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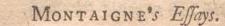
Montaigne's Essays

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. 33. Fortune oftentimes rational.

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extremest Importunity, to do as much for her; and God, at their joint Request, shortly after calling her to him, it was a Death embraced on both Sides, with singular Content.

HERSTONDING TOTAL

CHAP. XXXIII.

That Fortune is oftentimes observed to act by the Rule of Reason.

HE Inconstancy, and various Motions of Forture, may reasonably make us expect, she should present us with all Sorts of Faces. Can there be a more express Act of Justice than this? The Duke of Valentenois, having resolved to poison Cardinal Adrian Cornetto, with whom his Father, Pope Alexander the Sixth, and himself, were to go to Supper in the Vatican; he sent before a Bottle of poisoned Wine, and withal, strict Order to the Butlet to keep it very fafe. The Pope being come before his Son, and calling for Drink, the Butler supposing this Wine had not been so strictly recommended to his Care, but only upon the Account of it's Excellency, presented it immediately to the Pope, and the Duke himself coming in prefently after, and being confident they had not meddled with his Bottle, took also his Cup; so that the Father died immediately upon the Spot, and the Son, after having been long tormented with Sickness, was referred to another, and a worfe Fortune: Sometimes she seems to play upon us, just in the Nick of an Affair: Monsieur d' Estret, at that time Guidon to Monfieur de Vendosme; and Montieur de Liques, Lieutenant to the Duke of Arscot's Troop, being both Pretenders to the Sieur de Foungesfelles's Sitter, though of different Parties, (as it oft falls out amongst from tier Neighbours,) the Sieur de Liques carried her; but on the same Day he was married, and which was worle, before he went to Bed to his Wife, the Bridegroom having a Mind to break a Lance in Honour of his new Bride, went out to skirmish, near to St. Omers, where the Sieur d' Estree proving the Stronger, took him Prisoner, and the more to illustrate his Victory, the Lady herself was fain

Conjugis ante coacta novi dimittere collum, Quam veniens una, atque altera rursus hyems, Noctibus in longis avidum saturasset amorem*.

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Of her fair Arms, the am'rous Ring to break, Which clung fo fast to her new Spouse's Neck, E're of two Winters many a friendly Night Had sated her Love's greedy Appetite.

to request him of Courtefy, to deliver up his Prisoner to her, as he accordingly did; the Gentlemen of France never denying any thing to the Ladies. Does she not seem to be an Artist here? Constantine, the Son of Hellen, founded the Empire of Constantinople; and so many Ages after, Constantine, the Son of Hellen, put an End to it. Sometimes the is pleased to emulate our Miracles. We are told that King Clouis besieging Angoulesme, the Walls fell down of themselves by divine Favour. And Bouchet has it from some Author, that King Robert having fat down before a City, and being stole away from the Siege, to keep the Fealt of St. Aignan at Orleans; as he was in Devotion at a certain Place of the Mass, the Walls of the beleaguered City, without any Manner of Violence, fell down with a sudden Ruin. But she did quite contrary in our Milan War; for Captain Rense laying Siege to the City of Verona, and having carried a Mine under a great Parcel of the Wall, the Mine being fprung, the Wall was lifted from it's Base, but dropt down again nevertheless whole and entire, and so exactly upon it's Foundation, that the Besieged suffered no Inconvenience by that Attempt. Sometimes she plays the Physician: Jason Phereus being given over by the Physicians, by Reason of a desperate Impolthumation in his Breast, having a Mind to rid himself of his Pain, by Death at least, in a Battle, threw himself desperately into the thickest of the Enemy, where he was to fortunately wounded quite through the Body, that the

* Catultus.

Imposthume

246 MONTAIGNE'S Effays.

Imposthume broke, and he was perfectly cured. Did the not also excel the Painter Protogenes in his Art? Who having finished the Picture of a Dog quite tired and out of Breath, in all the other Parts excellently well to his own liking, but not being able to express as he would the Slaver and Foam that should come out of his Mouth, vext and angry at his Work, he took his Spunge, which by cleaning his Pencils had imbibed feveral Sorts of Colours, and threw it in a Rage against the Picture, with an Intent utterly to deface it; when Fortune guiding the Spunge to hit just upon the Mouth of the Dog, it there performed what all his Art was not able to do. Does the not sometimes direct our Counsels, and correct them! Isabella, Queen of England, being to fail from Zealand into her own Kingdom, with an Army in Favour of her Son, against her Husband, had been lost, had she come into the Port she intended, being there laid wait for by the Enemy; but Fortune, against her Will, threw her mo another Haven, where she landed in Safety. And he who throwing a Stone at a Dog, hit and killed his Mother-in-Law, had he not Reason to pronounce thin Verse,

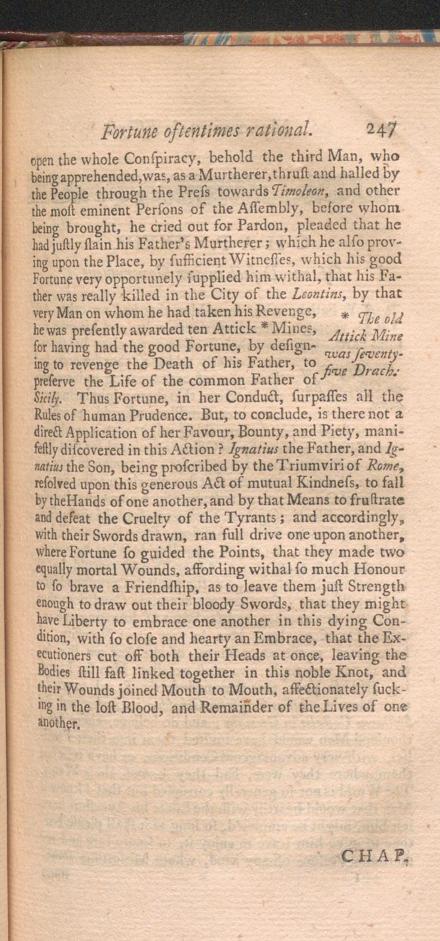
Ταυτόματον ημών καλλίω βελεύεται*.

By this I fee,
Fortune will always better Aim than we.

Fortune has more Judgment than we. Icetes had contracted with two Soldiers to kill Timoleon at Adranon in Sicily. These Villians took their Time to do it, when he was assisting at a Sacrifice, who thrusting into the Crowd, as they were making Signs to one another, that now was a fit Time to do their Business, in steps a Third, who with a Sword takes one of them full drive over the Pate, lays him Dead upon the Place, and away he runs. Which the other seeing, and concluding himself discovered and lost, he runs to the Altar and begs for Mercy, promising to discover the whole Truth, which as he was doing, and laying

* Meander.

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