



N^o 133. Thursday, August 2.

*Quis Desiderio sit pudor, aut modus
Tam Chari capitis?*

Hor.

THERE is a sort of Delight, which is alternately mixed with Terror and Sorrow, in the Contemplation of Death. The Soul has its Curiosity more than ordinarily awakened, when it turns its Thoughts upon the Conduct of such who have behaved themselves with an Equal, a Resigned, a Cheerful, a Generous or Heroick Temper in that Extremity. We are affected with these respective Manners of Behaviour, as we secretly believe the Part of the dying Person imitable by our selves, or such as we imagine our selves more particularly capable of. Men of exalted Minds march before us like Princes, and are, to the Ordinary Race of Mankind, rather Subjects for their Admiration than Example. However, there are no Ideas strike more forcibly upon our Imaginations, than those which are raised from Reflexions upon the Exits of great and excellent Men. Innocent Men who have suffered as Criminals, tho' they were Benefactors to human Society, seem to be Persons of the highest Distinction, among the vastly greater Number of human Race, the Dead. When the Iniquity of the Times brought *Socrates* to his Execution, how great and wonderful is it to behold him, unsupported by any thing but the Testimony of his own Conscience and Conjectures of Hereafter, receive the Poison with an Air of Mirth and Good-humour, and as if going on an agreeable Journey bespeak some Deity to make it fortunate.

WHEN *Phocion's* good Actions had met with the like Reward from his Country, and he was led to Death with many others of his Friends, they bewailing their Fate, he walking composedly towards the Place of Execution, how gracefully does he support his illustrious Character

to the very last Instant. One of the Rabble spitting at him as he passed, with his usual Authority he called to know if no one was ready to teach this Fellow how to behave himself. When a poor-spirited Creature that died at the same time for his Crimes bemoaned himself unmanfully, he rebuked him with this Question, Is it no Consolation to such a Man as thou art to die with *Phocion*? At the Instant when he was to die, they asked what Commands he had for his Son, he answered, To forget this Injury of the *Athenians*. *Niccles*, his Friend, under the same Sentence, desired he might drink the Potion before him; *Phocion* said, because he never had denied him any thing he would not even this, the most difficult Request he had ever made.

THESE Instances were very noble and great, and the Reflexions of those Sublime Spirits had made Death to them what it is really intended to be by the Author of Nature, a Relief from a various Being ever subject to Sorrows and Difficulties.

EPAMINONDAS the *Theban* General, having received in Fight a Mortal Stab with a Sword, which was left in his Body, lay in that Posture 'till he had Intelligence that his Troops had obtained the Victory, and then permitted it to be drawn out, at which Instant he expressed himself in this manner, *This is not the End of my Life, my Fellow-Soldiers; it is now your Epaminondas is born, who dies in so much Glory.*

IT were an endless Labour to collect the Accounts with which all Ages have filled the World of noble and heroick Minds that have resigned this Being, as if the Termination of Life were but an ordinary Occurrence of it.

THIS common-place way of Thinking I fell into from an awkward Endeavour to throw off a real and fresh Affliction, by turning over Books in a melancholy Mood; but it is not easy to remove Grievs which touch the Heart, by applying Remedies which only entertain the Imagination. As therefore this Paper is to consist of any thing which concerns human Life, I cannot help letting the present Subject regard what has been the last Object of my Eyes, tho' an Entertainment of Sorrow.

I went this Evening to visit a Friend, with a design to rally him, upon a Story I had heard of his intending to

steal

steal a Marriage without the Privy of us his intimate Friends and Acquaintance. I came into his Apartment with that Intimacy which I have done for very many Years, and walked directly into his Bed-chamber, where I found my Friend in the Agonies of Death. What could I do? The innocent Mirth in my Thoughts struck upon me like the most flagitious Wickedness: I in vain called upon him; he was senseless, and too far spent to have the least Knowledge of my Sorrow, or any Pain in himself. Give me leave then to transcribe my Soliloquy, as I stood by his Mother, dumb with the weight of Grief for a Son who was her Honour, and her Comfort, and never 'till that Hour since his Birth had been an Occasion of a Moment's Sorrow to her.

‘ **H**OW surprizing is this Change! from the Possession of vigorous Life and Strength, to be reduced in a few Hours to this fatal Extremity! Those Lips which look so pale and livid, within these few Days gave Delight to all who heard their Utterance: It was the Business, the Purpose of his Being, next to Obeying him to whom he is going, to please and instruct, and that for no other end but to please and instruct. Kindness was the Motive of his Actions, and with all the Capacity requisite for making a Figure in a contentious World, Moderation, Good-nature, Affability, Temperance and Chastity, were the Arts of his Excellent Life. There as he lies in helpless Agony, no Wife Man who knew him so well as I, but would resign all the World can bestow to be so near the End of such a Life. Why does my Heart so little obey my Reason as to lament thee, thou excellent Man.—— Heaven receive him, or restore him — Thy beloved Mother, thy obliged Friends, thy helpless Servants, stand around thee without Distinction. How much wouldst thou, hadst thou thy Senses, say to each of us.

‘ **B**UT now that good Heart bursts, and he is at rest — with that Breath expired a Soul who never indulged a Passion unfit for the Place he is gone to: Where are now thy Plans of Justice, of Truth, of Honour? Of what use the Volumes thou hast collated, the Arguments thou hast invented, the Examples thou hast followed.