

BOOK V.

Providence, or the Accidental Difference of Men.

CHAP. I.—WISE AND IGNORANT.

THE gifts of the understanding are the treasures of God, and he appointeth to every one his portion in what measure seemeth good unto himself.

Hath he endued thee with wisdom? hath he enlightened thy mind with the knowledge of truth? Communicate it to the ignorant, for their instruction; communicate it to the wise, for thine own improvement.

True wisdom is less presuming than folly. The wise man doubteth often, and changeth his mind. The fool is obstinate, and doubteth not; he knoweth all things but his own ignorance.

The pride of emptiness is an abomination, and to talk much is the foolishness of folly: Nevertheless, it is the part of wisdom to bear the impertinence of fools, to hear their absurdities with patience, and pity their weakness.

Yet be not puffed up in thine own conceit, neither boast of superior understanding; the clearest human knowledge is but blindness and folly.

The wise man feeleth his imperfections, and is humbled; he laboureth in vain for his own approbation. But the fool peepeth into the shallow stream of his own mind, and is pleased with the pebbles which