

say observation and Lord Bacon—and Christianity triumphs over it says Holy writ. “O death where is thy sting; O, grave, where is thy victory!” Poets, painters, prose and pulpit declaimers, have helped to make Death appear more terrible. But much as it may become man to prepare for Death, it is perhaps more his duty, and will even best prepare him for the change, to perform his part steadily and usefully in the drama of life. An active life, diversified by hurry, amusement, and a seasoning of difficulties, is the best preservative against any dreary opinions of the dissolution of the body. Yet perhaps those who have most reason to be pleased with sublunary things, would not wish their time to come over again. Many who rise from the feast of life, satisfied or cloyed with the length and variety of the entertainment, (for life, like wine should not be drank to the lees,) may consider Death as a smaller evil than a continuation of existence. Scarcely one in a thousand, it may be conjectured, how happy soever his life may have been, would be willing to return from the verge of the grave, to desire a repetition of pleasure from his sensations or reflections, and to go through anew precisely the same scenes he has already passed. Human beings are not only made to look upwards, as Ovid has it, but to look forward. Curiosity and hope, both powerful and enlivening feelings of human nature, establish, independently even of philosophy and religion, a belief in the immortality of the soul, and confidence in the beneficence of our Creator. But as this world is the only one its inhabitants have been in, or can have any accurate conception of, very few wish to change their certainty for the prospect of a better; and very few are in haste to perform the last scene of the mortal drama. Calm and unruffled in mind, firm and