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## **Montaigne's Essays**

In Three Books. With Notes and Quotations. And an Account of The Author's Life; With a short Character of the Author and Translator, by the late Marquis of Halifax; With the Addition of A Complete Table to each Volume

# Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de London, 1743

Chap. 1. That Men by various Ways arrive at the same End.

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# ESSAYS

OF

Michael Seigt. de Montaigne.

The First BOOK.

#### CHAP. I.

That Men by various Ways arrive at the same End.



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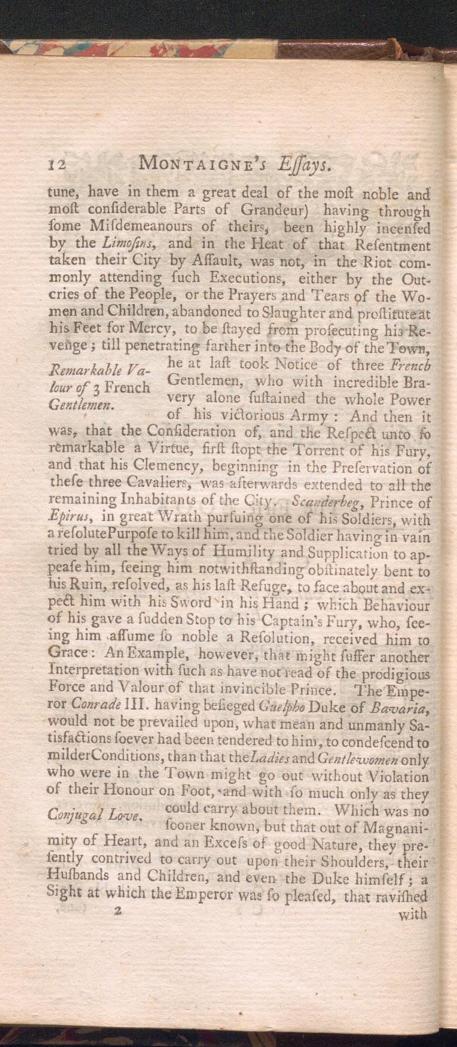
HE most likely and most usual Way in Practice, of appeasing the Indignation of such as we have any Way offended, when we see them in Possession of the Power of Revenge, and find that we absolutely

Submission (than which, nothing more flatters the Glory of an Adversary) to move them to Commission and Pity:

Submission mollifies the Hearts of the offended.

And yet Bravery, Constancy, and Resolution, however quite contrary Means, have sometimes served to produce the same Essect. Edward the Black Prince of Wales (the same who so long governed our Province of Guienne, a Person whose high Condition, excellent Qualities, and remarkable For-

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Various Ways to the same End. with the Generofity of the Action, he wept for Joy, and immediately extinguishing in his Heart the mortal and implacable Hatred he had conceiv'd against this Duke, he from that Time forward treated him and his with all Humanity and Affection. The one, or the other, of these two ways, would with great Facility work upon my Nature; for I have a marvellous Propenfity to Mercy and Mildness, and to such a Degree of Tenderness, that I fanly, of the two I should sooner surrender my Anger to Compassion than Esteem: And yet Pity is reputed a Vice amongst the Stoicks, who will that we Pity reputed a fuccour the Afflicted, but not that we Vice amongst should be so affected with their Sufferings, the Stoicks. as to fuffer with them. I conceiv'd these Examples not ill suited to the Question in Hand, and the rather because therein we observe these great Souls, assaulted and try'd by these two several ways to refist the one without relenting, and to be shook and subjected by the other. It is true, that to fuffer a Man's Heart to be totally fubdu'd by Compassion, may be imputed to Facility, Esseminacy, and Over-tenderness; whence it comes to pass, that the weakest Natures, as of Women, Children, and the common Sort of People, are the most subject to it: But after having refisted, and disdain'd the Power of Sighs and Tears, to lurrender a Man's Animofity to the fole Reverence of the facred Image of Virtue; this can be no other than the Effect of a strong and inflexible Soul, enamour'd of, and ravish'd with a Masculine and obstinate Valour. Nevertheless, Astonishment and Admiration may in less generous Minds beget a like Effect. Witness the People of Thebes, who having put two of their Generals upon Trial

for their Lives, for having continued in Arms beyond the

precise Term of their Commission, very hardly pardon'd

Pelopidas, who bowing under the Weight of so dangerous an

Acculation, had made no manner of Defence for himfelf,

a haughty and arrogant manner reproaching them with Ingratitude and Injustice, they had not the Heart to proceed any further in his Trial, but broke up the Court

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# Montaigne's Effays.

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and departed, the whole Affembly highly commending the Courage and Confidence of this Man Dionyfius the The Cruelty of Elder, after having by a tedious Siege, and through exceeding great Difficulties, taken Dionyfius the the City of Rhegium, and in it the Gover-Tyrant. nor Phyton, a very gallant Man, who had made so obstinate a Defence, he was resolv'd to make him a tragical Example of his Revenge; in order whereunto, and the more fensibly to afflict him, he first told him, That he had the Day before caus'd his Son and all his Kindred to be drown'd: To which Phyton return'd no other Answer but this, That they were then by one Day happier than be. Afterwhich, caufing him to be stripp'd, and delivering him into the Hands of the Tormentors, he was by them not only dragg'd through the Streets of the Town, and most ignominiously and cruelly whipp'd, but moreover, vilified with most bitter and contumelious Language: Yet still, in the Fury of all this Perfecution, he maintain'd his Courage entire all the Way, with a strong Voice and undaunted Countenance proclaiming the glorious Cause of his Death; namely, for that he would not deliver up his Country into the Hands of a merciless Tyrant; at the same Time denouncing against him a sudden Chastisement from the offended Gods. At which the Tyrant rolling his Eyes about, and reading in his Soldiers Looks, that instead of being incens'd at the haughty Language of this conquer'd Enemy, to the Contempt of him their Captain and his Triumph, they not only feem'd ftruck with Admiration of fo rare a Virtue, but moreover inclin'd to mutiny, and were even ready to rescue the Prisoner out of the Hangman's Hands, he caused the Execution to cease, and afterwards privately caus'd him to be thrown into the Sea. Man (in good Earnest) is a marvellous, vain, fickle, and unstable Subject, and on whom it is very hard to form any certain or proportionate Judgment. For Pompey could pardon the whole City of the Mammertines, though furiously incens'd against it, upon the single Account of the Virtue and Magnanimity of one Citizen, Zeno, who took the Fault of the Publick wholly upon himfelf; neither intreated other Favour, but alone to undergo the Punishment for all: And yet Sylla's Hoft, having in the City of Perufia manifested the same Virtue, obtain'd nothing by it, either

for himself or his Fellow Citizens. And directly contrary to my first Examples, the bravest of all Men, and who was reputed fo gracious and civil to all those he overcame. Alexander the Great, having after many great Difficulties forc'd the City of Gaza, and entring found Betis, who commanded there, and of whose Valour in the Time of this Siege he had most noble and manifest Proofs, alone, forfaken by all his Soldiers, his Arms hack'd and hew'd to Pieces, covered all over with Blood and Wounds, and yet still fighting in the Croud of a great Number of Macedonians, who were laying on him on all Sides, he faid to him, nettled at so dear bought Victory, and two fresh Wounds he had newly received in his own Person, Thou shalt not die Betis so honourably as thou dost intend, but shall assuredly suffer all the Torments that can be inflicted on a miserable Captive. To which Menaces the other returning no other Answer, but only a fierce and disdainful Look; What, says the Conqueror (observing his obstinate Silence) Is Obstinate Sibe too stiff to bend a Knee! Is he too proud to lence of Betis. utter one suppliant Word! I shall certainly conquer this Silence; and if I cannot force a Word from his Mouth, I shall at least extract a Groan from his Heart. And thereupon converting his Anger into Fury, prefently commanded his Heels to be bored through, caufing him to be dragg'd, mangled, and difmembred at an infamous Cart's-Tail. Was it that the Height of Courage was fo natural and familiar to this Conqueror, that because he could not admire, he should the less esteem this Hero? Or was it that he conceiv'd Valour to be a Virtue fo pecuhar to himself, that his Pride could not, without Envy, endure it in another? Or was it that the natural Impetuofity of his Fury was incapable of Opposition? Certainly had it been capable of any manner of Moderation or Satiety, it is to be believ'd, that in the Sack and Defolation of Thebes, to fee so many valiant Men lost and totally Deftitute of any farther Defence, croelly massacred before his Eyes, would have appeas'd it. Where there were above fix thousand put to the Sword, of which not one was seen to fly, or heard to cry out for Quarter; but on the contrary every one running here and there to feek out and to provoke the victorious Enemy to help them to an honourable End: Not one who did not to his last Gasp, yet endeavour

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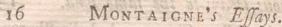
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to revenge himself, and with all the Arms of a brave Despair to sweeten his own Death in the Death of an Enemy Yet did their Virtue create no Pity, and the Length of one Day was not enough to satisfy the Thirst of the Converor's Revenge; but the Slaughter continued to the last Drop of Blood that was capable of being shed, and stopp'd not till it met with none but naked and impotent Persons, old Men, Women, and Children, of them to carry away to the Number of thirty thousand Slaves.



# CHAP. II.

Of Sorrow.

O Man living is more free from this Passion than I, who neither like it in myfelf, nor admire it in others, and yet generally the World, (I know not why) is pleas'd to grace it with a particular Esteem, endeavouring to make us believe, that Wisdom, Virtue and Conscience shroud themselves under this grave and affected Appearance. Foolish and fordid Disguise! The Italians however, under the Denomination of Un Trifto, decypher a clandestine Nature, a dangerous and ill-natured Man: And with good Reafon, it being a Quality always hurtful, always idle and vain, and as cowardly, mean, and base, by the Stoicks expresly, and particularly forbidden their Sages: But the Story nevertheless says, that Pfammenitus, King of Egypt, being defeated and taken Prisoner by Cambyses King of Persia, seeing his own Daughter pass by him in awretched Habit, with a Bucket to draw Water, though his Friends about him were fo concerned as to break out into Tears and Lamentations at the miserable Sight, yet he himfelf remain'd unmov'd, without uttering a Word of Difcontent, with his Eyes fix'd upon the Ground: And feeing moreover his Son immediately after led to Execution, still maintain'd the fame Gravity and Indifference; till spying at last one of his Domesticks dragg'd away amongst the Captives, he could then hold no longer, but fell to tearing his Hair, and beating his Breast, with all the other Extra-