

from its bed, and to swell around them ; when encompassed with universal desolation, no friend could aid another ; no prospect of escape appeared ; no place of refuge remained ; how similar were such scenes of destruction to the terrors of the last day ? What similar sensations of dread, and remorse, and too late repentance must they have excited among the guilty and profane.

To such formidable convulsions of nature, we, in these happy islands, through the blessing of Heaven, are strangers ; and strangers to them may we long continue. But however we may escape partial ruins of the globe in its general and final ruin, we also must be involved. To us must come at last that awful day, when the sun shall for the last time arise, to perform his concluding circuit round the world. They how blest, whom that day shall find employed in religious acts, or virtuous deeds ; in the conscientious discharge of the duties of life ; in the exercise of due preparation for the conclusion of human things, and for appearing before the great Judge of the world ! Let us now

III. Contemplate the soul of man, as remaining unhurt in the midst of this general desolation, when the whole animal creation perishes, and the whole frame of nature falls into ruins. What a high idea does this present, of the dignity pertaining to the rational spirit. The world may fall back into chaos ; but, superior to matter, and independent of all the changes of material things, the soul continues the same. When the heavens pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat, the soul of man, stamped for immortality, retains its state unimpaired ; and is capable of flourishing in undecaying youth and vigor. Very different indeed the condition of human spirits is to be, according as their different qualities have marked, and prepared them for different future mansions. But for futurity, they are all destined. Existence, still, is theirs. The capacity of permanent felicity they all possess ; and, if they enjoy it not, it is owing to themselves.

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