

fortune to obtain human burial, they were excluded from the receptacle of ghosts for an hundred years:—and hence the severest of all imprecations was that a person might die unburied.” And if any relative was backward in paying his dead friends due respect, or even sparing in his expenses upon their obsequies and monuments, he was looked upon as void of humanity and natural affection, and was excluded from all offices of trust and honor. Hence one special enquiry concerning the lives and behaviour of such as appeared candidates for the magistracy at Athens, was, whether they had taken due care in celebrating the funerals and adorning the monuments of their relatives. Such was the idea of the polished Greek, incorporated into the system of his Government, in the best days of the republic. It was pervaded no doubt with superstition : but it was a refined superstition, peculiar to the people who had sunk the doctrine of the soul’s immortality and of future rewards and punishments into poetical fictions. Even in this deteriorated form these momentous truths had some moralizing influence. They shed a phosphorescent light upon the sepulchre which mitigated the gloom it was too feeble to dispel.

But, if by the dim light which was shed upon their immortality, they were led to regard with a scrupulous and reverent affection the relics of the dead, how much stronger should that affection