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with the rest of the company, that for the sake of a piece of Lemmon-peel, or a Sugar-plumb, would spoil so pleasing a picture. Indeed, I could not but smile to see several of them cooling their mouths with lumps of Ice, which they had just before been burning with Salts and Peppers.

As soon as this show was over I took my leave, that I might finish my dinner at my own house: For as I in every thing love what is simple and natural, so particularly in my food; two plain dishes, with two or three good-natured, chearful, ingenious friends, would make me more pleased and vain, than all that pomp and luxury can bestow. For it is my Maxim, *That he keeps the greatest table, who has the most valuable company at it.*

N^o 152. *Thursday, March 30. 1710.*

*Dii, quibus Imperium est animarum, umbræque silentes,
Et Chaos, et Phlegethon, loca nocte silentia late,
Sit mihi fas audita loqui, sit numine vestro
Pandere res alta terra et caligine mersas.* Virg.

From my own Apartment, March 29.

A Man who confines his speculations to the time present, has but a very narrow province to employ his thoughts in. For this reason, persons of studious and contemplative natures often entertain themselves with the history of past Ages, or raise schemes and conjectures upon Futurity. For my own part, I love to range through that half of Eternity which is still to come, rather than look on that which is already run out; because I know I have a real share and interest in the one, whereas all that was transacted in the other can be only matter of curiosity to me.

Upon this account, I have been always very much delighted with meditating on the Soul's Immortality, and in reading the several notions which the wisest of men, both ancient and modern, have entertained on that subject. What the opinions of the greatest Philosophers have been,

I have several times hinted at, and shall give an account of them from time to time as occasion requires. It may likewise be worth while to consider, what men of the most exalted genius, and elevated imagination, have thought of this matter. Among these, *Homer* stands up as a Prodigy of mankind, that looks down upon the rest of humane creatures as a species beneath him. Since he is the most ancient heathen Author, we may guess from his relation, what were the common opinions in his time concerning the state of the Soul after death.

Ulysses, he tells us, made a voyage to the Regions of the Dead, in order to consult *Tiresias* how he should return to his own country, and recommend himself to the favour of the Gods. The Poet scarce introduces a single person, who doth not suggest some useful precept to his Reader, and designs his description of the Dead for the amendment of the Living.

Ulysses, after having made a very plenteous sacrifice, sat him down by the pool of Holy Blood, which attracted a prodigious assembly of Ghosts of all ages and conditions, that hovered about the Heroe, and feasted upon the steams of his oblation. The first he knew, was the shade of *Elpenor*, who, to show the activity of a spirit above that of body, is represented as arrived there long before *Ulysses*, notwithstanding the winds and seas had contributed all their force to hasten his voyage thither. This *Elpenor*, to inspire the Reader with a detestation of Drunkenness, and at the same time with a religious care of doing proper honours to the Dead, describes himself as having broken his neck in a debauch of wine; and begs *Ulysses*, that for the repose of his Soul, he would build a monument over him, and perform funeral rites to his memory. *Ulysses* with great sorrow of heart promises to fulfil his request, and is immediately diverted to an object much more moving than the former. The Ghost of his own Mother *Anticlea*, whom he still thought living, appears to him among the multitude of Shades that surrounded him, and sits down at a small distance from him by the Lake of Blood, without speaking to him, or knowing who he was. *Ulysses* was exceedingly troubled at the sight, and could not forbear weeping as he looked upon her: But being all along set forth as a pattern of consummate wisdom, he makes his affection give way to prudence; and therefore, upon his seeing *Tiresias*, does not reveal himself to his Mother, till he had consulted that great Prophet, who was the occasion of this his descent into the Empire of the dead. *Tiresias* having cautioned him to keep himself and his Companions free from the guilt of Sacrilege, and to pay his devotions

to all the Gods, promises him a return to his Kingdom and Family, and a happy old age in the enjoyment of them.

The Poet having thus with great art kept the curiosity of his Reader in suspence, represents his Wife man, after the dispatch of his business with *Tiresias*, as yielding himself up to the calls of natural affection, and making himself known to his Mother. Her eyes are no sooner opened, but she cries out in tears, *Oh my Son!* and enquires into the occasions that brought him thither, and the fortune that attended him.

Ulysses on the other hand desires to know, what the sickness was that had sent her into those Regions, and the condition in which she had left his Father, his Son, and more particularly his Wife. She tells him, they were all Three inconsolable for his absence; *and as for my self,* says she, *That was the sickness of which I died. My impatience for your return, my anxiety for your welfare, and my fondness for my dear Ulysses, were the only distempers that preyed upon my life, and separated my Soul from my Body.* *Ulysses* was melted with these expressions of tenderness, and thrice endeavoured to catch the apparition in his arms, that he might hold his Mother to his bosom and weep over her.

This gives the Poet occasion to describe the notion the Heathens at that time had of an unbodied Soul, in the excuse which the Mother makes for seeming to withdraw her self from her Son's embraces. *The Soul,* says she, *is composed neither of Bones, Flesh, nor Sinews, but leaves behind her all those incumbrances of mortality to be consumed on the funeral Pile. As soon as she has thus cast her burthen, she makes her escape, and flies away from it like a dream.*

When this melancholy conversation is at an end, the Poet draws up to view as charming a Vision as could enter into man's imagination. He describes the next who appeared to *Ulysses*, to have been the Shades of the finest women that had ever lived upon the earth, and who had either been the Daughters of Kings, the Mistresses of Gods, or Mothers of Heroes; such as *Antiope, Alcmene, Leda, Ariadne, Iphimedia, Eriphyle,* and several others of whom he gives a Catalogue, with a short history of their adventures. The beautiful Assembly of Apparitions were all gathered together about the Blood: Each of them, says *Ulysses*, (as a gentle Satyr upon Female vanity) *giving me an account of her Birth and Family.* This Scene of extraordinary women seems to have been designed by the Poet as a lecture of mortality to the whole Sex, and to put them in mind of what they must expect, notwithstanding the greatest perfections, and highest honours, they can arrive at.

The

The Circle of Beauties at length disappeared, and was succeeded by the shades of several Grecian Heroes who had been engaged with *Ulysses* in the siege of *Troy*. The first that approached was *Agamemnon*, the Generalissimo of that great expedition, who at the appearance of his old friend wept very bitterly, and without saying any thing to him, endeavoured to grasp him by the hand. *Ulysses*, who was much moved at the sight, poured out a flood of tears, and asked him the occasion of his death, which *Agamemnon* related to him in all its tragical circumstances; how he was murdered at a Banquet by the contrivance of his own Wife, in confederacy with her Adulterer: From whence he takes occasion to reproach the whole Sex, after a manner which would be inexcusable in a man who had not been so great a sufferer by them. *My Wife* (says he) *has disgraced all the women that shall ever be born into the world, even those who hereafter shall be innocent. Take care how you grow too fond of your Wife. Never tell her all you know. If you reveal some things to her, be sure you keep others concealed from her. You indeed have nothing to fear from your Penelope, she will not use you as my Wife has treated me; however, take care how you trust a woman.* The Poet, in this and other instances, according to the System of many heathen as well as christian Philosophers, shows, how anger, revenge, and other habits which the Soul had contracted in the body, subsist and grow in it under its state of separation.

I am extremely pleased with the companions which the Poet in the next description assigns to *Achilles*. *Achilles* (says the Heroe) *came up to me with Patroclus and Antilochus.* By which we may see that it was *Homer's* opinion, and probably that of the age he lived in, that the friendships which are made among the living, will likewise continue among the dead. *Achilles* enquires after the welfare of his Son, and of his Father, with a fierceness of the same character that *Homer* has every where expressed in the actions of his life. The passage relating to his Son is so extremely beautiful, that I must not omit it. *Ulysses*, after having described him as wise in council, and active in war, and mentioned the foes whom he had slain in battle, adds an observation that he himself had made of his Behaviour whilst he lay in the wooden horse. *Most of the Generals* (says he) *that were with us, either wept or trembled: As for your Son, I neither saw him wipe a tear from his cheeks, or change his countenance. On the contrary, he would often lay his hand upon his Sword, or grasp his Spear, as impatient to employ them against the Trojans.* He then informs his Father of the great honour and rewards which

which he had purchased before *Troy*, and of his return from it without a wound. The shade of *Achilles*, says the Poet, was so pleased with the account he received of his Son, that he enquired no further, but stalked away with more than ordinary majesty over the green meadow that lay before them.

This last circumstance of a deceased Father's rejoicing in the behaviour of his Son, is very finely contrived by *Homer*, as an incentive to virtue, and made use of by none that I know besides himself.

The description of *Ajax*, which follows, and his refusing to speak to *Ulysses*, who had won the Armour of *Achilles* from him, and by that means occasioned his death, is admired by every one that reads it. When *Ulysses* relates the fullness of his deportment, and considers the greatness of the Heroe, he expresses himself with generous and noble sentiments. *Oh! that I had never gained a prize which cost the life of so brave a man as Ajax! who, for the beauty of his person, and greatness of his actions, was inferior to none but the divine Achilles.* The same noble condescension, which never dwells but in truly great minds, and such as *Homer* would represent that of *Ulysses* to have been, discovers it self likewise in the speech which he made to the Ghost of *Ajax* on that occasion. *Oh Ajax! says he, Will you keep your resentments even after death? what destructions hath this fatal armour brought upon the Greeks by robbing them of you, who were their bulwark and defence? Achilles is not more bitterly lamented among us than you. Impute not then your death to any one but Jupiter, who out of his anger to the Greeks, took you away from among them: Let me entreat you to approach me; restrain the fierceness of your wrath, and the greatness of your soul, and bear what I have to say to you.* *Ajax*, without making a reply, turned his back upon him, and retired into a crowd of Ghosts.

Ulysses, after all these Visions, took a view of those impious Wretches who lay in tortures for the crimes they had committed upon the earth, whom he describes under all the varieties of pain, as so many marks of Divine Vengeance, to deter others from following their example. He then tells us, that notwithstanding he had a great curiosity to see the Heroes that lived in the ages before him, the Ghosts began to gather about him in such prodigious multitudes, and with such confusion of voices, that his heart trembled as he saw himself amidst so great a scene of horrors. He adds, that he was afraid lest some hideous Spectre should appear to him, that might terrifie him to distraction; and therefore withdrew in time.

I question not but my Reader will be pleas'd with this description of a Future State, represented by such a noble and fruitful imagination, that had nothing to direct it besides the Light of Nature, and the opinions of a dark and ignorant age.

N^o 153. *Saturday, April 1. 1710.*

Bombalio, Clangor, Stridor, Taratantara, Murmur. Farn. Rhet.

From my own Apartment, March 31.

I Have heard of a very valuable Picture, wherein all the Painters of the Age in which it was drawn, are represented sitting together in a Circle, and joining in a Consort of Musick. Each of them plays upon such a particular Instrument as is the most suitable to his character, and expresses that style and manner of painting which is peculiar to him. The famous Cupola-painter of those times, to show the grandeur and boldness of his figures, hath a Horn in his mouth, which he seems to wind with great strength and force. On the contrary, an eminent Artist, who wrought up his Pictures with the greatest accuracy, and gave them all those delicate touches which are apt to please the nicest eye, is represented as tuning a Theorbo. The same kind of humour runs through the whole piece.

I have often from this hint imagined to my self, that different talents in discourse might be shadowed out after the same manner by different kinds of musick; and that the several conversable parts of mankind in this great City might be cast into proper characters and divisions, as they resemble several Instruments that are in use among the Masters of Harmony. Of these therefore in their order, and first of the Drum.

Your Drums are the Blusterers in conversation, that with a loud laugh, unnatural mirth, and a torrent of noise, domineer in publick assemblies, over-bear men of sense, stun their companions, and fill the place they are in with a rattling sound, that hath seldom any wit, humour, or good breeding in it. The Drum notwithstanding, by this boisterous vivacity, is very proper