperity, that he shall never be mov'd; yet, as our Saviour speaks, *The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak*; and too commonly our Resolutions flagg with our Joys, and those that a while before imagin'd they despis'd the World, find themselves Worsted, if not Captivated, by it; and find it far more difficult than they thought it, to Live in the Company of Sinners without being of their Number, and in so defil'd a World without being spotted by it.

And as the same *David*, who said in his Prosperity, he should never be mov'd, said in his Distress, he should one Day perish by the hand of

*Saul* : So many of those, that whilst their Tears of Repentance, and of Joy, are not yet dry'd off their Eyes, are apt to defie and contemn all the Ghostly enemies, and difficulties, that oppose their present zealous Resolutions, will perhaps in a while after, when they meet with unexpected Impediments, and Foyls, change their confidence into despair, and think those very Enemies, whom they lately look'd on as Despicable, to be Insuperable: But as Physick, that does good for a time, ought not to be rejected, because it does good but for a time; nor should we reject the only sure means of our present Recovery, for fear of future Relapses; so, though we sadly find that Repentance must be repeated, and that after we have practis'd it often, we must have need of it agen; yet since 'tis the only proper means to recover a Soul out of a state of Sin, which is worse than any Disease, and leads to the worst of Deaths, we must never suffer ourselves to be so far Discouraged, as to forgo so necessary and so profitable a Duty, and must not more frequently Relapse into faults, than renew our Sorrow for them, and our Resolves against them: For Innocence indeed is far more desirable than Repentance, as Health is than Physick. But as Physick is more Eligible than the continuance of Sickness, so is Repentance more Eligible than  
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continuing in the state of Sin: And as the Drinking ev'n of a bitter Potion is a less Evil than the heat, and thirst, and restlessness of an Ague; so to lament for Sin here, is a far less uneasie thing than to do it in a place where there is nothing but remediless Wailing, and Gnashing of Teeth. 'Tis true, that our souls are in this too like our Bodies, that our whole Lives are spent betwixt Purging away of naughty Humours, and accumulating them: And me-thinks I hear the Flesh still saying unto the Spirit, as *Ruth* did to *Naomi*, *The Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but Death part thee and me*, *Ruth* 1. 14. But although there are Defilements, which, though often wash'd off, will as often come again to blemish us; and though the *Deeds of the Body*,\* will scarce all of them perfectly be put to Death, but with the Body it self; yet next to an uninterrupted state of Health, frequent and early Recoveries are desirable: And though the shameful necessity of needing to beg many pardons for the same fault, may justly make an ingenious Christian cry out with *Saint Paul*, *O! Wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death* †; yet the same sense of his own frailty, that puts this Exclamation into his Mouth, may comfort his Heart, by its being a pledge, that he shall one Day be able Exultingly

\* Rom. viii. 13. *Θανατόω.*

† Rom. vii.

to say with the same Apostle in another place, *Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 15. 57.*

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## MEDITATION VI.

*Upon the Syrups and other sweet things  
sent him by the Doctor.*

**T**HIS complaisant Physitian (*Sophronia*) is you see very sollicitous, that his Remedies should as well gratifie the Patient, as oppose the Disease: And besides, that this Julip is ting'd with Syrup of Clove-gilly-flowers, that it may at once delight the Palate, and the Eye; some of these other Remedies are sweetned with as much Sugar, as if they came not from an Apothecaries Shop, but a Confectioners. But my Mouth is too much out of Taste to relish any thing that passes through it; and though my Sickness makes this Flattering of the Palate almost necessary to the rendring these Medicines takable by me, yet upon the account of the same Distemper, all that the Doctor's tenderness and skill could do to make them *Pleasant*, can at most but keep them from being *Loathsome*. And therefore, you will easily believe, *Sophronia*, that I enjoy these sweet things upon

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a score, that if it does\* Imbitter them, does at least, as to me, deprive them of their Nature: So that he, that for the sake of these Syrups, and Electuaries, should, notwithstanding the Malady that needs them, envy me, might be suspected to be troubled with a worse Disease than an Ague is, a Frensie.

Thus there are many Favourites of Fortune, whose seeming Enjoyments may perchance be Envy'd by those that do but Gaze on their Condition, whilst 'tis rather pitt'y'd by those that know it: To be brought by Greatness of Power, or Riches, and Effeminacy of Mind, to that pass, that they seldome bear† any thing but their own Praises, ev'n when their Actions merit Reprehension, and that they can relish nothing that is not sweetned with so much of Flattery, as quite to disguise, and perhaps pervert, its Nature. These as I was going to say, and such other unhappy Priviledges, are things which (whatever fools may think) will not recommend Greatness to a considering Man, and are far more fit to procure the Possessour's ruine, than wise Men's envy: And besides, that a vain and impotent Soul is, by those disquieting Qualities, molested with greater Distempers than those Gratifications can make amends for, and which often hinder the full Rel-

\* Perhaps "does not."

† Ed. 1. "hear."

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lishing of these or any other Pleasure; The delight these treacherous Delicacies afford, is so much less considerable than the Weakness they suppose; that 'tis far more Eligible to be without them than to need them.

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## MEDITATION VII.

*Upon the want of Sleep.*

**A**H! Dear *Sophronia*, in spite of all the care and officiousness of those diligent Attendants, that you were pleas'd to send to watch with me, I have Slept all Night as little as I do now, or as I shall desire to do whilst you stay here.

This unwelcome leisure brought me as much a Necessity as an Opportunity to spend the time in entertaining my Thoughts, which on this occasion were almost as Various, and seemed too as Wild, as, if I had Slept, my Dreams themselves would have been: And therefore, I presume you will not wonder, if I can now recall but few of them, and if the rest be as easily Vanish'd out of my Memory, as they came abruptly into my Mind.

The first Thought that I remember entertain'd me, was that which was the most naturally suggested by the condition I was in: For when I found how tedious and wearisome each hour was,  
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and observ'd how long a time seem'd to intervene betwixt the several Divisions that the striking of the Clock made of a Night, that must at this time of the Year be much shorter than the Day, I could not but consider, how insupportable their condition must be, to be cast into outer Darkness, where tormented Wretches lye, not as I do upon a soft Bed, but upon Fire and Brimstone, where no attendance of Servants, or kindness of Friends, is allow'd them, that need it as much as they deserve it little; and, which is worst of all, where no Beam of hope is permitted to Consolate them, as if the Day should Dawn after so Dismal a Night though protracted to Millions of Ages, each of whose miserable hours appears an Age.

The next thing I was considering, was, How, defective we are in point of Gratitude to God; I now Blush that I cannot call to Mind the time, when I ever thought that his having vouchsaf'd me the power of Sleeping, deserv'd a particular Acknowledgment. But now I begin to see that 'tis our Heedlessness, not their Uselessness, that keeps us from daily being thankful for a multitude of Mercies, that we take no notice of; Though it be injurious, That that only commonness that heightens the Benefit, should keep us from being sensible of the Greatness of it. I confess I was very lately one of them, who look'd upon Sleep as one of those  
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those inconveniencies of humane Nature, that merit a Consolation; and I very little apprehended, that I should ever complain of the want of Sleep, as of a Grievance, the necessity of it being what I always look'd upon under that Notion: But I now perceive, he was a Wise man, who said, *that God made every thing Beautiful in its Season.*\* And yet, when I consider the Affinity betwixt Sleep and Death, whose Image it is, I cannot but think it very unlikely, that this Life should be design'd for our Happiness, since not to lose almost half of it were an Infelicity.

Another thing I remember I was considering, was this, That though want of Sleep be one of the uneasiest accidents that attend on Sickness, yet in many cases it proves as usefull as it can be unwelcome: For there is a sort of Jolly people, far more Numerous than I could wish them, who are at utter defiance with Thinking, and do as much fear to be alone, as they should to do any course that is naturally productive of so unmanly a fear: And the same Sinfull employments, or Vain pastimes, that make them afraid of being alone, do so much keep them from the necessity of being so, that they keep them almost from the very Possibility of it: For in the time of Health, Visits, Businesses, Cards, and I know not how many other

\* Eccles. iii. 11.

Avocations, which they justly style Diversions, do succeed one another so thick, that in the Day there is no time left for the distracted Person to converse with his own Thoughts: And ev'n when they are Sick, though they be debarr'd of many of those wonted Diversions, yet Cards and Company will give them enough to prove a Charm against Thinking, which the Patient is so willing, or rather solicitous, to decline, the need of that Sickness less troubles him, as it keeps his Body from going abroad, than as it tends to drive his Thoughts home; so that Sickness does little or nothing towards the making such Men consider, by casting them upon their Beds, unless it also hinder them from Sleeping there. But in the long and tedious Nights, when all the Praters, and the Gamesters (who are usually call'd good Companions, but seldom prove good Friends) are withdrawn, and have left our Patient quite alone, the Darkness of the Night begins to make him discern, and take some notice of his own Condition, and his Eyes, for want of outward Objects, are turn'd inwards, he must, whether he will or no, during the Silence of the Night, hear those Lessons, which by the Hurry and Avocations of the Day he endeavour'd to avoid. And though this be a very unwelcome Mercy, yet 'tis a Mercy still, and perhaps the greater for being so unwelcome: For if he could  
Sleep

Sleep in Sickness, as he us'd to do in Health, he were in great danger of having his Conscience laid Asleep, till it should be Awak'd by the Flames and Shriecks of Hell. And the design of God in chastning, being to reclaim and amend us, we not only do, by our want of Reflecting, indure the trouble of Sickness, without reaping the benefit of it, but also by our shunning to consider, we are so ill-natur'd to ourselves, as to lengthen the Sickness, we are so impatient of; which is in us as foolish as 'twould be in a nice Patient, after having been made to take a bitter, but a salutary Potion, to send unseasonably for Cordials and Julips to hinder the working of it, and so by such unruliness lose the benefit of the Operation, and lengthen his Pain and Sickness, to avoid the far less trouble of complying with the Nature of the Medicine, and the Designs of the Physitian: So that Repentance being necessary to Recovery, and the considering of a Man's own ways as necessary to Repentance, the want of Sleep, which both allows us time, and imposes on us a necessity to think, may well be look'd upon as a happy Grievance, since it very much tends to the shortning of our Afflictions, by the disposing us to Co-operate towards God's aims in sending them.

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## MEDITATION VIII.

*Upon telling the Strokes of an ill-going  
Clock in the Night.*

**T**HE same Violence of my Fit, that made me very much need Sleep, allow'd me so little of it, that I think I miss'd not hearing one stroke of the Clock all the Night long. But since you know, *Sophronia*, that the Clock is kept by the Souldiers that are Quarter'd in the place where it stands, you will easily believe, that 'tis not very carefully look'd to, especially since they are not only wont to let it go ill, but do oft times make it do so on purpose, and as may best comply with the Officers occasions, and as they would have the Guards that are to be set here, or to be sent hence, sooner or later Reliev'd. Of this uncertain going of the Clock, I never had occasion to take so much notice as the last Night, when, lying too constantly awak'd, I began to observe, that though all the hours were so tedious, as to seem every one of them extraordinary long, yet they manifestly appear'd to me not to be equally so; and therefore, when the Clock struck Eleven, to satisfie my self whether it did not mis-inform me, I call'd to one that sat up by me for the Watch I use to measure the time with in nice Experiments, and found it to want but very little of Midnight; and not much  
above

above an hour after, when by my Watch it was but about one, those that kept the Clock, whether out of Negligence or Design, or to make amends for past Slowness, made it strike two, which seem'd to me to hint a not unuseful Rule in estimating the length or shortness of Discourses: For there are Cases, where the difficulty or importance of of the Subject is such, that though it cost a Man many words, yet, if what he says be not sufficiently fitted to the Exigency of the Occasion, and the Theam, he may speak much, without saying enough. But on the other hand, if (as it often happens) a Man speak either Unseasonably, erroneously, or Impertinently, he may, though he say little, talk too much; The paucity or number of Words, is not, as many think it, that which is in such cases to be chiefly considered; for 'tis not many, or few, that are requir'd, but enough. And, as our Clock struck not so often as it should have done, when it struck Eleven, and yet struck a while after too often when it struck but two, because the first time it was Mid-night, and the second time it was but one of the Clock; so to estimate whether what is said have its due length, we are not so much to look whether it be little, or much, as whether a Man speak in the right time, and say neither more nor less than he should.

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## MEDITATION IX.

*Upon comparing the Clock and his Watch.*

**T**HE occasion I had (*Sophronia*) to compare the Clock and my Watch, suggested to me this other Reflection, That the Dial-plate of the Clock being I know not how many times larger than that of the Watch, the Circle on which the hours were mark'd in the one, did by vast Odds exceed the correspondent Circle of the other : And yet, though the Index of the Clock had then past through a far greater quantity of space than that of the Watch, this little Index, being, when it was indeed Mid-night, arriv'd at the mark of the twelfth hour, when the greater Index was come but to that of the eleventh, I justly concluded, That the Watch did not only go truer, but more forward than the Clock.

Thus in estimating Men's Lives, there is something else to be look'd at than the meer duration of them : For there are some men, who having Loyer'd and Trifled away very many Years in the World, have no other Argument of their Age, than the Church-books of their Gray-hairs ; and as little do they indeed Live, that waste a number of insignificant Years in successive or perpetual Diversions from the true business and end of Life.

These,

These, and many other kinds of Persons, that consume much Time to little purpose, may be said rather to have Lasted long, than to have Liv'd long : As the careless Wanderer, who, instead of Travelling, does nothing but stray from one wrong way to another, though he do so at Midsummer from Morning to Night, may be said to have been long a Horse-back, but not to have perform'd a long Journey ; whereas he, that by thriftily Husbanding his time, and industriously Improving it, has early dispatch'd the business for which he was sent into the World, needs not Gray-hairs to be reputed to have Liv'd long enough, and consequently longer than those that wear Gray-hairs, only because they were Born many Years before him. In a word, to one of these sorts of Men we may attribute a longer time, but to the other a longer life ; (for ev'n the Heathen could say, *Non est vivere sed valere Vita*) and within how narrow a compass soever a Man's Life be confin'd, if he have Liv'd so long, as before he comes to the end of Life he have reach'd the ends of Living ; The attainment of that Measure of Knowledge, and the practice of those Graces and Virtues that fit a Man to glorifie God in this short Life, and to be Glorified by him in that which shall have no end.

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## MEDITATION X.

### *Upon a Thief in a Candle.*

**T**HE silence of the Night, and my being unable to Sleep, disposing me to have my attention very easily excited ; I chanc'd to take notice, that the Dim light of the Candle, which the Curtains were not drawn so close as to exclude every where out of the Bed, was on a suddain considerably increas'd, and continued so long in that condition, that, for fear of some mischance, I put my Head out of the Bed to see whence it was that this new and unexpected increase of Light proceeded ; but I quickly found, that 'twas from a Thief (as they call it) in the Candle, which by its irregular way of making the Flame blaze, had melted down a good part of the Tallow, and would have spoil'd the rest, if I had not call'd to one of those that Watch'd with me, to rescue the remains by the removal of the Thief. But I had scarce done this, when, I confess to you, *Sophronia*, I found my self invited to make some Reflections upon what I had done, and to read my self a new Lesson by the Beams of this new Light : For though this Thief made the Candle shine more strongly, and diffuse a much greater Light than it did before ; yet because it made a great and irregular waste of the  
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the Candle, I order'd it to be taken away; and on this occasion me-thought I might justly make use of that saying of *Pharaoh's* forgetful Butler, *I do remember my Faults this day*, Gen. 41. 9. For though I find no great difficulty in abstaining from other kinds of Intemperance, yet to that of Studying, my Friends, and especially my Physitians, have often accus'd me of being too Indulgent: Nor can I altogether deny, but that in mental Exercises, there can be Exorbitancies and Excesses, I may have sometimes been Guilty of them; and that the things for which I think Life valuable, being the satisfaction that accrues from the improvement of Knowledge, and the exercise of Piety, I thought it allowable, if not commendable, to consume or hazard it for the attainment of those Ends; and esteem'd Sickness more formidable for its unfitting me to learn, and to teach, than for its being attended with pain and danger, and look'd upon what it made me forbear, as far more troublesome than what ever else it made me endure. But I find my Body is a Jade, and tyres under my Mind, and a few hours fix'd Contemplation does sensibly so spend my Spirits, as to make me feel my self more weary than the Riding post for twice as many hours has ever done. Wherefore, since, though the proper use of a Candle be to consume it self, that it may give others Light, I yet thought fit

fit to have the Thief taken away, because, though it made the Candle give more Light, it would have wasted it too fast, and consequently made it expire too soon ; I see not how I can resist their perswasions, that would have me husband better the little stock of strength Nature has given me, and the rather, by a moderate expence of it, endeavour to make it shine longer, though but Dimly, then consume it to fast, though for a while to keep up a Blaze : I will therefore endeavour to learn of this Sickness, and of this Accident, what the Doctors hitherto could never teach me, and injoyn my self an Abstinence, which to me is more uneasie, than if Wine, or Women, or other sensual Pleasures were to be the Objects of it ; but if in so difficult an Exercise of Self-denial, I do not always perform what I am now perswaded to, 'tis like I shall easily forgive my self, for but a little hastning the end of my Life to attain the ends of it.

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## MEDITATION XI.

*Upon the being in danger of Death.*

**I** KNOW that Physitians are wont after their Master *Hippocrates*, to tell us, That Feavers which intermit are devoid of Danger : But though an Ague, whilst it continues such, could not be a

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mortal Disease ; yet why may it not degenerate into such a one ? And for my part, who take the Prognosticks of Physitians to be but Guesses, not Prophecies, and know how backward they are to bid us fear, till our Condition leave them little hopes of us : I cannot but think that Patient very ill advis'd, who thinks it not time to entertain thoughts of Death, as long as his Doctor allows him any hopes of Life ; for in case they should both be deceiv'd, 'twould be much easier for the mistaken Physitian to save his Credit, than for the unprepar'd Sinner to save his Soul.

Wherefore, *Sophronia*, finding my Disease attended with unusual threatenng Symptoms, not knowing where they would end, I last Night thought it fit to suppose they might end in Death : And two things especially made me the more ready for such an entertainment of my Thoughts.

One, That we can scarce be too careful and diligent in fitting ourselves for the Acting of a part well, that we can never Act but once ; For where the Scripture tells us, *It is appointed for all Men once to Dye* ;\* it is immediately subjoyn'd, *That after that comes Judgment* ; and if we dye ill once, we shall never be allow'd to Dye again, to see if we would Dye better the second time than we did

\* Heb. ix. 27.

the first: But as the Wise man Allegorically speaks, *Where the Tree falls there shall it lye*.\* So that the faults committed in this last and importantest of humane Actions, being irreparable, I think the only safe way is to imitate him, who having said, *If a Man Dye, shall he Live again?* † presently annex'd by way of Inference and Resolution: *All the Days of my appointed Time will I wait till my Change come.*

The other consideration that recommended to me the Thoughts of the Grave, was this, That we may be often solicitous to provide against many Evils and Dangers that possibly may never reach us; and many endure from the Anxious fears of contingent Mischiefs that never will befall them, more Torment than the apprehended Mischiefs themselves, though really suffer'd, would inflict. But Death will sooner or later infallibly come, and never finally deceive our Expectations, and therefore the fore-thoughts of it are an employment which may prove, we know not how soon, of use, and will (however) prove of excellent Advantage: The frequent Meditation of the end of our Lives, conducing so much to make us lead them well, that the expectation of Death brings not less Advantages to those that scape the Grave, than to those that descend into it.

\* Eccl. xi. 3.

† Job. xiv. 14.

Such like considerations (*Sophronia*) having put me upon the thoughts of Death, I presume you may have some Curiosity to know what these Thoughts were ; and therefore, though I have neither Fitness, nor Inclination to mention to you those that almost every Sober person would have upon a Death-Bed, as a Man, and as a Christian, I will only take notice to you of those few that were suggested to me, by the less general Circumstances of my condition. And I am the more willing to satisfy your Curiosity now, because I have my self been very inquisitive on the like occasion : For the approach of Death will (if any thing can) make Men serious and considerate, being for good and all to go off the stage ; they make a truer and sincerer Judgment of the World they are ready to leave, and then have not the wonted Partiality for the pleasures and profits of a Life they are now abandoning. And as the Mind looks with other Eyes upon the World, when Death is ready to shut those of the Body ; so Men are then wont as well to speak their Thoughts more frankly, as to have them better grounded. Death stripping most Men of their Dissimulation, as well as of other things it makes them part with ; and indeed it is then high time for the Soul to put off her Disguises, when she is ready to put off the very Body it self.

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One thing then that I was considering, (*Sophronia*) was, in how wretched a condition I should now be, if I had been of the same Mind with the generality of those, who are of the same Age with me: For these presume, That Youth is as well made for Pleasures, as capable of them, and is not more a Temptation to Vanity, than an Excuse for it. They imagine themselves to do a great Matter, if, whilst Youth lasts, they do so much as resolve to grow better when it is gone; and they think, That for a Man to be otherwise than Intentionally Religious before his Hair begin to change Colour, were not only to lose the priviledges of Youth, but to inroach upon those of old Age. But alas! How few are Destroy'd by that incurable Disease, in comparison to those that Dye before they attain it? And how little comfort is it upon a Death Bed, to think, that by the course of Nature, a Man might have Lived longer, when that very Thought might justly prove Dismal to an unprepar'd Man, by suggesting to him, that this early Death may argue the Measure of his Iniquities exceeding great, and that this untimely End is not so much a Debt due to Nature, as a Punishment of Sin. All the fruition of these deluding Pleasures of Sin, cannot countervail the Horrour that a Dying Man's Review of them will create, who not only sees himself upon the point of leaving them for  
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ever, but of suffering for them as long. And on the contrary, the Review of Youthful pleasures declin'd for Virtue's or Religion's sake, will afford a Dying Man far higher Joys than their Fruition would ever have afforded him.

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## MEDITATION XII.

*Upon the same Subject.*

**A**ND one thing more there is, (*Sophronia*) that I dare not conceal from you, how much cause soever I have to blush at the disclosing it; And it is, that I judge quite otherwise of a competent preparation for Death now I am near it, than I did when I was in health. And therefore, if one, that, since his Conscience was first thorowly awakened, still resolv'd to be a Christian, and though he too often broke those good Resolutions, never renounced them, but tripp'd and stumbled in the way to Heaven, without quitting his purpose of continuing in it, finds a formidableness in the approach of Death: How uncomfortable must that approach be to those that have still run on in the ways of Sin, without once so much as seriously intending to forsake them? A Youth free from Scandal, and sometimes productive of Practices that were somewhat more than Negative piety, is not so frequent among those that want not opportunities

tunities to enjoy the Vanities and Pleasures of the World, but that the Charity of other being seconded by that great inward flatterer Self love, made me imagine that I was in a Condition fitter to wish for Death, than to fear it. But now I come to look on Death near at hand, and see beyond the Grave, that is just under me, that bottomless Gulf of Eternity; me-thinks it is a very hard thing to be sufficiently prepar'd for a Change, that will transmit us to the Bar of an Omniscient Judge, to be there Doom'd to an endless state of infinite Happiness or Misery. There is no Art of Memory like a Death-Beds Review of ones Life; Sickness, and a nearer Prospect of Death, often makes a Man remember those Actions wherein Youth and Jollity made him forget his Duty; and those frivolous Arguments, which when he was in Health, and free from Danger, were able to excuse him to his own indulgent Thoughts, he himself will scarce now think Valid enough to excuse him unto God, before whom, if the sinless Angels cover their Faces, sinful Mortals may justly tremble to be brought to appear. When the approach of Death makes the Bodily eyes grow Dim, those of the Conscience are enabled to discern, That as to many of the Pleas we formerly acquiesc'd in, it was the prevalence of our Senses that made us think them Reason: And  
none



none of that Jolly company, whose examples prevail'd with us to joyn with them in a course of Vanity, will stand by us at the Bar to excuse the Actions they tempted us to: And if they were there, they would be so far from being able to justifie us, that they would be condemn'd themselves. 'Tis true, (*Sophronia*) if we consider Death only as the conclusion of Life, and a Debt all Men sooner or later pay to Nature, not only a Christian, but a Man, may entertain it without Horror: But if one consider it as a change, That after having left his Body to rot in the Grave, will bring his Soul to the Tribunal of God, to answer the miscarriages of his whole past Life, and receive there an unalterable Sentence that will Doom him to endless and unconceivable Joys, or everlasting and inexpressible Torments; I think 'tis not inconsistent either with Piety or Courage, to look upon so great a change with something of Commotion: And many that would not fear to be put out of the World, will apprehend to be let into Eternity.

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### MEDITATION XIII.

*A further continuation.*

**A**NOTHER thing, *Sophronia*, which my present state suggested to me, was, a Reflection  
 on

on the great mistake of those that think a Death-Bed the fittest and opportunist place to begin Repentance in: But sure these Men are very little acquainted, either with the disadvantages of a dangerous Sickness, or the nature of Repentance. 'Tis true, that Sin and Death do more easily frighten one, when they are look'd on as both together: But I much doubt whether the being frightened by Hell, be sufficient to give a Man a well-grounded hope of Heaven: For when we see Sin and Torment at one view, and so near one to another, 'tis not so easie to be sure which of the two it is that, as we presume, scares the Sinner towards Heaven. And surely Repentance, which ought to be the change of the whole Man, and in some sense the work of the whole Life, is very improperly begun, when Men have finished that course, which it should have guided them in: Nor have Men cause to presume, that when God is severely punishing them for their Sins, he will vouchsafe them so great a Grace as that of Repentance, which they would none of, till it could not make them serviceable to him. And as for the opportunity 'tis hop'd an expiring State may give Men for Repentance, they must needs be great Strangers to great Sicknesses, that can promise themselves so unlikely a matter: Who can secure them, that the Acuteness of the Disease will

will not invade the Brain? and as Deliriums and Phrensies are not unfrequent in Feavers, and other acute Diseases, so in case they happen to persevere, the Wretch'd patient is cast into a desperate condition, ev'n on this side the Grave, and as near as the *Body* is to its Dissolution, the *Man* may be Dead a pretty while before it.

But supposing he escape these Accidents, which make Repentance impossible, a dangerous Sickness has other Circumstances enough to make it very uneasie: For the Organical faculties of the Mind cannot but be dull'd and prejudic'd by the Discomposure of the Spirits, by which their Functions are to be exercis'd; and the sense of Pain, the troublesome prescriptions of Physitians, the loathsome and bitter Potions, the weakning Operation of Physick, the Languishments produced by want of Spirits, the Restlessness proceeding from Heat and want of Sleep, the distracting Importunity of those interested Persons, especially if any of them be suspected to hover about the Dying Man's Bed, as Birds of Prey that wait for a Carcass, the Sighs and Tears of Friends and Relations that come to take their last Farewell, and to Imbitter it, The Lawyer that must be directed to draw up the Will, the Divine that must be allowed to say something concerning the Soul, and the affrighted Conscience, that alone brings more dis-

disquiet than all the rest put together, do make a Dying Man's condition so Amazing, so Dismal, and so Distracting, that to think this an opportune time to begin such a work, (which may well enough imploy the whole Man in his calmest state of mind) is a Madness as great as any, that ev'n a Death-Bed can, by the translation of the Humours into the Brain, occasion : For my part, I think it so wild, and so unadvisable a thing to put off the beginning to provide all Graces to a Death-Bed, that I think it uneasie enough so much as to exercise *then* those that were acquir'd *before* ; Men being in that state commonly unable so much as to Reap the consolation they have been Sowing all along a pious Life.

And this (*Sophronia*) brings into my mind a consideration, which being taken from the very nature of a Death-Bed Repentance, should methinks very much deterr Men from resolving before hand to rely on it; And it is this, That granting those (Socinians, \* and others) to be mistaken, that think so late a Repentance to come too late to be available ; yet the Dying Sinner, though he may be kept from despair of passing to Heaven, can scarce in an ordinary way have a comfortable assurance of getting thither : For though it be said, That a true Repentance cannot come too late, yet

\* Ed. 1 and 2, "Socians."

it is a hard thing to be certain, that so late a Repentance is true. Since Repentance confessedly importeth an abandoning and renouncing of Sin, at least in Hearty purpose and resolution; 'tis very difficult for an habitual Sinner, that remembers what vows and purposes of change of Life, Sickneses or Dangers have formerly induc'd him to make, which were forgotten, or violated, when the apprehensions that occasion'd them were over; 'tis hard I say for such a One to be sure, that his present Repentance is not of the same ignoble and uncurrent kind, since he has no Experience to satisfie him that it would be ordinarily, though not constantly, prevalent over the opposite Temptations; and since also (which is mainly to be consider'd) 'tis so easie for a Man to mistake for the true hatred of Sin, and the love of God, a horror of Sin springing from the present painful sense of the Mischief procur'd by it, together with the great fear of the approaching Torments that it threatens, and a strong desire of going to Heaven, when seeing himself unable to stay any longer on Earth, he must get thither to escape Hell. And as it is thus difficult, when a Man already feels much Punishment for Sin, and sees himself in danger of more, to discern clearly upon what account it is, that he is sorry for what he has committed; so it must be certainly a state un-

speak-

speakingly anxious and uncomfortable to find oneself dragg'd to the Grave, without knowing whether the last Trumpet shall call him thence to Heaven, or to Hell: And if he should be deceiv'd in judging of the Validity of his Repentance, the fatal error would be remediless, and the mistake far sadder and more horrid than that of the *Syrians*, who, when they thought they were arriv'd Victorious at *Dothan*, found themselves at the mercy of their enemies in *Samaria*, 2 Kings 6. 18. To conclude, (*Sophonias*) he that resolves not to renounce his Sins, till he thinks Christ ready to renounce him for them, may very probably lose his Soul, and has most certainly lost his Ingenuity; and that will appear a very sad loss for a Man, that being by Death denied the opportunities of actually leading a new and pious Life, must derive his comfort from the assurance that he sincerely intends it.

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## MEDITATION XIV.

*Upon the Apprehensions of a Relapse.*

I HAVE now at length, *Eusebia*, by the goodness of God, regain'd that measure of Health, which makes the Doctor allow me to return to my former Studies, and Recreations, and Dyet; and  
in

in a word, to my wonted course of Life, so that the Physitian having dismiss'd himself, nothing seems more seasonable and pertinent to my present Condition, than that of our Saviour to the Paralitick Man, to whom he gave both Recovery and an Admonition, which, if he obey'd, he found the more advantagious of the two; *Behold, thou art made whole, Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*\* But I am not so free from the apprehensions of an Ague, as my Friends think me from the danger of it: For having sadly Experienc'd the uneasiness of Sickness, I am thereby brought, though at no easie Rate, to set a high Value upon Health, and be a very Jealous Preserver of so great a Blessing; and those petty Chilnesses that formerly I regarded not, but was apt to impute to nothing but Fumes of the Spleen, or Melancholy Vapours, are now able to give me hot Alarms, and make me apt to fancy them the fore-runners, if not the beginners, of the Cold fit of an Ague, the first Invasion of that Disease having been preceded by the like Distempers; and accordingly, I carefully avoid the least Irregularities in point of Dyet, or of any other kind that may any ways endanger a Relapse into the Disease that once handl'd me so ill. But why should I be more apprehensive for my Body than

\* John v. 14.

my

my Mind ; and if at any time (as it may but too often happen) any Sin should come to be prevalent in my Mind, why should I not be sollicitously afraid of all the occasions and approaches of it, and tremble at these Commotions of the Appetite which would not else perhaps be formidable to me, in case I have found that such Beginnings indulg'd or neglected have ended in actual Sin, the real Disease of the Soul ; and as dangerous Sick-nesses do for the most part leave a crasie Disposition behind them, which threatens Relapses, so Sins once prevalent, though afterwards suppress'd, do yet leave behind them a secret Disposition or Propensity to the Repetition of the same faults ; and as 'tis less difficult to find examples of Bodily Diseases, than of Spiritual ones, where the Patient is protected from Relapses, so I think we should be more watchfull against falling back into the Sins, than into the Sickneses, we have once found our selves subject to, unless we would think, that a greater Danger, and of a Nobler part, deserv'd less of our care.

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## MEDITATION XV.

*Upon his Reviewing and Tacking together the  
several Bills fil'd up in the Apothecary's  
Shop.*

**E**ITHER my Curiosity, *Sophronia*, or my Value of Health, has made it my Custom, when I have pass'd through a course of Physick, to review the particulars it consisted of; That taking notice by what Remedies I found most good, and by what, little or none; if I should fall into the like Distemper for the future, I might derive some advantage from my past Experience. In compliance with this Custom, as I was this Day reviewing and putting together the Doctor's several Prescriptions sent me back by the Apothecary; Good God! said I, in my self, what a multitude of unpleasant Medicines have I been order'd to take: The very Numbring, and Reading them were able to Discompose me, and make me almost Sick, though the taking of them help'd to make me Well. And certainly, if when I was about to enter into a course of Physick, all these loathsome Medicines, and uneasie Prescriptions, had been presented to me together, as things I must take, and comply with, I should have utterly despair'd of a Recovery that must be so obtain'd, and should  
not

not perhaps have undertaken so difficult and tedious a Work, out of an apprehension that it would prove impossible for me to go thorow with it. Thus when a Man considers the Duties, and the Mortifications, that are requisite to a recovery out of a state of Sin, into a state of Grace, he must be resolute enough, if he be not deterr'd from undertaking the conditions that Piety requires, by so many and great difficulties as will present themselves to his affrighted Imagination: But let not this make him Despondent; for 'tis true, that these discomposing Medicines, if I must have taken so much as a tenth part of them in one Day, would have either dispatch'd me, or disabled me to endure the taking any the next. But then, although I now see these troublesome Prescriptions all at once, I did not use them so, but took only one or two harsh Remedies in one Day, and thereby was enabled to bear them, especially being assisted by moderate Intervalls of Respite, and supported both by other seasonable Cordials, and by that highest Cordial the Hope that the *use* of these troublesome means of Recovery would soon free me from the *need* of them. And thus, though the hardships of Piety are, by the Ghostly and Carnal enemies of it, wont to be represented to one that begins to grow a Convert, so great and formidable a Multitude as to be insuperable;

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yet

yet if he consider, that though his fore-sight meet with them all at once, yet he will need to grapple with them but one after another, and may be as well able to overcome a Temptation this Day, or to Morrow, as he did another Yesterday: So that to this case also may in some sense be applied, that (either Counsel, or Precept) of our Saviour, not to be solicitous for to Morrow, but to charge no more upon a Day than the trouble that belongs to it. And if he considers too, That as a wise Physitian has always a great care, that his Remedies be not disproportionate to the Patient's Strength, and after harsh Physick to relieve him with Cordials, so God will not suffer those that intrust themselves to him to be tempted above what they are able, but will allow them Cordials after their Sufferings, in case he do not turn the Sufferings themselves into Cordials. If (I say) our new Convert shall consider things of this Nature, he will not be much discourag'd by the appearance of difficulties, that will as much ennoble and endear his success, as they can oppose it; and he will never despair of Victory in an engagement, where he may justly hope to have God for his Second, and Heaven for his Reward.

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*OCCA-*

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OCCASIONAL  
REFLECTIONS.

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The III. SECTION.

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REFLECTION I.

*Upon the sight of some variously Colour'd  
Clouds.*

**T**HERE is amongst us a sort of vain and  
flanting *Grandees*, who for their own Un-  
happiness, and their Age's, do but too much  
resemble these painted Clouds; for both the one  
and other are Elevated to a Station, that makes  
most Men look upon them, as far above them;  
and their Conspicuousness is often increas'd by  
the bright Sun-shine of the Prince's favour, which,  
though it really leaves them Creatures of the same  
frail Nature that it found them of, does yet give  
them a Lustre and a Gawdiness, that much attracts

the Eyes, and perhaps the Envy and Respect of those superficial Gazers upon things, that are wont to be amus'd, if not dazl'd, with their insignificant Out-sides. But the Parallel holds further; for as, in spite of these Clouds sublimity and conspicuousness, they are but Aëry and Unsolid things, consisting of Vapours, and steer'd by every Wind: So the fine People I am comparing them too, in spite of their Exaltation, and of all the Shew they make, are really but slight Persons, destitute of intrinsick and solid worth, and guided either by their own blind Lusts, and Passions, or else by Interests as fickle as those, (to which it will be no addition to say) or as variable as the Wind. And as these Clouds, though they seem Vast as well as High, and are perhaps able, for a while, to make the Sky somewhat Dark, have usually but a short duration, and either quickly fall down in Rain, or are quite dissipated, and made to disappear: So these Titled persons, what Shew soever their Greatness makes, do oftentimes, either by a voluntary Humility and Repentance, as it were, descend of their own accord, and, by doing of good, endeavour to expiate and make amends for their former Uselessness, if not Mischiefs; or else, after having been for a while stared at, they do (some of them more slowly, and some more abruptly) vanish, without  
leaving

leaving behind them any thing that can so much as entertain our Sight in the very place, where before they Ingross'd it: And this Ruine sometimes happens to the most Elevated persons, from that very Prince, whose favour made them attract so many Eyes; as Clouds are oftentimes dispers'd before Night, by the same Sun that had rais'd and gilded them in the Morning.

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## REFLECTION II.

*Upon his making of a Fire.*

**H**OW many fruitless Blasts have I been spending upon this sullen Fire! 'Twas not, though, the Greenness of this Wood, that made it so uneasie to be Kindled; but, 'twas alone the greatness of the Loggs, on which the Fire could take no hold, but by the intervention of such smaller Sticks as were at first wanting here: Witness, that I had no sooner laid on a little Brushwood, but the flame, from those kindled Twiggs, invading and prevailing on the Billets, grew suddenly great enough to threaten to make the House it self part of its Fuel, and turn it to such Ashes as it makes haste to reduce the Wood into. Methinks the blaze of this Fire should light me to  
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discern something instructive in it: These Blocks may represent our Necessary, these Sticks our less important, Religious practices, and this aspiring Flame, the subtile Inhabiter of that of Hell. 'Twill be but succeslesly, that the Devil can attempt our grand Resolves, till he have first Master'd our less considerable ones: and made his successes against these, not only Degrees, but Instruments, in the Destroying of the other: Our more neglected and seemingly trivial Affections, having once receiv'd his Fiery impressions, do easily impart them to higher Faculties, and serve to Kindle solider Materials. It is therefore the safest way, to be faithful ev'n to our lesser Determinations, and watchful over our less predominant Passions, and whensoever we find our selves tempted to violate the former, or neglect the latter, not so barely to cast one Eye upon the seeming inconsiderableness of what we are intic'd to, as not to fix the other upon the Consequences that may attend it; and therein to consider the importance of what such slighted things may, as they are manag'd, prove Instrumental, either to endanger, or preserve.

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### REFLECTION III.

*Upon my Spaniel's Carefulness not to lose  
me in a strange place.*

**D**URING my stay at Home, whilst every Body this Cur chanc'd to meet, made so much of their Landlord's Spaniel, that they seem'd to have added to Oracles that Proverb of *Love me, love my Dogg*, the cajoll'd Cur would never keep at home ; but being welcom'd to so many places abroad, made me few Visits, that cost me not the trouble of sending for him. But now, that we are in a place, where he sees not more Men than Strangers, he stirs not from my Heels, and waits so close, and carefully, that it were now more difficult to lose him, than it was formerly to keep him from wandering. Thus doth it generally fare with us ; whilst we are Environed with numerous outward Objects, which, smiling on us, give our Gaddings to them the Temptation of an inviting welcome ; how inclin'd are we to forget and wander from our great Master : But when we are depriv'd of those Enveigling Courtiers,\* our Maker too is freed from those seducing Rivals, and our undistracted Affections are brought to settle on their noblest Object, by the removal, and the displacing, as

\* Ed. 2. "Courtiers."

well



well as they would be by the Knowledge and the Undervaluation, of Inferior ones. Lord! when I lose a Friend, or any outward Idol of my Fondness, teach me to reduce him to leave thee his Heir, by taking that loss for a Summons, to transfer and settle my whole Love on Thee; and if Thou but vouchsafe to make me so happy, I shall think myself enough so, not to Envy him, to whom the loss of his Asses prov'd an occasion of his finding a Crown; and shall not so much Regret what thy Dispensations shall have taken from me, as Gratulate to my self their having reduc'd me unto Thee.

## REFLECTION IV.

*Upon the prodigiously wet Weather, which  
happen'd the Summer that Colchester  
was Besieg'd. (1648.)*

**H**OW strangely unseasonable is this Melancholy weather! and how tedious a Winter have we endur'd this Summer? More than these few last Weeks have not afforded us half as many Days, wherein we were neither troubl'd with Show'ry, or threaten'd by Cloudy, weather; and we in *England* have great Temptations to envy  
Nature's

Nature's kindness unto *Rhodes*,\* if it be true what Geographers relate of that Island, that 'tis a Rarity for the Inhabitants to see a Day pass without their seeing the Sun : For among us, the Confusions of our Country seem to have infected our very Air, and Serenity is as great a Rarity in the Sky, as in Men's Consciences ; so that those, who are wont to make Fires, not against Winter, but against Cold, have generally displac'd the florid, and the verdent Ornaments of their Chimneys, and think *Vulcan* more proper there than *Flora* ; and some begin to doubt, whether our Almanacks be not mistaken, by calling this Moneth *July* instead of *November*. But notwithstanding all this appearance of Winter above our Heads, yet whilst we see, that Cherries, and Strawberries, and other Summer fruits, do grow, and, though but slowly, make a Progress towards Maturity in our Orchards, we doubt not that 'tis Summer, and expect that these Fruits, though they will not be Early ones, will at length come to be Ripe ones.

Thus, for Reasons, which, though we know not yet, our knowing of God may assure us to be both Wise, and Just, a pious Soul may sometimes be reduc'd to so sad a Condition, that the Face of

\* *At Rhodes the Air is never so Dim and Cloudy, but one hour or other the Sun shineth out, Pliny, l. 2. c. 62. Where he also says the same of Syracusa.*

Heaven

Heaven does to Her appear perpetually over-cast ; and the Tokens of God's Displeasure do so closely follow one another, that, to borrow *Solomon's* Phrase, *The Clouds return after the Rain* : \* But if, notwithstanding all this, the seemingly deserted Soul, do, like the good Ground mention'd in the Gospel, bring forth Fruit with Perseverance ; if Prayer, Charity, Resignation, and those other Divine Graces, that are wont to be the proper and genuine Productions of God's Spirit, do flourish, and prosper in the Soul, we may safely conclude that Soul, though never so Disconsolate, to be in the State of Grace, and that she really receives the blest Assistances of Him, who can alone give the Increase (to the Seeds of Piety and Virtue) though not in the glad and conspicuous way of an unclouded Heaven, yet in the effectual, though secret, Method of fructifying Influences ; and we may reasonably hope, That He that has not only *begun a good Work*, † but carry'd it on thorow such Impediments, and Disadvantages, will perfect it, by bringing the slow, but yet gradually, ripening Fruit to the due Perfection : For those that are the humble Christian's proper Graces do so much depend upon the Author, that, if they Flourish, his hiding himself in Clouds need not make us doubt the Fruits we see to be the

\* Eccles. xii. 2.

† Phil. i. 6.

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Productions of the Sun\* of Righteousness, though we see Him not. We must not hastily conclude it Winter with the Soul, though the Heaven be Lowring, provided the Earth be Fruitful; but remember, that the saving Influence of God's Spirit may be, where his comfortable Presence is not perceiv'd: The Living in sensible Comforts and Joys, is rather a part of our Reward, than of our Duty; and that (consequently) it may save many Modest and Pious persons a great deal of Disquiet, if they would learn to judge of their Spiritual condition, rather by the Duties, and Services, they pay God, than by the present Consolations he vouchsafes *Them*; or, in a word, rather by what they do, than by what they feel.

## REFLECTION V.

*Upon his being Carv'd to at a Feast.*

**T**HOROW many hands hath this Plate passed, before it came to mine; and yet, though I bow'd to every one of those that helpt to Conveigh it, I kept my chief and solemnest Acknowledgment for the fair Lady that sent it. Why should'st thou not, O my Soul, instruct thy Gratitude to tread in the steps of thy Civility? When

\* Ed. 1 and 2. "Son."

thou

thou receivest any Blessing from *that Father of Lights, from whom every good and perfect Gift comes down,* \* pay a fitting share of thy thanks to them that hand it to thee; but thorow all those means look principally to that God that sends it: Let not the Pipe usurp upon the Spring, (that were as absurd, as 'twere for me to Kiss my hand to the Plate, or at best, to those that helpt to convey it, with a neglect of the Lady) but so pay thy due Acknowledgments to the Reachers, that thou be sure to reserve thy principal Thanks, and highest strains of Gratitude, for the Giver.

## REFLECTION VI.

*Upon the sight of a Looking-glass, with  
a rich Frame.*

Eugenius, Lindamor, Eusebius.

*Lind.* **T**HIS Glass, has a Frame so curious, and so rich, that though I could scarce, if I would, with-hold my Eyes from Gazing here; yet, I believe, the Operation it has on my Curiosity, is no more than what it generally has on that of others; and by the attention with which I saw, † ev'n you, Gentlemen, surveigh it, I

\* James i. 17.

† Ed. 2. "I say."

am easily perswaded, that one needs not be a Lady, not to pass by such a Looking-glass without repairing to it.

*Eug.* I am much of your opinion, *Lindamor*, and such a sight as this has often made me a greater Friend, than many severer Persons are, to Eloquence in Sermons: For as if this very Glass had been plac'd here in a mean or common Frame, it would scarce have stopp'd us in our Passage through the Room, or have invited us to consult it; so a Sermon, may, by the nicer sort of Auditors, be left unregarded, though it be for Substance excellent: When, as the Frame, though it be not part of the Glass, nor shews us any part of our Faces, does yet, by its curious Work-manship, attract our Eyes, and so invite us to consult the Glass, that is held forth in it; so the Wit, and fine Language, wherein it is Dress'd up, though it be no Essential or Theological part of the Sermon, yet it is often that which invites Men to hear, or read it.

*Lind.* I think indeed, *Eugenius*, that wit and Eloquence do highly recommend Sermons, and devout Composures, to the Curiosity and Attention of some, that else would scarcely mind them; and upon that account I allow of your Comparison, but give me leave to carry it on a little further, by observing, that as the curious Frame doth

doth as well please, as attract, the Eye, without representing to it the lively\* Image of the beholders Face; so the fine Expressions you applaud, are commonly parts of a Sermon that have no specular † Virtue in them, I mean, that have no Power, like a good Looking-glass, to acquaint the Beholder with the true Image or Representation of his own Complexion, and Features: Nor will this Gaudy frame shew him what is otherwise than it should be, the discovery of which, nevertheless, in order to the rectifying what is amiss, is the principal and genuine use of a Looking-glass; and therefore, as no skilful Man will judge of the goodness of a Glass, by the fineness of the Frame, but rather by its giving him a true Representation of his Face, without liking it the worse, for shewing him its Moles, and Warts, and ‡ other Blemishes, if it have any; so no wise Christian will judge of a rowling Sermon, rather by the Language, than the Divinity, or will think the worse of a good Book, for discovering his Faults, or making him think the worse of his own, or other Mens, ill courses.

*Euseb.* Let me add, Gentlemen, that as when a Glass has a rich and gawdy Frame, Children's Eyes are oftentimes so entertain'd and amus'd with it, that they are regardless of any thing else;

\* Ed. 1. "the Image." † Ed. 2. "peculiar." ‡ Ed. 1. "or."

and

and for the sake of that part, which they can but see, they are unmindful to consult that usefuller part, whose Office it is, to discover to them, themselves: So, when there is too much of Rhetorick in a Sermon, many, that should not be Children, have their Attention, not only so attracted, but so detain'd, by that, that they are not thereby invited to consult, but diverted from regarding, the more instructive part of the Discourse. And the more Witty and Critical sort of Auditors, are so much more accustom'd to judge of Sermons, than to judge of themselves by them, that they deal with them, as if, in this Glass, a Man should only praise or discommend the Work-man-ship of the emboss'd Images of the Frame, without caring to make use of the Glass it self, to mend any thing he finds out of order about him: For thus, these Fastidious and Censorious hearers, make no other Use or Repetition of Sermons, than to censure or applaud the Expressions, and Contrivance,\* (which should be look'd upon but as the Ornaments of it) without minding the Doctrine, or caring to amend what that has discover'd to be amiss in them. But it must be confess'd, though I must Grieve and Blush, it can be truly so, that it is but too often, as the Scripture somewhere complains, *like People, like Priest*; † and that there

\* Edit. 2. "contrivances."

† Hosea iv. 9.

is



is a sort of Preachers, and those of the most Celebrated, who take a Course more likely to encourage, than reform, such Hearers, and which would, perhaps, make Men such, if it did not find them so: For one of this sort of Preachers (for I am loath to call them Divines) appears more solicitous to make his Expressions, than to make his Hearers, good. And whereas, these that are concern'd for the winning, or the saving, of Souls, think it a less good sign of a sure Sermon, that it makes the Hearers applaud the Preacher, than that it makes them condemn themselves: The Orator I am mentioning, had much rather hear their Praises, than their Sighs; and accordingly, is more solicitous to tickle their Ears, than, how much need soever there be of it, to launce their Consciences: He may, with far more Truth than Piety, invert the Profession of Saint *Paul*, and say, that he Preaches *not Christ crucify'd, but himself*;\* and though now and then he seem very Vehemently to declaim against Vices, yet one may easily enough perceive, that 'tis but a personated Anger, and that he rather fences with Sin, than is concern'd to Destroy it, and speaks against it rather to shew Skill, than to exercise Hatred; and as he affects to appear rather an Orator, than a Divine, so he is well enough content, his Audi-

\* 2 Cor. iv. 5.

tors

tors should rather admire his good Language, than follow his best Counsel: And, as if all that belongs to Ministers, and their Flocks, could be perform'd in the Pulpit, and the Pew, he is more carefull to remember his Sermons before he has deliver'd them, than to keep his Auditors from forgetting them afterwards; and unconcern'd for their Proficiency, seeks but their Praises, scarce ever aiming at so much as his own Discharge. In a word in such kind of Sermons, there is little spoken, either from the Heart, or to the Heart; the Orator and the Auditory tacitely agreeing to deceive themselves; and the Conversion of Sinners, being neither the effect, nor the aim, of such florid, but unedifying, Discourses, the business is translated on both sides, as if the Preacher thought he had done his part, when he has shewn his Wit, and the Hearers thought they had done theirs, when they have commended it.

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## REFLECTION VII.

*Upon my Spaniel fetching me my Glove.*

**P**OOOR Cur! How importunate is he to be employ'd about bringing me this Glove? and with what Clamours, and how many Fawnings, does he court me to fling it him? I never

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saw him so eager for a piece of Meat, as I find him for a Glove: And yet he knows it is no Food for him, nor is it Hunger that creates his Longings for it; for now I have cast it him, he does nothing else with it, but (with a kind of Pride to be sent for it, and a satisfaction which his glad Gestures make appear so Great, that the very use of Speech would not enable him to express it better) brings it me back again; as he meant to shew me, he desir'd it not to keep it for himself, but only to have it in his power, to return it as a present to his Master. But he must not bring me thus\* an empty Glove; it is in thee, my Soul, to fill this Accident with Instruction, by learning from Religion, as dis-interest'd a Behaviour towards God, as Nature taught this Brute Creature towards me. I will in my addresses, for Externals, less earnestly implore them for the service they may do me, than for the service I may do God with them; and (as Princes Commands are look'd upon by Courtiers as Honours, and as Favours) contenting myself with the Satisfaction of being trusted, and imploy'd by Him, I will rejoyce at the liberaller Expressions of his Love, as they may be improv'd into proportionable Expressions of mine, and will beg no Largess of his Bounty, without a design of referring it to his Glory.

\* Ed. 1. "thus bring me."

## REFLECTION VIII.

*Upon the taking up his Horses from Grass, and giving them Oats before they were to be Ridden a Journey.*

**J**UST so does God usually deal with his Servants; when he vouchsafes them extraordinary Measures of Grace, they are to look for Employments that will exercise it, or Temptations that will try it.

Thus that great *Captain of our Salvation*, Heb. 12. 2. whom the Scripture so much and so deservedly exhorts us to have our Eyes on, When at his solemn Inauguration into his Prophetick Office, the Heavens were open'd, from whence the Spirit of God did in a Bodily shape descend like a Dove upon him, accompany'd with a Heavenly Voice, proclaiming him the Beloved Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleas'd, Matth. 4. *Then, I say, that is (as Saint Mark\* tells us) immediately, Jesus (being, as another Evangelist has it, full of the Holy Ghost, Luk. 4. 1.) was led up of the Spirit into the Wilderness, to be Tempted of the Devil.* That wise and merciful Disposer of all things, who will not *suffer his Children to be Tempted above what they are able,*† seasonably for-

\* Mark i. 12.

† 1 Cor. x. 13.

tifies them by these preparatory Provisions and Consolations, for the Labours and Difficulties they are to be expos'd to. But whereas, if these Horses had reason wherewith to fore-see the Journey in order whereunto the Provender is so plentifully given them, they would (if not be troubl'd at their good Cheer) at least lose much of the Pleasure of it, by thinking of the Labour to ensue; with the Servants of God the case is much otherwise. For such is his Goodness to those he is pleas'd thus to deal with, in proposing and reserving them a Crown in some sort proportionate to, and yet inestimably out-valuing, the Toils and Difficulties requisite to obtain it; that as advantageous, and as welcome as his Preparatory Vouchsafements can be, the pious Soul may well think them less Favours upon their own Account, than as they enable the Receiver to do the more Service to the Giver.

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## REFLECTION IX.

*Upon the making a Fire with Charcoal.*

**T**HOSE that Lust fascinates are apt to imagine, that if they can suppress its visible Effects, and sensible Heat, that will be sufficient to free them from all the Mischiefs, they need  
fear

fear from it: But Lust is so pernicious a Guest, that not only he is very watchful to intrude again where he has once been entertain'd, but, notwithstanding his Absence, he may continue to do Mischief to those that seem to have quite expell'd him. For as Wood that is once thorowly set on Fire, may afterwards have that Fire quite choak'd, and extinguish'd, and yet by those changes be turn'd into Charcoal, whereby it is not only made Black, but dispos'd to be far more easily Kindled, and Consum'd than before; so those, who have once had their Hearts thorowly possess'd by the pernicious Flames of Lust, (which is indeed, to imploy an inspir'd Expression, *to be set on Fire of Hell\**) ev'n when they have stifled these criminal Flames, and feel no more of their Heat, may not only have their Reputation irrecoverably blemish'd by what is past, but commonly carry about with them an unhappy Disposition to be re-inflam'd, and to have by a few Sparks, and a little Blowing, those destructive Fires so re-kindled, as to Rage more fatally than ever.

\* James iii. 6.

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## REFLECTION X.

### *Looking through a Prismatical or Triangular Glass.*

**T**HIS more than flattering Glass, adorns all the Objects I look on thorrow it, with a Variety of Colours, whose Vividness does as much charm my Sense, as their Nature poses my Reason; Without the help of the Sun, and Clouds, it affords me as many Rain-bows as I please. And not only when I look on Trees, and Meadows, and Gardens, and such other Objects that are of themselves acceptable to the Sight; this Glass lends them Ornaments above any they are beholden for, either to Nature, or Art: But when I cast my Eyes upon courser, and homely things, and ev'n on Dunghills, this favourable Interposer presents them to me in such curious and gawdy Colours, that it does not so properly hide their Deformities, as make them appear Lovely; so that which way soever I turn my Eyes, I find them saluted, as if I were in some Rich Jeweller's Shop, with Sapphires, Topazes, Emeralds, and other Orient Gems, the Vividness of whose Colours may justifie those that think Colours to be but disguised Light, which, by these various Reflections, and Refractions, comes to be rather Dy'd than Stain'd.

But

But this Glass must as well afford me Instruction, as Delight, and ev'n by deceiving me, teach me : For thus, sinful Christians, when God looks upon them in themselves, must needs seem too Polluted, and Disfigur'd, not to appear Loathsome to Him, *Who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity\** without Abhorrency ; but when Christ interposes betwixt his Eyes and Us, we then seem far other things than otherwise we should, and not only we do not appear Filthy, but we do appear Lovely, if not Glorious. And as though some Objects, as things purely White, and Flames, look better through this Glass, than homely and dirty ones ; yet ev'n these, look'd upon through this Glass, are more Richly adorn'd, than the others beheld without it : So, whatever Difference there may be betwixt Persons that are either Innocent, or Exemplary, upon the bare account of Morality ; and those ignorant or frail Children of God, that, in themselves consider'd, would be much inferior to those newly mentioned ; yet when these are look'd upon thorow Christ, they are much more acceptable in God's Eyes, than the others consider'd out of him. And I shall add this further, that, whereas my looking upon Objects through the Prism, however it makes them appear to my Eyes, does work no real Change in the

\* Hab. i. 13.

things



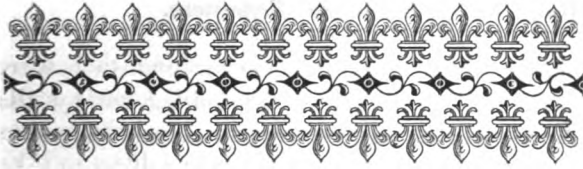
things themselves, but leaves those that were homely and foul before, foul and homely still; God's gracious looking upon us in Christ, makes us by degrees become fit for his Goodness to take delight in, and has an improving and transfiguring Power on us, like the Sun, that cherishes Green and unblown Flowers, and paints them with their curiousest Colours, by his looking on them. Since, then, the Scripture tells us, that we are not only reconcil'd to God, but, if I may so express it, are *ingratiated and endeared to him in the Beloved*;\* How much do we owe to that blessed Saviour, upon whose Account we enjoy the invaluable Priviledge to appear (and grow fit to do so) pleasing in God's Eyes? which besides, that it is the highest Honour, leads to the highest Happiness; or rather, is the one as well as the other.

\* Eph. i. 6.

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*OCCASIONAL REFLECTIONS.*

The IV. SECTION,

*Which treats of*

**ANGLING IMPROV'D**

To Spiritual Uses.

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DISCOURSE I.

*Upon the being call'd upon to rise early on  
a very fair Morning.*

**T**HE Sun had as yet but approach'd the East, and my Body as yet lay moveless in the Bed, whilst my roving Thoughts were in various Dreams, rambling to distant places, when, me-thought, I heard my name several times pronounc'd by a not unknown Voice; This noise made me, as I was soon after told, half open my Eyes, to see who it was that made it, but so faintly, that I had quickly let my Self fall asleep again, if the same Party had  
not

not the second time call'd me louder than before, and added to his Voice the pulling me by the Arm. But though this wak'd me so far, as to make me take notice that I was call'd upon to rise, yet my Drowsiness, and my Unwillingness to forgo a not unpleasant Dream, keeping me from discerning distinctly, who it was that call'd me, made me briskly enough bid him, what ever his business were, let me alone; But though at the same time I turn'd away my head to shun the Light, though dim, which at the half open'd Curtain shone in upon me, yet the Party, instead of complying with my desires, did, by throwing open the Curtains, further let in so much more Light upon my Face, that finding it would not serve my turn to keep my Eyes shut, I open'd them to see who it was that gave me this unwelcome Disturbance. This I had no sooner done, than I perceiv'd that 'twas *Eusebius*, who with *Lindamor*, and two or three other Friends, was come to call me to go a Fishing, to a place, where by appointment we were to meet about Sun-rising. The respect I paid *Eusebius*, and the value I plac'd upon his Conversation, covered me with Blushes to be thus surpris'd by him, and oblig'd me to satisfie him as well as I could, how much I was troubl'd and asham'd to have the favour of his Company brought me to my Bed-side, which I ought, and intended  
to

to have waited on him. And thus, whilst I was making him my Apologies, and he was pleasantly reproaching me for my Laziness, and Laughing at the disorder I had not yet got quite out of, I made a shift hastily to get on my Cloaths, and put myself into a condition of attending him and the Company to the River-side.

Whilst we were walking thither-ward, and *Lindamor* was minding *Eusebius* of the promise he had made the Day before, to exercise, upon most of the things that should occur to us, his Art of making Occasional Reflections, I was delighting myself with the deliciousness of that promising Morning, and indeed the freshness of the Air, the verdure of the Fields and Trees, and the various and curious Enammel of the Meadows, the Musick of the numerous Birds, that with as melodious as chearful Voices welcom'd so fair a morning. The curious and orient Colours wherewith the rising Sun embellish'd the Eastern part of the Sky, and above all that source of Light, who, though he shews us all that we see of glorious and fair, shews us nothing so fair and glorious as himself, did so charm and transport me, that I could not hold expressing my satisfaction in terms that, *Eugenius* was after pleased to say, needed not Rhymes to make them Poetical. And the sense of this invited me to add, that I now would not for any thing

thing have miss'd being wak'd, and thought my self hugely oblig'd to *Eusebius's* freedom, that would not suffer me to sleep out so glorious a Morning, nor lose the satisfaction of such desirable Company.

*Eusebius*, who was but a little way off in discourse with *Lindamor*, over-hearing a good part of what I had said, thought fit to take thence a Rise, to begin complying with his Friends requests, and accordingly, walking up towards me, and addressing himself to me, he told me, "you are unconcern'd enough, *Philaretus*, in what I am about to say, to make it allowable for me to tell *Lindamor*, that what has this Morning happen'd to you, puts me in mind of what I have several times observ'd on another occasion. For when a Man is so lull'd asleep by sensual pleasures, that like one that sleeps, he has but the faculty, not the exercise of Reason, and takes his Dreams for realities, if some serious Divine, or other devout Friend, concern'd for the Sinner's soul, or his glory that Dy'd to redeem it, endeavour to awaken him, and rowse him out of that State wherein he lies so much at ease; such attempts are wont at first to be look'd upon by the lazy Sinner, enamour'd of his ease, and present condition, but as pieces of unseasonable, if not uncivil officiousness; and entertaining the Light it self but as an unwelcome Guest,

Guest, he obstinately shuts his Eyes against that which alone makes them useful, and instead of looking upon the Attempter as his Friend, he checks him, and expostulates with him, and uses him almost as an Enemy; Insomuch, that too often those that love the welfare of Souls too little, or their own ease too much, forgo, with their hopes, their endeavours to reclaim him. But if by God's blessing, upon the constancy of this kindness, and the letting in of so much Light upon the Sinner, that he finds himself unable to continue his Slumber any longer with it, he comes to be thorowly awak'd, he quickly grows sensible that he is brought out of the Kingdom of Darkness into a true and marvellous Light, and instead of those empty fleeting Dreams, which did before amuse and delude him, and which to relish, and be fond of, the Eyes of his Mind must be as well clos'd as those of his Body, he is admitted to noble and manly entertainments, such as Reason chuses, Conscience applauds, and God himself approves. And this change of his condition he finds so advantageous, that he would not for all the World return again to that, he was at first so angry to be dissuaded from, and he does not forgive, but thank the Person that disquieted him, and blushes at the Remembrance of his having reduc'd others to importune him to be happy: And betwixt shame and

and gratitude, the sense of his present, and of his past condition possessing him, how much he has reason to make his Rescuer as well amends for what he endur'd,\* as retributing for what he acted for him, he does perchance, especially in the first fervours of his Zeal, think himself as much oblig'd to his Awakener, as *Philemon* was to Saint *Paul*, to whom the Scripture says, that he ow'd even himself.† And sometimes such a new Convert, as I am speaking of, will think his Obligation to the Instrument of his change so suitable to the transcendent satisfaction he finds in the change it self, that he would despair of seeing his Benefactor sufficiently recompens'd, if he did not remember a saying of the Prophet, (*That those that turn others to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever,‡*) that gives him ground to hope that God himself (whose plenty as well as bounty is inexhausted) will make the Recompence his Work. Wherefore," concludes *Eusebius*, "if you chance to have any Friends, (as 'tis odds most Men have) that stand in need of this as great as unwelcome expression of kindness, let us not be too soon discourag'd, by finding the effects of our friendship coldly received, and possibly too look'd upon as disturbances; for besides, that the less they are desir'd, and the worse they are entertain'd, the

\* Ed. 1. "had indur'd."

† Philem. 19.

‡ Dan. xii. 3.

more

more they [are] needed : a Christian is not bound so much to concern himself in the success of his endeavours, as to leave it in the power of every one that will be obstinate, to make him unhappy, when the business one way or other come to an end, he may miss his aim, without losing his labour, since he serves a Master that is as ready to reward, as able to discern Intentions ; and in case your endeavours do succeed, you will at once make a Man your Friend, and worthy to be so. And you shall scarce ever find Men more affectionate to you, than those you have made your Friends, by making them Enemies to Vice.”

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## DISCOURSE II.

### *Upon the Mounting, Singing, and Lighting of Larks.*

**T**HE agreement we had made at our setting forth, that the motion of our Tongues should not hinder that of our Feet towards the River-side, was the cause, that the past Discourses not having discontinued our Walk, by that time they were ended, we began to Traverse certain plow'd lands, that lay in the way betwixt us and the River. But we had scarce entred those Fields, when our Ears were saluted with the melodious Musick of a  
good



good number of Larks, whereof some mounted by degrees out of Sight, and others hovering and singing a while over our Heads, soon after lighted on the ground, not far from our Feet.

After we had awhile enjoy'd this costless, and yet excellent Music~~k~~, both *Eusebius* and I, chancing to cast our Eyes towards *Eugenius*, observ'd that his did very attentively wait upon the motions of a Lark, that singing all the way upwards, and mounting by degrees out of sight, not long after descended and lighted among some clods of Earth, which being of the colour of her Body, made us quickly lose sight of her. Whereupon *Eusebius*, who was full as willing to hear as speak, and in the Occasional Reflections that he made, was wont at least as much to aim at the exciting others thoughts, as the venting of his own, begg'd *Eugenius* to tell us what it might be, which his attentiveness to the motions of the Lark made us presume he was thinking on.

*Eugenius*, after a little backwardness, which he thought Modesty exacted of him, soon answer'd us in these terms.

“ Among all Birds that we know, there is not any that seems of so elevated, and I had almost said Heavenly a Nature as the Lark, scarce any give so early and so sweet a welcome to the Springing day. And that which I was just now gazing on,  
seem'd

seem'd so pleas'd with the unclouded Light, that she sung as if she came from the place she seem'd to go to, and during this charming Song mounted so high, as if she meant not to stop, till she had reach'd that Sun, whose Beams so cherish'd and transported her; and in this aspiring flight she rais'd herself so high, that though I will not say, she left the Earth beneath her very Sight, yet I may say, that she soar'd quite out of Ours. And yet when from this tow'ring height she stoop'd to repose or solace her self upon the Ground, or else when to seise upon some worthless Worm, or other wretched Prey, she lighted on the Ground, she seem'd so like the Earth that was about her, that I believe you could scarce discern her from its Clods. And whereas other Birds that fly not half so high, nor seem any thing near so fond of the Sun, do yet build their Nests upon Trees, the Lark does as well build hers upon the Ground, as look like a part of it.

Thus I have known, in these last and worst times, many a Hypocrite, that when he was conversant about sublimer Objects, appear'd, as well as he call'd himself, a Saint; nothing seem'd so welcome to him as new Light; one might think his Lips had been touch'd with a coal from the Altar, his Mouth did so sweetly shew forth God's praise, and sacred dispensations. In sum, take

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this

this Hypocrite in his fit of Devotion, and to hear him talk, you would think, that if he had not been already in Heaven, at least he would never leave mounting, till he should get thither.

But when the Opportunities of advantaging his lower Interests call'd him down to deal about Secular affairs here below, none appear'd more of a piece with the Earth than he, for he look'd as if he had been besmear'd all over with the Earth round about him, and he seem'd, in providing for his Family, to be of a meaner and a lower Spirit, than those very Men whom in discourse he was wont to undervalue, as being far more Earthy than himself.

“Since we know,” says *Eusebius*, “that the best things corrupted prove the worst, it can be no disparagement to Piety, to acknowledge that Hypocrisy is a vice which you cannot too much condemn. And when the pretending of Religion grows to be a thing in request, many betake themselves to a form of Religion, who deny the Power of it; And some, perchance, have been prefer'd less for their Jacobs voice, than for their *Esau* hands.

But, *Eugenius*, let us not to shun one extream, fondly run into the other, and be afraid or asham'd to profess Religion, because some Hypocrites did *but* profess it; His course is ignoble, and præposterous, that treads the paths of Piety, rather because

cause they lead to Preferment than to Heaven; But yet 'tis more excusable to live free from scandal for an inferiour end, than not to live so at all: And Hypocrites can as little justify the profane, as themselves. It may be, that all that own Religion are not Pious; but 'tis certain that he that scorns to own it must less be so. And if scoffers at Piety should succeed the Pretenders to it, they cannot be said (as sometimes they would be thought) to be an innocent sort of Hypocrites, that *are* better than they *seem*; for Scandal is a thing so Criminal and contagious, that whosoever desires and endeavours to *appear* evil, *is* so: To refuse to be Religious, because some have but professed themselves to be so, is to injure God, because he has been injur'd. A skilfull Jeweller will not forbear giving great rates for Neck-laces of true Pearl, though there be many Counterfeits for one that is not so; Nor are the right Pearls a whit the less Cordial to those that take them, because the artificial Pearl made at *Venice*, consisting of Mercury and Glass, for all their fair shew, are rather Noxious, than Medicinal. And indeed our knowledge, that there are Hypocrites, ought rather to commend Piety to us, than discredit it with us; since as none would take the pains to counterfeit Pearls, if true ones were not of Value; So Men would not put themselves to the con-

straint of personating Piety, if that it self were not a noble Quality. Let us then, *Eugenius*, fly as far as you please from what we detest in Hypocrites: But then let us consider, *what* it is that we detest; which being a bare, and therefore *false pretence* to Religion, let us only shun *such* a pretence, which will be best done by becoming real Possessors of the thing pretended to.

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## DISCOURSE III.

*Upon the Sight of a fair Milk-maid singing  
to her Cow.*

**E**UGENIUS, who was not at all indispos'd to listen to Exhortations of this Nature, not only imbrac'd this made him by his Friend, but with earnestness enough continu'd the Conference to explain his meaning, and satisfie *Eusebius*, that he did not think Piety fit to be discountenanc'd, though he thought Hypocrisie was so, and that he was no Enemy to the Profession of Religion, but to those that blemish'd it by unsuitable Practices. And with such kind of Discourses we continu'd our Walk, till being come to a Style, over which we were to pass out of one Meadow into another, I chanc'd to stop, and turn about to pay *Lindamor* the Respect of desiring him to lead  
me

me the way over : But not finding him there, I hastily cast my Eyes all over the Field, till at length they discover'd him a good way off, in a Posture that seem'd extremely serious, and wherein he stood as immoveable as a Statue. This sight soon carry'd me towards him, and I had dispatch'd half my way before his changing his Posture gave him an opportunity to discover me, which as soon as he did, he immediately came to meet me, and almost before I had ask'd him the occasion of what I had seen ; Whilst (reply'd he) *Eugenius* was purging himself from a fault that none that knows him will suspect him to be guilty of, I was detain'd a little behind you by the Musick of one of those Larks, whose melody was so charming, that I could not find in my heart to make haste from it : But whilst I was listening to it, my Attention was diverted by a nobler Object, for I heard, from the further corner of this Meadow, a Voice, which, though not govern'd with Skill, did so repair the want of it by its native sweetness, that Art was absent without being miss'd, and I could not but have some Curiosity to see who was the Possessor of so much power to please ; turning then my steps towards that part of the Field whence the Voice came, my Eyes quickly ceas'd to envy my Ears, for they discover'd, kneeling by a Cow, and singing to her whilst she milk'd her, a Person,  
who,

who, in the habit of a Milk-maid, seem'd to disguise one of those Nymphs that Poets are wont to describe us. And that you may not wonder, continues *Lindamor*, at what I shall say to you of a country Girle, Know, that methought I saw in her Face something more like *Hermione*, before she prov'd inconstant, than I expected to find in any of her Sex: I will not tell you, that this fair Creature had the Blushes of the Morning in her Cheeks, the Splendour of the Sun in her Eyes, the freshness of the Fields in her Looks, the whiteness of the Milk she express'd in her Skin, and the melody of the Larks, we were admiring, in her Voice, least you should think Mr. *Boyls* Seraphick Love had lost its Operation on me. But I may perhaps without much Hyperbole, give you this Account of her, that though her Cloaths are almost as course as cleanly, and though they are suited to her Condition, yet they are very ill suited to her Beauty, which, as if Nature intended a Triumph over Fortune, has, without any assistance of Ornament, more distress'd my Liberty, than others have been able to do with all their most curious Dresses. And this fair Creature, continues *Lindamor*, as she is rich in Natures bounty, appear'd as well by the cheerfulness of the Tune she sung, as by the manner of her Singing it, so satisfy'd with the unpurchas'd  
Trea-

Treasures she possesses, that she seem'd almost as much pleas'd as I was to look upon her. This Character of *Lindamors* inviting me to go see, whether or no it were deserv'd, and the frequent Experience I have had, that ev'n upon such bright Eyes as Poets, and Lovers, call'd Suns, I could gaze undazel'd enough to approve my self a right Eagle, assuring me I might safely do it, I fearlessly, but softly, approach'd the place where the fair Milk-maid was solliciting the Udder of a fresh Cow, and I found, that though indeed some Resemblance she had to *Hermione*, had made *Lindamor* flatter her, yet she look'd at once so innocently, and prettily, that she seem'd like to do Mischief, without at all intending it; and I could not but fancy, that if some Ladies that are much cry'd up, and are very imperious Mistresses, because they are so, were bound to change Dresses with this unsophisticated and unadorn'd Maid, the one would appear to owe her Beauty to Art, and the other to be beholden for hers to nothing but Nature. But *Lindamor*, who is not naturally indispos'd to be Amorous, did not think that this Imagination of mine did that pretty Creature right: for when I told him she would eclipse a hundred of our fine Ladies, if she had but the Dress of one of them; Why, that (replies he, with a kind of Indignation) she can do without it,  
and



and perhaps, subjoyns he, as much as with it : For her present habit leaves her most her self, and Bravery would but disguise, or hide what it cannot adorn. And I am confident, (continues he) that should such a genuine Beauty appear among the Gallants, she would really captivate many, ev'n of those wary ones that do but pretend to be so, to the designing and applauded Ladies: For though Skil may encounter the Wiles of Art, it would scarce be able to resist the Charms of Nature. But whilst *Lindamor* was thus Completing with what he fancy'd the Picture of his once lov'd *Hermione*, and had his Eyes as much fix'd upon her, as dazl'd ones could be, the lovely Milk-maid, (who, all this while having not taken notice of us, was as regardless of *Lindamor*, as he seem'd to be of all things but her) having dispatch'd what she was doing, took up her Pail to carry it homewards : But her way chancing to lye by that part of the Meadow where we were yet standing, she could not but discover us, and judging by our Cloaths, and more by *Lindamors* Mien,\* that we were of a Quality differing from theirs she was wont to converse with, she gave us a Salute low enough to let us see that she forgot not her Condition, but attended with so much Gracefulness, as made *Lindamor* conclude she merited a

\* Ed. 1 and 2, " Meer." Folio, " Mien."

better,

better, and, as she pass'd by him, to return the gesture of Respect, which he thought so much Beauty had a right in any habit to exact; she vonchsaf'd him a smile, which, I after told him, would have made him happy, if he had thought it had proceeded from Kindness, not Civility; and she went away with a Look so serene, as well as taking, that she seem'd to carry home with her far more quiet, than she left him possess'd of. But I that had lost sight of her, without losing any thing with it, save the expectation of seeing in haste so fair a Milk-maid, was going to *Railler* with *Lindamor*, about what had pass'd, when I was restrain'd, by perceiving that the sight of a Person that seem'd so contented, together with the native pleasantness of that place, and of that glorious Morning, had such an operation upon him, that he could not forbear to celebrate the happiness and innocency of a Country life. And after he had with much Transport, and Fluency, repeated the substance of what *Ovid* and other antient Poets had in their strain deliv'rd, concerning the felicity of the Golden Age, he began to apply as much of it as the Matter would bear, to the recommending of a Rural life, and was very sollicitous to make me acknowledge, that though we are wont to look upon Villagers as an inferiour and wretched sort of People, yet they are the persons  
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of the World, whose condition is the most proper, not only to keep them innocent, but to make them happy: Their cheap and simple way of Living, allowing them to rest contented, with what bounteous Nature has provided for them, or an easie Industry can procure them. Whereas among Men nobly Born, or Persons of Quality, 'tis look'd upon as want of Breeding, for a Man not to think himself unhappy, as long as he hath not a thousand Pound a Year.

*Lindamor*, though he here made a Pause to take breath, would yet perhaps have prosecuted his Discourse, had he not been prevented by the intervening of *Eusebius*, who a while after we had left him, having miss'd us, had follow'd us to the place he found us in, and who, when he drew nigh, having over-heard *Lindamor* speaking, stood still a while at some distance off, to listen to what he said, and so became an unsuspected Auditor of the last part of his Friends Discourse. Whereupon taking him by the hand, and leading him towards the River, he told him, with a serious, not to call it a severe Look; I had thought, *Lindamor*, you had made righter Estimates of the several courses of Life, than, by what I have newly over-heard you to say, I now suspect you do. Know then, *Lindamor*, (adds he) That Innocence and Contentment depend more upon a Man's mind, than upon his  
his

his condition : To manifest this to you, I shall in the first place observe, that 'tis not always the Occasion, or the Object, but rather the Degree that makes an Affection of the Mind unruly and troublesome ; Nor is it according to the intrinsick value of things, which none save the Wise can discern ; but the Rate, how unskilfully soever fixt, which we put upon them; that they operate upon our passions. And therefore, you shall see a Child take on more sadly for the scape of a Sparrow, or the breaking of a Rattle, than some will do for the loss of a good Estate, nay, of a Friend; and *Haman*, for the want of a Bow from *Mordecai*, complain'd more in his Palace, than *Job*, till his miserable comforters had exasperated his grief, did for the loss of the biggest Fortune in the East, and of the Children he reserv'd it for, and valu'd far above it.

And then, *Lindamor*, (continues *Eusebius*) do not imagine, that though Courtiers and Gallants have more splendid and glittering Temptations to Sin and Discontent, Country people are exempted from Temptation to either: Theirs may be as great, though not the same, nor so specious as the other; their Faults and Infelicities are indeed less taken notice of, because their Persons and Conditions are obscure, and their Poverty conceals their Vices, as well as their Virtues, from our Eyes; as in a sharp Winter the Snow does as well  
hide

hide their Dunghills, as cover their Gardens. But if your Quality allow'd you to acquaint your self with the true state of this inferiour sort of People, you would soon perceive, that ev'n of rural Families, there is scarce any, that, as far as their Wits will reach, has not its several Parties, and little Intrigues; Nor is there any Cottage so low, and narrow, as not to harbour Care, and Malice, and Covetousness, and Envy, if those that dwell in it have a mind to entertain them: And what Envy alone may do to produce Crimes and Discontents, we may conjecture by what happen'd betwixt *Cain* and *Abel*, since their being heirs to the whole World, could not keep two Brothers at peace, whilst one of them was envious: And there are some sordid Vices, which are more incident to the meaner and more necessitous sort of Men, as Spiders and Cobwebs are wont to abound more in thatch'd Cabbins, than in great Mens houses. I should perhaps (says *Eusebius*) think these people happy, if I found they thought themselves so; but the Pomp and Vanities of the World have oftentimes stronger allurements for them, than for the Grandees and Courtiers themselves: For those that are possess'd of these imaginary Joys, are disabus'd by their own Experience; and those that live among these Theatrical persons, are near enough to discern that they are but causelesly envy'd

envy'd. As (for my part) when I had occasion to be conversant in great Mens Families, and the honour to preach in Princes Courts, the sight of their course of Life did as thorowly convince me of the Vanity of the World, as my Sermons endeavoured to convince them. Whereas Country people see but the glittering and deluding outside of Greatness, and beholding it but at a distance, see it in the favourablest light which Men can behold it in, and consequently are strongly tempted to envy what they admire, and repine at their own condition, for the want of it: Nay, every gawdy trifle, that those that live in Towns and Cities chance to make shew of, is wont to make a Country man envy, as well as gape; And 'tis odds, but that very Milkmaid, whose condition you are pleas'd to think so happy, envies some Neighbouring Farmers Daughter for a piece of taudry Ribbon, or a black Hood: Nor are they so much more priviledg'd from the assaults of Temptation, than Men of higher rank; For 'tis not so much a Mans outward condition, as his inward disposition and temper of mind, that makes Temptations either to sin, or to discontent, prevalent, or unsuccessfull. When *Joseph* was sold into *Egypt*, and sollicitated by a Woman that would needs be his Mistress upon more scores than one, though his condition expos'd him more to hopes  
and

and fears, than almost any other condition could expose another Man; And though his Youth made him very capable of relishing the pleasures that his Beauty made him courted to receive, by giving them; yet this chaste Youth chose rather to be Imprison'd any where, than in a fair Ladies Arms, and prefer'd the being made a Captive, before the Captivating of his amorous Mistress. But whilst young *Joseph* was thus chaste in the *Ægyptian Potiphar's* House, his eldest Brother *Reuben* was Incestuous in good *Jacob's*, whose Family was then the visible Church of God; and *Lot*, who was chaste and temperate in *Sodom* it self, was Drunk and committed Incest in a Cave; so much more does the success of Temptations depend upon the temper of a Man's mind, than upon the place he lives in.

I know not (says *Eugenius*) whether the Innocence of Rural people be more easie than that of great Men, but sure it is not so commendable: For as a Woman that has never yielded, because she was never sollicitated, may be call'd rather Innocent than Virtuous; so their condition, that owe their not being Inveigl'd by the Vanities of the World, to their Ignorance of them, has more in it of good fortune than of merit. I thank you for that consideration, (subjoyns *Eusebius*) for I confess I think there is a great Disparity betwixt an

an unacquaintedness with the bewitching pleasures of the World, and a contempt of them. And he is the truly heroick Spirit, that can (as *David* could) plentifully enjoy all those sensual Delights and Vanities he chose to reject: for he could feast a Nation, and prefer Temperance before all that Abundance; He could gain strange Victories at once over his outward enemies, and over the Temptations he was expos'd to by such successes; He could Build stately Palaces, and then profess himself to be but a *Stranger, and a Sojourner upon Earth*; \* He could afford Humility room to sit with him on his Throne, and could listen to her Memento's amidst all the Acclamations of his People, and the Panegyricks of his Courtiers; He was not to be resisted by Beauties, that to others were irresistible, when he postpon'd the fairest Objects that could here charm his Eyes, to such as were visible only to those of Faith; He had got together the greatest Treasure, that for ought I remember we read of in any History, and yet seems never to have been much pleas'd with it, but when he dedicated it to the Building of the Temple, and made the fruits of his Valour the oblations of his Piety. To be short, he was the greatest Person upon Earth, when he was content to leave it; and was willing

\* Ps. xxxix. 12; cxix. 19.

to



to descend from the Throne into the Grave, whilst he look'd upon that as the place whence he must ascend to the Mansion of his God; so much did he, ev'n whilst he wore an earthly Crown, aspire to an Heavenly one. And though (continues *Eusebius*) we must now a days as little expect to meet with a Man of *David's* condition, as of his temper, yet proportionably we may put a vast Difference betwixt those that but escape the sight of the World's allurements, and those that reject the Proffers of them.

*Eusebius* was in this part of his Discourse, when we were come near enough to the River, to discover it within a little way of us: And therefore finding by his silence, that he thought it seasonable to desist, I only ventur'd to tell him, with a low Voice, as we continu'd our Walk, that I suspected, that in some of the things he had been saying, he had a design rather to check *Lindamor* a little, and keep up the Discourse, than to deny, that a retir'd and rural Life has great advantages towards Contentation: To which, that he might conclude what he had to say, before we reach'd the River, he made haste to reply in the same Tone, That I was not altogether mistaken: For (says he) I think the case may be pretty well represented, by saying, that as there are some Airs very much wholesomer than others, and fitter  
to

to preserve Men from Diseases; so a very private and quiet condition of Life, does much more easily than a more expos'd and turbulent one, protect most sorts of Men from Vices and Disquiets. But then on the other side, as there are some Men of such sound and strong Constitutions, that they will enjoy their Health in the worst *Airs*, when Men of tender and vitiated Complexions will be Sickly in the best; so there are some generous and steady Souls, that will pass thorow the most troublesome and most expos'd courses of Life, with more of both Innocence and Contentment, than others can enjoy in a condition far remoter from Disturbances and Temptations. And, annexes *Eusebius*, (purposely raising his Voice) as for these Villagers\* that *Lindamor* thought so happy, I must dissent from him as long as I see they can admire, and almost worship, a Man for wearing a Gaudy suit of Cloaths, or having two or three Foot-men behind his Coach, before they know whether he be not a Knave, or a Fool, or both: For I shall scarce think, that he, who is himself possess'd with Envy, deserves mine.

\* Ed. 1 and 2. "Villages." Folio. "Villagers."

## DISCOURSE IV.

### *Upon Fishing with a counterfeit Fly.*

**B**EING at length come to the River-side, we quickly began to fall to the sport, for which we came thither, and *Eugenius* finding the Fish forward enough to bite, thought fit to spare his Flies, till he might have more need of them, and therefore ty'd to his Line a Hook, furnish'd with one of those counterfeit Flies, which in some Neighbouring Countries are much us'd, and which being made of the Feathers of Wild-fowl, are not subject to be drench'd by the water, whereon those Birds are wont to swim. This Fly being for a pretty while scarce any oftner thrown in, than the Hook it hid was drawn up again with a Fish fastened to it, *Eugenius* looking on us with a smiling Countenance, seem'd to be very proud of his success; which *Eusebius* taking notice of, Whilst, (says he) we smile to see, how easily you beguile these silly Fishes, that you catch so fast with this false Bait, possibly we are not much less unwary our selves; And the Worlds treacherous pleasures do little less delude both me and you: For, *Eugenius*, (continues he) as the Apostles were Fishers of men in a good sense, so their and our grand adversary is as kilful Fisher of men in a bad sense;

sense ; And too often in his attempts, to cheat fond Mortals, meets with a success as great and easie, as you now find yours. And certainly, that Tempter, as the Scripture calls him, does sadly delude us, even when we rise at his best Baits, and, as it were, his true Flies : For, alas ! the best things he can give, are very worthless, most of them in their own nature, and all of them in comparison of what they must cost us to enjoy them. But however, Riches, Power, and the delights of the Senses are real goods in their Kind, though they be not of the best Kind : Yet alas, many of us are so fitted for deceits, that we do not put this subtle Angler, to make use of his true Baits to catch us ! we suffer him to abuse us much more grossly, and to cheat us with empty titles of Honour, or the ensnaring Smiles of great ones, or disquieting Drudgeries disguis'd with the specious names of great employments. And though these, when they must be obtain'd by sin, or are propos'd as the recompences for it, be, as I was going to say, but the Devils counterfeit Flies ; Yet, as if we were fond of being deceiv'd, we greedily swallow the Hook, for Flies, that do but look like such ; so Dim-sighted are we, as well to what Vice shews, as to what it hides. Let us not then (concludes *Eusebius*) rise at Baits, whereby we may be sure to be either grossly, or at least exceedingly

deceiv'd; For who ever ventures to commit a Sin, to taste the luscious sweets, that the fruition of it seems to promise, certainly is so far deceiv'd, as to swallow a true Hook for a Bait, which either proves but a counterfeit Fly, or hides that under its alluring shew, which makes it not need to be a counterfeit one to deceive him.

## DISCOURSE V.

*Upon a Fishes struggling after having swallow'd the Hook.*

**F**ORTUNE soon offer'd *Eusebius* a fair Opportunity to confirm this last part of his Reflection, for he had scarce made an end of it, when a large Fish, espying the Fly that kept my Hook swimming, rose\* swiftly at it, and having greedily chop'd it up, was hastily swimming away with it, when I struck him, and thereby stopt for a while his Progress; but finding himself both Arrested and Wounded, he struggl'd with so much violence, that at length he broke my slender Line, (that was fitted but for weaker Fishes) and carry'd away a part of it, together with the annexed Hook, and Bait. If Philosophers (says hereupon *Eusebius*) be not too liberal in allowing Brutes to

\* Ed. 1 and 2. "rise."

think

think, we may well suppose that this Fish expected a great deal of Pleasure from the Bait he fell upon so greedily, and that when once he had got it into his Mouth, he might well look upon it as his own, and those other Fishes that saw him swallow it, and swim away with it, did probably envy his good Fortune; but yet indeed he does not enjoy his wish, though he seem to have the thing wish'd for within his power, for by the same action in which he suck'd in the Fly, he likewise took in the Hook, which does so wound and tear his tender Gills, and thereby put him into such restless pain, that no doubt he wishes that the Hook, Bait, and all, were out of his torn Jaws again, the one putting him to too much torture to let him at all relish the other. Thus men, which do what they should not, to obtain any Object of their sensual Desires, whatever Pleasure they may before hand fancy to themselves in their success, are oftentimes, ev'n when they obtain their ends, disappointed of their expectations; sometimes Conscience, Reason, or Honour, makes\* them, ev'n when their desires are not of the worst sort, do as *David* did, when he had, more vehemently than became a pious General, long'd for Water out of the Well at *Bethlehem*, and by the strange Venturousness of his bold and affectionate Officers

\* Ed. 1 and the folio. "making."

obtain'd

obtain'd it, could not find in his heart to Drink it, but pour'd it untasted on the Ground. But when the things we so long for must be criminally obtain'd, then it not only often fares with them, as it did with *Amnon*, who immediately upon the incestuous fruition of his ravish'd Sister, hated her more than before he had lov'd her; but it sometimes happens to those that sin more heinously in this matter, as it did to *Judas*, who, after having betray'd a Master, that was incomparably more worth than all the World, and thereby for ever lost himself for a few pieces of Silver, seem'd to have it in his power, without having it in his will, to enjoy them, and in a desperate, but unseasonable, fit of anguish and remorse, did of his own accord disburthen himself of that Money, which he had sold his Conscience to get; so that though he had what he sought, he had not what he expected: And when what he coveted was in his possession, he had the guilt of acquiring it, without the power of enjoying it. And ev'n in cases far less heinous, (concludes *Eusebius*) when Men seem to have got what they aim'd at, and to have carry'd it away as their Booty, in spite of all opposition, the Wound thereby inflicted on injur'd Conscience, puts them to so much of deserved pain, that the wishes they are thus criminally possest of, they do not enjoy, but detest.

DIS-

## DISCOURSE VI.

*Upon the sight of ones Shadow cast upon the  
face of a River.*

**T**HE sight of some Fishes playing to and fro upon the top of the Water, diverted us from prosecuting our Conference, and drew us to apply our selves attentively to the catching of them, in which accordingly we spent some part of the Morning; yet whilst we continu'd Angling, not far from one another, we often cast our Eyes (as is usual in such cases) upon each others fishing Corks, to learn as well the successes of our Friends, as in what places the Fish were forwardest to bite: As I chanc'd to look towards that Cork at which *Eusebius's* Hook was hanging, I perceiv'd that it was divers times drawn under Water, without his endeavouring thereupon to strike that Fish that made thus bold with his Bait; wherefore laying down my Angle a while, I went softly towards *Eusebius*, to see what it was that made him so regardless of his Sport, whilst yet, by the posture he continu'd in, he seem'd to be intent upon it: But approaching near enough, I quickly perceiv'd, That instead of minding his Hook, his Eyes were fixt sometimes upon his own Picture, reflected from the Smooth surface of the  
gliding



gliding stream, and sometimes upon the Shadow projected by his Body, a little beside the Picture upon the same River.

The unwilling noise I made in coming so near, having oblig'd *Eusebius* to take notice of me, I thought fit, since I found I was discover'd, to ask him smilingly, whether he were *Narcissus*-like, making love to his own Shadow.

*Eusebius* guessing by these words that I had conjectur'd what he was doing, answer'd me with a look somewhat more serious than that I had spoken to him with; I was indeed, *Philaretus*, attentively enough considering, sometimes my Picture, which the Water presents me with, and sometimes the Shadow, which the Sun and I together cast upon the Water; But (says he, with a half Smile) I look'd upon both these, not with the Eyes of a *Narcissus*, (for that would make *me* much madder than *he* was) but with those of a Christian: For I was considering, that one of the Differences betwixt the Law, and the Gospel, might not be ill represented by the Difference betwixt a common Looking-glass, and that afforded me by this Crystal stream: For though both being specular Bodies, I can see my Face in either; yet if my Face be spotted with Dirt, or grown Pale by reason of the Faintness usual in such hot Weather, a common Looking-glass will indeed dis-

discover those things to me, but will not otherwise assist me to remedy them ; whereas; when I consult this Stream, if it shew me any spots in my Face, it supplies me with water to wash them off, and by its cooling, and refreshing Waters, can relieve me from that Faintness that reduces me to look Pale.

Thus the Law, which is commonly, and which seems ev'n by an Apostle to be compared to a *Looking-glass*,\* shews us indeed the pollutions of our Souls, and discovers to us the effects of our spiritual Languidness, and Faintness ; but the Gospel does not only do so, but tells the Embracers of it, by Saint *John's* mouth, *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, who is the Propitiation for our sins, and whose Blood cleanses us from all sin.*† And the Author of the same Gospel invites all those, that find themselves tired and thirsty, to come unto him, and to be refreshed.†

By this time, *Lindamor*, who was Angling not very far off, perceiving us stand together, as if we were engaged in some Discourse, laid by his Rod a while, and came to listen to what he expected he might learn from *Eusebius* ; who pausing here, I put him in mind, that he had also mentioned to me the sight of his Shadow upon the face of the

\* S. James i. 23—25.

† S. John ii. 1, 2.

‡ S. Matt. xi. 28.

River,

River, as another object of his Contemplations, and that therefore my curiosity (wherein I knew *Lindamor*, as soon as I should acquaint him with the occasion, would share) made me very desirous to know what thoughts had been suggested to him, by a Subject that seem'd so slight and barren.

Since you will needs know, (replies *Eusebius*) I will confess to you, that my Thoughts were Theologically enough employ'd, and therefore, lest you should think, I affect to Preach out of the Pulpit, I will but succinctly mention some of those Various things, that this Shadow, as despicable as you think it, suggested to me: But since I was only entertaining and exciting my self, not discoursing with Naturalists, or disputing with Atheists, I presume you will not wonder, that I take the Doctrine of the Creation for granted, as it is acknowledged by Christians in general, and particularly by You.

I was then considering, that this Shadow, related to me, might in some particulars be no unfit one of the Universe in reference to God: And indeed, perhaps the World may without much extravagance be termed the Shadow of him, of whose Attributes, or Perfections, it exhibits to an attentive considerer divers excellent Impresses, and the resemblance may thus far be advanc'd, that as though it represents the Shape and Out-  
lines

lines of my Body, which projects it, yet it represents but them, and consequently this Shadow in reference to it is but a superficial and worthless thing; so the World, though it be not destitute of several Impresses, and as it were Lineaments or Features of the Divine Wisdome and Power, yet for all this, its representations of the Divine Author of it, are but very Imperfect, Superficial, and Dark, and the Excellency of the Adorable Author of things, keeps him infinitely above all the works that he has made.

But to mention some of the Comparisons I took notice of: In the first place we may consider, that I make this Shadow here without taking the least pains to do so, and with as little toyl God made the World: *He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast,*\* (says the Psalmist, speaking of the Creation) and elsewhere the Scripture says, *That the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the Earth fainteth not, neither is weary,*† and therefore that Rest ascrib'd him on the seventh Day, is to be understood but a Cessation from Creating, not a Repose from Labour, for all disproportions to the power of created Agents, are so equally inconsiderable, in reference to one that is Infinite, that Omnipotence may make even the World without Toyl.

\* Psalm xxxiii. 9.

† Isaiah xl. 28.

Secondly,

Secondly, To make this Shadow, I neither use nor need Colours, nor Pencil; I digg no Quarries, nor fell no Trees to perfect this work, and employ no Materials about it; As little had God any Pre-existent matter to contrive into this vast Fabrick: Our Creed proclaims him the Creator of Heaven and Earth; the Angel, that holds the Book, in the *Revelations*,\* describes him resemblingly; and the Apostle tells us, *That through Faith we understand that the Worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen, were not made of things that do appear*:† And indeed it became an Omnipotent Architect, not to be beholden but to himself for his Materials. He that calleth things that are not, as though they were, makes them by calling them; *He brought forth Light out of Darkness, by calling for Light, and there was Light; he spake it, and it was done*, says the Psalmist;‡ and the World was, if I may so express it, but the real Eccho of that productive, *FIAT*.

The next thing, I was considering, was, that, to destroy this Shadow, I needed neither Sword, nor Pistol, the withdrawing of my self under the Neighbouring Trees being sufficient to make the Shadow disappear, and leave behind as little shape of it, as if there never had been any. And thus,

\* Rev. x. 6. † Heb. xi. 8. ‡ 2 Cor. iv. 6.; Gen. i. 3.; Ps. xxxiii. 9.

as the World could not have had a beginning, without having been provided by God, so for the continuance of the Being it enjoys, it depends altogether, and every moment, upon the will and pleasure of its first Author, of whom Saint *Paul* tells us, *That in Him, we not only live and move, but have our being* ;\* and to the same purpose I think one may allege that place, where the Scripture says of God, not only, *That he has made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens with all their Hoast, the Earth, and all things that are thereon, the Seas and all that is therein* ;† but adds, *That he preserveth them all*, as our Translatours English it ; for in the Hebrew I remember it is, *Vivifies them all*, that is, sustains them in that improper Kind of Life, or that Existence, which, whilst their Nature lasts, belongs unto it ; -so that if God should at any time withdraw his preserving Influence, the World would presently Relapse, or Vanish into its first nothing, as there are many Notions of the Mind, such‡ as that of Genus, and Species, which are so the Creatures of Reason, that they have no longer an Existence in the nature of things, than they are actually upheld therein, by being actually thought upon by some Intellectual Being ; And God is so the preserver of all his Creatures, that one may say of the rest,

\* Acts xvii. 28. † Neh. ix. 6. ‡ Ed. 1. comma after "such."

as the Psalmist speaks of many of them, where addressing himself to God, he says, *Thou hidest thy Face, they are troubled ; Thou takest away their Breath, they Dye, and return to their Dust ; Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are Created, &c. \**

I was also taking notice, (pursues *Eusebius*) that to produce what changes I pleas'd, in all, or any part of this Shadow ; I needed not employ either Emissaries, or Instruments, nor so much as rouse up my self to any difficult Exertion of my own strength, since, by only moving this or that part of my own Body, I could change at pleasure in the twinkling of an Eye, the figure and posture of what part of the Shadow I thought fit : And thus, when God had a mind to work those Miracles, we most admire, as when at *Josuah's* prayer he stop'd the course of the Sun, and at *Hezekiah's*, made him go back, we Men are apt to imagine that these prodigious Effects must needs cost their Author much, and that he must strain his Power, and be necessitated to a troublesome Exertion of his Omnipotence, to be able to produce them, whereas to that Divine Agent, those things that would be to all others impossible, are so far from being difficult, and the Creatures have so absolute and continual a dependance on him, that 'tis as easie for him to effect the greatest Alterations in them,

\* Psalm civ. 29, 30.

as to resolve to do so. And even those Miraculous changes of the course of Nature, that do the most astonish us, do so naturally and necessarily flow from the Motions of his own Will, that to decree, and to execute, (whether or no they require powers otherwise than Notionally differing) are alike easie to him : And that irresistible Agent finds as little more difficulty to produce the greatest changes among the Creatures, than to produce the least ; as I find it harder to move the whole Arm of my Shadow, than to move its little Finger. And this consideration (subjoyns *Eusebius*) might be, methought, consolatory enough to his Church, who by reposing an entire trust in her God, entitles her self to the protection of him, that can as easily produce changes in the World, as resolve on them, and can with the same facility destroy her and his greatest Enemies, as decree their Destruction.

I was also further considering, (says *Eusebius*) That though the little wat'ry Bodies, that make up this River, and consequently those that glided along by me, were in a restless Motion, the hindmost always urging on, and chasing those that were before them, yet my Shadow was as compleat and stable upon the fugitive Stream, as if it had been projected on the water of a Pond, or rather as if all the parts of Water, whereon 'twas Visible, had been fixt and moveless ; of which I made this  
Appli-



Application, that though we may say with *Solomon*, in a larger sence than his, *That one Generation goes, and another comes,*\* the World being maintained by perpetual Vicissitudes of Generation and Corruption, yet the Wisdome and Providence of God does so far confine the Creatures to the establish'd Laws of Nature, that though vast Multitudes of Individuals are always giving place to others, yet the particular Creatures, which do at any time make up the World, do always exhibit the like Picture of its divine Original.

But yet lastly, (says *Eusebius*) I was considering too, that though this Shadow have some kind of resemblance to that, whose Shadow it is, yet the Picture is but very superficial and obscure; And if we should suppose, the Fishes that inhabit this Stream, to be endued with reason, they could even from *Lindamors* shadow but collect, that the Original is a Man, and not a Brute; but they could not hence make any discovery of what manner of Man he is, nor know any thing of his Virtues, or his Thoughts, or his Intention, nor consequently have that Notion of him, that I (pursues *Eusebius*, turning to him, and a little Smiling on him) do harbour and cherish, who having the happiness to converse with him, have the opportunity and the justice to admire him. Thus, where I formerly

\* Eccles. i. 4.

ventured to call the World Gods Shadow, I did not forget, how imperfect a Picture a Shadow is wont to be: And though this dark Representation, that God has vouchsaf'd Men of himself in the Universe, be sufficient to convince us, that it was not made by chance, but produced by a Powerful and Intelligent Being; the eternal Power and God-head of the Great Author of Nature, as the Scripture seems to teach us, being manifested to attentive and rational Considerers, in the visible productions of his Power and Wisdome; yet how short and dim a Knowledge must they have of him, that have no other than these Corporal Instructors. How many of his glorious Attributes are there, for whose Knowledge we must be beholden, rather to his Written, than his Created Word? and how little will humane Intellects, without Revelation, discover of that manifold Wisdome of God, which the Scripture teaches us, *That even to the Angels it must be made known by the Church.\** And if those Illuminated persons, such as *Moses* and *Saint Paul* himself, who had both extraordinary Revelations from God, and intimate Communion with him, confessed, that in this Life they saw him but Darkly, and, as it were, in a Glass; sure the Dim light of meer Nature will give us but extremely imperfect, and detracting

\* Eph. iii. 10.

Idea's of him, whom the like Limitedness of our Nature will allow us to know but very imperfectly, in Heaven it self, though as we shall there see him Face to Face, our apprehensive Faculties will as well be enlarged, as the dazzling and ravishing Object be disclosed.

But, (says *Eusebius*) though I forget, that I am not in the Pulpit, I hope you remember, that I told you at first, how little I pretended these kind of Reflections would endure a rigorous Philosophical Examen, and that I am not so Indiscreet, as to expect that they should work Conviction in an Infidel, though I hope they may excite good Thoughts in a Believer.

These last words of our Friend being not followed by any other; *Lindamor*, having waited a while to ascertain himself, that *Eusebius* had ended his Discourse, began another, by saying:

I perceive, *Eusebius*, with much more satisfaction than surprise, that the same Subject, and at the same time, did, as 'twas fit, suggest very differing considerations to you and me; for whilst your Shadow afforded you the rise of sublime Speculations, I was making but a moral Reflection upon mine: For taking notice, (continues he) that the Shade my Body projected, near Noon, was almost as much shorter than it, as in the Morning it was longer, prompted me to think how foolish it were  
for

for me, who know by sure ways of measuring my own Stature, that it is moderate enough, not to be either proud of, or complain'd of, should imagine that I am either as Tall as a Gyant, or as Low as a Dwarf, because I see my Shadow either exceeding long, or extreamly short; and I was further considering, pursues *Lindamor*, that if Philosophers, as well as the Vulgar, have rightly called Fame or Glory the Shadow of Virtue, it would be as irrational to estimate ones self not by the testimonies of ones Conscience, which is the Authentick standard of Intrinsick worth, but by the fickle Opinions of others, (which oftentimes flatter, and oftner detract) but very seldome give a just and impartial estimate of merit: The Fame may have its increase, and decrements, whilst the Person continues the same, and loses nothing of Substance with the Shadow. And for a Man that should examine himself, and judge of himself by his own designs, and actions, not other Mens words, to suffer himself to be puff'd up by vulgar applause, or dejected by unmerited censures, were to mistake a Shadow for a Standard.

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DIS-

## DISCOURSE VII.

*Upon a Fall occasion'd by coming too near  
the Rivers Brink.*

**I**T was not long after this, that *Eugenius* chancing to spy a little Nook, which seem'd to promise him a more convenient Station for his Angling, he invited *Lindamor* to share the advantage with him, and began to walk thitherward along the Rivers Brink, which the abundant moisture of the Waters that glided by it, had adorn'd with a pleasant Verdure; But he had not marcht very far, when chancing to tread on a place, where the course of the Water had worn off the Bank, and made it hollow underneath, he found the Earth falter under him, and could not hinder his Feet from slipping down with the Turf that betray'd him; nor could he have escaped so, had not his endeavours to cast the weight of his Body towards the Bank been assisted by *Lindamor*, who though not so near the Brink as to be in danger, was not so far off but that he was able to catch hold of him, and draw him to the firm Land. The noise that *Lindamor* made, when he saw his Friend falling, quickly drew *Eusebius* and me thither, where, after I had a while made my self merry with the Disaster, I found to have been so harmless; *Eusebius* (who arriv'd there a little later) as'd him how  
he

he came to fall, and *Eugenius* answering, that he thought he had trod upon firm Ground, because he saw the Bank look to the very edge as if it differ'd not from the rest of the Field, which it terminated; *Eusebius* took occasion from thence to tell him, You may from this take notice, that 'tis not safe Travelling upon the confines of what is Lawful, and what is Sinful, no more than upon the Borders of two Hostile Nations: When we suppose, that thus far we may go towards that which is Sinful, without committing it, we are wont with more boldness than considerateness to conclude, that we need not scruple to venture, or rather that we shall run no venture, having firm footing all the way. But 'tis much to be feared, that when we allow our selves to come as far as the utmost Verge of what is Lawful, and to do that which in the *Casuists* Language, is, *tantum non* to Sin, the natural Proclivity of our minds to Evil, which carries them downwards, as weight does our Bodies, will sometime or other make us find hollow Ground, where we presume to find it firm: He that to Day will go towards Sin as far as he thinks he may, is in danger of going to Morrow further than he should; And it is far more easie for him to be secure than to be safe, that walks upon the Brink of a Precipice. He was a wise Man, that as soon as he had forbidden his  
Son

Son to enter into the path of the Wicked, and to go in the way of Evil men, subjoyns, as the best course to conform to the Prescription, avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away :\* God's indulgence leaves us a Latitude to comply with our infirmities and Necessities, and to give us opportunities of exercising a pious Jealousie over our selves, and of shewing how much we fear to offend him. But a wary Christian will say in this case, as Saint *Paul* did in almost a like, *All things are Lawful for me, but all things are not Expedient* ;† And he must often go further than he can with Prudence, that will always go as far as he thinks he can with Innocence.

## DISCOURSE VIII.

*Upon the Good and Mischief that Rivers do.*

**T**HIS Discourse being ended, we All, as it were, *by common Consent*, apply'd our selves again to prosecute the Sport that had invited us to the River : But we had not Angl'd very long, before we were Disturb'd by a *loud and confus'd Noise*, which we soon discover'd to proceed from a Ship, that, together with some Barges, and other lesser Boats, were, by the help of a favourable

\* Prov. iv. 15.

† 1 Cor. vi. 12.

Breath

Breath of Wind, Sailing up the River towards *London*. The sight of these Laden-Vessels, together with the prospect of the Thames, *Which*, (as it happen'd in that place) seem'd, in various Windings and Meanders, wantonly to fly, and to pursue it self: This sight, I say, together with that of the rich and flourishing Verdure, which the Waters in their passage, bestow'd upon all the Lands that were on either side any thing near their Banks, invited *Eugenius*, to fall upon the praises of that *Excellent River*, which not only imparts Fertility and Plenty, here at home, by Inriching all the places that have the advantage to be near it; but helps to bring us Home, whatever the Remoter parts of the World, and the Indies themselves, whether East or West, have of *Rare* or *Usefull*.

*Lindamor*, having both applauded and recruited *these Commendations*, Me-thinks, (says he) That amongst other *good things*, wherewith this River furnishes us, it may supply us with a good Argument against those Modern Stoicks, who are wont, with more Eloquence than Reason, to Declaim against the Passions, and would fain perswade *Others*, (for I doubt *whether* they be so perswaded themselves) That the Mind ought to deal with its Affections, as *Pharaoh* would have dealt with the *Jews-Males*, whom he thought it *wise to Destroy*, lest they might, one Day, grow up into a condition  
to



to revolt from him. But, because the Passions are (sometimes) Mutinous, to wish an Apathy, is as unkind to us, as it would be to our Country, To wish we had no Rivers, because (sometimes) they do Mischief, when great or suddain Rain swells them above *their Banks*.

When I consider, (says *Eusebius*) *That* of the Immaculate and Divine *Lamb* himself, 'tis recorded in the Gospel, *That He look'd round about, upon certain Jews, with Indignation, being griev'd for the Hardness of their Hearts;*\* So that two Passions are ascrib'd to *Christ himself* in one Verse: And when I consider too, the Indifferency, and (consequently the Innocence) of Passions *in their own Nature*, and the Use that Wise and Virtuous Persons may make of them, I cannot think we ought to throw away (or so much as wish away) those Instruments of Piety, which God and Nature has put into our Hands: But am very *well content* we should retain them upon such conditions as *Abraham* did, *Those Domesticks he bought with his Money*, whom the Scripture tells us, *He both Circumcis'd and kept as Servants.*†

But, (continues *Eusebius*) As I do not altogether disallow *Lindamors* Comparison, between Rivers and Passions, so he must give me leave to add this to it, That as Rivers, when they over-flow, Drown

\* S. Mark iii. 5.

Gen. xvii. 23.

those

those Grounds, and Ruine those Husbandmen, which whilst they flow'd Calmly *betwixt their Banks*, they Fertiliz'd and Enrich'd: So our Passions, (when they grow Exorbitant and Unruly) destroy *those Virtues*, to which they may be very Serviceable whilst they *keep* within their Bounds.

Instances of this truth, (pursues *Eusebius*) are but too Obvious; 'tis said, *That Valour is Anger's whetstone*; and our *being Counsell'd* by the Apostle, *To be Angry, and not to Sin*,\* argues, that Passion *not* to be Incompatible with Innocence, whilst 'tis confin'd within the limits of Moderation. But when once Anger is Boyl'd up into Rage, or Choler into an habitual Fury, or appetite of Revenge, it makes more Havock in the World than Beasts and Inundations: The greatest part of those *Rivers of Blood*, that are shed in Battels, (though spilt by Anger) do rather Irritate than Appease the unnatural Thirst of that *insatiate Fury*: The burning of Cities, the sinking of Fleets, and the Desolations of Provinces, and of Kingdoms, make but part of the Tragick effects of this *Inhumane Passion*, when it once *thorowly possesses* those that wield Scepters, and handle Swords.

I will not tell *Lindamor*, That ev'n that noblest and best of Passions, *Love*, as gentle and amiable as it appears, when once it comes to degenerate by

\* Eph. iv. 26.

grow-

growing Unruly, or being Misplac'd, is guilty of far more Tragedies than those that have the fortune to be Acted on Theatres, or to furnish the Writers of Romances; and that which (perchance at first) seems to be but an *Innocent Love*, being not duely watch'd and regulated, may, in time, grow to disobey, or deceive Parents, to violate Friendships, to send Challenges, and fight Duels, to betray the Honour of harmless Virgins, and of the noblest Families, to Rebel against Kings, procure the Ruine of Monarchies and Commonwealths; And, in a word, To make thousands miserable, and those it possesses most of all, and thereby to bring Credit to, if not also to Surpass, the Fictions of Poets, and the Fabulous stories of Romances.

And as for the desire of Excelling others, as great and noble things as it makes Men undertake, whilst it aspires only to a Transcendency in *Virtue*, and in *Goodness*, when that Passionate desire, by making Men too greedy of Superiority in Fame and Power, degenerates into Ambition; How many *Vices* are usually set a work by this one *Passion!* The contempt of the Laws, the Violation of Oaths, the Renouncing of Allegiance, the Breach of Leagues and Compacts, the Murder of ones nearest Relations,\* (if they be more

\* So the folio. Ed. 1 and 2. "Relation."

nearly

nearly related to a Crown) and all the other Crimes and Miseries, that are wont to beget or attend civil Warrs, are the usual as well as dismal Productions of this aspiring Humour in a Subject; Nor does it less Mischief when Harbour'd in a *Prince's Breast*, for the Undoing of his *own People*, the Subversion of his Neighbour's States, the Sacking of Cities, the Slaughter of Armies, the Dispeopling of *some* Provinces, and the Peopling of others with Widdows and Orphanes, are Sacrifices that are more frequently offer'd up to Ambition, than able to satisfie it: For what can quench his Thirst of Rule and Fame, or hinder the Attempts to which it stimulates him, that can find in his Heart to destroy Armies, and ruine Provinces, only that he may be taken notice of to be able to do so.

Certainly (subjoyns *Eusebius*) he knew very well the Frame of humane Spirits, that said by the Pen of an Apostle; *From whence comes Warrs and Brawlings among you? Come they not hence, ev'n of your Lusts that War in your Members.\** And I doubt whether Plagues, Wars and Famines have done more mischief to Mankind, than Anger and Ambition, and some other inordinate Passions; for these do frequently bring upon Men those publick and other fatal Calamities, either as Judgments, which they provoke God to Inflict,

\* James iv. 1.

or

or as Evils, which as proper consequents naturally flow, from those Mischievous practices, to which unbridl'd Passions hurry the criminally unhappy Persons they have Inslav'd.

Wherefore, (concludes *Eusebius*, casting his Eyes upon *Lindamor*) As the usefullness of a River hinders us not from making good the Banks, and, if need be, making Damms, to confine it within its Limits, and prevent its Inundations; So the usefullness of the Passions should not hinder us from watchfully employing the Methods and Expedients afforded us by Reason and Religion, to keep them within their due Bounds, which they seldom overflow without shewing to our Cost, that, as 'tis observed of Fire and Water, they cannot be so good Servants, but that they are worse Masters.

## DISCOURSE IX.

*Upon the comparing of Lands, seated at differing distances from the River.*

**T**HIS last Discourse, to which the River had afforded the occasion, inviting me to Survey as much of it as was within my View, a little more attentively, gave me the opportunity of taking notice of a manifest difference betwixt the  
Lands

Lands that lay near it, and those whose Situation was remoter from it, and having acquainted *Eusebius* with what I had observ'd, which his own Eyes could not but presently bear witness to ; One (says he) that should only consider how swiftly this Stream runs along these flowery Meadows, and how great a quantity of Water passes through them, and from them, towards the Sea, would be apt to conclude, that certainly these Grounds retain none of the Water which runs from them so hastily, and so plentifully, especially since we can see no Channels, nor other manifest Inlets, and Receptacles, that should divert and retain the fugitive Water, so that the Grounds confining on the River, must be but little advantag'd by its Neighbourhood. But, (continues *Eusebius*) though these Grounds have not any patent Passages, whereby to derive Water and Fatness from the River, and therefore must suffer the greatest part of it to run by them undiverted, yet still some of the Cherishing and Fertilizing moisture is from time to time soak'd in by the Neighbouring Ground, and (perhaps by blind Pores and crooked Channels) so dispersed thorow the whole Fields, that they have thereby Water, and in that vehicle Fertility convey'd to them, which you will not doubt, if you do but with me take notice, how much the Lands that lye on both sides near the  
Course

Course of the River, are more Verdant, and Flourishing, and more Rich than those less happy Grounds, to whom their Remoteness denies the advantage of so improving a Neighbourhood.

Thus (resumes *Eusebius*) many a pious Person that is an Assiduous attendant on the means of Grace, and has a care to place himself as it were in the way, by which the Ordinances of God, especially those of Reading, and Expounding of the Scriptures, are wont freely and copiously to flow, is (especially upon any fit of Melancholy, or distress of Mind) apt to be extremely discourag'd from prosecuting that course of Duties, and by looking upon the little that he remembers of so many excellent Sermons as he has heard, he is often inclined to conclude not only he has lost all the good Sermons that he has heard already, but that at least for such as he there is little to be expected from them for the future.

But though to lose so much of a thing, so precious as the Doctrine of Salvation, be that, which is oftentimes a fault, and always an unhappiness, yet 'tis a far less Mischief to forget Sermons than to forsake them: The one may be but an effect of a weak Memory, the other is that of a depraved Will, perverted by Laziness, Impatience, or some greater fault: We should scarce allow it for a Rational proceeding; if one in a Consumption, or  
Disen-

Disentery, because he grows not Fat with Feeding, should resolve to renounce Eating and Drinking.

But this, (says *Eusebius*) is not that which I chiefly intended: For Pious, but melancholy Persons, are oftentimes too Partial against themselves, to be competent Judges of their own Estate, they seem not to forget any Sermon so much as that, Charity should begin at home; And they are much more careful not to accuse any body wrongfully than themselves, though they might remember, that in the Estimate of Christ himself, all Grounds are not equally Fruitful that are good, some bringing forth hundred, some sixty, some but thirty Fold, and yet to all he vouchsafes the title of Good; and though, as mad Men that have quite lost their Wits, seldome or never complain of the want of them; so those that have forfeited, or are devoid of Grace, rarely bemoan themselves of the weakness of it. And 'tis no mean sign of Proficiency in Piety, to be apt to deplore ones unproficiency; 'Tis true, that Preaching is not always, and I fear not so much as often, the Savour of *Life unto Life*, the Perversness of the Hearers making it but too frequently the Savour of *Death unto Death*. But yet, speaking in the general, though it aggravate the Sins committed in spite of it, yet it usually hinders many others from being committed; and he that twice a Week is told of God,  
and



and Duty, and Heaven, and Hell, has his Conscience more awak'd than he that never hears of any of these things. And if you but compare one of these despondent Christians, we are considering, with the careless Sensualists, that fly a rowzing Sermon, as they should do what it would deter them from; you will easily discern a sufficient disparity between them, to invite you to conclude, that the Instructiveness of Preaching may, like the moisture of the River, be convey'd but by little and little at a time, and by unperceived Passages, and yet be able to impart Fertility: For though much run by, yet commonly something will stick, which we may safely conclude, if though we can discern it no other way, it disclose itself by the Effects; for 'tis not always to those that remember the most of them, that Sermons do the most good, as Water retained in Ponds makes not the Bottom flourishing, but the Banks, and the Efficacy of a Sermon is better to be collected from the Impression it has on the Understanding, and Affections, than from that it leaves on the Memory, whether we retain the Particulars faithfully or no, and carry them home with us; yet if a Sermon leave us Devouter than it found us, if we go from God's Ordinances, with a love to them, and a relish of them, and a purpose to frequent them, we may be Despondents, but

but are not altogether Non-proficients; that incorruptible Seed by which we are Regenerated, being once thrown into an honest Heart, may, as our Saviour intimate, grow up we know not well how, and though perhaps by insensible degrees, yet at length attain Maturity. To dispatch, (concludes *Eusebius*) whether or no a Man can orderly repeat all the Particulars that composed the Sermon, it does him good, if it either makes him good, or keeps him so: And its Operation is to be estimated, not so much by what we Remember, as by what we Resolve.

What you have been saying, (subjoyns *Lindamor*) when he perceiv'd that *Eusebius* had done speaking, suggests to me a Reflection, that till now I did not dream of; And though it differ from that wherewith you have been pleased to entertain us, yet because 'tis applicable to the same purpose, and occasioned by the same River, I shall without scruple, though, after your Discourse, not without Blushes, tell you, that it is this; I, among many others that Live near it, have often resorted in hot Weather to this River, to bathe myself in it, and after what I have been hearing, I now begin to consider, that though incomparably the greater part of the River run by me, without doing me any good, and though when I went out of it, I carried away little or none of it with me; yet

q

whilst

whilst I stayed in it, that very Stream, whose Waters run so fast away from me, washed and carried off whatever Foulness it might find sticking to my Skin: And besides, not only cooled me, and refreshed me, by allaying the intemperate heat that discomposed me, and made me faint, but also help'd me to a good Stomach for some while after.

Thus (resumes *Lindamor*) I have sometimes found, that a moving Sermon, though it did not find me qualified to derive from it the Advantages it questionless afforded better Auditors, and when I went from it, I found I had retained so little of it, that it seemed to have almost totally slipt out of my Memory, yet the more Instructive and Pathetick passages of it had that Operation upon me, as to cleanse the Mind from some of the Impurities it had contracted, by Conversing to and fro in a defiling World, without suffering Pollutions to stay long, and settle where they began to be Harboured; And besides, I found that a course of such Sermons, as I have been mentioning, did oftentimes (and if it had not been my own fault, would have always done so) both allay those Inordinate heats that tempting Objects are but too apt to Excite; refresh my drooping Spirits, that continually needed to be revived; and raise in me an Appetite to the means of Grace, which are Piety's (and consequently the Soul's) true and improv-

improving Aliments. So that, (concludes *Lindamor*) though I seldome let Sermons do me all the good they may, and should; yet I dare not forsake them, because I forget them; since 'tis to do a Man some good, to make him less bad than he was, and to give a Value and Inclination for the means of growing better than he is.

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## DISCOURSE X.

*Upon a Fishes running away with the Bait.*

**T**HIS Reflection of *Lindamor's* was soon follow'd by another of the same Gentleman's, who seeing many Fishes rise one after another, and bite at *Eugenius's* Bait, which he let them sometimes run away with, that he might be the surer to be able to draw them up, as he afterwards did several of them; See, (says *Lindamor*, as one of the fishes had just swallowed the Hook) how yonder silly Fish, having at length seized the beloved Bait, he has been Courting, posts away with it as his obtained wish, little dreaming of being himself taken: Thus (continues the same Speaker) when greedy Mortals have an opportunity to obtain forbidden things, they joyfully run away with them as the Goods they aimed at, and when they fondly think they have caught, they

are so, and whilst they imagine themselves to carry away a Booty, they become a Prey; for that he is in his Judgment that never errs, who, whatever he gets into the Bargain, loses himself.

The Scripture, (subjoyns *Eusebius*,\* mentions, among other properties of Vice, that which it calls the Deceitfulness of Sin.† And the wise Man tells us, that Wine is a Mocker;‡ and it may be one of the reasons of these Expressions, that when we think our selves possessed of a sinful Pleasure, we are indeed possessed by it as Dæmoniacks are possessed by the Divil, who serves many other Sinners, though less perceivedly, as he serves Witches, whom he gets the Power to command, by seeming to obey them, and to comply with their criminal desires; And, if we compare this, with what I was just now observing to you, on the occasion of the counterfeit Fly, we may add, That even when Sin seems the Kindest and most Obsequious to us, and to answer if not exceed our Desires, our case may be but like the Canaanitish General's, who though he had Milk brought him by *Jael* instead of the Water he only requested, was but thereby invited to *Sleep the Sleep of Death*,§ and to have his Fears more surpass'd than his Desires had been.

\* Ed. 2. "*Eugenius*," but see the reference below to what had been said about the fly, p. 192.

† Heb. iii. 13.

‡ Prov. xx. i.

§ Judges iv. 29

But

But, (pursues *Eusebius*) this may supply us with another Reflection; for though this Fish seems to have devoured the Hook and Bait it swallowed, yet in effect it is taken thereby; so the Divil, when he had played the Serpent and the Lion, when he had brought the Jews and Gentiles to conspire against their common Saviour, and had made *Herod* and *Pilate* friends to make them joynt Enemies to Christ, and when by these means he seemed to have obtained his end, by employing their hands to Kill the formidablest of all his Enemies, this pursued Prey destroyed the seeming Conquerour; and Death appearing to swallow the Lord of Life, was, if I may so speak, choaked by the Attempt, since he not only was quickly able to say in the Apostles Triumphant Language: *O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?\** but did by Death conquer him that had the power of Death, that is, the Divil; † nay, and made all his followers so much sharers in the advantages of his Conquest, as by the same way (which we are informed by the same Text) to deliver those whom the restless fear of Death perpetually kept from relishing the Joys of Life.

\* 2 Cor. xv. 15.

† Heb. ii. 14, 15.

## DISCOURSE XI.

*Upon a Danger springing from an unseasonable  
Contest with the Steersman.*

**T**HIS Discourse being ended, *Eugenius*, who was look'd upon by us all as the most Experienced as well as concerned Angler among us, descrying at a good distance a place which he judged more convenient for our Sport, than that we there were in, where the Fish began to bite but slowly; He invited the Company to this new Station, but when we were come thither, finding in a short time, that either it was ill stock'd with Fish, or that the Season of their Biting in the places thereabouts was over, he thought it concerned him to provide us some better place; and accordingly, whilst we were yet, by the pleasure of mutual conversation, endeavouring to keep the Fishes sullenness from proving an Exercise to our patience, he walk'd on along the River, till he lighted upon a Youth, that by his Habit seem'd to belong to some Boat or other Vessel; and having enquir'd of him, whether he could not be our Guide to some place where the Fish would bite quick, he replied, that he easily could, if we would take the trouble of coming to a place on the other side of the River, which his Master, who was a  
Fisher-

Fisher-man, had Baited over Night, and would questionless let us make use of for a small Gratification ; *Eugenius*, being very well content, call'd away the Company, which were led by the Youth to a Boat belonging to his Master, into which being entred, the old Man, who was owner of the Boat, hoys'd up Sails, and began to steer the Boat with one of his Oars, to a place he shewed us at a good distance off, but did it so unskilfully, that since a Mariner of his Age could scarce mistake so grossly for want of Experience in the River, we began to suspect, that he had too plentifully tasted a far stronger Liquor than that which was the Scene of his Trade ; and as the old Man was half Drunk, so the Youth appeared to be a meer Novice, both which we had quickly occasion to take notice of: For some Clouds that were gathering out of the Sea, passing over our Vessel, rais'd in their passage, as is usual enough, a temporary Wind, that to such a slight Boat as ours was, might almost pass for a kind of Storm ; For then the old Man gave out his directions so ill, and the Youth was so little able to execute them punctually, that two of the Company, offended at their unskilfulness, began by angry and unseasonable Expostulations and Clamours, to confound the already disorder'd Boat-man, and being got up, with no small hazard to the Boat, they would per-



perchance, by crossing the Water-men in their endeavours, have made it miscarry, had not *Lindamor*, whose Travels had made him well acquainted with such cases, earnestly requested them to sit still, and let the Water-men do their own work as well as they could, affirming, that he had seen more than one of those easily over-set Boats cast away by the confused and disagreeing endeavours of the Water-men and Passengers to preserve it: This counsel was thought very reasonable, since the greater the Wind was, and the less the Steerman's dexterity, the more necessary it appear'd, that we should be orderly and quiet, and by leaning our Bodies sometimes one way, and sometimes another, as occasion requir'd, do what in us lay to keep the Vessel upright, and herein we were so prosperous, that soon after the Cloud was passed, and the Shower it brought with it was over, the Wind grew moderate enough to allow us to make some calm Reflections on what had happened: This *Lindamor*, from the thanks that were given him for his advice, took occasion to do in these terms: Since States-men and Philosophers are wont to compare a Common-wealth to a Ship, I hope the Reflection suggested to us by what had just now happen'd, will be the easier pardon'd. The skill of ruling Nations, is an Art no less difficult than noble; for whereas Statuaries, Masons,  
Car-

Carpenters, and other Artificers work upon inanimate Materials, a Ruler must manage free Agents, who may have each of them interests or designs of their own, distinct from those of the Prince, and many times repugnant to them : And the Prizes that are contended for in Government, either are, or (which is in our case all one) are thought, so Valuable, and the concurrents are so Concern'd, and consequently so Industrious to drive on each his own design, that without mentioning any of those many other things which make good Government difficult, these alone may suffice to make it more our trouble than our wonder, that the Rulers of States and Common-wealths should oftentimes mis-govern them. But the publick Infelicities of declining States, are not always wholly due to the Imprudence of the Ruler, but oftentimes those that most resent such Imprudence, even by those very Resentments, encrease the publick Disorders they appear so much troubled at ; and it may be a question, Whether it be more prejudicial to Common-wealths, to have Rulers that are mean States-men, than to have a Multitude of Subjects, that think themselves to be Wise ones, and are forward to Censure what is done by their Magistrates, either because it is done by their Superiours, or because 'tis not done by themselves.

Yet

are attended with great variety of Circumstances, according to some or other of which, they may be differently considered, and estimated, as 'tis not very difficult to make many, if not most Actions appear politick or unwise, according as they are Cloathed with those of their Circumstances, that may be applied to excuse them, or with those that are fit to discommend them; so I would take a care to put the favourablest Constructions on those publick Counsels, that are capable of more Constructions than one, and use the Parents of my Country, as *Noah's* two dutiful Children did their distemper'd Father, whose Nakedness when they had once discovered, they covered too; and that in such a way, as shewed they were unwilling to see more of it than was necessary to enable them to hide it. And I say this, (continues *Lindamor*) with Relation to *Eugenius*, and such as he; for as to the Vulgar, who yet make up the far greatest and loudest part of those that would intrude themselves into State-affairs, upon the pretence of their being ill managed by their Superiours; I cannot but think, that whatever the course of Affairs be, these cannot but be incompetent Judges of their being Politick, or the contrary: For to judge of things barely by success, were somewhat to forget that there is a supream and absolute disposer of Events, and has been a practice always rejected by

by the Wise, as both discouraging Wisdome and affronting it: And as for the Counsels, by which indeed the Prudence or Imprudence of publick Actions is to be estimated, the Vulgar is rarely admitted to have such a Prospect into the true State of Affairs, as is requisite to enable them to judge of the Expedience or unadvisedness of them, being unacquainted with the frame and Motives of the Prince's Counsels and Designs: Ordinary Men may often think that Imprudent, whil'st they consider it only in it self, which its congruity to the rest of the Prince's designs may make Politick enough, and a private Whisper, or the Intimation from an unsuspected Spy, or an intercepted Letter, or divers other things unperceiv'd, and perhaps undreamt of, by those that are not of the State-Cabal, may make it wise to do several things, which to those that look only at the Actions, without knowing the Motives, may appear Unpolitick, and would indeed be so, were it not for these Reasons, which yet ought to be as little Divulged as Disobey'd: So that the Peoples forwardness, to quarrel with the Transactions of their Prince, is usually compounded of Pride and Ignorance, and is most incident to those, that do not sufficiently understand either State-affairs or themselves; and whils't they judge upon incompetent Information, even when their Superiours are  
are

are in the fault, they may be so, for censuring them.

I must not now dispute, (says *Eusebius*) whether such as you, Gentlemen, whom their Conditions, Parts, and Opportunities qualifie to discern the Interests and Designs of Princes, may not be allowed to judge of their Counsels, and see their Errours; As our late Astronomers, being assisted with good Glasses, are allowed to tell us, that they discern Spots even in the Sun it self. But certainly, the Ambition of Pragmatical Inferiours, to make themselves States-men, upon pretence that those that sit at the Helm do not Govern it as wisely as these would do, if they were in the same places, is a fault no less prejudicial to any State, than Epidemical in some of them: For whil'st the Government is thus Decryed, the same disadvantageous Representations embolden Strangers and Forreiners to attempt the Subversion of a State, and make the Dispondent Subjects despair of preserving it, little considering that there are scarce ever any Imprudences in a Government, that can prove any thing near so Prejudicial to the Generality of the Subjects, as would the Subversion of it, whether by Forrein Conquest, or by Intestine Jarrs; such changes seldome doing less than entail upon unhappy Countries the fears and mischiefs of War. And that though it be granted,  
that

that the right of Governing does not confer the Skill, yet 'tis much better to stick to the former, than oppose or desert it, because it wants the latter: For a right to a Crown, is that, which for the most part manifestly belongs but to one, and is seldome plausibly pretended to by above two or three, whereas the Skill to Govern is so undetermined, and so uncertain a thing, that Mens Innate pride and Self-love would encline almost every Man to claim it for himself, especially, since by challenging that, he might put for no less than Sovereignty: And in a State thus abandoned to the craftiest or the strongest, there would never want disturbing Vicissitude of Governments, as well as Governours, since whoever could get Interest enough in the Souldiery, or the Multitude, would quickly devise and impose such a frame of Government, as may put the Management of Affairs into his and his Parties hands, and give them the Authority that have the Power. But (*resumes Eusebius*) I must remember, that not Politicks, but Divinity is my Profession, and therefore without enlarging upon the confusion that is inevitable in a State, where the right of Governing being not heeded, or at least not ascertained, every Man would pretend to Counsel or Command, and none would think himself bound to Obey; I shall onely mind you, that Magistracy having been instituted  
by

by God, for the good of Mankind, we may in obeying our Lawful Magistrates, though perhaps less Wise than we could wish them, not only participate the Advantages naturally accruing from Obedience to Superiours, but divers peculiar Blessings that God oftentimes vouchsafes to our Obedience to his Vice-gerents, and his Institutions. Let Subjects therefore (says *Eusebius*) wish for wise Princes, but submit to those the Providence of God, and the Laws of their Country, may have given them: Let us, if by any just way we be called to it, assist a Prince with the wisest Counsels we can; if not, let us assist him to make the best of the unwise Counsels he has taken, without adding our Factiousness, or our Passions to his Misgovernment, remembering that, at least in my Opinion, to the happiness of a Commonwealth, it is not only requisite that the Prince know how to command well, but that the Subjects obey well; and that even weak Counsel, faithfully assisted, and as much as may be rectified or repaired by those that are to Execute them, may less prejudice the publick, than the froward and jarring endeavours of Men, that perhaps would be wiser Rulers if they had a right to be so. It may be (continues *Eusebius*) that affection and diligence in the publick Service, may, in spite of the Governments miscarriages, prevent, or at least  
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retard and lessen, the Ruine of the State. But however, (concludes he) it will be no small satisfaction to an honest Man, and a loyal Subject, not to be conscious to himself of having contributed to the publick Calamities, either by his own Provocations, or his Factious indignation at the Princes faults; if a Man have done his utmost to hinder the Ruine he comes to be involved in, the publick Calamity will be far lighter to him, being not clogged by private Guilt; and he will support the misfortune of it with far the less trouble, if he be to support nothing else. Nay, since the Service we do to whatever Prince is rightfully set over us, upon the score of his being Gods Vice-gerent, is ultimately directed to that Supream, and as the Scripture calls him, *Only Potentate*,\* whose Munificence is as inexhausted as his Treasure; we may safely expect, that whatever prejudice we here sustain upon the account of the Prince's commands, will hereafter be advantageously considered to us in the reward of our Obedience.

\* 1 Tim. vi. 15.

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## DISCOURSE XII.

*Upon Clouds rising out of the Sea, and falling  
down in Rain not Brackish.*

**T**HIS Discourse had already lasted so long, that as well my Unwillingness that one Theme should detain us any longer, as my Desire to keep *Eugenius* from making any Reply, which on such an occasion might perchance have begot some Dispute, made me forward to divert the Discourse, by inviting the Company to take notice of a black Cloud that was coming towards us, which soon after, in its passage under the Sun, interpos'd betwixt our Sight and that gloriousest Object of it. *Lindamor* then having a while attentively enough consider'd it, took thence an occasion to say: This Cloud, Gentlemen, whensoever it shall fall down in Rain, will sufficiently shew that it was before but Water, which whilst it lay mingl'd with the rest of the River, or the Sea, whence 'tis Exhal'd, may be suppos'd as Clear and Limpid as any of the rest; but now that the Sun has by its powfull Beams elevated this Water in the form of Vapours, and drawn it near it self, we see it Composes a Cloud, which does no longer receive or transmit the Light, but robs the Earth of it, and eclipses the Sun that rais'd it, and sometimes too produces dismal storms of Rain, and Wind, and Hail.

Hail. Thus (pursues *Lindamor*) there are many, who while they continu'd in a low and private Fortune, were as blameless as others; and yet, when by a peculiar Vouchsafement of Providence, they are rais'd from that humble state to a conspicuous height, they seem to have as much chang'd their Nature as their Fortune, they grow as much worse than meaner Men, as their condition is better than that of such; and the principal things by which they make their Exaltation be taken notice of, are, the Prejudice they do to their Inferiours, and the Ingratitude they exercise towards that Monarch of the World, that rais'd them above others. Of so perverting a Nature, is so high a Station, that the gaining of an Earthly Crown, is very far from being a furtherance to the acquiring of an Heavenly one: And many, whom an humble condition of Life kept as Innocent as Lowly, are, by the highest Advancement in point of Fortune, impair'd in point of Morality; and these supreme Dignities, which the ambitious World so fondly Courts and Envy, do so often manifest those that have attain'd them, to be unworthy of them.

I know not whether *Eugenius* imagin'd that *Lindamor* did in this Discourse make some little Reflection, upon what we had lately said on the behalf of Princes: But I afterwards suspected, that it was partly to reply to this Observation, as

well as entertain the Company with a new one, that he subjoin'd. As this Cloud has furnish'd *Lindamor* with one Reflection, so that which lately brought us the Showr of Rain, whose marks are yet upon our Hats, may supply us with another, which may shew, that Themes of this Nature are applicable to very differing purposes, according as one or other of their Circumstances happens to be consider'd and employ'd: For as far (pursues he) as we can judge by the Neighbourhood of the Sea, and by that Cloud's being driven hither by a Wind blowing thence, it consisted of the Sea-water rais'd in the form of Vapours. But though the Water of the Ocean is Salt and Brackish, Unpleasant and Unwholesome whil'st it lies there Unelevated; yet that Water which has the Advantage of being rais'd to the second Region of the Air, appears, when 'tis turn'd into Rain, to have left all its Brackishness behind it, and proves both wholesome for Mens Bodies, and fertilizing to their Fields.

Thus (continues *Eugenius*) we sometimes see, that Men, who in a private condition were subject to divers Vices, devest them when they are advanc'd to the honour of putting on Royal Robes, as Silk-worms leave their Husks behind them, when by acquiring Wings they turn into (a nobler sort of Creatures) flying Animals; as most Men  
change,

change, so some improve their Minds with their Condition, and seem to have mis-behav'd themselves in a lower Station, but because they were Born to a higher, and were, whilst beneath it, detain'd out of their proper Sphere. And indeed, as a Throne exposes those that sit on it to peculiar Temptations to Vice, so does it afford them peculiar Engagements to Virtue; as so Elevated a Station is apt to make Men giddy, so is it proper to make them circumspect, by letting them see that all the World sees Them; the Sublimity of such a Condition would make any Soul, that is not very mean, despise many mean things that too often prevail upon Inferiour persons. If Princes have any sense of Shame and Honour, it will be a great Curb to them, to consider, that, as there are too many Eyes upon them to let their Vices be secret, so their Faults can as little escape Censure as Discovery; and Men will be the more severe to their Reputations, because 'tis the only thing wherein Subjects can punish their Sovereigns. If they have any thing of Generosity in their Natures, their very Condition, by placing them above other Objects, will make them aspire to Glory; and that is a Mistress, that ev'n Monarchs cannot successfully court, but with great and good Actions. And if they have withal a sense of Piety, they cannot, but, in Gratitude to him whose Vice-gerents they

they are, endeavour to promote his Interests that made them so, and so make themselves as like him as they can in his other Attributes of Clemency, Justice, and Bounty, as he has vouchsaf'd to make them in his Power and Authority: And besides, that the actual Possession of an Earthly Crown leaves them nothing worth aspiring to but a Heavenly one; The consideration of the great Advantages they have above other Men of doing Good, and the Exemplariness and Influence as well of their Vices as of their Virtues, will make them tremble at the thoughts of the Account they must one Day render of so many Thousands, perhaps of so many Millions, (of Subjects) committed to their Charge, if, as they are sure it will be a great one, they shall not make it a good one. Nor (pursues *Eugenius*) is History altogether unfurnish'd with Examples of those whom a Throne has as well Improv'd as Dignify'd: *Saul* was not the only Person, who when he was created King had another Spirit, and became another Man;\* That *Titus*, who was the Head of it, was justly styl'd the Darling of Mankind, though his Virtue and Nobleness did, more than his Crown, keep the greatest part of Posterity from taking notice of any thing in him, but an Obligingness proportionate to his Greatness: Yet I find in some antient Writers, to whom

\* 1 Sam. x. 6—9.

Truth

Truth was more dear than ev'n this Favourite of Mankind, that before he came to that supreme Pitch of humane Dignity, his course of Life did not promise the *Roman* World the happiness it deriv'd from his Government ; His Life before he came to be Emperour, having not been so free from Blemishes of Lust and Blood ; But that I may, in writing his Character, invert what the *Roman* Historian said of one of his Predecessours, and say, that *Titus* had been thought *Indignus Imperio nisi imperasset*.\* And, without going as far as *Rome*, our own History affords us a *Henry* the Fifth, who, before he came to the Kingdome, was scarce thought worthy to Live in it, and did so degrade himself to the Practices of the meanest Malefactors, that a Judge, that was then his Fathers Subject, was fain to use him at that Rate ; and yet this Prince, as soon as he had Seated himself in the Throne, did as suddenly as if the Place it self had some secret Virtue to improve those it admitted, behave himself as a Person worthy of it ; and not only Conquer'd *France*, but, which was a Nobler, as well as a more difficult Victory, his own Resentments too, by preferring that Judge, when King, that had Imprison'd him, when Prince ; and evincing by so memorable an Action, that he prefer'd Virtue above himself, and renouncing the

\* See Tacitus, Hist. I. 49.

Plea-

Pleasure of Revenge, he scrupl'd not to promote one whom he could not commend without condemning himself; were it not, that in this Prince, according to what I was saying, the King was become another Man than the Subject. And perhaps, (concludes *Eugenius*, a little Smiling) I could proceed to give you other Examples enough to keep it from being improbable; that one main Reason, why there are but few good Princes, is, because there are but few Princes; were it not that I see the Water-man prepare to Land us: And in effect, we were now come so near the place, where the Fisher-man design'd to set us Ashore, that whether or no *Lindamor* had a mind to return any thing to what *Eugenius* had said, it would then have appear'd unseasonable, either to resume the Debate, or prosecute the Discourse.

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### DISCOURSE XIII.

*Upon drawing the Boat to the Shore.*

WHEN we were now come to the place where we were to be Landed, least the Boat should be carried away by the Stream before we could step Ashore, the Owner of it reach'd out his long Pole, and by means of the Crook, taking fast hold of the Bank, he drew the Pole towards him

him with all his might, and thereby brought the Boat to Shore. This endeavour of the Water-man's, and the effect of it, inviting *Eusebius* to smile a little, gave me the Curiosity, as soon as we were Landed, to enquire why he did so : It is almost as ordinary, (answers *Eusebius*) for Men to think themselves wiser than God, as 'tis impossible for them really to be so. Those that study nothing but to obtain their Ends, and that scruple at nothing they judge conducive to them, do oftentimes lay their designs and plots with so much Artifice and Subtilty, that they do not doubt, that, whatever may become of God's designs, and of his promises, and threats, those which themselves have laid so Politickly cannot but succeed. And even pious and well-meaning Persons, that have the opportunity to discern the Politick ways that these Men take to compass their Ends, are oftentimes tempted to needless Fears, that Divine providence will be puzzl'd and distress'd by them ; and to think, that for Reasons secret, though just, Providence may be put by these Mens craft to play an after-game in the World to come. But in such cases, it often fares with these grand Designers, as it did just now with our Water-man : He had fastened his Grapling-Iron to the Shore, and putting to his utmost strength, did so forcibly endeavour to draw it towards him, that



that one, that did not know that the Shore was fixt, might expect this Lusty Fellows endeavours capable to put into Motion whatever he so forcibly drew towards him : But the Shore being fixt, and immoveable, instead of making that come to him, his very strainings drew him and his Boat to that. Thus the contrivers of the proud Pile of *Babel*, whereby they meant (not, as most imagine, to secure themselves against a second Flood ; the Text being silent as to that Aim, and a Plain being a very improper place for such a purpose, but) to make themselves a Name, and prevent Dispersion. These ambitious Contrivers, who had laid their Plot so hopefully, that they had engag'd no less than Mankind, and who probably had Designs as rais'd as their intended Fabrick, since those Expressions of him, that knew their Hearts, (*And this they begin to do, and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do*\*) seem'd me-thinks to warrant my Conjecturing, that those had designs very aspiring, that intended but to make a Rise to their soaring flight of a Tower, whose Top should reach unto Heaven. But the Policy of these ambitious Builders being contrary to the charitable decree of God, to have the Earth Peopl'd, he made use of that very conspiracy, that brought them together, to effect that

\* Gen. xi. 6.

which

which they conspir'd to prevent ; so, that now the remotest Parts of the Inhabited World are but the Colonies of *Babel*, whose scattered Architects have indeed made themselves a Name, but upon a quite contrary Account than they intended or expected. Thus the Purlblind envy of *Joseph's* Brethren, having made them resolve to prevent his future Dreams of Superiority over them, made them think, that, by Selling him for a Slave, they had taken sufficient Order he should never come to be their Master. And yet we see, that *Joseph's* being sold into *Egypt*, was made use of by the wise Orderer of humane Affairs, to make him in effect Lord of that rich and populous Kingdome ; and thereby, of his envious Brethren ; *Pharoah's* Dreams having advantageously made him amends for the hardships his own had expos'd him to. So the proud Favourite of *Ahasuerus* questionless thought he could scarce miss his Ends, when, by the Counsel of his Friends, and, as he fondly thought, of his Gods too, he provided for *Mordecai* that fatal Gibbet, which probably he might have escap'd, if he had not erected it. Thus the High Priest and *Sanhedrin* of the Jews, seem'd to Act with much Policy, though no Justice, when they resolv'd upon the death of our Saviour, lest, as the Gospel tells us, the *Romans* should come and Destroy their Temple, and Nation, which  
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whether indeed it did not rather procure than divert the coming of the *Romans*, the Church History can inform you. Nay, the Old Serpent himself, that Arch-politician, that was the Instructor of those others I have been naming, even in his chiefest Masterpiece, found himself the most Over-match'd by him, to whom the Scripture ascribes the taking of the Wise in their own Craftiness.\* For questionless, he highly applauded his own Subtilty, and seem'd to have taken the directest and most prosperous way to his impious Ends, that could be devis'd, when, having made *Herod* and *Pilate* Friends upon such terms, that the Lamb of God should be the Victim of their new Confederacy, he had engaged both Jews and Gentiles in a ruinous and tragick Conspiracy to Kill the Prince of Life, and by that unparallel'd Crime at once destroy the Divels chief Enemy, and make God theirs: And yet the Event has sufficiently manifested, that the Apostle might well affirm, that Christ by his Death destroy'd him that had the Empire of Death, the Divel,† and that Satan's Kingdome never receiv'd so deadly a Wound, as that which pierc'd our Crucify'd Saviour's side. Wherefore in short, (concludes *Eusebius*) the Decrees of Providence are too solid and fixt to have Violence offered them by humane

\* Job v. 13. ; 1 Cor. iii. 19.

† Heb. ii. 14.

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Attempts, how specious soever they be ; and those that think to bring God to their Bent, will find at long Running, that they have to do with One, whose Power and Wisdome are so Over-ruling, that not only he can frustrate their utmost endeavours, but make those very endeavours frustrate themselves, and employ Mens subtlest Policies to accomplish those very things they were design'd to defeat.

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## DISCOURSE XIV.

*Upon Catching store of Fish at a Baited place.*

**A**S soon as we were come to the place the Fisher-man told us of, we found it as plentifully stor'd with Fish as he had fore-told us, and caught more in some few Minutes than we had taken in a whole hour before : But we did not half so much marvel at this, as we were pleas'd with it, because the Fisher-man inform'd us, that he had liberally Baited the place over-night with Corn, as well as Worms ; whil'st this pleasant Exercise lasted, *Eusebius* marking how great a Resort of Fishes there was in that place, and how fast we drew them up, upon comparing what he saw happen, with the Occasion of it, thus acquainted us with the thoughts thereby suggested to him. Those (says he) that Yester-day in the Evening  
might

might see this man (pointing at the Fisher-man) throw in his Baits by handfulls into this place, and then depart, as minding them no more, were probably, if they knew not his Design, and the Custom of Fishers, tempted to think him a wastfull Prodigal, or at best a venturous Fool, to bury his Corn in the River, and throw his Baits to be caught up by Fishes, that for ought he knew would never come back to thank their Host. But those that know (what we now find) how profitable a Course this is wont to prove, would, instead of thinking such a practice a piece of Folly, look upon it as a piece of Providence: For though he be sure not to recover in kind the things he cast upon the Waters, yet such a loss is wont to prove very gainful unto him, whil'st he loses but a Grain of Corn or a Worm, to obtain Fishes of far more Value. Thus, though the purblind World may think a liberal Almes-giver, or a generous Confessor, a Fool, or a Prodigal, whil'st they only consider him as one that throws away what he has in present Possession, and seems not so much as to hope for the recovery of the same Goods, or any of the like Nature; yet those whose Eyes being Illuminated with a Heavenly light, are thereby enabled to look into the vast and distant Regions of the future, and to descry there the final Issues of all Temporal things, will be so far from thinking

ing him unwise, for parting with unsatisfying Trifles, to procure the highest and most permanent Goods, that they will think his Proceedings far more justifiable in point of Prudence, than we now think the Fisher-man's: Nor will the parting with a great Fortune, as freely as with a lesser, any more alter the Case, than the Fisher-mans throwing in his bigger Worms, and grains of Corn, with no more scruple than his lesser: For Heaven does as well incomparably outvalue the greatest, as the least Goods poor Mortals can lay out for it; and he, who has all things to give, and is infinitely more than all himself, has promis'd, that those that Sow plentifully, shall reap so too; and though the least of future Acquists would Incomparably transcend the greatest Price that can be here given for it, yet the future Rewards will betwixt one another bear a proportion to the Occasions of them; and as the Fisher-man is sure to lose what he throws into the Water, and is not sure to get by it any thing of greater Value than some Fishes; the Christian-Adventurer, (if I may so call him) may hope, though not confidently promise himself, in this World the hundred fold mention'd by our Saviour, as well as in the World to come Life everlasting. And therefore, if we do indeed in Saint *Paul's* Language, look, not to the things which are seen, which are but Temporary,

rary, but to the Invisible ones which are Eternal,\* we shall think that Exhortation of his very Rational, as well as very Pious, where, having Discours'd of the future and glorious State of the true Christians, he concludes, *Wherefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; for as much as you know, that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord.* †

## DISCOURSE XV.

*Upon the Magnetical Needle of a Sun-Dyal.*

**W** E had not yet dismiss'd the Water-man, when *Eugenius* chancing to express a Curiosity, to know what a Clock it was, when we had freshly begun to Angle at our new Station; as *Lindamor* and the rest drew their Watches to satisfie his Question, so the Boat-man took out of his Pocket a little Sun-Dyal, furnished with an excited Needle to direct how to Set it, such Dyals being used among Mariners, not only to show them the hour of the Day, but to inform them from what quarter the Wind blows; upon the sight of this Dyal, my natural Curiosity invited

\* 2 Cor. iv. 18.

† 1 Cor. xv. 58.

me,

me, after it had told me the hour, to try whether the Magnetick Needle were well touched, by drawing a little Penknife out of a pair of Twises I then chanced to have about me, and approaching it to the North point of the Needle, which according to the known custom of such Needles, readily followed it, or rested over against it, which way soever I turned the Penknife, or whereabout soever I held it still; *Eusebius* seeing me give myself this Diversion, came up to me to be a sharer in my sight, which no Familiarity can keep from being a Wonder: But after a while, he look'd upon it in a way that made me think it presented him somewhat else than the hour of the Day, or the corner of the Wind; and I was confirm'd in that thought, by seeing him apply to it the case of *Lindamor's* Watch, and then a Diamond-ring pluck'd from his own Finger, and in effect, he soon began to tell me; Me-thinks, *Philaretus*, this Needle may afford us a good direction in the choice of Companies: And that is a matter of such moment, that some Divines perhaps would question, whether or no the direction it gives Navigators to find the Poles, be of much greater Importance: For not only it has been truly observed, that the choice of ones Company does exceedingly discover whether a Man be Good, or Bad, Wise, or Foolish; but I shall venture to add,  
s that



that it does very much contribute to *make* him what others say it declares him ; For an assiduous Converse does insensibly dispose and fashion our Minds and Manners to a resemblance with those we delight to converse with, and there are few that have so much Resolution, as to disobey Customs and Fashions, especially when embraced by Persons that we love, and would be esteemed by, and from whose Opinions and Practices we can scarce dissent constantly without impressing a Dislike, that threatens to make them dislike us. For my part, (says *Lindamor*) I have always thought there is great difference betwixt keeping Company with some Men, and choosing to do so ; For whilst we Live in this World, we must often have to do with the Lovers of the World : But though to be cast by the Exigencies of our Callings upon bad Company, be an Infelicity without being a Fault, yet certainly, to *choose* such Company, and prefer it before that of wise and good Men, is in a high Degree both the one and the other. And I confess, (continues he) I cannot think, that the proper use of Conversation is but to *pass away* our time, not to *improve* it.

You are certainly much in the right, (subjoyns *Eusebius*) for though too many of those that are now cried up for good Company, do either so dissuade us from good and serious things, or so divert

vert us from them, that 'tis oftentimes counted a piece of Indiscretion to say any thing that may either enrich Men's Understandings, or awaken their Consciences; yet I cannot but think, that Conversation *may* be, as well as *ought* to be, rescued from being an Instrument to promote Idleness and Vice; and, if Men were not wanting to themselves, I doubt not, it may be so ordered, that Conversation, which so often robs Men of their time, and so frequently of their Devotion, might be made a great Instrument of Piety, and Knowledge, and become no less Useful than 'tis wont to be Pleasant.

To make Companies (replies *Lindamor*) such as you think they may be, they must grow very different from what most commonly they are: For, not to speak of those loose and profane ones, where Virtue and Seriousness are openly derided, and any thing, how contrary soever to Piety, or right Reason, may be used, not only with toleration, but applause, if Men can bring it out, I say not in Jest, (for they are seldome more in earnest) but neatly wrapt up in Raillery; even in those civiller sorts of Company, where Vice is not professedly maintained, you shall seldome, during a long stay, hear any thing that is really worth carrying away with you, or remembering when you are gone. And to Discourse of any thing that is

Grave enough, either to exercise Men's Intellects, or excite their Devotion, is counted a piece of Indiscretion, that is wont to be more carefully avoided than almost any thing that is really such; so, that even in such Companies, the Innocentest use that we are wont to make of our time, is, to lose it: And really, (continues *Lindamor*) when I consider how ensnaring the worser sort of Companions\* are, and how little, even those that do not openly defie Piety and Knowledge, are wont to cherish either of them; I begin to be reconciled to *Hermites*, who fly from such Conversations as are apt to make Men either Vitious, or at least Idle, into those Solitudes, where they are not like to be Tempted, either to renounce their Devotion, or to suppress; it, to entertain idle Thoughts, or stifle good ones: Nor could I without much Scruple, as well as Impatience, allow my self to spend some part of my time in such kind of entertainments as many spend most of theirs in, were it not, that looking upon Civility as a Virtue, and Hospitality as in some cases a Duty, and upon both of them as things of good report, I can think those hours they make me spend, may be justly cast upon their account, and that the Ceremonious† and Insignificant conversations whereto they oblige me, may be undergone upon some such account

\* Ed. 2. "Companies."

† Ed. 1. "Ceremonies."

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as that, on which serious Parents converse and oftentimes play with their Children ; for, as though the things they do, are in themselves trivial, and useless, yet they may be justifiable Effects of a paternal care to still a Child, or keep him from harming himself; so the Duty of exercising of Civility makes me look upon as justifiable, though unpleasant, those Expressions of it, which, in themselves considered, I could not Reflect on without Indignation, and could not but think very much below any Man, whom Education has fitted for the exercise of Reason, or whom Religion has elevated to the hopes of Heaven.

But it may (says *Eusebius*) on the other side be represented, that since 'tis scarce possible not to meet sometimes with Companies that are not of the best sort, we should look upon those Necessities, as calls of Providence, to improve those Opportunities for the advantage of them we are engaged to converse with ; for Nature, as well as Christianity, teaches us, that we are not Born only for our selves, and therefore, as we ought often to converse with the best Men, to acquire Virtue and Knowledge, so we must sometimes converse with others, that we may impart them, and learn how much we are beholden to God's Goodness, that has so much discriminated us from other Men ; and though we do not find that our  
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Conversation does immediately and visibly reform those we converse with, yet it will not presently follow, that it is altogether ineffectual on them: For, besides that the seeds of Virtue and Knowledge, as well as those of Plants, may long seem to lye dead, even in those Soils wherein they will afterwards Flourish and Fructifie; there may be at present a Good, though not a Conspicuous, Effect of your Discourse and Example. For when Men are hasting to Hell, he does them no small Service, that does so much as Retard their course, as Cordials, and other Medicines, may do good even to decrepid Old men, whom they cannot perfectly cure.

And trust me, *Lindamor*, 'tis no such useless performance as you may think it, for a Man of known Piety and Parts, by conversing with the Children of this Generation, *To* dare to own Religion among those that dare to deride it; *To* keep alive and excite a witness for God and Good things in their Consciences; *To* let them see, and make them (at least inwardly) acknowledge, the Beauty of a pious, Industrious, and well-ordered course of Life; *To* convince them, that it is not for want of knowing the Vanities they dote on, that he despises them; *To* shew, that a Man, that denies himself their sinfull Jollities, can live contented without them: And, (to dispatch) *To* manifest,

nifest, by a real and visible Demonstration, that a virtuous and discreet Life is no unpracticable, no more than Melancholy thing, ev'n in Bad times, and among Bad men. And says, *Eusebius*, to me it seems very considerable, that our Saviour himself, the great Author of our Faith, and Exemplar of our Piety, did not choose an Anchorites, or a Monastique Life, but a sociable and an affable way of conversing with Mortals, not refusing Invitations, even from Publicans, or to Weddings, and by such winning Condescensions gained the Hearts, and thereby a Power to reform the Lives, of multitudes of those he vouchsaf'd to converse with.

Other considerations (pursues *Eusebius*) might be represented to the same purpose with these : But since I promised you something of Direction, I suppose you will expect I should tell you, not what I *could* say, but what I *do* think. I will tell you then in few words, that though I think it as well possible as fit for men of radicated Virtue, and fine Parts, to make sometimes a good use of bad Company, especially when their lawful occasions cast them into it ; yet for others to be often engag'd in such Company, though it may be but an Infelicity, is a very great one ; and to choose such Company, is, what is worse than an Unhappiness, a Fault : But generally speaking, I would distinguish three sorts of Companies ; for there  
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are some, that not only are unable to improve me, but are unwilling to be improved themselves; A second sort there is, that are as well ready to learn, as able to instruct: And there are others, that, though they are not Proficients enough to teach me things worth my Learning, are yet desirous to be taught by me, the little that I know, and they ignore. Now, *as* the Magnetick Needle we were looking on, and which affords us the Theam of this Discourse, if you should apply a Loadstone to it, would be most powerfully attracted by that, because it can receive fresh Virtue from it; and even, if you approach a piece of Steel to it, the Needle will, though not so studiously, apply it self to it, from which, though it receives no Magnetick virtue, it can impart some to it: But if you offer it the Silver case of your Watch, or the Gold that makes up your Ring, or the Diamonds that are set in it, none of all these, how Rich or Glittering soever, will at all move the Needle, which suffers them to stand by unregarded; *So* I shall with the most of Chearfulness, and Application, seek the Company of those that are qualify'd to impart to me the Virtue or the Knowledge they abound with: Nor shall I refuse to entertain a Society with those few, that being such small Proficients as to need to learn of me, are also forward to do so. But those that can  
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neither teach me any thing that is Good, nor are disposed to let me teach it them, how great a shew soever they make, among those that make choice of their Companions by their Eyes ; I may be *cast upon* their Conversation, but shall very hardly *choose* it.

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## DISCOURSE XVI.

*Upon the Quenching of Quick-lime.*

I HAD almost forgot to relate, that not far from the place where we went on Shore, and which we had not yet quitted, we saw divers heaps of Quick-lime, some Smoaking, and some that had not yet been Drench'd in Water ; and upon Enquiry of those that look'd to it, we were soon inform'd, that the conveniency of the Neighbouring River, both for slacking of Lime, and conveying Mortar, had made the Owners bring their Lime thither, to be temper'd and made fit for the Reparation of some Houses that we saw a little way off: But while we were talking, one of the workmen began to throw Water upon one of the heaps that had not yet been Slack'd, and afterwards poured on so much more as serv'd quite to drown the Lime ; and *Eusebius* marking, both what



what he did, and what ensu'd upon it, took thence occasion to say to us ; He that should see only the Effect of the first Effusion of cold Water upon quick Lime, would think, that by a kind of Antiperistasis, the Internal heat of the Lime is rather increas'd than suffocated by the Coldness and Moisture of the Water ; for that which before was not taken notice of, to manifest any sensible warmth, as soon as its Enemy the Water begins to invade it, acquires a new heat and new forces in the Conflict, and not only shews a great impatience, or Enmity, to that cold Liquor, by acting furiously upon it, and throwing off many parts into the Air, but prevails so far as to heat that cold Element it self, to that degree, as to make it Smoak and Boil. But this Conflict is seldome near so lasting as 'tis eager ; for if you have but the Patience to stay a while, you shall see the Lime, after it has spent its occasional Ardour, and after its Fire is quench'd, lye quietly with, nay under, the Water, as cold and as moveless as it. Thus, when a devout Man, (especially if his Fervour be Adventitious from Education, or Custom, as the Fire in the Lime from the Calcination) first falls into the Company of Persons, either Profane, or otherwise grossly Vitious, we often see, that his Zeal, instead of being smother'd by such a rude and unaccustom'd Opposition, seems rather  
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to be excited and kindl'd thereby, and possibly seems more likely to impart the warmth of his Devotion to its Enemies than to lose any of it himself; but when he is constantly, or at least frequently, surrounded with such Company, you will too often see him lose as well his own Ardour as the endeavours of communicating it; and with those very Persons, that did at first kindle and exasperate his Zeal, you shall at last see him live very quietly, and perhaps manifest as little of Religious warmth as they; and that which at first did so strangely exasperate and discompose him, becomes after a while so familiar, as not at all to move him.

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## DISCOURSE XVII.

*Upon ones Talking to an Eccho.*

**W**E had possibly dwelt longer upon such Reflections, had I not been suddenly diverted by the repeated Clamours of a Voice, which each of us imagin'd he had very often heard: Whereupon, as it were, by common consent, we began to look round about us, to see if any of our little Company were missing, and finding that *Eugenius* was so, we readily concluded the Voice we heard, though somewhat alter'd by distance,  
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and other circumstances, to be his; and accordingly we hasted towards the place, whence we judg'd the Voice to proceed, that in case he were in any Distress, or had met with any Disaster, we might rescue or relieve him: But when we came near, we could now and then distinctly hear him speak some words so loud, and yet so incoherent and unable to compleat a Sense, as if he meant that all thereabouts should hear him, and no Body understand him. This made us double our Curiosity, and our Pace, till at length we descry'd him all alone in a solitary corner, wherein yet his Loudness kept us from believing he sought privacy: But as soon as he discover'd us, he seem'd both surpris'd and troubl'd at it; coming to meet us, he first begg'd our pardon, if having been Louder than he thought, he had put us to a trouble he did not intend; and then Laughing, ask'd us, if we did not think him Mad: but *Eusebius* smiling, told him, that before we could answer that Question, we must ask one of him, which was, what he had been doing. Whilst you, (answers *Eugenius*) were (I doubt not) better employ'd, my natural Curiosity seduc'd me to spend some time in Ranging about the places near the River-side, and as I was passing by this Field, the accidental Lowing of an Ox made me take notice, that this Neighbouring Hill and Wood, furnish this place with  
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an excellent Eccho, which I at first try'd only by Whooping and Hollowing; but afterwards diverted my self by framing my Questions so, as to make that Babling Nymph (for so you know the Poets will have Eccho to be) to Discourse with me.

For my part, (says *Lindamor*) I should by no means like her Conversation, because that two Qualities she has, which to me would very much discommend it: And to prevent our asking him what those Qualities were, One of them, (says he) is that she vouchsafes to Discourse indiscriminally with all commers that Talk to her, provided that they make Noise enough.

You are much in the right, (says *Eugenius*) for that easiness of admitting all kind of Company, provided Men have boldness enough to intrude into ours, is one of the uneasiest Hardships, (not to say Martyrdoms) to which Custom has expos'd us, and does really do more Mischief than most Men take notice of; since it does not only keep impertinent Fools in countenance, but encourages them to be very troublesome to wise Men. The World is pester'd with a certain sort of Praters, who make up in Loudness what their Discourses want in Sense; and because Men are so easie Natur'd as to allow the hearing to their Impertinencies, they presently presume that the things they speak are none; and most Men are so little able  
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to discern in Discourse betwixt Confidence and Wit, that like our Eccho, to any that will but talk loud enough they will be sure to afford answers. And, (which is worse) this readiness to hazard our Patience, and certainly lose our Time, and thereby incourage others to multiply idle words, of which the Scripture seems to speak threatningly, is made by Custom an Expression, if not a Duty, of Civility; and so even a Virtue is made accessory to a Fault.

For my part, (subjoyns *Eugenius*) though I think these Talkative people worse publick Grievances than many of those for whose prevention, or redress, Parliaments are wont to be assembled, and Laws to be enacted; and though I think their Robbing us of our time as much a worse Mischief than those petty Thefts for which Judges condemn Men, as a little Money is a less valuable Good than that precious Time, which no sum of it can either purchase or redeem; yet I confess, I think, that those of our great Lords and Ladies, that can admit this sort of Company, deserve it: For if such Persons have but minds in any measure suited to their Qualities, they may safely, by their Discouragement, banish such pitiful Creatures, and secure their Quiet, not only without injuring the Reputation of their Civility, but by advancing that of their Judgment. And I fear, (continues *Eugenius*)  
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that those who decline this Employment (and indeed Improvement) of their Titles, or other kinds of Eminency, do by their Remissness more harm than they imagine; For though the Judgment and Company of such Persons, be not always the best grounded, or the best chosen, yet their Quality or Station in the World makes it usually the most conspicuous, and the most consider'd. And I doubt not, there is no such Multitude of dis-interest Lovers of Good things, but that there be\* the fewer found Studious to express Wit and Virtue in Conversation, when they see, that in the Estimate of those that are look'd upon as the chief Judges of what is or is not good Company, the most empty and impertinent Prattle with confidence, or loudness, procures a Man at least as good a Reception as the best and most rational Discourse without it. And, which is yet worse, that Tyrannous thing, which we misname Civility, has so degraded Reason, as well as displac'd Piety, in Conversation, that if there be never so many Persons together, entertaining themselves with rational or instructive Discourse, in case there come in but one impertinent Creature that is below it, all these shall sink themselves to his Level, and as much debase their Discourse, as if they believ'd it fitter, that all the rational Conversers should fore-

\* Edit. 2. "will be."

go the Exercise and the Benefit of their Wit and Virtue, than that a Fool should not appear to talk as wisely as any of them; and thus they seem'd asham'd of their Attainments, instead of making him asham'd of his Ignorance, and reducing him to improve himself into a capacity of being fit for their Company; whereas, from a contrary practice, they might derive the great Advantage, either of freeing themselves from uninvited Companions, or of making them worth the having.

But, (subjoyns *Lindamor*) I remember I told you there was a second Quality, that I dislik'd in the Nymph I found you entertaining, and that is, that, when I will, I can make her speak to me, just what I please. I know (replies *Eugenius*) that a moderate degree of Complaisance, is not only in many cases allowed us by Discretion, but necessary to keep up the Pleasantness, not to say the very Peace, of humane Societies; For if all Men, at all times, spake their Minds freely; and did not soften one another by concealing their mutual Dislikes, and Dissents, and by certain outward Expressions of Kindness, or Respect, made by Complements and Gestures; Men have so many Imperfections, and so much Self-love with all, that scarce any two of them would endure one another; Nay, and in spite of that Indulgence, which provident Nature has implanted in all Animals, for  
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the preservation of their Species, in that of the Individuals that compose it, and as much as our own Faultiness has added to that Fondness; yet, I doubt, we shall scarce find one Man of a thousand, that would endure so much as himself, if we did not for the most part exercise Complaisance within our own Breasts, and did not as much flatter our selves, and disguise our selves, to our selves, as we flatteringly disguise our selves to others.

But, (continues *Eugenius*) when all this is said, I may endure, but I shall scarce choose and prize a Companion, that, like an *Eccho*, uses no liberty of his own, but allows me to direct whatever I would have to be answered me: And I know not whether I could not better like one that would ever dissent from me, than one that would never do so; I cannot look upon him either as my Friend, or as a Person worthy to be made so, who never evinces his being more concerned to advantage me, than to please me, by making use of the liberty of a Friend, and thereby shewing, that he considers not barely himself, but me; besides, that as there is no true Friendship where there is not an Union of Affections, so methinks there can be no good Company where there is not sometimes a Dissent in Opinions.

*Eusebius*, that was a Friend to Seriousness, with-

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out being an Enemy to Pleasantness, gathering from the long Pause made by his Friends, that they designed not the prosecuting of this Discourse any further; Me-thinks, Gentlemen, (says he, Smiling) you are very severe to a harmless Nymph, who is so modest, and reserved, that she will never put you upon beginning a Conference with her, and so Complaisant in it, that 'tis your own fault if ever she says any thing to you, that displeases you; and for my part, (continues he) I have that opinion of humane things, that as I think there are very few so perfect, but that we may find something in them fit to be shunn'd, so there are not many so imperfect, but that they may suggest to us somewhat or other, that may not be unworthy of our imitation; and as *Lindamor* has taken notice of two Qualities in our Eccho, which discommended it to him, so I have observed as many, that I rather approve than dislike.

For, in the first place, 'tis evident, that our Nymph (however *Eugenius* has been pleased to miss-call her a Babler) is much less Talkative than most of her own Sex, or indeed of ours; for she never begins to talk with any Body, not speaking unless she be spoken to. He that considers how much of the Discourse that wastes Men's time, and entertains the most Companies with the most applause, consists of Talk that tends either to  
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flatter those that are present, or detract from the absent, or to censure our Superiours, or our Betters, or to express our own Profaneness, or to excite the Pride or Carnality of others; and he that shall consider, that though by these and many other ways we are extremely apt to offend in words; yet we must give an Account for that kind of words, what sort soever be meant by them, which our Translators render *Idle ones*;\* and that the Judge himself tells Men, that they shall by their words, as well as by their actions, be justified, or condemned; will easily believe, that if Silence were as much in Fashion as 'tis charitable to Mankind to wish it, the Regions of Hell would be far thinlier Peopled than now they are like to be.

I could tell you, that Silence discovers Wisdom, and conceals Ignorance, and 'tis a property that is so much belonging to wise Men, that even a Fool, when he holdeth his peace, may pass for one of that sort; And I could easily add I know not how much in the commendation of this excellent Quality, if I knew how at the same time to praise Silence, and to practise it; so that it may as well pass for an excellency in the Nymph, whose Apology I am making, that she does not speak but when it is necessary she should, I mean, when she is spoken to, in such a way as does exact her answer.

\* Matt. xii. 36, 37.

But this is not all the good qualities of our Eccho ; for as she rarely speaks but when 'tis expected she should, so she seldome repeats above a small part of what is said to her ; this I account a very seasonable piece of Discretion, especially in such treacherous and fickle times as ours, where, almost as if he thought himself fit to be an universal States-man, such a one concerns himself very needlessly for almost all the publique Quarrels in Christendome, and shews himself zealous for a party which will receive no advantage by his disquiets ; and not content like a Merchant-venturer, his Passion may upon this account make him a Sufferer by what happens in the Remotest parts of the World ; In our own fatal Differences, (which 'tis almost as unsafe to speak freely of, as 'tis unhappy to be involv'd in them) he will on needless occasions declare, with his Opinion, his want of Judgment, and perhaps Ruine himself with those under whose Protection he lives, by spreading Reports, and maintaining Discourses, that rendred him suspected among those, who think that a Man must wish their Forces should be beaten, if he can think they may have been so ; Nay, I have known some, that, though put into considerable Employments, could not hold talking of their own Party, at a rate of freedome which those that have so much Innocence as not to deserve

serve it, will scarce have so much Goodness as to support it: So that me-thinks, these Men deal with their Fortunes as Children oftentimes do with their Cards, when having taken a great deal of pains to build fine Castles with them, they themselves afterwards ruine them with their Breath.

It may be a greater without being a more prejudicial piece of Folly, to believe all that one hears, than to report all that one believes; and especially, those are to be censured for want of our Nymphs reservedness, by whom it loses that name; for though those kind of Men make sure by their way of Talking, to make others take notice how much they are confided in by their own party, yet sure they would take a discreeter course, if they did but consider, that the proof they give, that they are trusted with secrets, is, that they are unfit to be so.

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### DISCOURSE XVIII.

*Upon a Giddiness occasion'd by looking attentively  
on a rapid Stream.*

**T**HESSE thoughts of *Eusebius* suggested so many to *Lindamor*, and me, that to entertain our selves with them, we walk'd silently a good way along the River-side; but at length, not hear-

hearing any more the Noise his Feet were wont to make in going, turning my self to see what was become of him, I perceiv'd him to be a pretty way behind me upon the Rivers brink, where he stood in a fixt Posture, as if he were very intent upon what he was doing. And 'twas well for him, that my Curiosity prompted me to see what it was that made him so attentive; for, before I could quite come up to him, me-thought I saw him begin to stagger, and though that sight added wings to my Feet, yet I could scarce come time enough to lay hold on him, and, by pulling him down backwards, rescue him from falling into the River. The shriek I gave at the sight of my Friends danger, was, it seems, loud enough to reach *Eusebius's* Ears, who, turning his Eyes towards the place whence the Noise came, and seeing *Lindamor* upon the Ground, made hastily towards us, and came up to us by that time I had help'd *Lindamor* up, and before I had receiv'd from him the obliging Acknowledgments he was pleas'd to make me for a piece of service that I thought had in it more of Recompence than Merit. *Eusebius* hearing what pass'd betwixt us, joyn'd his thanks to *Lindamor's*, and at the same time congratulated my Friend for his escape, and me for having, to use his Expressions, had the honour and satisfaction to be such a Person as *Lindamor's*

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Deliverer. But after our Expressions of Joy for his escape were over, *Eusebius* and I had both a curiosity to learn particularly the occasion of his Danger, which he told us in these words; As I was thinking, *Eusebius*, on your last Reflection, I was diverted from prosecuting my Walk in *Philaretus's* Company, by happening to cast my Eyes on a part of the River, where the Stream runs far more swiftly than I have all this Day taken notice of it to do any where else, which induc'd me to stop a while, to observe it the more leisurely: And coming nearer, I found the Rapidness of the Current to be such, notwithstanding the depth of the Water, that I stood thinking with my self, how hard it were for one to escape, that should be so unlucky as to fall into it; But whilst I was thus musing, and attentively looking upon the Water, to try whether I could discover the Bottom, it happened to me, as it often does to those that gaze too stedfastly on swift Streams, that my Head began to grow giddy, and my Leggs to stagger towards the River, into which questionless I had fell, if *Philaretus* had not seasonably and obligingly prevented it. Something like this (says *Eusebius*) does not unfrequently happen in the unwary consideration of some sorts of sinfull Objects, especially those suggested by Atheism and Lust: For not only we oftentimes consider Atheistical

istical suggestions, and entertain Libidinous fancies, without any intention to quit our Station, or the secure and solid Basis of Religion, and Chastity; but we are often inclinable to think, that we converse with these Objects only to discern their Formidableness the better, and fortifie our Resolutions to shun them. And yet such is the pernicious Nature of Atheism, and of Lust, that they turn our Brains, and oftentimes, if Providence, or Christian prudence, do not seasonably interpose, we may unawares fall into the Mischief, even by too attentively surveying its greatness, and may be swallowed up by the danger, even whilst we were considering how great it is. To parley with such fascinating Enemies, though with a design to refuse them, and strengthen our Aversion to them, is against the Laws of our Christian warfare: And though it be not as criminal, may often prove as fatal, as to hold Intelligence with the Enemy. 'Tis true, that the deformity of both these Sins is such, that all their Ugliness cannot be taken notice of at first sight: But the discovery is more dangerous than necessary, since a little knowledge of their Hideousness is enough to make every honest Heart abhor them. And since their less obvious Deformities are more dangerous to be pry'd into, than necessary to be known, let us fear to learn of these deluding Sins, more than we need know

know to hate them, and remember, that even those that are frighted by seeing Faces recently mark'd with the small Pox, may, notwithstanding that fear, catch the Disease with that sight.

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## DISCOURSE XIX.

*Upon ones Drinking Water out of the Brims of his Hat.*

WE were by this time come back to the Baited places we had left, when *Eugenius*, to whom his Rambling up and down, added to the heat of the Day, had given a vehement Thirst, spying a place where the Banks were very low, and almost level with the Surface of the Water, left us for a little while to repair thither; and Kneeling upon the Ground, he took up with his Hat, which by Cocking the Brims he turn'd into a kind of Cup, such a proportion of Water that he quench'd his Thirst with it; and carelessly throwing the rest upon the Ground, quickly return'd towards the Company, which he found he had not left so silently, but that our Eyes had been upon him all the while he was absent; and that sight afforded *Eusebius* an occasion to tell us, Our friend *Eugenius*, might, if he had pleased, by stooping lower



lower with his Head, have Drank immediately out of the entire River ; but you see he thought it more safe, and more convenient, to Drink out of a rude extemporary Cup ; and that this way suffic'd him fully to quench his Thirst, we may easily gather, by his pouring away of some remaining Water as superfluous : And if he should tell us, that he could not have quench'd his Thirst with a sufficient quantity of Water ; because he Drank it not out of the River, but out of his Hat ; I doubt not, you would think him troubl'd with a more formidable Distemper than Thirst, and conclude him in a greater need of Physick than of Water.

Thus (resumes *Eusebius*) to a sober Man, provided he have a Competency of Estate suited to his Needs and Condition, it matters not very much whether that Competency be afforded him by a moderate or by an exuberant Fortune, and oftentimes 'tis more safe and convenient, and no less satisfactory, to receive this Competency out of that which is but a little, than out of that which is a great deal more than enough ; for not only the necessities of Nature are few, but her capacities are limited. And therefore, how much soever you have of Meat, and Drink, and the like accommodations ; the Body of a Man can enjoy but a certain, and that too no very great, Measure of them, proportion'd to the Cravings of our stinted Nature,

Nature, by more than which 'tis not the Body, but the unruly Fancy, that is Gratify'd; as when the stomach is satisfy'd, a Table full of untouch'd Dishes feeds but a Man's Eye, or his Pride; and if he should Cram a little part of it into his Stomach, it would but be Nauseated at first, and afterwards breed ill Humours and Diseases. And accordingly, 'tis no less than *Solomon* that says, *When Goods encrease, they are encreas'd that Eat them; and what Good is there to the Owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their Eyes?\** I dare not absolutely (pursues he) condemn those that think not the necessities of Nature the only Measures of a Competency of Fortune; for though he that wants not them, wants a just cause to quarrel with Providence, yet Custom has so Entail'd some ways of Expence upon some Stations in the World, that since a Man can scarce Live without *Them*, and yet without Disgrace, there are but few who are so great Stoicks, or such mortify'd Christians, as not to think, that what is more than enough for one, may be less than enough for another, and as not to estimate their having or wanting a Competency, not only by the Exigencies of Nature, but by those of a Man's particular Quality, or Station. But (subjoyns *Eusebius*) he that has, in this liberal sense, a sufficiency of outward

\* Eccles. v. 11.

Goods,

Goods, is me-thinks but ill advis'd, as well as unthankful, if he repine at his Portion, because it is inferior to those of the famously Rich: For though an unwieldy Affluence may afford some empty Pleasure to the Imagination, (for to the Body it scarce affords any at all) yet that small Pleasure is far from being able to countervail the Imbittering cares that attend an over-grown Fortune: For whatever the unexperienc'd may imagine, the frequent and sad Complaints of the Rich themselves sufficiently manifest, that 'tis but an uneasie Condition, that makes our Cares necessary for things that are meerly superfluous; and that Men, whose Possessions are so much spread and display'd, are but thereby expos'd the fairer and wider Marks that may be hit in many places by misfortune. Nor will Carelessness secure them, since a provident concern of a Man's Estate, though it be great, being by the Generality of Men look'd upon as a Duty, and a part of Prudence, he cannot suffer himself to be wrong'd or cheated of that, without losing, with his Right, his Reputation.

For my part, (says *Lindamor*) I do the more wonder to see Men so greedy of *Lading themselves*, as the Scripture speaks, *with thick Clay*,\* that they Hoard up their Treasures from those uses which

\* Heb. ii. 6.

alone

alone make *Riches* worthy the Name of *Goods*, and Live by a temper quite contrary to that of Saint *Paul*, *As having all things, and possessing nothing.*\* When I consider the things they pretend to by this as mean as unchristian Appetite; The two chief of these, are wont to be, The keeping of a great House, and the leaving their Children great Matches. As to the former, though others are too much advantag'd by it not to extol it, and though it be sometimes indeed in some cases a decent, and almost necessary, piece of Greatness, yet 'tis in my opinion one of the most unhappy Attendants that retain to it; for the Laws of Hospitality, and much more those of Custom, turns him that keeps a great Table into an Honourable Host, subjects him to comply with the various and oftentimes unreasonable Humours of a succession of Guests, that he cares not for at all, and that care as little for him; it brings him in a world of Acquaintance, to whom he must own himself oblig'd, because they come to Eat his Meat, and must really requite them, by giving them the pretiosest thing he has to part with, *his Time*: And a full Table, together with the Liberties that Custom allows at it, if not exacts there, tempt him both to Indulgence to his Appetite, prejudicial to his Health, and if they do not prevail with him to speak, do often at least to

\* 2 Cor. vi. 10.

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dispose him to hear, and to connive at, such free Discourses as are prejudicial to his Interests ; so that there is more than one account upon which a great Entertainer may be involv'd in *David's* Curse, against his mortal Enemy, of having his Table become a Snare. \*

And for the design (continues *Lindamor*) of laying up vast Estates for a Man's Children ; if they be Sons, he thereby but encreases their Temptation to wish the Father Dead, and provides Incentives to their Vice, and Fuel for their Excesses, when he is so : And if they be Daughters, not to repeat the newly mention'd Inconveniences ; how many unhappy young Women have we seen, who, upon the score of the vast Portions left them by their Parents, have been betray'd, and sold by their Guardians, or by those *Relations* that should have been, as they were call'd, their *Friends*? and how often have we also seen, that an unwieldy Fortune has been so far from Purchasing the Heir to it a good Husband, that it has procur'd her a Bad one, by making her think her self oblig'd and qualify'd to Match with some high Title, and procuring her to be Haunted by some, whose Vices perhaps alone have reduc'd him to Sell himself to redeem his Fortune, and to make an Address which aims but at the Portion, not the Person ; and accordingly,

\* Ps. lxi. 22.

when

when he has got the one, he slightes the other, and *despises* her for the want of that high Extraction she priz'd in him, and perchance *hates* her too, for confining him from some former and more than pretended Passion.

I perceive then, *Lindamor* (says *Eusebius*) that you are, as well as I, dispos'd to think him not a meer Fool, that pray'd God to *give him neither Poverty, nor Riches, but to supply him with things suitable to his Condition*, Prov. 30. 8. (That seeming to be the meaning of the Hebrew Phrase ;) A pinching Poverty, and a luxuriant Fortune (though different Extremes) being liable to almost equal Inconveniences, and a Competency affording us enough to engage us to Thankfulness, without Administring such Temptations to Sensuality and Pride. †

## DISCOURSE XX.

*On seeing Boys swim with Bladders.*

**T**HE Sun was yet so near the Meridian, that if the Attention *Eusebius's* Discourses excited, had not diverted us from minding the heat of the Weather, we should have found it troublesome ; and in effect, soon after we had left listning to the conferences I have been repeating, we begun to feel a heat, uneasie enough to oblige us to retire  
from

from it: But taking several ways, as Chance or Inclination directed us, to shun the same inconvenience, it was my Fortune to hold the same course with *Lindamor*, and both of us, by following no Guide, but the design of shunning all beaten Paths, and unshelter'd Grounds, that being the likeliest way to reach our double end of Coolness and Privacy; after we had a while walk'd somewhat near the River-side, we were at length brought to a Shady place, which we should have found, as well as we wish'd it, a Solitude, if others had not concurr'd with us in the same hopes; for the Expectation of Privacy had brought thither divers, whom the Suns scorching heat invited to that cool and retir'd part of the River, where they hop'd to shun all other Eyes, as well as that of Heaven; among those Swimmers we observ'd some Novices, who, to secure their first Attempts, had Bladders ty'd under their Arms, to keep them from sinking any lower, This sight (says *Lindamor*, after he had a while mus'd upon it) hath Circumstances in it, that me-thinks are applicable enough to the Education of many of the young Ladies of these times; of whose faults, the Excellent *Celia*, and all the others, that you and I can think worth our Concern, are free enough to let me entertain you without Rudeness of them; the Commonness of these Blemishes ennobling those  
few

few that are exempted from them. You cannot then (continues *Lindamor*) but have observ'd with me, that many of those young Ladies, whose Parents, out of a mistaken Zeal, condemn'd that which at the Court was wont to be called *good Breeding*, and *Principles of Honour*, as things below a Christian, and insufficient to bring their Possessours to Heaven, are so unluckily Bred, and so ill Humour'd, as well as Fashion'd, that an almost equally unhappy Education is requisite to make their Company tolerable: Civility, which is almost as Essential to a compleat Lady, as her Sex, they are perfect Strangers to, or rude Despisers of it; and not only their Minds are not Imbu'd with those Principles of Friendship, Generosity, and Honour, which make some of their Sex so Lovely, and so Illustrious in Story, and of which more Ladies would be capable, if more were taught them; but these are utterly uninstructed in the Laws of what the French call *Bein seance*, and are altogether unpractis'd in that Civility, and suppleness of Humour, which is requisite to endear Conversation, and is so proper to the softer Sex. I must confess, (pursues *Lindamor*) that I never have been more puzzl'd how to behave my self then in their Company: The serious sort of Discourse, (ev'n such as is to be found in our fresher and more polish'd Romances) they

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are



are utterly incapable of; And in the trifling and pitifull Prattle that alone is not above them, they are so Unsociable, so Indiscreet, and oftentimes so Bold, that in spite of the respect, such as *Celia* gives me for her Sex, I find in their Conversations as much Exercise for my Patience as my Chastity, and being tempted to put off the respect that belongs to Ladies, as they do the modesty, I find it more difficult to retain my Civility than my Liberty. The Bladders (re-sumes *Lindamor*) which young Swimmers use, are, 'tis confess'd, but light and empty things, that are easily made useless; nay, though they help beginners, they are Cloggs to skilful Swimmers, and yet these Trifles are they that hinder Novices from sinking into the Mud: Thus Honour, though it be an Airy unsolid thing, nay, though it oftentimes proves a hinderance to great Proficients in Christianity, yet to Persons that have not yet attain'd to higher Principles, it is an excellent support, and hinders them from sinking into many Meannesses, and Miscarriages, into which, those especially of the fairer Sex, that want a due sense of Honour, are too apt to be precipitated: You know what Lord told his accused Lady, that he knew she was too proud to be a Whore. And certainly, though Principles of Gallantry include not all Virtues, yet they avert those  
those

those they sway from grosser Vices: And though to be well Bred, be not to be a Saint, but incomparably inferiour to it: yet to be both, is more desirable than to be the latter only: And they are very unwise, who, before they are sure their Children will admit the higher and more perfect Principles of Religion, neglect to give them that Education that may render Moral Accomplishments acceptable to *Them*, and *Them* to well bred Company, lest by proving indispos'd to Spiritual graces, their not having been taught the Moral Ornaments of the Mind, leave them destitute of all good Qualities.

*THE TRANSITION.*

Containing

A DISCOURSE

*Upon the Sports being interrupted by Rainy weather.*

**N**OTWITHSTANDING the Serenity and Promisingness of the Morning we came out in, we have already upon the Water had one proof of the unsetl'dness of the Weather, and now upon the Land we meet with another: For, by that time *Lindamor* was come somewhat near the end

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of

of his Discourse, he was oblig'd to hasten to it, by the approach of a Cloud, whose Largeness and Blackness threatned us with an imminent Show'r: Nor did it give us a false Alarm, for by that time we could recover the next Shelter, the Show'r we fled from, began to fall violently enough upon the Trees, we were retir'd to. And this unwelcome accident reducing us all to look about us, we quickly saw, to our Grief, that not only the *Rain* but the Clouds were increas'd, and the Sky being almost every where over-cast, left us no way to escape the inconveniences it threatned us with, but the making with what haste we could towards the place, over which we perceiv'd smoke enough, to conclude there was some Village beneath it: And finding at our Arrival thither, as good an Inn, as we could reasonably expect in such a place, after we had a while dry'd our selves by the Fire, *Eugenius* (to whom Exercise and the time of the Day had given a good Stomach) mov'd the Company, that in spite of the meanness of the House, we might rest ourselves there, till we had Drest the Fish we had taken, to make up the best Dinner the place would afford: This motion I did not alone readily assent to, but seconded it, by representing, that probably by that time we had Din'd, we should either recover some fair Weather, or lose the hopes of regaining it for that Day. To  
which

which I added other considerations to persuade the Company, though, That indeed which prevail'd with me, was, the expectation of having an opportunity while Dinner was providing, to retire, as I soon after did, into another Room, and set down in short hand, what I have hitherto been relating, lest either delay should make the particulars vanish out of my Memory, or they should be confounded there by the accession of such new Reflections, as, in case a fair Afternoon should invite us to return to the river, *Eusebius* would probably meet with Occasions of presenting us. But before I could handsomely slink away, I happen'd to be entertain'd a while with some things of the like Nature with those I was about to set down: For this unwelcome change after so glorious and hopeful a Morning, did naturally suggest to all of us, some thoughts of the Mutability and Fickleness of Prosperity, and how easily, as well as quickly, we may be depriv'd of that we cannot easily part with. But whilst the rest of us were entertaining themselves with these thoughts, *Eugenius*, who was more concern'd than any other of us, for the sport he came for, having a good while look'd with melancholy Eyes upon this change, began to repine and murmur at the interruption, which the persisting Rain continued to give him in it: Whereupon *Lindamor* took occasion to say,  
for

for my part, if I could dissipate these Clouds with a wish, I should scruple at the Ridding myself of them, ev'n at so easie a Rate: For I see, that the Gaping clefts of the parched Ground do, as it were with so many Mouths, proclaim its need of the Rain you repine at. And I always, (continues he) am ready to joyn with the Husbandman in his wishings, as well for Rainy as for fair Weather, and am so much a Common-wealths Man, that I had rather at any time not escape a Showr, than let him want it.

You are I confess, (says *Eugenius*) now I think a little better on it, in the right, and have more reason to be discontented at my Impatience, than I at the Weather; for we should, ev'n in these lesser Occasions, as well as on greater, Exercise self-denial, and prefer a publick good to our private conveniences: And indeed it were far better, that I should miss some Fishes, than that thousands of Families should miss of Bread.

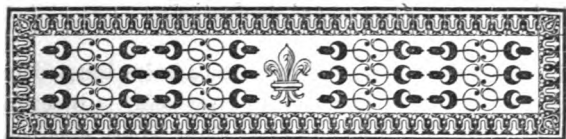
*Eusebius*, that had hitherto listen'd to what was said, being unwilling, that his Friends Ingenuity should make him any longer accuse himself, told him, (to divert the Discourse) This accident, *Eugenius*, was suggesting to me, a thought, where-with I shall not scruple to acquaint you, and the Company. For (continues he) as pleasant, and as much desir'd, as fair Weather is wont to be, and

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as much as we use to be discontented at a lowring and dropping sky, yet the one is no less necessary nor useful in its season, than the other. For too uninterrupted a course of Heat, and Sun-shine, would make the season fruitful in nothing, but in Caterpillars, (or such kind of Vermine) and in Diseases, and is far more proper to fill Graves, than Barns: Whereas seasonable vicissitudes of Clouds, and cloudy Weather, make both the Ground fruitful, and the Season healthful. Thus in our outward Condition, too long and constant a prosperity is wont to make the Soul Barren of all, but such Wantonnesses as 'tis ill to be fruitful of, and the interposition of seasonable Afflictions is as necessary, and advantageous, as it can be unwelcome. But (pursues *Eusebius*) the consideration that chiefly entertain'd me, was this, That as *here*, to make the Earth fruitful, the face of Heaven must be now and then obscur'd, and over-cast, we must be depriv'd of the welcome pleasure of the Sun to receive the fertilizing Benefit of the Rain; so such is our condition here below, that our perverseness makes it necessary, that God should oftentimes appear to frown upon us, to make us fruitful in those Works, to which he is pleas'd to vouchsafe his smiles. But, Oh! (concludes *Eusebius*, lifting up his eyes and hands towards Heaven) how happy shall we be in that glorious and everlasting

ing Day, *when* our Condition shall be as blessed in not requiring Vicissitudes as in not being subject to them. *When* the Sun-shine alone shall perform all that is wont to be done here both by it, and by the Rain; and the Soul, like *Ægypt*, being fruitful without the assistance of the Clouds, we shall not need to have our joys Eclips'd, to have our Graces kept from being so, or to make our Light shine the brighter: But each blessed Soul shall be emblem'd by that Vision in the Revelations, where St. *John* saw an *Angel standing in the Sun*,\* we shall not then need to have our Love wean'd from inferiour or undue Objects, by any Experience of their Imperfections; since the clear Discovery that God will vouchsafe us of his own Excellencies will abundantly suffice to confine our Affections to them: And since the works wherein we are to be fruitful in Heaven will be but to admire and thank him, that is infinite in Beauty, and in goodness, the perfecter sight and fruition we shall have of his astonishing as well as ravishing Attributes, will but proportionably increase our Wonder, and our Praises, and will naturally make us as Grateful *For* such a state as happy *In It*.

\* Rev. xix. 17.



OCCASIONAL  
REFLECTIONS.

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The V. SECTION.

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REFLECTION I.

*Upon the sight of N. N. making of Syrup  
of Violets.*

ONE that did not know the Medicinal Vertues of Violets, and were not acquainted with the Charitable Intentions of the skilful person, that is making a Syrup of them, would think him a very great Friend to *Epicurism*: For his Employment seems wholly design'd to gratifie the senses. The things he deals with are Flowers and Sugar, and of them he is sollicitous to make a Composition that may delight more than one or two senses; For in One Syrup he endeavours to please the Eye, by the loveliness of the Colour; the Nose, by the perfume of the Scent; the Taste,  
by



by as much sweetness as Sugar can impart. But he that knowing that Violets, though they please the Palate, can purge the Body, and notwithstanding their good smell, can expel bad humours, knows also that the Preparer of these fragrant Plants, in making their Juice into a Syrup, is careful to make it acceptable, that its pleasantness might recommend it, and invite ev'n those to prove its Vertues, who had rather continue sick, than make Trial of a disgusting Remedy; will not blame his Curiosity, but commend his prudent Charity; since he doubly obliges a Patient, that not onely presents him Remedies, but presents him Allurements to make use of them.

If I see a person that is Learned and Eloquent, as well as pious, busied about giving his Sermons, or other devout Composures, the Ornaments and Advantages which Learning or Wit do naturally confer upon those productions of the Tongue, or Pen, wherein they are plentifully and judiciously employ'd; I will not be forward to condemn him of a mis-expencc of his Time or Talents: *whether* they be laid out upon Speculative Notions in Theology, *or* upon Critical Inquiries into Obsolete Rites, or Disputable Etymologies; *or* upon Philosophical Disquisitions or Experiments; *or* upon the florid Embellishments of Language; *or* (in short) upon some such other thing as seems  
extrin-

extrinsecal to the Doctrine that is according to Godliness, and seems not to have any direct tendency to the promoting of Piety and the kindling of Devotion. For I consider, that as God hath made man subject to several wants, and hath both given him several allowable appetites, and endowed him with various faculties and abilities to gratifie them; so a man's Pen may be very warrantably and usefully employ'd, though it be not directly so, to teach a Theological Truth, or incite the Reader's Zeal.

And, besides what I have been alledging, there is a further and more principal Consideration which belongs to this matter. For ev'n wise men may prosecute the same design, without doing it all of them the same way; and the several Means and Methods they imploy, notwithstanding a great Difference in other particulars, may agree in this, That the Respective Chusers of them had each of them a good Aim, and proceeded in a rational way. Though therefore I see a man of good parts, studious of learning, or of practising, the Precepts of Eloquence, and spend much time in reading florid Composures, or in making such; I dare not be forward to censure him, for an effeminate or useless Writer. For there are so many things pious or laudable, and so many ways whereby some or other of them may either be  
directly

directly promoted, or indirectly serv'd, by removing Objections, or other Impediments, that 'tis not easie to be sure that a Rational Man cannot have as well a Rational as a well-meant design to *instruct*, if not *reform*, in those very Composures that seem fitted onely to *delight*. There being a Nicer sort of Readers which need Instruction (and to whom 'tis therefore a Charity to give it) who are so far from being likely to be prevailed on by Discourses not tricked up with Flowers of Rhetorick, that they would scarce be drawn so much as to cast their eyes on them.

A while before *Esther* made that generous Attempt, wherein, to rescue the people of God, she hazarded a Throne, to which above an hundred other Peoples paid homage, and ventur'd at once the greatest Crown and the fairest Head in the world; One that had seen onely what she was doing, without knowing why she did it, would perchance have thought her employ'd, more like a Disciple of *Epicurus*, than of *Moses*, whose people and her own was then in a forlorn and gasping condition. For the Scripture telling us, that *she put on her Royal apparel*,\* and the Tenour of the story intimating with what aim she did it, we may well suppose that she was not sparing in Jewels, and other of the richest Ornaments, on an Occa-

\* Esther v. 1.

sion

sion where her Quality exacted that she should appear with a Magnificence befitting the greatest Princess in the world; and that she was very curious in a Dress that was to heighten her Beauty, when by That, with the Giver's assistance, she was upon her knees to dazle the world's greatest Monarch on his Throne, and make Him pay Homage to her Charms, to whom above an hundred Nations had presented their fairest Productions, (the brightest Nymphs of the East.) And those that have read any thing of the Asiatick Luxury, will easily believe our pious Queen to have been also very sollicitous about the choice and ordering of her Sweet-meats, when she was to treat an Asian Monarch, who had treated the whole People of the chief City of the world for many days together, and as many Princes as made up the Noblest part of Mankind for above twenty times as long: and yet this Magnificent Queen, that seem'd busi'd about none but sensual Imploiments, had so commendable a Design both in her Ornaments and in her Banquets, that so meritorious an Imploiment of her Greatness shew'd her to be worthy of it; and as it appear'd in the Event, that her Banquets did co-operate with her Fasts, and her Royal Robes with *Mordecay's* Sack-cloth and Ashes, to that happy rescue of her Nation, for which, after so many Ages, it doth to  
this

this day yearly celebrate her Memory. So whilst she seem'd busied to gratifie others sensuality and her own pride, her Disposition of Mind was so worthy the Success that crown'd her Attempt, that at the same time she was providing all that Pomp and those Delicacies, she was also providing to give them up, and sacrifice them, for the Interest of God's Church, and her People; generously venturing for the service of Heaven a Height of Prosperity, for whose loss nothing but Heaven it self could make her amends.

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## REFLECTION II.

*Upon the sight of a Paper-Kite in a windy day.*

Eugenius, Lindamor.

*Eug.* **I**F the Air were calm and quiet, this Kite would lie unregarded ev'n by those very Youths, that now look at nothing else. But the wind that blows away straws and feathers, and throws down leaves, does even by its being contrary, help to raise this Paper-Engine to that admired heighth, which makes it be gaz'd at by many others, than Boys, and not onely attract our eyes, but sometimes soar out of their reach. Thus, if a great Person, for Courage, or Parts, or both, have

have the ill fate to live in quiet, and peaceful times, he may long enough languish unregarded in an Age that needs him not. But if the times grow troublesome and dangerous, his generous spirit will not onely surmount the difficulties that are wont to attend them, but be rais'd by them, and turn them into steps to Glory and Preferment.

*Lind.* Me-thinks, *Eugenius*, these Kites may afford us no less fit a resemblance of the fate of some Errours about Religion, especially if they chance to be maintain'd by Men that are resolute, and viceless. For there are some of these conceits so fond, and groundless, that they could not long subsist of themselves, and would soon cease to tempt a solemn Opposition, if they did not too soon meet with it. And as you were observing to another purpose, that these artificial Kites, which men take no notice of in calm weather, are both elevated and kept aloft by the blasts of contrary winds, so these erroneous Opinions I speak of, would, if they were let alone, grow quickly unregarded; whereas needless or ill manag'd Persecutions of Doctrine, not Prejudicial to Government, (for 'tis onely such that I mean) bring them into every body's Eye, and give them a Repute, that nothing else would have procur'd them, and make them be look'd upon as things of a sublime and celestial nature, that lead to that Heaven,  
they

they seem to aspire to. To thrive by Persecution, though it be a great Advantage, yet it is not the incommunicable Prerogative of Divine Truths; And though it be certain that they get most by it, yet even Errors do often gain by it too, there being certain Advantages that accrue to Opinions, by being persecuted, without distinguishing whether they be true, or false. For men that are persecuted for their Religion, are generally careful to instruct themselves thoroughly in it, and furnish themselves with Arguments to defend it. The frowns of the Magistrate, and the watchful Eyes of their Adversaries, are strong Disswasives to them from doing any thing that may arm his hand, or provoke other's tongues against their Sect, to which they know their personal faults will be imputed. And above all this, their sufferings entitle them to popular commiseration, which is a thing that distress does so much invite, that even condemn'd Malefactors seldome want a share in it. And to some of these men Persecution is the more favourable, because it puts them upon fighting with the weapons they can best handle. For some are far better at Suffering, than at Disputing, and can more easily endure a Prison, than answer a Syllogism. And as this Constancy is often their best Argument, so is it an Argument, that the Generality of Men best understand, and  
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consequently is likely to be most wrought on by, so that the more harsh than effectual way wherein they are dealt with, gives them the opportunity to display a Resoluteness, that makes most men think them well meaning, and in earnest, and their own Party cry them up for Martyrs, or at least Confessors; which, in case that (as it happens in most States) scandalous sins be left unpunished at the same time, that Harmless Errours are so severely dealt with, gives them the fairer opportunity to insinuate into the minds of the people, that their Persecutors had rather see men vitious, than inquisitive. And, generally speaking, any personal sufferings that a well-meaning man undergoes for what he judges his Conscience, is but such a kind of burden to his mind, as feathers are to an Eagle, or a Falcon, which though in themselves consider'd they have a weight, yet instead of clogging him, they not onely help him to support himself, but enable him to soar towards Heaven, and reach a height that makes him prais'd or wonder'd at.

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### REFLECTION III.

*Killing a Crow (out of a window) in a Hog's-trough, and immediately tracing the ensuing Reflection with a Pen made of one of his Quills.*

**L**ONG and patiently did I wait for this unlucky Crow, wallowing in the sluttish Trough, (whose sides kept him a great while out of the reach of my Gun) and gorging himself with no less greediness, than the very Swinish Proprietaries of the Feast, till at length having guzzl'd and croak'd enough, when by hovering over his beloved Dainties, he had rais'd himself high enough, to prompt me to fire at him, my no less unexpected, than fatal shot, in a moment struck him down, and turning the Scene of his Delight into that of his Pangs, made him abruptly alter his Note, and change his triumphant Chant for a dismal and tragick Noise. This Method is not unusual to Divine Justice towards brawny and incorrigible Sinners, whose Souls no less Black, than this inauspicious Bird's feathers, do wear already the Livery of the Prince of Darkness, and with Greediness do the works of it, whose Delights are furnish'd (as the Feasts of Crows are by Carrion) by their own filthy lusts, or other people's faults, and who by the Oaths and Curses where-

wherewith they offend Christian ears whilst they live, and by the ill odour they leave behind them when they are dead, do but too much justify my resembling them to these hateful Creatures. Such sensual and obdurate Epicures, I say, God oft-times suffers to run on their long Carrier, in paths of their own chusing, without checking them in the fruition of those Joys, which are to be their onely Portion, till at length *their iniquity filling up the determinate measure,\** he cuts them off, in the height of their Injoyments, and employing oft-times their own sins for their Executioners, or at least Instruments of their Destruction, precipitates them headlong from the Pinnacle of their Delights, into the bottomless Pit, which one of their Predecessors (the rich man in the Parable) call'd, as he sadly found it, the *Place of Torment,†* where the luscious sweets of sin are so dearly reckon'd for, and afford so much *Bitterness in the latter end,‡* that their sense sadly convinces them, of (what their sensuality kept them from believing) the folly of gaining any thing at the rate of losing their own Souls. Thus the Israelitish Prince found a *Nemesis* bold enough to violate the Sanctuary, even of his Mistress's arms, and regardless of its charms) enter that lovely Circle, their Kindness clos'd him in, to snatch him thence,

\* Gen. xv. 16.

† Luke xvi. 28.

‡ 2 Sam. ii. 26.

and extinguish the lustful flames that lighted him thither,\* with the cold blasts of Death. Thus the mutinous Loathers of Manna, and lusters after flesh, had their wish severely granted, for they had indeed Quails serv'd in by fields-full, but attended with so sudden and sharp a Reckoning, that *whilst the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chew'd,*† Death hindred them to swallow it, choak'd them with it, and devour'd them as greedily, as they did those Birds. Thus the insolent Philistins found themselves ill protected by their vainly celebrated God,‡ and his (much stronger) Temple, though in the latter there were thousands of them, without any other Enemy, than one, they had sent for to be a friend to their Mirth. For in the very midst of all the Triumphs of a solemn Festival (which had more properly been kept to *Dalilah*) whilst they were insulting over captive *Samson's* Blindness, they could not see their own approaching Destiny, though it were then so near, that the next fit of Laughter had not time to pass to their Mouths, ere an unexpected Vengeance (the provok'd Deity lending an Omnipotent Arm to *Samson's* hand) confounded in one Ruine, the Idol with the Worshippers, and suddenly turn'd the whole Temple into an Altar, with which the Priests themselves, fell surprized

\* Numb. xxv.

† Ibid. xi. 33.

‡ Judges xvi.

Sacri-

Sacrifices to that tragical Solemnity. And thus (to hasten from so sad a Theme) the revelling *Belshazzar*, in the midst of his Magnificent and Royal Feast, saw an intruding hand, which by its manner of appearing, as well as by what it wrote, was able to mar the Supper, without impairing the Dainties. And that Monarch, whom even a Siege could not reduce below a condition of Feasting, though he were carouzing in the consecrated Cups, had such a Brimmer of trembling put into his hand, as both presag'd and perchance began the Destiny approaching him under the Ensigns of the Noble *Cyrus*, whose Conquering Sword, guided by Providence, and made the Sword of Justice, did that very same night, let out his Wine, and Bloud, and Life together.

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*Upon the same Subject.*

' **T**IS hard on such an occasion to avoid making some Reflection upon the Mutability of worldly Conditions! How little did this Crow imagine, a quarter of an hour since, that in so short a time, his Body should be as senseless, and as stinking Carrion, as that he was wont to feed it with; that his feathers should wear so unlucky a kind of Mourning for his Destruction, and that

I

I should write his Epitaph with one of his own Quills! Sure since a few minutes can turn the healthiest Bodies into breathless Carcases, and put those very things into the hands of our Enemies, which were they that we principally reli'd on, for our safety, it were little less than Madness, to repose a distrustless Trust in these transitory Possessions, or treacherous Advantages, which we enjoy but by so fickle a Tenure. No; we must never venture to wander far from God, upon the Presumption that Death is far enough from us, but rather in the very height of our Jollities, we should endeavour to remember, that they who feast themselves to-day, may themselves prove Feasts for the Worms to-morrow.

## REFLECTION IV.

*Upon a Glow-worm that he kept included  
in a Crystal Viol.\**

**I**F this unhappy Worm had been as despicable as the other reptiles that crept up and down the Hedge, whence I took him, he might, as well as they, have been left there still, and his own Obscurity, as well as that of the Night, had pre-

\* *At Lees.*

serv'd

serv'd him from the confinement he now suffers. And if, as he sometimes for a pretty while withdrew that Luminous Liquor, that is as it were the Candle to this small dark Lanthorn, he had continued to forbear the disclosing of it, he might have deluded my search, and escap'd his present Confinement.

Rare Qualities may sometimes be Prerogatives, without being Advantages. And though a needless Ostentation of ones Excellencies may be more glorious, a modest Concealment of them is usually more safe: And an unseasonable disclosure of flashes of Wit, may sometimes do a Man no other service, than to direct his Adversaries how they may do him a mischief.

And as though this Worm be lodg'd in a Crystalline Prison, through which it has the Honour to be gaz'd at by many Eyes, and among them, by some that are said to shine far more in the Day than this Creature do's in the Night; yet no doubt, if he could express a sense of the Condition he is in, he would bewail it, and think himself unhappy in an excellency, which procures him at once Admiration and Captivity, by the former of which he does but give others a Pleasure, while in the latter he himself resents a Misery.

This oftentimes is the fate of a great Wit,  
whom

whom the Advantage he has of ordinary Men in Knowledge, the Light of the Mind, exposes to so many effects of other Men's Importunate Curiosity, as to turn his Prerogative into a Trouble: The light that ennobles him, tempts Inquisitive Men to keep him, as upon the like score we do this Glow-worm, from sleeping: And his Conspicuousness is not more a Friend to his fame, than an Enemy to his quiet; for Men allow such much Praise, but little Rest. They attract the Eyes of others, but are not suffer'd to shut their own, and find, that by a very disadvantageous Bargain, they are reduc'd for that imaginary good, call'd Fame, to pay that real Blessing, Liberty.

And, as though this Luminous Creature be himself imprison'd in so close a Body as Glass, yet the Light that ennobles him, is not thereby restrain'd from diffusing it self: So there are certain Truths, that have in them so much of native Light or Evidence, that by the personal Distresses of the proposer, it cannot be hidden, or restrain'd; but in spite of Prisons, it shines freely, and procures the Teachers of it Admiration, ev'n when it cannot procure them Liberty.

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RE-

## REFLECTION V.

*Upon a Courts being put into Mourning.\**

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### The I. PART. †

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Genorio, Eusebius, Lindamor.

*Genor.* **M**ETHINKS, you look, *Eusebius*, as if the change that Blacks have made in this place, since I last saw you here, tempts you to question whether or no this be the Court.

*Lind.* Yet, I fear, *Eusebius* will scarce doubt, that you, and these other Gentlemen are Courtiers, whilst he sees how much you dissemble in personating sadness: For though your Cloaths look mournful, your Faces do not, and you talk to one another as unconcern'dly, as when you wore lighter Colours; and your Grief is so slight, that it has not an Influence so much as upon your looks, and words, which yet are things that Courtiers are said to be able to disguise without an over-difficult constraint.

\* Hague, 1648.

† "For there was a second part of this Reflection, but when it was to be sent to the Press it could not be found, nor would the Presses haste, and the Author's occasions, allow him either to stay till it were found, or write a new one.

*Genor.*



*Genor.* But, I hope, *Lindamor*, I need not labour to persuade such as you, that, when we seem to mourn, without doing it, we may be thought guilty of dissimulation without being so: For what Duty is there, that you and I should be really troubled for the Death of a Prince, whose Subjects we were not, who never obliged us, and who perhaps did onely keep the Power of doing Good, which himself never us'd, from a Successor that had the will to employ it. But you will demand, why then we put on Black; To which, the Answer is easie, that Custom having establish'd that Ceremony in the Courts of Princes, in Amity with each other, the Omission would be look'd upon as an Affront, and be a Provocation. And therefore, the Blacks we wear, are not meant to express a Grief for the Dead, but a Respect to their living Relations: And thus, this as heartless as solemn shew of Mourning, is not put on by Hypocrisie, but by Prudence, or Civility. And in this case, I would appeal to *Eusebius* himself, but that I perceive some Object or other, has ever since we began to talk, engross'd his Attention, as well as seal'd up his Lips.

*Lind.* I have taken notice of it, as well as you, *Genorio*, and I confess, I would give much to learn his Thoughts.

*Euseb.* 'Tis odds then, *Lindamor*, that you  
would

would over-purchase so worthless a Knowledge: And to satisfy your Curiosity, at an easier rate, I will tell you, that I was observing, how a Gentleman, who, it seems, does not much frequent the Court, chancing to come in a Colour'd suit, that, but last Week, would have been thought a fine one, was star'd at by all in the room, except your selves, whose Faces chanc'd to be turn'd from him, like a Man of another Country, (not to say of another World) which the poor Gentleman at length perceiving, he soon grew so sensible of it, that in spite of the Richness and Newness of his Cloaths, with many Blushes he slunk out of the Court, to which he found Men's gazing at him concluded him to be a Stranger.

*Lind.* But this, *Eusebius*, is onely to tell us, what you observ'd, not what Reflections you made upon it, and you know, that which I was inquisitive after, was your *Thoughts*.

*Euseb.* I will add then, *Lindamor*, since you will have it so, that I was considering, that there has been no Law made by the State to forbid any, much less Strangers, to appear in this Court in Colour'd cloaths: And those, which the Gentleman I was speaking of, had on, were such, both for fineness, and fashionableness, as would very well become a greater Court, if it were not in Mourning. But, now the Prince, and those that  
have

have the Honour to belong to him, or to frequent this place, have put themselves into Blacks, to appear in another, though in a finer Habit, is, to betray ones not belonging to the Court, nor using to come to it; and among so many, that think they have a Right to give Laws in point of Cloaths, a Lac'd, or an Imbroider'd suit, though last Week in request, would, now they have laid them by, make a Man look not so much like a Courtier, as a Player. And this Reflection invited me to consider further, what a strange Influence fashions have on Mankind, and what an happy change might be easily made in the World, if they, who have it in their Power to introduce Customs, would make it their Endeavour to introduce good ones.

*Lind.* I am so much of your mind, *Eusebius*, that I confess, I envy not Princes so much for the Splendour and the Pleasures that they live in, nor for the Authority of raising Armies, nor perchance for the Happiness of making them Victorious, as for the power of imposing and reforming of Fashions. And I think it a less improvable Pre-rogative, to be able to coyn any Metal into mony, or call it in at pleasure, than by the stamp of their Authority to introduce good Customs, and make them current.

*Genor.* But, do not Princes enough, when they  
take

take care to make good Laws, and see them well executed.

*Lind.* I will not dispute, whether by That, they do all they ought, but sure I am, they do not all they may: For humane Laws being made for the civil Peace of humane Societies, they are wont to be fram'd not for the making Men virtuous, but the restraining them from being mischievous; they consist far more of Prohibitions than Commands, and ev'n their Prohibitions reach but to a little part of what is ill; the Business of Laws being to provide, not against all Evils, but those grosser ones, that are prejudicial to civil Societies: So that there are a thousand Rules of Reason, or Christianity, which States have not thought fit to turn into Laws. For Pride, Envy, Covetousness, Gluttony, Intemperance, Effeminate-ness, Oaths, Idleness, and I know not how many other Sins, contrary to the Laws of Nature, and of Christ, are so little provided against by humane Sanctions, that one may be a bad Christian, and a bad Man, without being a bad Citizen; There being nothing more easie, nor I fear more usual, than for multitudes to pass uncited before Man's Tribunal, to receive their condemnation at God's. But though a Prince can scarce, as a Legislator, prevent, or suppress such Sins, yet, as a Pattern, he may do much towards it: For, by his Example, his Opinions,

nions, his Encouragements, and his Frowns, he may reform an hundred particular things, which the Laws do not (and perhaps cannot) reach. His declar'd Esteem of such and such Practices, joyn'd with his particular Actions suited to it, and his profest dislike of those Sinful or Dishonourable courses, he finds the Rifest, back'd with a stedly and resolute discountenance of those that do not decline them, will, in a short time, bring those that are about him, to conform their Actions and Behaviour to what Men are satisfi'd, he desires, or likes. And those whom their nearness to Him, or their Employments, make the conspicuous and exemplary Persons, being thus model'd, their Relations and Dependants will quickly be so too, and then that which is in request at Court, being upon that very account look'd upon as the Fashion, it will by degrees be imitated by all those on whom the Court has Influence; since, as we just now saw in the Instance of *Eusebius's* gawdy Gentleman, Men will be asham'd to be unlike those, whose Customs and Deportments pass for the Standards, by which those of other Men are to be measur'd.

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RE-

## REFLECTION VI.

*Upon hearing of a Lute first tun'd, and then  
excellently play'd on.*

**T**HE Jarring strings made so unpleasant a noise, whil'st the Instrument was tuning, that I wonder not at the Story that goes of a Grand Signior, who being invited by a Christian Embasadour to hear some of our Musick, commanded the Fiddlers to be thrust out of his Seraglio, upon a mis-apprehension that they were playing, when they were but tuning. But this rare Artist had no sooner put an end to the short exercise he gave our Patience, than he put us to the Exercise of another Virtue: For his nimble and skilful Fingers make one of the innocentest Pleasures of the Senses to be one of the greatest, and this Charming melody (for which *Orpheus* or *Arion*\* themselves might envy him) do's not so properly delight as ravish us, and render it difficult to moderate the Transports of our Passions, but impossible to restrain the praises that express our satisfaction: So that if this Musitian had been discourag'd by the unpleasant Sounds that were not to be avoided, whil'st he was putting his Lute in Tune, from proceeding in his work, he had been very much

\* Ed. 1 and 2. "Orion."

want-

wanting to himself, and to save a little pains, had lost a great deal of Pleasure and Applause.

Thus when the faculties and passions of the Mind, either through a native unruliness, or the remisness of Reason and Conscience, are discompos'd, he that attempts to bring them into order, must expect to meet at first but an uneasie Task, and find the beginning of a Reformation more troublesome, for the time, than the past disorders were: But he is very little his own Friend, if he suffers these short-liv'd difficulties to make him leave his Endeavours unprosecuted: For when once they have reduc'd the untun'd Faculties and Affections of the Soul to that pass which Reason and Religion would have them brought to, the tun'd or compos'd Mind affords a satisfaction, whose greatness do's ev'n at present abundantly recompence the Trouble of procuring it, and which is yet but a prælude to that more ravishing Melody, wherein the Soul (already Harmonious within it self) shall hereafter bear a part, where the Harps of the Saints accompany the glad Voices that sing the Song of the Lamb, and the Hallelujahs of the rest of the Cælestial Quire.

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RE-

## REFLECTION VII.

*Upon being presented with a rare Nosegay  
by a Gardener.*

Lindamor, Eusebius.

*Lind.* **H**ERE is indeed a Present, for which I must still think myself this fellow's Debtor, though he thinks I have over-paid him. 'Tis pity these Rarities were not more suitably address'd, and worn by some of Natures other Master-pieces, with whom they might exchange a graceful Lustre, and have the Ornament they confer reflected back upon them. But one that had never been a Lover, would perhaps say, that that wish were more civil to the Flowers, than the Ladies, of whom there are few, which these soft polish'd Skins, and Orient Tinctures, would not easilier make Foils, than prove such to them: For (not to name the Rest) this Lovely fragrant Rose here, wears a Blush that needs not do so, at any Colour the Spring it self can, amongst all her Charming Rarities, shew. Yes, here are Flowers above the flattery of those of Rhetorick; and besides, two or three unmingled Liveries, whose single Colours are bright, and taking enough to exclude the wish of a diversity; here is a variety of Flowers, whose Dyes are so dexterously blended,

Y

and



and fitly checquer'd, that every single Flower is a variety. I envy not *Arabia's* Odours, whil'st that of this fresh Blusher charms my sense; and find my Nose and Eyes so ravishingly entertain'd here, that the Bee extracts less sweetness out of Flowers; which were they but less frail, I fear would make me more so (than yet I am.) Surely this Gard'ner leads a happy Life! He inherits nothing of *Adam*, but that Primitive profession that imploy'd and recompenc'd his Innocence, and such a Gay and priviledg'd Plot of his *Eden*, as seems exempted from the general Curse, and instead of the Thorns and Thistles that are the unthankful Earths wonted productions, brings him forth Lillies and Tulips, and gratefully crowns his Culture (for Toil I cannot think it) with chaplets of Flowers.

*Euseb.* I perceive, (*Lindamor*) that you judge of the Delightfulness of this Man's calling, onely by these Lovely and Fragrant productions of it. And you see these curious Flowers in their prime, without seeing by what practices, and degrees, they have been brought from despicable seeds to this perfection and lustre. And perhaps, if you consider'd that a Gardener must be digging in the violent heats of the Summer, and must be afraid of the bitter cold of the Winter, and must be watchful against surprising frosts in the Spring, and must not onely prune. and water, and weed his  
his

his Ground, but must, to obtain these gawdy and odoriferous Flowers, submit to deal with homely and stinking Dung; If (*Lindamor*) you would take notice of these and of some other Toils and Hardships that attend a Gardener's Trade, you would (I doubt not) confess, that his Employments, like his Bushes, bring him Thorns as well as Roses.

And now give me leave (*Lindamor*) to tell you, that this may be appli'd to the condition of some studious persons, that you and I know. For when we hear a Learned or Eloquent Sermon, or read some Book of Devotion, or perhaps some Occasional Discourse handsomely written, we are apt to envy the Preacher or the Writer, for being able to say some things that instruct or please us so much. But alas, (*Lindamor*) though we see not these Productions of the Brain till they are finish'd, and consequently fitted to appear with their full Advantages abroad, yet to bring them to that pass, the Author may perhaps undergoe many a trouble that we dream not of. For he that has to do with difficult or weighty Subjects cannot present us a good Book, or a Fine Discourse, with the same ease that a rich man can present us a fine pair of Gloves, or a fine Collation, which may be had at an hour's warning from the next Milleners or Confectioners. For to be able to write one good Book on some Subjects, a man must have been

at the trouble to read an hundred: To grow capable to give a better rendring of a Greek Text, he must perchance have perus'd *Suidas*, *Stephanus*, *Hesychius*, and I know not how many Lexicographers and Scholiasts: To be qualifi'd to make a Translation of an Hebrew Word or Phrase, that shall illustrate a dark Text, or clear a Difficulty, or more fitly agree with his notion, or accommodation of a place in Scripture, a man must have not onely like a School-Boy learn'd an Hebrew Grammar, and turn'd over *Buxtorf's*, *Schindler's*, and other Dictionaries, but (which is worse) he must in many cases hazard his eyes and his patience in conversing with such Jewish Writings, not onely as *Elias* his *Tishbi*, and *Kimchi's Michlol*; but to gain a little Rabbinical Learning, and find out some unobvious signification of a Word or Phrase, he must devour the tedious and voluminous Rhapsodies that make up the *Talmud*, in many of which he can scarce learn any thing but the Art of saying nothing in a multitude of words; and in others, which are not so useless, the most he will find in I know not how many dull pages, (written with as little Wit as Truth) will perhaps be an Account of some wild Opinion, or some obsolete Custom, or some superstitious Rite of a generation of people, whose Fancies and Manners scarce any thing makes worth our inquiring after, but their having liv'd  
many

many Ages since. And even when a man sets himself to write those smooth Composures, where Eloquence is conspicuous, and seems to be chiefly design'd, the Author seldom comes by his Contentment on as easie terms as the Readers come by theirs. For, not to mention, that sometimes Periods that in a well printed Book look very handsomely, and run very evenly, were not in the written Copy without interlining and Transcriptions. Those that are Scholars themselves can hardly write without having an ambition, or at least a care, to approve their Discourses to them that are so too. And in the judgment of such Perusers, to be able to write well, one must not onely have skill in the Subject, but be well skill'd in the way of writing, lest the Matter be blemish'd by the manner of Handling it. And although to shew ones self a Master in treating of variety of Themes with a florid style, and even in those Composures that are design'd chiefly to express Wit and move Affections, one may think that Nature may be well let alone to supply any she has been kind to, with all they need; yet even in these cases there are some Toils and uneasinesses that are scarce to be avoided; since a discreet man, though never so rich in Natures's gifts, will think himself oblig'd to study Rhetorick, that he may be sure he does not transgress the Laws of It.

For

For though an Author's Natural parts may make his Book abound with Wit, yet without the help of Art he will scarce make it free from faults. And to be well stock'd with Comparisons, which when skilfully manag'd make the most taking passages of fine Pieces, one must sometimes survey and range through the works of Nature and Art, which are the chief Ware-houses, where variety and choice of Similitudes is to be had, and to obtain those pleasing Ornaments there is oftentimes requir'd no less pains than to devise useful Notions. As one must search the Ditches amongst Briars and Weeds, not onely to find Medicinable Herbs, but to gather Prim-roses and Violets. So that (*Lindamor*) to conclude, if we consider the trouble that applauded Composures do oftentimes cost their Authors, we should be sensible we owe more than most men think we do to those to whom we owe good Books. But then unless they find some Recompence for their Labours, in the satisfaction of promoting piety, or in the well-natur'd Pleasure they feel themselves in pleasing others, I should scarce doubt but that some of the Writers, we think so happy, may rather deserve our Esteem than our Envy.

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RE-

## REFLECTION VIII.

*Upon a Child that cri'd for the Stars.*

**I** REMEMBER *P. S.* did once, upon just the like Theme, discourse to the following purpose.

Amongst those numerous Eyes, that these fair Lights attract in so clear a night as this, there are not perhaps any that are more delighted with them, than this Child's seem to be. And those Persians that ador'd the rising Sun, could not be more charm'd with that glorious Object, than this Child is with these twinkling Lights, that need his absence to become so much as visible. But his is a pleasure, that is not more great than unquiet, for it makes him querulous, and unruly, and because he cannot by his struggling, and reaching forth his little hands, get possession of these shining Spangles,\* that look so finely, their fires produce water in his eyes, and cries in his mouth, that are very little of kin to the Musick the Platonists fanci'd in the Spheres he looks at. Whereas, though my inclinations for Astronomy make me so diligent a Gazer on the Stars, that in spite of my great Obnoxiousness to the incle-

\* " Thus in a Starry night fond Children cry  
For the rich Spangles that adorn the sky."

Mr. W.  
mency

mency of the nocturnal air, I gladly spend the coldest hours of the night in contemplating them ; I can yet look upon these bright Ornaments of Heaven it self, with a mind as calm and serene, as those very nights that are fittest to observe them in.

I know divers men for whom Nature seems to have cut out too much work, in giving them, in an unconfinedly amorous disposition of mind, strong Appetites for almost all the fair Objects that present themselves to their sight : These amorous Persons may be, I grant, very much delighted when they first gaze upon a Constellation of fair Ladies, but the Heart commonly pays dear for the Pleasure of the Eye, and the eager desires that Beauty creates, are in such men excited too often not to be frequently disappointed, and are wont to be accompani'd with so many jealousies, and fears, and repulses, and difficulties, and dangers, and remorse, and despairs, that the unhappy Lovers (if those that love more than one can merit that Title) do rather languish than live, if you will believe either their own querulous words, or their pale and melancholy looks, which would make one think they were just entring into the Grave, or had been newly digged out of it. Whereas a person that has his Affections, and Senses, at that command, which Reason and Religion require,  
and

and confer, can look upon the same Objects with pleas'd but not with dazl'd Eyes: He considers these bright and curious Productions, as fair animated Statues of Nature's framing, and contenting himself to admire the workmanship, adores onely the Divine Artificer, whose infinite amiableness is but faintly shadow'd forth even by such lovely Creatures. And therefore what has been said of Mistresses, may be more justly applicable to all the other Objects of Men's too eager Passions. To be short, looking upon these curiousest Productions of Nature, with a Philosopher's and a Christian's Eyes, he can cast them on those bright Objects with pleasure, and yet withdraw them without trouble, and allowing Beauty to contribute to his Delight, without being able to create him any Disquiet; though it afford him a *less transporting* Pleasure than it sometimes do's the Amorist, yet, all things consider'd, it may afford him a *greater* Pleasure, by being more innocent, more untroubl'd, and more lasting; And there may be such a Difference betwixt the Contentment of this calm admirer of Beauty, and that of a greedy and unconfi'd Prostituter of his Heart to it, as there is betwixt the unquiet Pleasure that the sight of the Stars gives to this Child, and the rational Contentment it may afford to an Astronomer.

RE-



## REFLECTION IX.

*Upon my Lady D. R. Her fine Closet.\**

Lindamor, Eusebius.

*Lind.* **I**S not this Closet strangely fine, *Eusebius*? Here is such a variety of pretty and taking Objects, that they do as well distract the Eye as delight it; the abundance, the choice, and the Order, do as well disclose the fair Possessors skill, as Her magnificence, and shew at once, that she both has plenty, and deserves it, by knowing so well how to make use of it. Those things that are here solitary, or single, will scarce be elsewhere matched, and all the rest are so pretty, and so excellent in their several Kinds, that the number of fine things that make up this curious Collection, cannot hinder any of them from being a Rarity, And in a word, the Embellishments, that adorn and ennoble this delightful place, are such, that I believe the Possessor of them, as welcome as she is unto the best Companies, scarce ever looks upon finer things, than she can see in her Closet, unless when she looks into her Glass. But, me-thinks, *Eusebius*, you hear and view all this with a silent seriousness, which begins to make me suspect, that

\* A.D. 1651.

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what I thought might be an Effect of your Wonder, may be so of your Dislike.

*Euseb.* The Collection, *Lindamor*, is, I confess, very curious in its Kind, and such, as if the Mistress of it were less handsome than she is, might give her as well Cause to be jealous of these fine things, as to be proud of them, since a Beauty that were but ordinary, could not divert a Spectator's Eye from Objects, whereof many are not so. But, *Lindamor*, I must freely tell you, that I like both the Lady, and the Closet, much better than the Custom; such sights as these are introducing among Ladies of furnishing such Kind of Closets: I know that Youth may in certain cases, excuse some of the Impertinencies 'tis wont to occasion; And it is not strange to me, that Persons of the fairer Sex, should like, in all things about them, that handsomness for which they find themselves to be the most lik'd; Nor would I forbid, ev'n such of them, as are not of a very high Quality, to have a retiring place so neatly adorn'd, as may invite them to be alone, and with-draw to it, to read or meditate, provided these Ornaments be not so costly, as to rob Charity, or so gawdy, as to distract the Devotion they should but accommodate. And in case Circumstances should so conspire, as that Youth and Quality should be attended by such a plentiful Fortune, as that after  
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all, that either Justice, Prudence, or Decency can challenge, there remains yet enough, both to relieve the Poor, and purchase Rarities themselves: I will not be so severe, as to condemn Persons so circumstanc'd, nor fall out with those that are able to reconcile Sumptuousness and Charity. But the number of such Ladies, especially so soon after a long civil War, must needs be but small, and I fear much inferiour to that of those, who will consider more what they see done before their Eyes, than they will the disparity of Circumstances betwixt their own Condition, and that of those they Æmulate: And the greater appearance of Ingeniousness, as well as Innocence, there is in the practice I am disapproving, the more dangerous it is, and the more fit to be examined and decri'd. For as the old Serpent has variety of Wiles, so he fits them to the various tempers of the Persons he assays to work upon; and when he meets with Ladies virtuously disposed, since he cannot quite eradicate their inclinations to the best part of Religion, Charity, he will at least blast and render them fruitless; and he justly thinks, he has reach'd no small part of his end, if though he cannot seduce them to do ill, he can at least hinder them from doing good. And this he has of late attempted but too prosperously, by persuading us to take those for the standard and  
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examples of our Expences, that making none of the score of Piety, have the more left for their Vanities and their Appetites, which they gratifie at such high rates, that those that think themselves bound to imitate them in those Excesses, that are misnam'd Gallantry, shall have as little ability, as the other have will, to apply any considerable part of their Estates to those Uses, which chiefly God granted them those Estates for ; and by that time, the Lady her self, and the House, and the Closet, are furnished with all the Ornaments that Vanity and Emulation call for, there is nothing left for Charity to dispose of, nay, perhaps not for Justice ; the Creditor being oftentimes turned back empty as well as the Beggar, if not also made a Beggar by ruinous delays. And greater fortunes, than most Ladies have, may be exhausted, by gratifying such an ambition, as that of a Closet, to whose Costliness nothing can put limits, till Discretion do : Custom it self having not yet regulated a piece of Vanity, which, as imposing as Custom is wont to be, it has not yet dar'd to enjoyn.

*Lind.* Me-thinks, *Eusebius*, you are somewhat forward to accuse those fair Creatures, that though they should want Innocence, would scarce want Advocates ; and you are to good a Casuist to ignore, that they are wont to alledge, that the Bravery you are so severe to, is no where expressly  
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prohibited in the Scripture, and this unforbiddenness they think sufficient to evince, that the Sumptuousness you so condemn, is not absolutely, and in its own nature, Sinful.

*Euseb.* I can readily believe, that *Lindamor* has Wit and Amorousness enough to make him find it more easie to defend fair Ladies, than to defend himself against them: And I know, 'tis said, that these sumptuous Closets, and other Vanities, are not simply unlawful in their own Nature; but I know too, that divers things, not in their own Nature unlawful, may be made so by circumstances, and if so, then I fear, That that can be no other than ill, which makes a Man needlessly disable himself to do good. The Apostle, that discountenanc'd Woman's wearing of Gold, or precious things upon their Bodies, would sure have opposed their having more sumptuous Ornaments upon their Walls: These cannot pray for us, but the poor and distressed, they keep us from relieving, may either successfully pray to God for us, or cry to him against us. The Scripture that represents *Dives* in Hell, without saying that he oppressed or defrauded any, gives no other account of his Doom, than that living at a high rate, and going richly dress'd, he neglected to relieve the starving poor. A few such Closets as this Ladies, might be easily enlarged, and contrived into an  
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Hospital: A small part of these Superfluities would relieve the necessities of many Families, and a liberal Heart might purchase Heaven at an easier rate, than the furniture of this Closet cost the Owner of it. Nor is this practice so unallied to a fault, as to escape a punishment even in this World; these Courtiers of Applause being oftentimes reduced to live in want, even in the midst of a plentiful Fortune; these costly trifles so engrossing all that they can spare, that they must sometimes deny themselves things convenient, and perhaps almost necessary, to flaunt it out with those that are neither the one nor the other, and being frequently enough fain to immolate their own inclinations and desires, though perchance strong and innocent, to their Vanity. And those that have once found the happiness there is in making others happy, will think their Treasure better bestowed in feeding hungry Mouths, than idle Eyes: The costly Practice I am yet censuring, does not onely offend Charity, but starve it, by substracting from it that which should feed it, and enable it to act like it self. And for my part, I think, he that devises, and by his Example brings Credit to, a new Expensive way of Vanity, does really destroy more Poor, than if he usurped an Alms-house, or ruined an Hospital. And by the ill President he leaves, he takes the way to be  
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uncharitable, even after Death, and so do harm, when Misers and Usurers themselves are wont (by their Legacies) to do some good. To conclude, 'tis no very Christian practice to disobey the Dictates of Piety, without having so much to plead for so doing, as the pretence of following the Dictates of Custom: And 'tis a great deal better to be without a gay Closet, than to be without Charity, which loveliest of Christian virtues, she must sure very much want, that will needlessly begin an new Example to give a bad one.

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## REFLECTION X.

*Upon his seeing a Lark stoop to, and caught with,  
Day-nets.*

Eusebius, Lindamor.

*Euseb.* **P**OOOR Bird! thou wert just now so high upon the Wing, that the tir'd Gazers fear'd thou hadst lost thy self in Heaven, and in thy fatal stooping seems't to have brought us thence a Message, that so relishes of that place, that I should be troubl'd to see thee so rudely entertain'd, if that Circumstance were not necessary to the Instructions of thy Message; some Birds, you know, *Lindamor*, we usually beguile

guile with Chaff, and others are generally drawn in by appropriated Baits, and by the Mouth, not the Eye. But the aspiring Lark seems compos'd of more sprightly, and refin'd Materials; she is ever a Natural, though no Native, Persian, and the Sun makes not a cloudless Visit to our Horizon, which that grateful Creature gives not a welcome to, both by Notes, which, could he hear them, he would think worthy of him, and by a flight as aspiring as if she meant he should hear them; and, in a word, so conspicuous is this Creatures fondness of Light, that Fowlers have devis'd a way to catch her by it, and pervert it to her Ruine: For placing broken Looking-glasses upon a moveable Frame betwixt their Nets, the unwary Bird, while she is gazing upon that glittering Light the Glass reflects, and sporting her self in those Beams, which derive a new Glory from their very being broken, heedlessly gives into the Reach of the surprizing Nets, which suddenly cover her, and which the Light it self kept her from seeing. The Devil is like this Fowler, *Lindamor*, and you, or I, had perhaps resembl'd the unhappy Lark, if sometimes Providence did not both graciously, and seasonably, interpose, and ev'n when we were come near enough to have been cover'd by the Nets, rescu'd us from them; for it has ever been that old Serpent's Policy, and Practice, to take



the exactest measure of our Inclinations, that he may skilfully suit his Temptations to them; well knowing, that that Dexterity gains him a Devil within us, that conspires with him without us, to make us Instances of that Truth which represents *Things divided against themselves as ruinous*. If therefore, the Tempter find by Experience, that you are indispos'd to be wrought upon by common Temptations, to forget the Practice of Religion; that you have Unconcern'dness enough not to be much distracted with the empty and Trifling Chaff, Youth is wont to be caught with, (which perhaps seldome employ any of your Thoughts so much as those of Scorn, and Pity); that the very Gain and solider Goods of this World (for which many thought wise Men lose those of the next) cannot make you so greedy, nor so fond of them, as he desires: If, I say, the Devil have sufficiently observ'd how uneasie it were to intice you with common Baits, he will alter his Method strait, and attempt to catch you with Light. He knows as well as I do, that you have a Curiosity, or rather a Greediness of Knowledge, that is impatient of being confin'd by any other Limits than those of Knowledge it self; and accordingly, seldome, or perhaps never disturbing or frightening you, he will let you freely sport your self about the glittering Intellectual Glass, Men call Philosophy,

sophy, and suffer you not onely to *gaze* upon all its pieces, and *survey* a pretty Number, but per-adventure, *pry* into more than one; and among so numerous, and delighting Objects, I fear, that if you will frankly own what my own Guilt makes me suspect you of, you must confess, That he had made you to share your Time, that you should scarce have left yourself any for Heavenly Themes, and the Meditation of Death, (which consequently might have then surpris'd you, had it invaded you) if Providence had not mercifully snatch'd you out from between the Nets you were allur'd to, before you were quite involv'd in them; and by Sickness, or else, by Means (in other cases) so unlikely, as outward Distractions, call'd your Thoughts home by driving them away from those enchanting Studies, whose Light might much likelier have betray'd you into the Net, than have shewn it you.

*Lind.* Though I am not surpris'd to hear *Eusebius*, yet I am glad to hear a *Scholar* talk at this rate, and believe with you, that many a one that was neither Crow, nor Wood-cock, has perish'd in this Snare; and we have known but too many great Scholars, so intirely taken up with writing, and reading of Books, with learning this Science, and with teaching that, that by setting themselves such Tasks, as requir'd and imploi'd the whole Man, Death has undiscernedly stoll'n upon them,

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and unawares intruded into their Studies, where their restless Ambition to enrich the Mind never left them the leisure to prepare it, to leave the Body, but either made them surpris'd Instances of that sad (but true) Observation of *Seneca*, *Pleurosq̄ue in ipso Vitæ apparatusu Vita destituit*, or else made their Condition like that of *Archimedes*, who was so busie in tracing his Circles, that he took no notice of that victorious Enemy that came to dispatch him.

*Euseb.* I allow, that 'tis the Innocence, as well as Pleasure of Knowledge, that deceives those Learned Men; but they, as well as others, must remember, that ev'n the wholesomest Meats may be surfeited on, and there is nothing more unhealthy, than to feed very well, and do but very little Exercise. And I take it to be as true of the Intellectual, as the Material World, that *it profits not a Man if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul.\** Whatsoever therefore Philosophers do tell us, of a wise Man, that he is nowhere banish'd, because he is a Citizen of the World; I must think a Christian every where an Exile, because he is a Citizen of the Heavenly Jerusalem, and but *a Stranger and a Sojourner here*. It was not absolutely in the capacity of the *Father of Lies*, that the Devil boasted, that the

\* S. Matt. xvi. 26.

Earth

Earth was his Dominion; for, as our Saviour himself stil'd him, *The Prince of this World*,\* I find, that he has all things here so much at his Devotion, that there is no place that he cannot lay an Ambush in, since he can pervert ev'n Light it self, to hide his Snares. Let us, therefore, hereafter endeavour still to stand upon our Guard, as remembering ourselves to be in an Enemy's Country, where Distrust is the onely Mother of safety; and since Providence has so graciously presented us a Lesson, our Books would not have taught us, against such a fondness of them, as is injurious to Piety, and dangerous to the Soul; Let us justifie, better than this silly Lark has done, that saying of *Solomon*, *Surely in vain the Net is spread in the sight of any Bird.*† Let not Philosophy any more take up our Life so, as not to leave us leisure to prepare for Death, and study a Science which shall most benefit us in another World, and which alone will do so there: No, we may visit *Athens*, but we should dwell at *Jerusalem*; we may take some turns on *Parnassus*, but should more frequent *Mount Calvary*, and must never so busie ourselves about those *many things*, as to forget that *Unum Necessarium*, *that good part which shall not be taken away from us.*‡

\* S. John xii. 31.; xiv. 30.; xvi. 11.

† Prov. i. 17.

‡ S. Luke x. 42.



OCCASIONAL  
REFLECTIONS.

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The Last SECTION.

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REFLECTION I.

*Seeing a Child picking the Plums out of a piece of  
Cake his Mother had given him for his Breakfast.*

Eusebius, Lindamor.

*Euseb.*



HIS Child is so much one in his humour, that despising meer Bread, though never so nourishing and wholesome, his Mother is fain to disguise the Materials of it into Cake, out of a belief that the toothsome, would make the nutritive part go smoothly down. But this lick-erish Chit, I see, defeats her plot, and knows already how to nibble off the bait from the hook, and

and casting by the Meat, make his whole Meal of what was meant onely for Sauce, to give a Rellish to what he rejects for it. This puts me in mind of the unwelcome fate those Papers of mine, that treat of Devotion, have met with: For when I first was so unacquainted with the world, as to expect that Piety and Vertue were able, by their native charms, so much to endear my dress, as to win themselves adorers in a plain, or even a severe one; I ventur'd some of them abroad, though not in Print, yet among my Acquaintance, in a careless Matron-like habit, in which I soon found they almost frighted most of those I had design'd them to work the quite contrary effects on. But when my Acquaintedness with the Genius of the Age had sadly taught me, that I was to alter my Method; that the Eloquence of Vertues Sermons was that which must attract an Auditory, and engage Attention to them; and that those orders of hers, in which she employ'd not Rhetorick for her Secretary, could not be so much as listen'd to, much less obey'd, I endeavour'd to cloath Vertue, though not in a gawdy, in a Fashionable Habit, and devesting her not onely of her Sack-cloth, but her Blacks, where I saw she appear'd in them with Disadvantage, I endeavour'd to give her as much of the modern Ornaments of a fine Lady, as I could without danger of being accus'd to have dress'd her

her like a Curtizan. This Attempt having not prov'd so unsuccessful, but that many were pleas'd to assure me, I had not been unlucky in it, I spent some time in the self-denying Exercise of minding Words, and improving a Style, I hop'd to be able to improve to Virtue's service, and subduing my Inclinations to be fit to Teach, as I had done to Learn, her Precepts; I some times, for her sake, tri'd my Pen in a smoother, and more florid style, than that which the nature of the Studies I was most addicted to, made the most familiar to me, flattering my self with a Belief, that since my Writings had usually the good fortune not to be ill approv'd, I might so happily mingle and interweave Instructions with Delight, as to necessitate my Readers to swallow both together, or at least bribe them by the latter to entertain the former.

*Lind.* You have better luck, as well as better skill, than many others, if you find it not often to fare with the Fishers of Men as it did with those other Fishers, that first were honoured with that glorious Title, when they complained to our Saviour, that *we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing.*\* For I see that men are grown witty enough to elude what they cannot despise, and resemble the deaf Adder that stops her spiritual ears from harkening to the voice of Charm-

\* S. Luke v. 5.

ers,

ers, be the Charmer never so cunning. And the best Reception that the moving'st Eloquence, that pleads for Piety, can obtain of them, is but such as may serve to make that applicable to the Preacher, which God once said to a Prophet, *Lo thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well upon an Instrument; For they hear thy words, but they do them not.\** But the best is, that you serve a Master, that is as inclinable to reward, as able to discern, Intentions, and does not make his Estimates by Events, but judges of our Performances, not by the Effects they produce, but the Affections they flow'd from, and the Ends they aim'd at.

*Euseb. The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord.†* And therefore, *Lindamor*, as I dare not repine at the unsuccessfulness of my Endeavours, so I dare think, that whilst it proceeds but from the Obstinacy of others, 'tis not likely to be imputed to me by Him that complain'd Himself, *That all the day long he had stretch'd forth his hands to an unpersuadable and gain-saying people.‡* Otherwise, I confess, I should not have much cause to be satisfi'd with the Return that all my Indeavours have hitherto brought me home. For I see that men can read

\* Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

† S. Matt. x. 24.

‡ Is. lxxv. 2; Rom. x. 21.



a Book of Devotion as unconcern'dly as they do a Romance or a Play, in both of them culling out onely what they call Wit, and making no better use of it than either to exercise or improve their own. They hear the most pathetick Sermons, not as Christians but Oratours, and if in such Discourses they have been so just as to praise the Rhetorick, they think they may well be excus'd if they over-look the Divinity: In short, nothing but what gratifies their Fancy can leave any Impressions on their Memory, and that it self, if it tend to reform them, makes none on their Affections. And some whose happier Pens allow them to do it far more justly than I can, do complain, That if a devout Book have not good store of witty passages, they will not mind it at all, and if it have, they will mind nothing else.

So that, *Lindamor*, I should sometimes be discourag'd from prosecuting Endeavours, which, though they now and then succeed, are oft-times so unprosperous, if I did not think, with you, that they who labour to win Souls to God, are set on work by him, that having no need of our Performances, seeks in our services but the opportunities of exercising his own Goodness.

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## REFLECTION II.

*Upon the sight of Sweet-meats, very artificially counterfeited in Wax.*

**T**HE shape and colours of the best Sweet-meats of these kinds, are here so luckily represented by a skilful Hand, that Art seems to have design'd rather to rival Nature, than barely to imitate Her, and a Lover of Junkets that approaches not too near to these, must have much quickness of sight, or but little of appetite, if such inviting Objects do not tempt him both to mistake and to desire them. But, though at this distance these alluring Sweet-meats appear very pleasing; yet if one should be so unadvis'd as to endeavour to eat them, instead of enjoying them more fully by the taste than he did by the sight, he would both spoil and disfigure them, and perhaps be so near choking himself, that he would more earnestly wish them out of his mouth, than ever he wish'd them in it.

There are some pleasures and conditions too in the world, which make so fine a shew at a distance, that in those that gaze at them aloof off, they frequently beget envy at them, and wishes for them; and yet he that calmly beholds them takes the best way of enjoying them: since that  
which

which whilst 'tis but aim'd at, is expected to be very satisfactory upon a nearer and fuller fruition, would be so far from proving so, and would so little be as sweet to the palate as specious to the eye, that it would not onely cease to afford them any delight, but would make them wish they had let those deluding Sweets alone, and would make attainments more uneasie and troublesome than even desire was.

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## REFLECTION III.

*Upon the eating of Oysters.*

Eugenius, Lindamor.

*Eug.* **W**HILST every body else is commending these Oysters, either with his Tongue or with his Teeth, so that one of the Company sticks not to say, that they are as much worth as if they contain'd each of them a Pearl, you onely seem as unconcern'd a Spectator, as if you thought their proper use, like that of Flowers, were, rather to be looked on than to be eaten.

*Lind.* I confess, *Eugenius*, that I found my self more inclinable to reflect on what you are doing, than to keep you company in it, and whilst I saw such persons so gustfully swallow these extoll'd  
Fishes,

Fishes, the sight led me to take more notice than perhaps you have done of the strange power of Education and Custom.

*Eug.* And what, I pray you, has Custom to do with Oysters?

*Lind.* You will soon know that, if I tell you, that I was considering, on this occasion, how forward we are to think other Nations absurd or barbarous for such practices, that either the same, or little better, may be found unscrupled at among ourselves; and I acknowledge it to be one of the chief advantages I account myself to have obtain'd by my Travels, that as I do not easily admire, so I am not forward to deride, the Practice of any People for being New, and am not apt to think, their Customs must be therefore worse than ours, because they widely differ from them.

I could give you store of Instances to justify this impartiality, but because the circumstances of eating and drinking are those which make men, with the greatest confidence, term other Nations Brutish and Barbarous, I will confine my self to some Examples of that nature.

We impute it for a barbarous custom to many Nations of the *Indians*, that like Beasts they eat raw Flesh. And pray, how much is that worse than our eating raw Fish, as we do in eating these Oysters? Nor is this a practice of the rude Vulgar onely

onely, but of the politest and nicest persons among us, such as Physicians, Divines, and even Ladies. And our way of eating seems much more barbarous than theirs, since they are wont to kill before they eat, but we scruple not to devour Oysters alive, and kill them not with our Hands or Teeth, but with our Stomachs, where (for ought we know) they begin to be digested before they make an end of dying. Nay sometimes when we dip them in Vinegar, we may, for sauce to one bit, devour alive a schole of little Animals, which, whether they be Fishes or Worms, I am not so sure, as I am, that I have, by the help of convenient Glasses, seen great numbers of them swimming up and down in less than a Sawcer full of Vinegar.

We detest and despise some other Nations, for feeding upon Caterpillars, Grass-hoppers, and other Insects; and others, for feeding upon Carrion, and stinking food.

And do not many of us do as bad, when we not onely eat, but extoll, rotten Cheese, whose Livid Colour sufficiently betrays its Putrefaction, and whose odious smell offends most mens Noses, and turns some mens Stomachs? Nay, when this Cheese is grown to that high degree of rottenness that our critical palats like it best in, we then devour whole hundreds of Mites, which are really  
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crawling Insects, bred out of Putrefaction, and these too are so numerous and little, that our greediness makes us swallow many of them alive.

Among the Savagest Barbarians we count the Cannabals, and as for those among them that kill men to eat them, their inhumane cruelty cannot be too much detested ; but to count them so barbarous merely upon the score of feeding on man's flesh and blood, is to forget that woman's milk, by which alone we feed our sucking Children, is, according to the received Opinion, but blanched Blood ; and that Mummy is one of the usual Medicines commended and given by our Physicians for falls and bruises, and in other cases too. And if we plead that we use not Mummy for food, but Physick, the *Indians* may easily answer, that by our way of using man's flesh, we do oftentimes but protract sickness and pain, whereas they by theirs maintain their health and vigour. And there is no reason why it should be allowable to eat Broth, for instance, in a Consumption, and be condemnable to feed upon it to maintain health.

But lastly, as the highest degree of Brutishness, our Travellers mention the practice of the Soldanians at the *Cape of Good hope*, who not onely eat raw meat, but, if they be hungry, eat the guts and all of their Cattle, with the Dung in them. I will not answer, that I know several among us,

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(and perhaps some fair Ladies too) that to prevent the Scurvy and the Gout, drink their own or Boy's Urine : nor that women themselves do oftentimes take *Parmacitty* inwardly, though the Latin name (*Sperma Ceti*) sufficiently declare what excretion of a Whale it is (though perhaps mistakenly) believed to be : nor yet that under the name of *Album Græcum*, Dogs dung is commonly given to Patients of all sorts and qualities against sore Throats : nor will I mention, that in *Holland* 'tis usual, as I have seen my self, to mingle Sheep's dung with their Cheeses, onely to give them a colour and a relish : But I will rather demand, how much less we do our selves, than what we abominate in those Savages, when we devour Oysters whole, guts, excrements, and all ; nay, when not for Physick, but only for Delicacies, our Courtiers and Ladies themselves are wont to make sawce for the bodies of Lobsters of that green stuff, which is indeed their Dung : And to these I could add other Examples, if I were not afraid to divert you too long from so much pleasure as the Company seems to take in eating raw Fish.

*Eug.* You put me in mind of a fancy of your Friend Mr. *Boyle*, who was saying, that he had thoughts of making a short Romantic story, where the Scene should be laid in some Island of the South-

Southern Ocean, govern'd by some such rational Laws and Customs as those of *Utopia* or the *New Atlantis*, and in this Country he would introduce an Observing Native, that upon his return home from his Travels made in *Europe*, should give an account of our Countries and manners, under feign'd Names, and frequently intimate in his Relations, (or in his Answers to Questions that should be made him) the reasons of his wondering to find our Customs so extravagant and differing from those of his Country. For your Friend imagin'd, that by such a way of proposing many of our practices, we should our selves be brought unawares to condemn, or perhaps laugh at them, and should at least cease to wonder to find other Nations think them as extravagant, as we think the manners of the *Dutch* and *Spaniards*, as they are represented in our Travellers Books.

*Lind.* I dislike not the project, and wish it were prosecuted by some Body, that being impartial were more a friend to Fables. For when I consider, that the name of Barbarian was given by the two Noblest Peoples of the Earth, the *Greeks* and *Romans*, not onely to all the rest of the World, but to one another, though both those Nations were highly civiliz'd, and the courtly *Persians*, and other voluptuous *Asiaticks*, were perhaps no less so than they; I doubt that most Nations in



stiling one anothers Manners extravagant and absurd, are guided more by Education and Partiality than Reason, and that we laugh at many Customs of Strangers onely because we never were bred to them, and prise many of our own onely because we never consider'd them. And we may well believe that Custom has much a larger Empire than men seem to be aware of, since whole Nations are wholly swai'd by it, that do not reckon themselves among its Subjects, nor so much as dream that they are so.

## REFLECTION IV.

*Upon a Lanthorn and Candle carri'd by, on a windy night.*

**A**S there are few Controversies more important, so there are not many, that have been more curiously and warmly disputed, than the Question, Whether a publick or a private life be preferable? But perhaps this may be much of the nature of the other Question, Whether a marri'd life or a single ought rather to be chosen? that being best determinable by the Circumstances of particular cases. For though indefinitely speaking, one of the two may have advantages above the other, yet they are not so great, but that special  
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Circumstances may make either of them the more eligible to particular persons. They that find themselves furnish'd with Abilities to serve their Generation in a publick capacity, and Vertue great enough to resist the Temptations, to which such a condition is usually expos'd, may not onely be allow'd to embrace such an Employment, but oblig'd to seek it. But he whose parts are too mean to qualifie him to govern others, and perhaps to enable him to govern himself, or manage his own private Concerns, or whose Graces are so weak, that 'tis less to his Vertues or to his ability of resisting, than to his care of shunning the occasions of sin, that he owes his escaping the Guilt of it, had better deny himself some opportunities of doing Good, than expose himself to probable Temptations. For there is such a kind of difference betwixt Vertue shaded by a private, and shining forth in a publick life, as there is betwixt a Candle carri'd aloft in the open air, and inclosed in a Lanthorn; in the former place it gives more light, but in the latter 'tis in less danger to be blown out.

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## REFLECTION V.

*Upon the first Audience of the Russian Extraordinary Embassadour, at which he made his Emperour's Presents.*

**I** SEE the general Expectation that there will be here this night a Magnificent Appearance, has produc'd one. And as it often happens in publick Shews, that the chief part of them is made by those that come to see them: so here, besides them whose Duty obliges them to attend at the Solemnity, there is a greater concourse of fine people of either Sex, than any thing of this nature has for these many years occasion'd. And not onely many of the Ladies wear in their Ribbands little less vivid colours, than those of their faces, and are set out with Jewels almost as sparkling as their Eyes, (which yet the Courtiers think were able to warm the *Russian* hearts, though all the Ice and Snow of their Country guarded them) but the Men themselves are many of them as finely and as richly dress'd, as if even they came as well to be seen as to see. And if the Embassadour be, what a man of his Employment should be, (and what some say he is) a Person acquainted with the Manners of Men, he cannot but know, That we, as others Nations, value our own Fashions enough, to look upon Men disguis'd by the *Russian*

*sian* dress, as little better than Anticks, if not as some new kind of Northern Animals. But for all this Gazing throng of Gawdy spectators, that were able to put an ordinary Stranger out of Countenance, to appear in a Habit differing from theirs: the Embasadour, and those that come along with him, think it not fit to decline the *Russian* habit or Ceremonies, for the *English*, but to keep to the Ceremonies us'd in *Muscovy*, as strictly as if the Monarch of it that sent them hither saw them here; and are not discourag'd from this Manly proceeding, by seeing themselves star'd at for it by a number of Gawdy spectators, that wear Cloaths, and use Ceremonies, so differing from theirs. But\* whatever those may think of the Embasadour, that are wont to estimate Men by the fashionableness of their Cloaths; yet the Wiser and more Intelligent do not blame him, for refusing to disparage the Fashions of his own people, by appearing asham'd of them; but, do rather think it prudent in him, to prefer the pleasing of his Master, and his own Country-men, before the gratifying of Strangers, since 'tis not here, but at home, that he expects the recompence of his Behaviour, and Embassy.

Thus, when a Christian, who belongs to a Celestial King, and whose *Citizen-ship is in Heaven*,†

\* Ed. 2. "And."

† Phil. iii. 20.

being-

being but a *Stranger upon Earth*, converses among the *Men of the World*, though in Matters indifferent, there is oftentimes requir'd by Prudence, as much of Compliance as is allow'd by Innocence; yet, when there happens an Occasion, wherein he cannot comply with the deprav'd Customs of those among whom he Lives, without disobeying Him for whom he Lives, and whose Servant he is, or doing something that would derogate from the Dignity of a Person related to such a Master, he will then less consider what may be thought of him by a Multitude, than what Account he is to render to him, who has forbidden Men to *follow a Multitude to do Evil*. And, as he knows, That his reward would be much less than he reckons upon, if it were a thing to be receiv'd on Earth, not in Heaven: So, how strange and unfashionable soever his Conformity to the Orders of his own Sovereign may appear, he chuses rather to displease Men than God, and acts, as both *seeing*, and being seen by, *Him that is Invisible*.

*A Continuation of the Discourse.*

AND this ought to be more easie to him, than their Singularity is to the *Russians*, I have been mentioning; for whereas these, if they be knowing, and impartial, refuse our Modes and Rites,

Rites, not because they are worse, but onely because they are other than those of their Country ; he refuses to conform to the forbidden fashions of this World, not for their being different from those of the Kingdome he belongs to, but for their being bad, and condemn'd by Him that cannot err: Whereas, of the opposite practices, the same infallible Judge pronounces by the mouth of a Person by him inspir'd, that *these are the good things, and the profitable unto Men.*\* And whereas, these Strangers see nothing in this magnificent Assembly, whose Fashions they decline, fit to be despised, but see some Persons in it, to whom they pay a great respect, and who deserve it upon another account, than that of their wearing Crowns ; those that are Loyal to Virtue, have cause to look upon those they refuse to be like, with a noble, and just Indignation, as Persons that have degraded themselves, and by unworthy Practices blemish'd, and almost forfeited, the Dignity of their Nature, and the nobler Title of Christians. And, whereas these *Muscovites* are morally certain, that we shall never prefer their Fashions to our own ; the Christian has as great an assurance, that those, whose Practices he dissents from, will one day repent, that theirs dissented from his, and will wish they had imitated

\* Titus iii. 8.

what

what they now seem to scorn. And however, when he shall come to the celestial City he belongs to, he will be in no danger to be derided for the sake of Piety, since those, that deride Piety, will not be admitted there. And as these *Russians* could not take a better way than that of not sneaking, to avoid the having their Rites and Persons undervalu'd; so for a Christian, not to blush at his unfashionable Practices, seems the hopefulllest way to keep them and him from being scorn'd, especially with those, who having themselves no Quality better than Confidence, value it most in others. And sure it were a very unlikely way to keep others from despising the Customs of the Heavenly Jerusalem, for him that belongs to it to appear asham'd of them himself. Nor have pious Persons cause to be out of Countenance, at the singularity ev'n of a strictly virtuous Department, since, being (as the Scripture tells us such Men in general are) *fellow Citizens with the Saints* and *Domesticks of God*,\* they cannot justly be blam'd, if they aspire to be as like as they can here, to those, whom they desire and hope to be perfectly like hereafter. And if the Angels (as the Scripture in several places seems to intimate) are witnesses of our Actions, the smallest number of unfashionable good Men, may, upon that score,

\* Eph. ii. 19.

say

say to one another, as the Prophet did to his Servant, upon the account of the Heavenly Host that surrounded him, *Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.\** And the approbation of these illuminated, happy, and glorious Spirits, is sure more considerable than that of mortal, and, which is worse, of sensual Men, whether we consider their Number, or their Judgments. And however, the Day will come, when those that despise his Singularity, will envy his Happiness; one welcoming smile from Christ will make him amends for all the scornful smiles of Sinful men; And the sentence of Absolution, and Bliss, solemnly pronounc'd before God, Angels, and Men, will not onely recompence him forthe World's Disesteem, but shew that he did not deserve it.

## REFLECTION VI.

*Upon the sight of Roses and Tulips growing near one another.*

'**T**IS so uncommon a thing to see Tulips last till Roses come to be blown, that the seeing them in this Garden grow together, as it deserves my notice, so methinks it should suggest to me some Reflection or other on it. And perhaps it

\* 2 Kings vi. 16.

may



may not be an improper one, to compare the difference betwixt these two kinds of Flowers, to the disparity which I have often observ'd betwixt the Fates of those young Ladies, that are onely very handsome, and that have a less degree of Beauty recompenc'd by the Accession of Wit, Discretion, and Virtue: For Tulips, whil'st they are fresh, do indeed by the Lustre, and Vividness, of their Colours, more delight the Eye than Roses; but then they do not alone quickly fade, but as soon as they have lost that freshness, and gawdiness, that solely indear'd them, they degenerate into things not onely undesirable, but distastful; whereas Roses, besides the moderate Beauty they disclose to the Eye, (which is sufficient to please, though not to charm it) do not onely keep their Colour longer than Tulips, but when that decays, retain a perfum'd Odour, and divers useful Qualities, and Virtues, that survive the Spring, and recommend them all the Year. Thus those unadvis'd young Ladies, that because Nature has given them Beauty enough, despise all other Qualities, and ev'n that regular Diet which is ordinarily requisite to make Beauty it self lasting, not onely are wont to decay betimes, but as soon as they have lost that Youthful freshness, that alone endear'd them, quickly pass from being Objects of Wonder, and Love, to be so of Pity,

if

if not of Scorn ; Whereas those that were as solicitous to enrich their Minds, as to adorn their Faces, may not onely with a mediocrity of Beauty be very desirable whil'st that lasts, but notwithstanding the recess of that, and Youth, may, by the fragrancy of their Reputation, and those Virtues and Ornaments of the Mind, that Time do's but improve, be always sufficiently endear'd to those that have merit enough to discern, and value, such Excellencies ; and whose Esteem and Friendship is alone worth their being concern'd for. In a word, they prove the happiest, as well as they are the wisest, Ladies, that whil'st they possess the desirable Qualities that Youth is wont to give, neglect not the acquist of those that Age cannot take away.

## REFLECTION VII.

(Taken out of the 2nd Book of the \* Martyrdom of *Theodora*, and turn'd into an Occasional Meditation.)

*Upon the sight of a Branch of Corral among a great Prince's Collection of Curiosities.*

**T**HE present and future condition of a Christian, especially of a Martyr, is not ill repre-

\* An unpublished Piece of the Author's. (Published by him in 1687. *Ed.*)

sented

sented by what we take notice of in Corral; for whilst that Shrub yet lives, and remains fastned to its native earth or soil, it grows in an obscure Region of the world, and is perpetually surrounded, and over-flown, by the brackish and unpleasant waters of the Sea, and oftentimes expos'd to the irregular agitations of its waves. Besides, the substance of this Plant (as those who should know inform us) is but soft and tender under water, and its colour but sad and unlively: nor is it, like the Tulip or the Rose-bush, adorn'd with any pleasant verdure, and much less does it flourish with gawdy colours. And whilst it remains under water, the excellency of it does so little disclose it self, that men sail over it without suspecting or dreaming they have any thing of precious under their feet; and by the Fishes, in whose Region, or rather Element, it grows, 'tis pass'd by wholly unregarded: But when this unheeded Corral comes to be torn off from its root, and pluck'd out of his soil, and so is kill'd in the capacity of a Plant, it then exchanges the dark and unquiet place it was confin'd to for a more elevated and lightsome Region; and instead of sharing the fate of common Shrubs and Flowers, first to degenerate into fading colours and offensive smells, and then to perish, either by rottenness or fire, our Corral, by the violence offer'd to it, acquires a delightful redness, together with a solidity and

and a durableness, that makes it a thing so lovely and immortal, that it serves for an Ornament, for the Cabinets of the Curious; and what stupid Fishes do not at all regard, those nobler Creatures, Men, do so highly prize, that oftentimes it finds place even among the Rarities of Princes.

Thus, a true Christian, whilst he is yet confin'd to the Region of the Animal Life, lives oftentimes in an obscure and low condition, and far from that prosperous state wherein the world's Favourites are wont to flourish; he is almost perpetually expos'd to pressures and afflictions, and either most men consider him not at all, or those that look at his out-side onely are apt to despise him because it is so homely. And he is not onely in such a (seemingly forlorn) condition, as made the Psalmist complain of himself, that *all the waves pass'd over him*;\* but (like those Plants of Corral, that, not growing so near the shoar, are constantly cover'd with water, as well as sometimes disorder'd by storms) the calamities that do, as it were, over-whelm him, are never altogether remov'd, even in the intervals of those tempestuous *Fits* which increase his Distresses: But when the violence of sickness, or the fury of a Persecutor shall have taken away his life, he must then be translated into a higher and happier Region, Afflictions and Distresses will be

\* Ps. xlii. 7.

all

all left behind. And when the sensual Idolizers of their Bodies shall be condemn'd to have those as loathsome as were their Minds, and as restless as their guilty Consciences, His Body will obtain new and glorious Qualities like that of his Redeemer, and his Soul shall find no less happy a Transfiguration, the *mortal part will be swallowed up of life,\* that perfection which is but in part shall be done away.†* And these newly acquir'd Excellencies of the whole man, will never after vanish or decay. And he that liv'd unregarded by the stupid Inhabitants of the earth, shall be joyfully welcom'd into the best society of Celestial Spirits, and, what is infinitely more, gratefully welcom'd and dignifi'd by the Son of God himself. Men should not therefore, by a Christians present state, take their measures of his future fate, but rather should remember that he who said of such, *They shall be mine in the day when I make up my‡ special treasures*, is one whose Estimate of Persons and Conditions we may safely rely upon, since he is able to make any of them infallibly such as he pleases to pronounce them, and consequently we may look upon the constant Christian's differing condition, with his that said, *We are now the Sons of God, and it does not (indeed) yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when*

\* 1 Cor. xiii. 10. † 2 Cor. v. 4. τὸ θνητόν. ‡ Mal. iii. 17. *Segullah.*  
he

*he shall appear, we shall be like HIM;\* who would be like himself alone, did not his goodness vouchsafe to exalt those that love him, to a likeness, which makes them very unlike the gloriouslest things we here admire, by incomparably transcending them.*

## REFLECTION VIII.

*Upon the sight of the effects of a Burning-glass.*

**I**T is a fault incident to many good men, to be too much indispos'd to entertain the Precepts of Vertue, as such excellent things deserve, in case those that teach them do not practise them. There are too many that do not think themselves oblig'd to take even the wholesomest advice from those, whom they see more careful to give it others, than to follow it themselves. And some of them are so nice, that they will scarce read a Book of Devotion, unless it come, like that *St. John eat* in the *Apocalypse*,† from the hand of an Angel. But for my part, though I hope I both value and desire Religious Preachers as much as the rest of my Brethren, yet I think it would be much to the injury of Scripture and of Reason, if we should

\* 1 SJohn iii. 2.

† Rev. x. 10.

suffer

suffer the personal faults of men to keep them from doing that good, their nature fits them for. The Etymology of the Gospel importing its being welcome news, 'tis pity that any one that teaches it should not have a title to the Character *David* gave *Ahimaaz*, of whom he said, that *he is a good man, and brings good tidings.*\* But my desirousness of piety in a Preacher is more for others sake than mine. For I know not why Truth, which is an intellectual thing, should lose its nature by any moral viciousness in the Proposer. I know there is something extraordinary in the case of *Noah*, who awoke from his Wine and immediately prophesied, and yet the Event verifi'd his Predictions. Our Saviour instructing his Disciples about the Scribes and Pharisees, who sate in *Moses's* Chair, at the same time commands them to conform to their Doctrine, when he forbids them to imitate their Example. The Wise-men did not the less find Christ at *Bethlehem*, though the Priests and Pharisees sent them without accompanying them thither. And the *Assyrian* General was cured of his Leprosie by following the Prophet's prescription convey'd him by that *Gehazi*, who, by his unworthy carriage in that business, transplanted (if I may so speak) that foul Disease into himself and his posterity. I will therefore consider Ser-

\* 2 Sam. xviii. 27.

mons more than Preachers : For as in a Burning-glass, though the Sun-beams do but illustrate, not heat, it in their passage, they may yet, by its assistance, kindle subjects that are more disposed to receive their action : So those very Truths and Notions of a learned Preacher, which do but enlighten him, may inflame his Hearers, and kindle in their hearts the love of God. And as if a Perfume be set on fire by the Beams projected through a Burning-glass (which they do not so much as warm in their passage) the Scent is no less odoriferous and grateful, than if it had been produc'd by an actually burning coal. So neither is that Devotion which is kindled by the Eloquence of an indevout Preacher, any whit the less acceptable to God for their not being themselves affected with the Zeal they beget in others. And what the Book of *Kings* relates of *Elisha's Bones*,\* contains a far greater Miracle in the Historical, than in the Allegorical sense, in which 'tis no such wonder to see a man rais'd to life by a dead Prophet.

\* 2 Kings xiii. 21.



## REFLECTION IX.

*Upon the finding a Horse-shoe in the High-way.*

THE common people of this Country have a Tradition, that 'tis a lucky thing to find a Horse-shoe. And though 'twas to make my self merry with this fond conceit of the superstitious Vulgar, I stoop'd to take this up; yet now I observe in it a Circumstance that may, for ought I know, somewhat justify the Tradition. For I take notice, that though Horse-shoes are by travelling worn out, yet if they had a sense of their own condition, it might afford them some consolation in it, that the same Journeys that waste them make them both useful and bright. Whereas, though the Horse-shoe I have taken up have not been consum'd upon the account of travelling, it has been eaten up by rust, which wastes it as well as Attrition would have done, but does not give it the lustre it would have receiv'd from that. I meet with many, who, very unmindful that He who\* was justly styl'd the Wise-man, whose counsel it was, that *what ever our hand finds to do, we should do it with all our might, &c.*† make it the main business of their life merely to lengthen it; that are far more sollicitous to live long, than

\* Eccles. ix. 10. † So all Eds. Read, perhaps, "that he was"

well,

well, and would not undergo the least labour, or endure the least hardship, to do the greatest Good, but had rather lose an hundred opportunities of serving God, or obliging Men, than one Entertainment, or an hours sleep, and all this under the pretence of minding their Health, and complying with the Dictates of Self-preservation. But I have often observ'd too, that ev'n these jolly People that seldome have a serious Thought, but how to avoid serious Employments, may, by making their whole Lives a Succession of Divertisements, or rather a constant Diversion from the true end of them, make their Lives indeed thereby useless, but not at all immortal. And truly, Feavers, Plurisies, and other acute Diseases, that are home-bred, besides those numerous fatal ones that are caught by Contagion, and a multitude of Casualties, do cut off so many before they reach old Age, in comparison of those, that the Diligence, and Industry, impos'd by Religion, or Curiosity, destroy, that I think so great a fear of using the Body for the interests of the Soul, and of him to whom we owe both, do's very little become his Disciples, who said, That 'twas *his Meat to do the Will of God that sent him, and to accomplish his Work.*\* The trouble of Thirsting, and Sweating, and Undressing, would to an ingenious Man be

\* S. John iv. 34.

but just recompenc'd by the bare pleasures of Eating, and Drinking, and Sleeping: to confine an honest and inquisitive Person from those, which he looks upon as the almost onely Manly employments, the exercise of Virtue, and the pursuit of Knowledge, by telling him, that such a forbearance may protract his Life, is, to promise a thing upon a condition that destroys the end and use of it; and he will look upon it, as if you should offer him a Horse, provided he will not ride him, or a Perspective-glass, upon condition he shall not draw it out, for fear the Air should, as it sometimes do's, impair the Glasses. A Heaven-born Soul would scarce think it worth while to stay here below, if its work must be, not to imploy the Body, but to tend it. Those that are so unreasonably afraid to spend their Spirits, are in some regards less excusable than Misers themselves; for though both hoard up things that cannot be better enjoy'd than by being parted with, the chief uses for which they were intrusted with them; yet in this, those I blame are more censurable than the Covetous themselves, since these, by their Niggardliness, can avoid spending their Money, but the others, by their Laziness, cannot avoid the Consumption of their time. I know a Man may be Prodigal of himself, as well as his Estate, and that both those Profusions are faults, and therefore fit to be de-

declin'd. But if I could not shun both the Extremes, certainly, since we all must Dye, and the question is not whether or no we will Live for ever, (for the most that can be hop'd for, is not to be priviledg'd from Death, but onely to be longer repriv'd) but whether we will rather indeavour to lead a Life, mean, and unprofitable, a few more days, or a glorious Life, for a somewhat less number of them? I should rather chuse to spend my Life quickly, than uselessly; for he that lays out himself for Eternity, if he lose any Portion of his time upon that account, is the sooner put into possession of an Inexhaustible stock of it; whereas those, who, that they may Live long, meanly forgo the ends of Living, and seek, by Laziness, to protract an insignificant stay on Earth, would, should they reach their Aim, add rather to their Years than to their Life.

## REFLECTION X.

*Upon the Shop of an ugly Painter rarely well stor'd  
with Pictures, of very handsome Ladies.\**

Genorio, Lindamor, Eusebius.

*Genor.* **H**ERE is a deceitful Shop of Beauty,  
where many that come but to won-

\* At the *Hague*.

der,

der, meet with Love, and ev'n when they buy not what they like, pay their Hearts for it ; the Shop being so well furnish'd, that Beauty seems here to have assum'd all the variety of Features, and Complexions, she can be dress'd in, and so exquisitely to have fitted all Gazers, with proportionate and attractive Objects, that nothing but an absolute Incapability of Love, is here able to protect them from that Passion, which, not to resent among so many inspiring Wonders, were one. If in these Faces, the Originals equal the Transcripts, if Art have not flatter'd Nature, and attempted more to instruct than imitate her ; and if the Painter have not elected, rather to have his Pieces lik'd, than like, here are Apologies for Love, that can procure it, not onely Pardons, but Prosellites. I must (in that case) add, that there are more Suns than one, whose Brightness, ev'n by Reflection, can dazle ; here are Princesses more illustrious for the Blood that lightens in their Cheeks, than for that which runs in their Veins, and who, like victorious Monarchs, can conquer at a distance, and captivate by Proxie.

*Euseb.* I fear, *Genorio*, that you are so transported with your Text, that you will quite forget (if ever you intended it) to make a Homily upon it : For you talk at such a rate, as if you were about to lose, to the Pictures of Ladies, the liberty,  
your

your Friend Mr. *Boyle* would be thought to have ever defended against their Originals, and fanci'd, that it might add to the other Resemblances you so admire betwixt them, if both of them were made Enemies to seriousness.

*Lind.* I presume, *Genorio* will willingly allow me, to serve him at this turn; for whether or no he meant us a Reflection, some charms or other he has met with in these Pictures, seem to have so arrested his Thoughts, as well as his Looks, that we shall not have them hastily deliver'd from so pleasing a Captivity; and the Knowledge I alone, of us three, have of the Drawer of these Pictures, supplies me with a Circumstance, without which, I should not, when *Eusebius* is by, offer at an Occasional Meditation: But upon this advantage, I shall venture to tell you, That the thing I was considering, was, that though the Limner have drawn some Pieces, as handsome as Lovers think, or wish their Mistresses, and some (as they tell me) so like, that an actual Confrontation of the Artist's works, and Nature's, would scarce distinguish them, (since the former would appear to differ from the later, but in that silence, which the later's admiration, to see themselves so perfectly represented, would impose) yet is the Painter himself so deformed a Creature, that he might draw a lovelier Face ev'n than any here, by drawing one  
per-

perfectly unlike his own. Alas, this discloses the difference there may be betwixt the being able to write fine Characters of Virtue, and the possessing of it. How ridiculous should I esteem this Linner, if with all his\* ugliness, he should esteem himself handsome, because his Pencil can draw Faces that are so! As absurd were it for us, to grow proud of our devout Composures, and fancy Piety ours, because our Discourses can possibly inamour others of it. The Devil sometimes do's unmolestedly suffer us to write well, if he can but persuade us we need do no more, and that good Pens may dispense us from good Actions. Our Paper-wars against Vices, are oftentimes like *Alexander's*, against the Neighbouring Nations, not out of Hatred, but Glory, not to Extirpate, but to Conquer them, and manifest to the World the sufficiency of our Parts, by a Victory, after which, we often treat the vanquish'd Enemy with greater Courtesie, than those whose Quarrel we undertook. Discourses against Vices, may be as well indited by Vanity, as by Zeal, and meant to express Wit, not persuade Piety. And if (as it chanceth but too frequently) we grow proud of them, we do, like Witches turning Exorcists, onely comply with Satan to cast out the Devil.

*Euseb.* To second your pious Reflection, *Lind-*

\* Ed. 1 and the folio. "this ugliness."

*amor,*

*amor*, with some thoughts suitable to my Profession, I will add, that in the case you put, it happens to us as it once did to *Gideon*,\* who, of the spoils of God and *Israels* conquered Enemies, made an Idol, which prov'd, in the end, his, and his houses Snare. 'Twas a most instructive Check, and divine admonition, that our Saviour gave his Apostles, when, in the account they brought him of their Embassy, they joyfully related their exercis'd power, of dispossessing Devils; *Notwithstanding* (answer'd Christ) *in this rejoice not, that Spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in Heaven.*† In effect, though *Judas* were one of the Persons, invested with this miraculous power of casting Devils out of others, yet we read that *Satan* afterwards *enter'd into Judas, and that it had been good for him, that he had never been born.*‡ And though as *Solomon* tells us, *He that winneth Souls, is wise,*§ yet it is he only that shall *do*, as well as *teach*, the Commandments *that shall be call'd great in the Kingdom of Heaven.*|| And the Judge himself informing us, that, at the worlds last day, many will plead their *having in his name not only prophesy'd or preach'd, but cast out Devils,*¶ and shall yet be

\* Judges viii. 24, 25, 26, &c.

† S. Matt. xxvi. 24.

|| S. Matt. v. 19.

† S. Luke x. 17.

§ Prov. xi. 30.

¶ S. Mat. vii. 22, 23.

dis-



disclaim'd by him ; sufficiently intimates, that 'tis as possible, as unavailable, *to do many wonderful works* (for Religion) and to be *workers of Iniquity*. The true Christian should, *Lindamor*, be willing to impart any useful Discoveries that God shall please to vouchsafe him ; but he will ever consider the taking'st Notions he can frame of vertue, more as Engagements to it, than Arguments of it ; and since there is not any thing in which Charity ought more to begin at home than in devout Instructions, he will endeavour to make himself as much Piety's Votary, as Advocate ; *to imitate those truly Wisemen*, that as they inform'd those of *Jerusalem*, of the Star they had seen in the East, did themselves follow it, till it brought them unto Christ ; to entitle himself to that of our Saviour, *A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, brings forth good things ;\** and (finally) to take his Celebrations of vertue from his Experience, not his Fancy ; as Nurses first feed themselves, to nourish their sucking Infants, to whom they give no meat, which they have not in their own Breasts first digested into Milk, lest (like the Carpenters thattoyl'd to build the Ark to save *Noah* from the Deluge, themselves perisht in,) *when he has preach'd to others, himself should prove a Cast-away.†*

\* S. Luke vi. 45.

† 1 Cor. ix. 27.

*A Con-*

*A Continuation of the Discourse.*

*Genor.* **S**URE, Gentlemen, tis a happy thing to be able to convert the meanest things to the noblest uses, and make whatever one pleases, subservient to Piety, by skilfully employing ev'n slight and unpromising Occasions, to represent her, with the Advantages of a vary'd and surprizing Dress, whereby you may procure that Vertue lovers, and your selves friends: For her Votarie's are so ingenuous and disintress'd in their Amours, that they have as well a kindness for their Rivals, as their Mistress.

*Lind.* I will not deny but that there may be Persons so inflam'd with heavenly Love, that their Devotion is able, like the last fire, that is to refine or destroy the World, to turn all things into Fuel for its victorious flames, and who, when they are once ingag'd in Meditation, can make their pious thoughts excite themselves and flame up higher, and higher, without the assistance of other Incentives, than what their own fervency procures them; as 'tis observed, that when the fire has seiz'd upon a Town, by how small a spark soever it have been kindl'd, if the flame come to be very great, though the air be very calm, the fire it self will produce a wind, that, without the help of Bellows, shall strongly blow it, and make it blaze the more, and  
aspire

aspire towards Heaven. But, *Genorio*, when-ever (for I answer but for my self) I shall meet with any such happy Contemplators, I shall have the Justice to be one of their Admirers, without having the vanity to pretend to be one of their number.

*Euseb.* And I, for my part, shall tell you, *Genorio*, that though there may be divers charitable persons, besides yourself, that by the Expressions it becomes me to use in some of my Meditations, and other composures of the like Nature, may be apt to fancy that I am my self, as devout as I in-deavour to make my Readers, yet you must not imagine that my mind, like one of those Writings, has no other thoughts than Religious, or at least moral ones; For those may be the productions, not of a constant frame of Mind, but of Occasional Fits of Devotion: And you may read a greater number of such Reflections in an hour than perhaps I have made in a month, not to say, in a year. And I must ingeniously confess to you, that I think it more easie to make ten good Sermons than to practise one, and to declaim against all sins than to relinquish any: There goes much lesse self-denial to conform to the Precepts of *Cicero*, than to those of Christ, and I find it so much less difficult to excite other mens passions, than to command my own, that if you will not  
suffer

suffer your charity too much to injure your judgment, You must look upon the devouter passages you may have met with among my Composures, as Expressions of what I aim at, rather than of what I practise.

*The End of the last Section.*



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T A B L E.

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