

## C H A P. XXVI.

## Of their funerals.

THE war being ended, humanity doth invite us to bewail for the dead, and to bury them. It is a work wholly of piety, and more meritorious than any other. For he that giveth succour to a man whilst he is alive, may hope for some service of him, or a reciprocal kindness; but from a dead creature, we can expect nothing more. This is that which made that holy man *Toby* to be acceptable to God; and for that good office, they that employed themselves in the burying of our Saviour are praised in the gospel. As for tears and mournings behold what faith the wise son of *Sirach*: *My son pour forth tears over the dead, and begin to mourn as if thou hadst suffered great harm thyself; and then cover his body according to his appointment, and neglect not his burial. Make a grievous lamentation, and be earnest in mourning, and use lamentation as he is worthy, and that a day or two, lest thou be evil spoken of.*

This lesson being come, whether it be by some tradition, or by the instinct of nature, as far as to our savages they have yet at this day that common with the nations of these parts to weep for the dead, and to keep the bodies of them after their decease, as it was done in the time of the holy patriarchs *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and since. But they make strange clamours many days together, as we saw in *Port Royal*, some months after our arrival into that country (to wit in *November*) where they made the funeral ceremonies for one of theirs, named *Panonie* who had taken some merchandizes out of *Monf. de Ments*'s store-house, and went to truck with the *Arnauchiquois*. This *Panonie* was killed, and the body brought back into the cabins of the river of *St. Croix*, where our savages did both weep for him and embalm him. Of what kind this balm is I could not know, not being able to enquire of it upon the places; I believe they jag the dead corps and make them to dry. Certain it is, that they preserve them from rottenness; which thing they do almost throughout all these *Indies*. He that hath written the history of *Virginia*, saith that they draw out their entrails from the body, flay the dead, take away the skin, cut all the flesh off from the bones, dry it at the sun, then lay it (enclosed in mats) at the feet of the dead. That done, they give him his own skin again, and cover therewith the bones

*Virginia.*

Vol. II.

tied together with leather, fashioning it even so as if the flesh had remained at it.

It is a thing well known that the ancient *Egyptians* did embalm the dead bodies, and kept them carefully. Which (besides the prophane authors) is seen in the holy scripture, where it is said that *Joseph* did command his servants and physicians to embalm the body of *Jacob* his father; which he did according to the custom of the country. But the *Israelites* did the like, as it is seen in the holy chronicles, where it is spoken of the death of the kings *Asa* and *Joram*.

From the river of *St. Croix*, the said deceased *Panonie* was brought into *Port Royal*, where again he was wept for. But because they are accustomed to make their lamentations for a long continuance of days, as during a month, fearing to offend us by their cries (for as much as their cabins were but some five hundred paces off from our fort) *Membertou* came to intreat *Monf. de Peurincourt* not to dislike that they should mourn after their wonted manner, and that they would be but eight days in performing of it, which he easily granted them; and then afterwards they began the next day following, at the break of day, their weepings and cryings, which we did hear from our said fort, taking some intermission on the midst of the day; and they mourn by intermission every cabin his day, and every person his turn.

It is a thing worthy marvelling, that nations so far distant do agree in those ceremonies with many of the hither world. For in ancient times the *Persians* (as we read in many places of *Herodotus*, and *Q. Curtius*) did make such lamentation, did rent their garments, did cover their heads, did cloath themselves with a mourning garment, which the holy scripture doth call *sackcloth*, and *Josephus* *sebeima tapeinon*. Also they shaved themselves, and their horses and mules, as the learned *Drusius* hath noted in his observations, alleging for this purpose both *Herodotus* and *Plutarch*.

The *Egyptians* did as much, and per-adventure more, in that which concerneth lamentations. For after the death of the holy patriarch *Jacob*, all the ancients, men of calling, and the counsellors of the house of *Pharaob*, and of the country of *Egypt*, went up in great multitude even as far as to the corn floor of *Atad* in *Canaan*, and

10 Z