



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
PADERBORN

Universitätsbibliothek Paderborn

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. 11. Of Cruelty.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53407](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53407)

that shines in the ancient Historians: Such as the Sire de Jounville, a Domestick to St. Louis: Eginard, Chancellor to Charlemain; and of later Date, in Philip de Comines. This here is rather an Apology for King Francis, against the Emperor Charles the Fifth, than an History. I will not believe that they have falsified any Thing, as to Matter of Fact; but they make a common Practice of wresting the Judgment of Events (very often Contrary to Reason) to our Advantage, and of omitting every Thing that is nice to be handled in the Life of their Master; witness the Relations of Messieurs de Montmorency, and de Brion, which were here omitted: Nay, so much as the very Name of Madam d'Estampes is not here to be found. Secret Actions an Historian may conceal; but to pass over in Silence what all the World knows, and Things that have drawn after them publick Consequences, is an inexcusable Defect. In fine, Whoever has a Mind to have a perfect Knowledge of King Francis, and the Revolution of his Reign, let him seek it elsewhere, if my Advice may prevail. The only Profit a Man can reap from Guicciardin and Bellay is, from the particular Narrative of Battles and other Exploits of War, wherein those Gentlemen were personally engaged; some Words, and private Actions of the Princes of their Time, and the Practices and Negotiations carried on by the Seigneur de Lancy; where, indeed, there are, every where, Things worthy to be known, and Discourses above the vulgar Strain.



C H A P. XI.

Of Cruelty.

Inclinations to Goodness. I Take Virtue to be distinct from, and something more noble, than those Inclinations to Generosity, and that good Nature which we are born with. Well dispos'd and well descended Souls pursue, indeed, the same Methods, and represent the same Face that Virtue itself does: But the Word *Virtue* imports, I know not how, something more great and active, than merely for a Man to suffer himself, by a happy Disposition, to be gently and quietly drawn to the Rule of Reason.

Reason. He who, by a natural Sweetness and Facility, should despise Injuries receiv'd, would, doubtless, do a very great, and a very laudable Thing; but he who, provoked, and nettled to the Quick, by an Offence, should fortify himself with the Arms of Reason, against the furious Appetite of Revenge, and, after a great Conflict, master his own Passion, would doubtless do a very great deal more. The first would do well; and the latter virtuously: One Action might be called Bounty, and the other Virtue; for methinks the very Name of Virtue presupposes Difficulty and Contention; and 'tis for this Reason, perhaps, that we call God Good, Mighty, Liberal and Just; but we do not give him the Attribute of Virtuous, being that all his Operations are natural, and without Endeavour. It has been the Opinion of many Philosophers, not only *Stoicks*, but *Epicureans*, that it is not enough to have the Soul seated in a good Place, of a good Temper, and well disposed to Virtue. It is not enough to have our Resolutions fixed above all the Power of Fortune, but we are, moreover, to seek Occasions wherein to put them to the Proof: We are to covet Pain, Necessity and Contempt, to contend with them, and to keep the Soul in Breath, *Multum sibi adjicit virtus laceffita* *. 'Tis one of the Reasons why *Epaminondas*, who was yet of a third Sect, refused the Riches which Fortune presented to him by very lawful Means; because, said he, *I am to contend with Poverty*: In which Extream he maintain'd himself to the last. *Socrates* put himself, methinks, upon a rough Trial; keeping for his Exercise a termagant scolding Wife, which was fighting at Sharps. *Metellus* having, of all the Senators, alone attempted, by the Power of Virtue, to withstand the Violence of *Saturninus*, Tribune of the People at *Rome*, who would, forcibly, cause an unjust Law to pass in Favour of the Commons, and by so doing have incurr'd the Capital Penalties that *Saturninus* had establish'd against the Diffenters, entertain'd those, who in this Extremity led him to Execution, with Words to this Effect: *That it was a thing too easy and too base to do Ill: and that to do well*

That Virtue cannot be exercised without some Difficulty.

* *Sen. Epist. 25.*

where there was no Danger, was a common thing; but that to do well where there was Danger, was the proper Office of a Man of Virtue. These Words of Metellus very clearly represent to us, what I would make out, viz. That Virtue refuses Facility for a Companion; and that that easy, smooth and descending Way, by which the regular Steps of a sweet Disposition of Nature are conducted, is not that of a true Virtue: She requires a rough and stormy Passage; she will have either outward Difficulties to wrestle with (like that of Metellus) by means of which Fortune delights to interrupt the Speed of her Career; or internal Difficulties, which the inordinate Appetites and Imperfections introduce to disturb her. I am come thus far at my Ease; but here it comes into my Head, that the Soul of Socrates, the most perfect that ever came to my Knowledge, should, by this Rule, be of very little Account; for I cannot conceive in that Person any the least Motion of a vicious Inclination: I cannot imagine there could be any Difficulty, or Constraint, in the Course of his Virtue: I know his Reason to be so powerful and sovereign over him, that she would never have suffer'd a vicious Appetite so much as to spring in him. To a Virtue so elevated, as his, I have nothing to oppose. Methinks I see him march, with a victorious and triumphant Pace, in Pomp, and at his Ease, without Opposition or Disturbance. If Virtue cannot shine bright, but by the Conflict of contrary Appetites, shall we then say, that she cannot subsist without the Assistance of Vice; and that it is from her, that she derives her Reputation and Honour? What then also would become of that brave and generous Epicurean Pleasure, which supposes that it nourishes Virtue tenderly in her Lap, and there makes it play and wanton, giving it for Toys to play withal, Shame, Fevers, Poverty, Death and Torments? If I presuppose that a perfect Virtue manifests itself in contending, in patiently enduring Pain, and undergoing the utmost Extremity of the Gout, without being moved in her Seat: If I give her Austerity and Difficulty for her Necessary Objects: What will become of a Virtue elevated to such a Degree, as, not only to despise Pain, but moreover, to rejoice in it, and to be tickled with the Daggers of a sharp Colick, such as the Epicureans have established, and of which, many of them, by their Actions, have given most manifest Proofs?

Proofs? As have likewise several others, who I find to have surpassed, in effect, even the very Rules of their own Discipline: Witness the younger *Cato*; when I see him die, and tearing out his own Bowels, I am not satisfy'd simply to believe, that he had then his Soul totally exempt from all Troubles and Horror: I cannot think that he only maintained himself in the Steadiness that the Stoical Rules prescribed him; temperate without Emotion, and undisturbed: There was, methinks, something in the Virtue of this Man, too sprightly and youthful to stop there; I do believe that, without doubt, he felt a Pleasure and Delight in so noble an Action, and was more pleas'd in it, than in any other of his Life: *Sic abiit à vita, ut causam moriendi nactum se esse gauderet* *. I believe so far, that I question whether he would have been content to have been deprived of the Occasion of so brave an Execution. And if the Sincerity that made him embrace the Publick Concern more than his own, withheld me not, I should easily fall into an Opinion that he thought himself obliged to Fortune for having put his Virtue upon so brave a Tryal, and for having favoured that *Thief* †, in treading under foot the ancient Liberty of his Country. Methinks I read, in this Action, I know not what Exultation in his Soul, and an extraordinary and manly Emotion of Pleasure, when he looked upon the Generosity and Height of his Enterprize.

*The noble
Death of
Cato accom-
panied with
Pleasure.*

† Cæsar.

Deliberata morte ferocior ‡.

Not stimulated with any Hope of Glory, as the popular and effeminate Judgments of some have concluded; for that Consideration had been too mean and low to possess so generous, so haughty, and so obstinate a Heart as his: But for the very Beauty of the Thing in itself, which he, who had the handling of the Springs, discern'd more clearly, and in its Perfection, than we are able to do. Philosophy has obliged me in determining, that so brave an Action had been indelicately placed in any other Life, than that of *Cato*; and that it only belonged to his, to end so. Notwithstanding,

* *Cic. Tusc. lib. 1.* † *Hor. lib. 1. Ode 37.*

and according to Reason, he commanded his Son, and the Senators that accompanied him, to take another Course in their Affairs *Catoni, quum incredibilem natura tribuisset gravitatem, eamque ipse perpetua constantia roboravisset semperque in proposito consilio permansisset, moriendum potius quam Tyranni vultus aspiciendus erat* *. Nature having endued Cato with an incredible Gravity, which he had also fortified with a perpetual Constancy, without ever flagging in his Resolution, he must of necessity rather die, than see the Face of the Tyrant. Every Death ought to hold proportion with the Life before it. We do not become others for dying. I always interpret the Death by the Life preceding; and if any one tells me of a Death strong and constant in Appearance, annexed to a feeble Life, I conclude it produced by some feeble Cause, and suitable to the Life before. The easiness then of this Death, and the Facility of dying, he had acquir'd by the Vigour of his Soul: shall we say that it ought to abate any thing of the Lustre of his Virtue? And who, that has his Brain never so little tinctur'd with the true Philosophy, can be content to imagine *Socrates* only free from Fear and Passion, in the Accident of his Prison, Fetters and Condemnation? and that will not discover in him, not only Stability and Constancy (which was his ordinary Composure) but moreover (I know not what) new Satisfaction, and frolick Cheerfulness in his last Words and Actions; at the Start he gave, with the Pleasure of scratching his Leg, when his Irons were taken off, does he not discover an equal Serenity and Joy in his Soul for being freed from past Inconveniencies, and at the same time to enter into the Knowledge of Things to come? *Cato* shall pardon me, if he pleases; his Death, indeed is more tragical, and more taken notice of, but yet this (I know not how) methinks finer. *Aristippus* said, to one that was lamenting his Death; *The Gods grant me such a one*, said he. A man discerns in the Souls of these two great Men, and their Imitators (for I have very much doubt, whether there was ever their like) so perfect a Habitude to Virtue, that it was turn'd to a Completion. It is no more a laborious Virtue, nor the Precepts of Reason,

* *Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.*

*Virtue turn'd
into Habit in
Cato and So-
crates.*

to maintain which, the Soul is so racked ; but, the very Essence of their Souls, their natural and ordinary Habit. They have rendred it such by a long Practice of Philosophical Precepts, having light upon a rich and ingenuous Nature. The vicious Passions that spring in us, can find no Entrance into them. The Force and Vigour of their Souls stifle and extinguish irregular Desires, so soon as they begin to move. Now, that it is not more noble, by a high and divine Resolution, to hinder the Birth of Temptations, and to be so form'd to Virtue, that the very Seeds of Vice be rooted out, than to hinder their Progress; and having suffer'd themselves to be surprized with the first Motions of Passions, to arm themselves, and to stand firm to oppose their Progress, and overcome them; and that this second Effect is not also much more generous, than to be simply endowed with a frail and affable Nature, of itself disaffected to Debauchery and Vice, I do not think can be doubted; for this third and last Sort of Virtue seems to render a Man innocent, but not virtuous; free from doing ill, but not apt enough to do well: Considering also, that this Condition is so near Neighbour to Imperfection and Cowardice, that I know not very well how to separate the Confines, and distinguish them: The very Name of Good-Nature and Innocence are, for this Reason, in some sort grown into Contempt. I very well know, that several Virtues, as Chastity, Sobriety and Temperance, may come to a Man through personal Defects. Constancy in Danger, if it must be so called, the Contempt of Death, and Patience in Misfortunes, may oft-times be found in Men, for want of well judging of such Accidents, and not apprehending them for such as they are. Want of Apprehension and Sottishness, do sometimes counterfeit virtuous Effects: As I have often observed it happen, that Men have been commended for what really deserved Blame. An *Italian* Lord once said this in my Presence, to the Disadvantage of his own Nation; *That the Subtilty of the Italians, and the Vivacity of their Conceptions were so great, that they foresaw the Dangers and Accidents that might befall them, so far off, that it must not be thought strange, if they were often in War observed to provide for their Safety, even before they had discover'd the Peril: That*

Italians subtle and quick of Apprehension.

we

we French and Spaniards, who are not so cunning, went on further; and that we must be made to see and feel the Danger before we would take the Alarm; and that even the Germans and Swiss, more heavy and Thick-skull'd, had not the Sense to look about them, even then, when the Blows were falling about their Ears. Perhaps, he only talk'd so for Mirth Sake; and yet it is most certain that, in War, raw Soldiers rush into Danger with more Precipitation, than after they have been well beaten.

— *Haud ignarus, quantum nova gloria in armis,
Et prædulce decus primo certamine possit* *.

Not ign'rant in the first Essay of Arms,
How Hope of Glory the raw Soldier warms.

For this Reason it is, that when we judge of a Particular Action, we are to consider several Circumstances and the whole Man by whom it is perform'd, before we give it a Name. To instance in myself; I have sometimes known my Friends call that Prudence in me which was merely Fortune, and repute that Courage and Patience, which was Judgment and Opinion: And attribute to me one Title for another, sometimes to my Advantage, and sometimes otherwise. As to the rest, I am so far from being arriv'd at the first and most perfect Degree of Excellence, where Virtue is turned into Habit, that even of the second I have made no great Tryal. I have not been very solicitous to curb the Desires by which I have been importun'd. My Virtue is a Virtue, or rather an Innocence, casual and accidental. If I had been born of a more irregular Complexion, I am afraid I should have made scurvy Work: for I never observed any great Stability in my Soul to resist Passions, if they were never so little vehement. I have not the Knack of nourishing Quarrels and Debates in my own Bosom, and consequently owe myself no great Thanks that I am free from several Vices:

*Si vitii mediocribus, Et mea paucis
Mendosa est natura, alioqui recta velut se
Egregio inspersos reprehendas corpore nervos* †.

† *Æneid.* 11.

† *Hor. lib. 1. Sat. 6.*

If of small Crimes, and few, my Nature be
To be accus'd, and from the great ones free,
Those venial Faults will no more spot my Soul,
Than a fair Body's blemish'd with a Mole.

I owe it rather to my Fortune than my Reason : She has made me to be descended of a Race famous for Integrity ; and of a very good Father ; I know not whether or no he has infus'd into me Part of his Humours ; or whether Domestick Examples and the good Education of my Infancy, hath insensibly assisted in the Work, or if I was otherwise born so ;

*Seu Libra seu me Scorpius aspicit
Formidolosus, pars violentior
Natalis horæ, seu tyrannus,
Hespericæ Capricornus undæ †.*

Whether by *Balance* weigh'd my future Fate ;
Or *Scorpio*, Lord of my Ascendant, fate ;
Or Tyrant *Capricorn*, that rudely sways,
And ruffles up the Occidental Seas.

But so it is, that I have naturally an Horror for most Vices. The Answer of *Antisthenes* to him who ask'd him, *Which was the best Apprentiship, To unlearn Evil*, seems to point at this. I have them in Horror, I say, with a Detestation so natural and so much my own, that the same Instinct and Impression I brought with me from my Nurse I yet retain, no Temptation whatever had the Power to make me alter it. Not so much as my own Discourses, which in some Things lashing out of the common Road of modest Speaking, might easily license me to Actions that my natural Inclination makes me hate. I will say a prodigious Thing, but I will say it however ; I find myself in many Things more curb'd and retain'd by my Manners than my Opinion, and my Concupiscence is less debauch'd than my Reason. *Aristippus* instituted Opinions so bold, in Favour of Pleasure and Riches, as made all the Philosophers murmur at him : But as to his Manners, *Dionysius*, the Tyrant, having presented three beautiful Women before him to take his

† *Hor. lib. 2. Ode 17.*

Choice; he made Answer, *That he would chuse them all and that it had happened ill to Paris, in having prefer'd one before the other two*: But having taken them home to his House, he sent them back untouch'd. His Servant finding himself overloaded upon the Way, with the Money he carry'd after him, he order'd him to pour it out, and throw away that which troubled him. And *Epicurus*, whose Doctrines were so irreligious and effeminate, was in his Life very laborious and devout: He writ to a Friend of his, *That he lived only upon Biscuit and Water, intreating him to send him a little Cheese to lie by him against he had a Mind to make a Feast*. Must it be true, that to be a perfect good Man, we must be so by an occult, natural and universal Propriety, without Law, Reason or Example? The Debauches wherein I have been engaged, have not been (I thank God) of the worst Sort, and I have condemn'd them myself; for my Judgment was never infected by them. On the contrary, I accuse them more severely in myself than in any other. But that is all; for, as to the rest, I oppose too little Resistance, and suffer myself to incline too much to the other Side of the Ballance, excepting that I moderate them, and prevent them from mixing with other Vices, which, for the most Part, will cling together if a Man have not a Care. I have contracted and curtail'd mine, to make them as single as I can:

— *Nec ultra*
Errorem foveo †.

For as to the Opinion of the *Stoicks*, who say, *That the wise Man, when he works, works by all the Virtues together, tho' one be most apparent, according to the Nature of the Action*; (and of this the Similitude of a human Body might serve them to some Instance; for the Action of Anger cannot work, but that all the Humours must assist, tho' Cholick predominate) if from thence they will draw a like Consequence, that when the wicked Man does wickedly, he does it by all the Vices together, I do not believe it to be simply so, or else I understand them not; for I effectually find the contrary. These are witty and substantial Subtilties

* *Juv. Sat. 8.*

ties, which Philosophy sometimes insists upon. I follow some Vices, but I fly others as much as a Saint would do. The *Peripateticks* also disown this indissoluble Connection; and *Aristotle* is of opinion, *That a prudent and just Man may be intemperate and lascivious.* *Socrates* confessed to some who had discover'd a certain Inclination to Vice in his Physiognomy, *That it was, in Truth, his natural Propensity, but that he had by Discipline corrected it.* And such as were familiar with the Philosopher *Stilpo*, hath said, *That being born subject to Wine and Women, he had by Study render'd himself very abstinent both from the one and the other.* What I have in me of Good, I have quite contrary by the Chance of my Birth; and hold it not either by Law, Precept, or any other Instruction. The Innocency that is in me is a simple and unexpected one; little Vigour and less Art. Amongst other Vices, I mortally hate *Cruelty*, both by Nature and Judgment, as the very Extream of all Vices; but with so much Tenderness withal, that I cannot see a Chicken's Neck pull'd off without Trouble, and cannot, without Impatience, endure the Cry of a Hare in my Dog's Teeth, tho' the Chace be a violent Pleasure: Such as have Sensuality to encounter, willingly make use of this Argument (to shew that it is altogether vicious and unreasonable) that when it is at the Height, it subjects us to that Degree, that a Man's Reason can have no Access, and instance our own Experience in the Act of Love. Wherein they conceive, that the Pleasure doth so transport us, that our Reason cannot perform its Office whilst we are so benumb'd and extasy'd in Delight; I know very well it may be otherwise, and that a Man may sometimes, if he will, gain this Point over himself to sway his Soul, even in the Critical Moment, to think of something else: But then he must leisurely incline and ply it to that Bent. I know, that a Man may triumph over the utmost Effort of this Pleasure: I have experienc'd it in myself, and have not found *Venus* so imperious a Goddess, as many, and some more reform'd than I, declare. I do not consider it as a Miracle, as the *Queen of Navarre* does, in one of the Tales of her *Heptameron* (which is a marvellous pretty Book of that kind) nor for a thing of extreme Difficulty to pass over whole Nights, where a Man has all the Convenience and Liberty he can desire, with a long-coveted
Mistress,

Mistress, and yet be just to his Faith, first given to satisfy himself with Kisses and innocent Embraces, without pressing any further. I conceive that the Example of the Pleasure of the Chace would be more proper wherein, tho' the Pleasure be less, yet the Ravishment and the Surprize are more, which the Reason being astonish'd, has no so much Leisure to prepare itself for the Encounter; whereas after a long Quest, the Game starts up on a sudden in a Place where, perhaps, we least expected: Which sudden Motion, with the Ardour of the Shouts and Cries of the Hunters, so strikes us, that it would be hard, for such are eager of the Chace, immediately to turn their Thoughts another Way; and also the Poets make Diana triumph over the Torch and Shafts of *Cupid*.

*Quis non malarum quas amor curas habet
Hæc inter obliviscitur *?*

Who amongst such Delights would not remove
Out of his Thoughts the anxious Cares of Love?

But to return to what I was saying before, I am tenderly compassionate of others Afflictions, and should easily cry for company, if upon any occasion whatever I could cry at all. Nothing tempts my Tears but Tears, and not only those that are real and true, but whatever they are, either feign'd or painted: I do not much lament the Dead, and should envy them rather; but I very much lament the Dying. The Savages do not so much offend me in roasting and eating the Bodies of the Dead, as they do who torment and persecute the Living. Nay, I cannot so much as look upon the ordinary Executions of Justice, how reasonable soever, with a steady Eye. Some one being to give Testimony of Julius Cæsar's Clemency. *He was,* says he, *and moderate in his Revenges: For having compell'd the Pirates to yield, by whom he had before been taken Prisoner, and put to ransom: forasmuch as they had threatned him with the Cross, he indeed condemn'd them to it, but it was after they were strangled. He punish'd his Secretary Philomon,*

* *Hor. Ep. 2.*

had attempted to poison him, with no greater Severity than a single Death. Without naming that *Latin* Author, that dare alledge for a Testimony of Mercy, the killing only of those by whom we have been offended; it is easy to guess, that he was struck with the horrid and inhuman Examples of *Cruelty*, practis'd by the *Roman* Tyrants. For my Part, even in Justice itself, all that exceeds a simple Death, appears to me perfect *Cruelty*; especially in us, who ought to have Regard to their Souls, to dismiss them in a good and calm Condition: Which cannot be, when we have discompos'd them by insufferable Torments. Not long since, a Soldier, who was a criminal Prisoner, perceiving from a Tower where he was shut up, that the People began to assemble to the Place of Execution, and that the Carpenters were busy erecting a Scaffold, he presently concluded that the Preparation was for him; and therefore enter'd into a Resolution to kill himself, but could find no Instrument to assist him in his Design, except an old rusty Cart-Nail that Fortune presented to him: With this he first gave himself two great Wounds about his Throat; but finding those would not do, he presently after gave himself a third in the Belly, where he left the Nail sticking up to the Head. The first of his Keepers that came in found him in this Condition, yet alive, but sunk down and near expiring by his Wounds. Therefore, to make Use of Time, before he should die and defeat the Law, they made haste to read his Sentence, which having done, and he hearing that he was only condemn'd to be Beheaded, he seem'd to take new Courage, accepted of Wine, which he had before refused, and thanked his Judges for the unhop'd-for Mildness of their Sentence; saying, *That indeed he had taken a Resolution to dispatch himself, for fear of a more severe and insupportable Death; having entertained an Opinion, by the Preparations he had seen in the Place, that they were resolv'd to torment him with some horrible Execution:* And seem'd to be deliver'd from Death, for having it chang'd from what he apprehended. I should advise, that these Examples of *Severity*, by which 'tis design'd to retain the People in their Duty, might be exercis'd upon the dead Bodies of *Criminals*; for to see them depriv'd of Sepulture, to see them boil'd and divided into Quarters, would almost work as much upon the Vulgar, as the Pain they

they make the Living endure: Tho' that, in Effect, be little or nothing, as God himself says, *Who kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do* *. I happen'd to come by one Day accidentally at Rome just as they were upon executing *Catena*, a notorious Robber: He was strangled without any Emotion of the Spectators; but when they came to cut him in Quarters, the Hangman gave not a Blow that was not follow'd by a doleful Cry from the People, and an Exclamation as if every one had lent his Feeling to the miserable Carcase. Those inhuman Excesses ought to be exercised upon the Bark, and not upon the

The severe Laws of Persia moderated by Artaxerxes Quick. *Artaxerxes*, in almost a like Case, moderated the Severity of the ancient Laws of Persia, ordering, *That the Nobility who had committed a Fault, instead of being whipped, as they were us'd to be, should be stripped only, and their Cloaths whipped for them; and that, whereas they were wont to tear off their Hair, they should only take off their high-crown'd Tiara.* The so devout *E-*

Hogs sacrificed in Figure to the Divine Justice by the Egyptians. *Egyptians* thought they sufficiently satisfy'd the Divine Justice in sacrificing Hogs in Effigy and Representation; a bold Invention to pay God, so essential a Substance in Picture only, and in Show. I live in a Time, wherein we abound in incredible Examples

of this Vice, thro' the Licence of our Civil Wars; and we see nothing in ancient Histories more extreme than what we have Proof of every Day. I could hardly persuade my-

The Cruelties exercised in Civil Wars. self, before I saw it with my Eyes, that there could be found out Men so cruel and fell, who, for the sole Pleasure of Murder, would commit, hack and lop off the Limbs

of others; sharpen their Wits to invent unusual Torments, and new kinds of Death without Hatred, without Profit, and for no other End, but only to enjoy the pleasant Spectacle of the Gestures and Motions, the lamentable Groans and Cries of a Man in Anguish. For this is the utmost Point to which Cruelty can arrive, *Ut hominem non iratus, non timens, tantum spectaturus occidat: That a Man should kill*

* *St. Luke, chap. xii. ver. 40.*

a Man without being angry, or without Fear, only for the Pleasure of the Spectacle. For my own Part, I cannot, without Grief, see so much as an innocent Beast pursu'd and kill'd, that has no Defence, and from whom we have receiv'd no Offence at all. And that which frequently happens, that the Stag we hunt, finding himself weak and out of Breath, seeing no other Remedy, surrenders himself to us who pursue him, imploring Mercy by his Tears,

—*questuque cruentus,
Atque imploranti similis* *.

That bleeding by his Tears does Mercy crave,
has ever been to me a very unpleasing Sight;
and I hardly ever take any Beast or Bird
alive, that I do not presently turn loose. *Pythagoras* bought them and *Fishes of Hunt-*
men, Fowlers, and Fishermen to do the same. *Beasts bought
alive by Py-
thagoras to
turn out.*

—*primoque a cæde ferarum,
Incaluisse puto maculatum sanguine ferrum* †.

I think, 'twas Slaughter of wild Beasts that made,
Too docile Man first learn the Killing Trade.

Those Natures that are sanguinary towards Beasts, discover a natural Propensity to Cruelty. After they had accustom'd themselves, at *Rome* to Spectacles of the Slaughter of Animals, they proceeded to those of the Slaughter of Men, the Gladiators. Nature has herself, I doubt, imprinted in Man a Kind of Instinct to Inhumanity; no body takes Pleasure in seeing Beasts play and carefs one another, but every one is delighted with seeing them dismember and tear one another to Pieces. And that I may not be laugh'd at for the Sympathy I have with them, Theology itself enjoins us some Favour in their Behalf: and considering, that one and the same Master has lodg'd us together in this Palace for his Service, and that they as well as we are of his Family, it has Reason to enjoyn us some Affection and Regard to them. *Pythagoras* borrow'd the *Metempsychosis* from the *Egyptians*, but it has since been receiv'd by several Nations, and particularly by our *Druids*.

*Pythagoras's
Transmutati-
on of Souls.*

* *Æneid. l. 7.*

† *Ovid. Met. lib. 15.*

*Mortem carent animæ, semperque priore relicta
Sede, novis domibus vivunt, habitantque receptæ* *.

Souls never die, but, having left one Seat,
Into new Houses they Admittance get.

The Religion of our ancient *Gauls* maintain'd, that Souls being eternal, never ceas'd to remove and shift their Places from one Body to another; Mixing moreover, with this Fancy some Consideration of Divine Justice. For according to the Behaviour of the Soul, whilst it had been in *Alexander*, they said, that God order'd it another Body to inhabit, more or less painful, and proper for its Conditions.

————— *muta ferarum*
*Cogit vincla pati, truculentos ingerit urfis,
Prædonesque lupis, fallaces vulpibus addit,
Atque ubi per varios annos per mille figuras
Egit, Lætheo purgatos flumine tandem
Rursus ad humanæ revocat primordia formæ* †.

The silent Yoak of *Brutes* he made them wear,
The Bloody Souls he did enclose in Bears,
The Ravenous in Wolves he wisely shut,
The Sly and Cunning he is Foxes put;
Where after having, thro' successive Years
And thousand Figures, finish'd their Careers,
Purging them all in *Lethe's* Flood, at last
In human Bodies he the Souls replac'd.

If it had been valiant, he lodg'd it in the Body of a Lion; if voluptuous, in that of a Hog; if timorous, in that of a Hart or Hare; if subtil, in that of a Fox; and so of the rest, 'till having purify'd it by this Chastisement, it again enter'd into the Body of some other Man;

*Ipse ego, nam nemini, Trojani tempore belli
Pantboides Euphorbus eram* ‡.

For I myself remember in the Days
O' th' *Trojan* War, that I *Euphorbus* was.

* *Ovid. Met. lib. 15.*

† *Claud. in Ruff. lib. 2.*

‡ *Ovid. Met. lib. 15.*

As to the Relation betwixt us and Beasts, I do not much admit of it, nor allow what several Nations, and those the most ancient and most noble, have practis'd, who have not only receiv'd *Brutes* into their Society, but have given them a Rank infinitely above them; esteeming them one while Familiars and Favourites of the Gods, and having them in more than human Reverence and Respect; others knowing no other Divinity but they. *Belluæ à Barbaris propter beneficium consecratæ: The Barbarians consecrated Beasts, out of Opinion of some Benefit receiv'd by them.*

Beasts rever'd for Gods by some of the Ancients.

—Crocodilon adorat

*Pars hæc, illa pavet saturam serpentibus Ibin,
Effigies sacri hic nitet aurea Ceropitheci.*

—Hic piscem fluminis, illic

Oppida tota canem venerantur.*

One Country thus adores the Crocodile,
Th' Inhabitant of Monster-breeding Nile,
While other Nations long-bill'd Ibis dread,
With Poisonous Flesh of ugly Serpents fed.
And in some Cities too, you may behold,
The Statue of a Monkey shine in Gold;
Here Men, from monstrous Fishes Aid implore,
And there, whole Towns a grinning Dog adore.

And the very Interpretation, that *Plutarch* gives to this Error, which is very well taken, is advantageous to them: For, he says, *That it was not the Cat, or the Ox, for Example, that the Egyptians ador'd: But that they in those Beasts ador'd some Image of the Divine Faculties; in this the Patience and Utility, in that the Vivacity, or, as our Neighbours, the Burgundians with the Germans, the Impatience to see itself stout up; by which, they represented the Liberty they lov'd and ador'd, above all other Divine Faculties, and so of the rest.* But when, amongst the more moderate Opinions, I meet with Arguments, that endeavour to demonstrate the near Resemblance betwixt us and Animals, how much they share in our greatest Privileges, and with how great Probability they compare

* *Juven. Sat. 15.*

and couple us together, in earnest. I abate a great deal of our Presumption, and willingly let fall the Title of that imaginary Sovereignty, that some attribute to us over other Creatures. But supposing all this were true, there is nevertheless a certain Respect, and a general Duty of Humanity, that ties us not only to Beasts that have Life and Sense, but even to Trees and Plants. We owe Justice to Men, and Grace and Benignity to other Creatures that are capable of it. There is a certain natural Commerce, and mutual Obligation betwixt them and us; neither shall I be afraid to discover the Tenderness of my Nature so childish, that I cannot well refuse to play with my Dog, when he the most unseasonably importunes me so to do. The *Turks* have Alms and Hospitals for Beasts. The *Romans* had a publick Regard to the Nourishment of Geese, by whose Vigilancy their Capitol had been preserv'd: The *Athenians* made a Decree, that the Mules and Moyles which serv'd at the building of the Temple call'd *Hecatompodon*, should be free, and suffer'd to pasture at their own Choice without Hindrance. The *Agrigentines* had a common Custom solemnly to inter the Beasts, they had a Kindness for; as Horses of some extraordinary Qualities, Dogs and Birds of whom they had had Profit, and even those that had only been kept to divert their Children. And the Magnificency that was common with them in all other Things, did also particularly appear in the Sumptuousness and Numbers of Monuments, erected to this very End, that remain'd in their Beauty several Ages after. The *Agyptians* bury'd Wolves, Bears, Crocodiles, Dogs and Cats in Sacred Places, embalm'd their Bodies, and put on Mourning at their Death. *Simon* gave an honourable Sepulture to the Mares, with which he had three times gain'd the Prize of the Course at the *Olympick Games*. The ancient *Xantippus* caus'd his Dog to be interr'd on an Eminence near the Sea, which has ever since retain'd the Name. And *Plutarch* says, That he made Conscience of selling to the Slaughter, an Ox, that had been long in his Service.