THE LAIRD OF COOL'S GHOST, BEING
A Copy of several Conferences and Meetings that passed betwixt the Reverend Mr OGILVIE,
Late Minister of the Gospel at Innerwick, in East Lothian,
AND THE GHOST of Mr MAXWELL,
Late Laird of Cool,
As it was found in Mr Ogilvie's Closet after his Death.
WRITTEN WITH HIS OWN HAND.
To which is added,
The Dreadful Terrors of Death.
Upon the third day of February, 1722, at seven o'clock in the evening, after I had parted with Thurston, and coming up the burial road, one came up riding after me; upon hearing the noise of the horse's feet, I took it to be Thurston; but looking back, and seeing the horse to be of a grey colour, I called, Who's there? the answer was, the Laird of Cool, be not afraid. Looking to him, with the little light the moon afforded, I took him to be Collector Castlelaw, who had a mind to put a trick upon me, and immediately I struck with all my force with my cane, thinking I would leave a mark upon him that would make him remember his presumption; but although sensible I aimed as well as ever I did in my life, yet my cane finding no resistance, but flying out of my hand to the distance of sixty feet; and, observing it by its white head, I dismounted and took it up, but had some difficulty in mounting again, partly by reason of a certain sort of trembling throughout my whole joints, something also of anger had its share in my confusion; for though he laughed when my staff flew out of my hand coming up with him again, (who halted all the time I was seeking my staff,) I asked him once more who he was? he answered, The Laird of Cool. I inquired, First, if he was the Laird of
Cool? Secondly, What brought him hither? and, Thirdly, What was his business with me? he answered, The reason that I want you is, that I know you are disposed to do for me what none of your brethren in Nithsdale will so much as attempt, though it serve never so good a purpose. I told him, I would never refuse to do any thing to serve a good purpose, if I thought I was obliged to do it as my duty. He answered, Since I had undertaken what few in Nithsdale would, for he had tried several persons on that subject, who were more obliged to him than I was to any person living. Upon this I drew my bridle reins and asked in surprise, what I had undertaken? he answered, That on Sabbath last, I heard you condemned Mr Paton, and the other ministers of Dumfries, for dissuading Mr Menzies from keeping his appointment with me; and if you had been in their place, would have persuaded the lad to do as I desired, and that you would have gone with him yourself, if he had been afraid; and if you had been in Mr Paton’s place, you would have delivered my commissions yourself, as they tended to do several persons justice. I asked him, Pray, Cool, who informed you that I talked at that rate? to which he answered, You must know that we are acquainted with many things that the living know nothing about; these things you did say, and much more to that purpose, and deliver my commissions to my loving wife. Upon this I said, ’tis a pity Cool, that you who know so many things should not know the difference between an absolute and conditional promise; I did indeed, at the time you mention, blame Mr Paton, for I thought him justly blameable, in hindering the lad to meet with you, and if I had been in his place, I would have acce.

See Note bottom of 6th page.
ed quite the reverse; but I did never say, that if you would come to Innerwick and employ me, that I would go all the way to Dumfries on such an errand, that is what never so much entered into my thoughts. He answered, What were your thoughts? I don't pretend to know, but I can depend on my information these were your words; but I see you are in some disorder, I will wait upon you when you have more presence of mind.

By this time we were at James Dickson's inclosure, below the church-yard; and when I was recollecting in my mind, if ever I had spoken these words he alleged, he broke off from me through the church-yard with greater violence than any man on horseback is capable of, with such a singing and buzzing noise, as put me in greater disorder than I was in all the time I was with him. I came to my house; and my wife observed more than ordinary paleness in my countenance, and alleged that something ailed me. I called for a dram, and told her I was a little uneasy. After I found myself a little refreshed, I went to my closet to meditate on this most astonishing adventure.

Upon the 5th of March, 1722, being at Harehead, baptizing the shepherd's child, I came off about sun-setting, and near William White's march, the Laird of Cool came up with me as formerly; and after his first salutation, bade me not be afraid. I told him I was not in the least afraid, in the name of GOD and Christ my Saviour, that he would do me the least harm; for I knew that he in whom I trusted, was stronger than all together; and if any of them should attempt to do even to the horse I now ride upon, as you have done to Doctor Menzies's man, I have free access to complain to my Lord and
Master, to the lash of whose resentment you are liable now as before.*

Cool.—You need not multiply words upon that head, for you are safe with me, and safer, if safer can be, than when I was alive.

Ogil.—Well then, Cool, let me have a peaceable and easy conversation with you for the time we ride together, and give me some information concerning the affairs of the other world for no man inclines to lose his time conversing with the dead, without hearing or learning something useful.

Cool.—Well, Sir, I will satisfy you as far as I think proper and convenient. Let me know what information you want.

Ogil.—May I then ask you, if you be in a state of happiness or not?

Cool.—There are a great many things I can answer, that the living are ignorant of; there are a great many things that, notwithstanding the additional knowledge I have acquired since my death, I cannot answer; and there are a great many questions you may start, of which the last is one, that I will not answer.

* What I know concerning the matter is this, The servant of Dr Menzies, physician at Dumfries, told my master and many others, that the Laird of Cool, lately dead, appeared to him, rode him down, and killed his horse—That he appointed him to meet him some time after, at such a place, which he promised to do: But Mr Paton, then minister of Dumfries, advised him to break his promise. Mr Ogilvie then minister of Innerwick, near Dunbar, on hearing this blamed Mr Paton much, saying, Had I been there, he would not only have advised him to keep the promise, but have gone with him.

Dunbar, May 4th, 1785. JAMES HAMILTON.
Arminian Mag. for 1795.
Ogil.—Then I know how to manage our conversation; whatever I inquire of you, I see you can easily shift me; so that I might profit more by conversing with myself.

Cool.—You may try.

Ogil.—Well, then, what sort of a body is that you appear in; and what sort of a horse is that you ride upon, which appears to be so full of metal?

Cool.—You may depend upon it, it is not the same body that I was witness to your marriage in, nor in which I died, for that is in the grave rotting; but is such a body as serves me in a moment, for I can fly as fleet with it, as my soul can do without it; so that I can go to Dumfries, and return again, before you can ride twice the length of your horse; nay, if I have a mind to go to London or Jerusalem or to the moon, if you please, I can perform all these journeys equally soon, for it costs me nothing but a thought or wish: for this body is as fleet as your thought, for in the moment of time you can turn your thoughts on Rome, I can go there in person; and as for my horse he is much like myself, for he is Andrew Johnston, my tenant who died forty-eight hours before me.

Ogil.—So it seems when Andrew Johnston inclines to ride, you must serve him in the quality of a horse, as he does you now.

Cool.—You are mistaken.

Ogil.—I thought that all distinctions between mistresses and maids, lairds and tenants, had been done away at death.

Cool.—True it is, but you do not take up the matter.

Ogil.—This is one of the questions you won't answer.

Cool.—You are mistaken, for that question I can answer, and after you may understand it.
Ogil.—Well then, Cool, have you never yet appeared before God, nor received any sentence from him as a Judge.

Cool.—Never yet.

Ogil.—I know you was a scholar, Cool, and 'tis generally believed there is a private judgement, besides the general at the great day; the former immediately after death.—Upon this he interrupted me, arguing.

Cool.—No such thing, no such thing! No trial, no trial till the great day! The heaven which good men enjoy after death, consists only in the serenity of their minds, and the satisfaction of a good conscience; and the certain hopes they have of eternal joy, when that day shall come. The punishment or hell of the wicked, immediately after death, consists in the stings of an awakened conscience, and the terrors of facing the great Judge, and the sensible apprehensions of eternal torments ensuing. And this bears still a due proportion to the evils they did when living. So indeed the state of some good folks differ but little in happiness from what they enjoyed in the world, save only that they are free from the body, and the sins and sorrows that attend it. On the other hand, there are some who may be said rather not to have been good, than that they are wicked; while living, their state is not easily distinguished from that of the former; and under that class comes a great herd of souls; a vast number of ignorant people, who have not much minded the affairs of eternity, but at the same time have lived in much indolence, ignorance and innocence.

Ogil.—I thought that their rejecting the terms of salvation offered, was sufficient ground for God, to punish them with eternal displeasure; and as to their ignorance, that could never excuse them, since they
live in a place of the world, where the true knowledge of these things might have been easily attained.

Cool.—They never properly rejected the terms of salvation; they never, strictly speaking, rejected Christ; poor souls, they had as great a liking both to him and heaven, as their gross imaginations were capable of. Impartial reason must make many allowances, as the stupidity of their parents, want of education, distance from people of good sense and knowledge, and the uninterrupted application they were obliged to give to their secular affairs for their daily bread, the impious treachery of their pastors, who persuaded them, that if they were of such a party all was well; and many other considerations, which God, who is pure and perfect reason itself, will not overlook: these are not so much under the load of divine displeasure, as they are out of his grace and favour; and you know it is one thing to be discouraged and quite another thing to be persecuted with all the power and rage of an incensed earthly king. I assure you, men's faces are not more various and different in the world, than their circumstances are after death.

Ogil.—I am loath to believe all that you have said at this time, Cool, (but I will not dispute those matters with you) because some things you have advanced seem to contradict the Scriptures, which shall always look upon as the infallible truth of God. For I find, in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, that the one was immediately after death carried up by the angels into Abraham's bosom, and the other immediately thrust down to hell.

Cool.—Excuse me, Sir, that does not contradict one word that I have said, but you seem not to understand the parable, whose only end is to illustrate the truth, that a man may be very happy and flourishing in
this world, and wretched and miserable in the next; and that a man may be miserable in this world, and happy and glorious in the next.

Ogil.—Be it so, Cool, I shall yield that point to you, and pass to another which has afforded me much speculation since our last encounter; and that is, How you came to know that I talked after the manner that I did concerning Mr. Paton, on the first Sabbath of February last: was you present with me, but invisible? He answered very haughtily. No, Sir, I was not present myself. I answered, I would not have you angry, Cool, I proposed this question for my own satisfaction, but if you don't think proper to answer, let it pass. After he had paused, with his eyes on the ground, for three or four minutes of time at most, with some haste and seeming cheerfulness, says, Cool.—Well, Sir, I will satisfy you in that point; You must know that there are sent from heaven, angels to guard and comfort, and to do other good services to good people, and even the spirits of good men departed are employed in that errand.

Ogil.—And do you not think that every man has a good angel?

Cool.—No, but a great many particular men have; there are but few houses of distinction especially, but what have at least one attending them; and from what you have already heard of spirits, it is no difficult matter to understand how they may be serviceable to each particular member, though at different places at a great distance. Many are the good offices which the good angels do to them that fear God, though many times they are not sensible of it: and I know assuredly that one powerful angel, or even an active clever soul departed, may be sufficient for some villages; but for your great cities, such as London, Edinburgh, or the like, there is one great angel, that
has the superintendence of the whole: and there are inferior angels, or souls departed, to whose particular care such a man, of such a particular weight or business, is committed. Now, Sir, the kingdom of Satan does ape the kingdom of Christ as much in matters of politics, as can be, well knowing that the court of wisdom is from above; so that from thence are sent out missionaries in the same order. But because the kingdom of Satan is much better replenished than the other, instead of one devil, there are in many instances two or three commissioned to attend a particular family of influence and distinction.

Ogil.—I read that there are ten thousand times ten thousand of angels that wait upon God, and sing his praise and do his will, and I cannot understand how the good angels can be inferior in number to the evil.

Cool.—Did not I say, that whatever the number be, the spirits departed are employed in the same business; so that as to the number of original deities, whereof Satan is chief, I cannot determine, but you need not doubt but there are more souls departed in that place which in a loose sense you call hell, by almost an infinity, than what are gone to that place, which in a like sense you call heaven, which likewise are employed in the same purpose: and I can assure you that there is as great a difference between angels, both good and bad as there is among men, with respect to their sense, knowledge, cunning, cleverness and action, nay, which is more, the departed souls on both sides, outdo severals, from their very first departure of the original angels. This you will perhaps think a paradox but is true.

Ogil.—I do not doubt it, but what is that to my question, about which I am solicitous.

Cool.—Take a little patience, Sir; from what I
have said you might have understood me, if you had
your thoughts about you; But I shall explain myself
to you. Both the good and the bad angels have stated
times of rendezvous, and the principal angels, who have
the charge either of towns, cities or kingdoms, not to
mention particular persons, villages, and families, and
all that is transacted in these several parts of the
country, are there made open; and at their re-en-
counter on each side, every thing is told, as in your
parish, in mills, kilns, and smithies, with this dif-
ference, that many things false are talked at the living
re-encounters, but nothing but what is exact truth, is
said or told among the dead; only I must observe to
you, that, as I am credibly informed, several of the
inferior bad angels, and souls of wicked men departed,
have told many things that they have done, and then
when a more intelligent spirit is sent out upon inquiry,
and the report of the former seeming doubtful, he
brings in a contrary report and makes it appear truth,
the former fares very ill: nevertheless their regard to
truth prevents it; for while they observe the truth, they
do their business and keep their station, for God is
truth.

Ogil.—So much truth being among the good angels,
I am apt to think that lies and falsehood will be as
much in vogue among the bad.

Cool.—A gross mistake, and it is not alone the mis-
take which the living folks fall under with respect to
the other world; for the case plainly is this, an ill man
will not stick at a falsehood to promote his design; as
little will an evil soul departed, stop at any thing that
can make himself successful; but in admitting report
he must tell the truth, or woe be to him. But besides
their monthly, quarterly, or yearly meetings, or what-
ever they be, departed souls acquainted, may take a
trip to see one another yearly, weekly, daily, or
after if thy please. Thus then I answer your question, that you was so much concerned about: for my information was from no less than three persons, viz. Aikman, who attends Thurston’s family; James Corbet, who waits upon Mr Paton: for at that time he was then looking after Mrs. Sarah Paton, who was at your house; and an original emissary appointed to wait upon yours.

At this I was much surprised, and after a little thinking, I asked him: And is there really, Cool, an emissary from hell, in whatever sense you take it, that attends my family?

Cool.—You may depend upon it.

Ogil.—And what do you think is his business?

Cool.—To divert you from your duty, and cause you to do as many ill things as he can: for much depends on having the minister on their side.

Upon this I was struck with a sort of terror, which I cannot account for. In the mean time he said several things I did not understand. But after coming to my former presence of mind, said,

Ogil.—But Cool, tell me in earnest, if there be a devil that attends my family, though invisible?

Cool.—Just as sure as you are breathing, but be not so much dejected upon this information, for I tell you likewise that there is a good angel who attends you, who is stronger than the other.

Ogil.—Are you sure of that, Cool?

Cool.—Yes, there is one riding on your right hand, who might as well have been elsewhere, for I meant you no harm.

Ogil.—And how long has he been with me?

Cool.—Only since we passed Brand’s-lee, but now he is gone.

Ogil.—We are just upon Flenscleugh, and I desire to part with you, though perhaps I have gained
more by conversation than I could have otherwise
done in a twelvemonth; I choose rather to see you
another time, when you're at leisure; and I wish it
were at as great a distance from Innerwick as you can.

Cool.—Be it so, Sir; but I hope you will be as
obliging to me next re-encounter, as I have been to
you this.

Ogil.—I promise you I will, as far as is consistent
with my duty to my Lord and Master Christ Jesus:
and since you have obliged me so much by informa-
tion, I will answer all the questions you propose, as
far as consists with my knowledge; but I believe you
want no information from me.

Cool.—I came not here to be instructed by you,
but I want your help of another kind.

Upon the fifth of April, 1722, as I was returning
from Old Hamstocks, Cool came up with me on horse-
back, at the foot of the ruinous inclosure, before we
came to Dod: I told him his last conversation had
proved so acceptable to me, that I was well pleased
to see him again; that there was a number of things
that I wanted to inform myself farther of, if he would
be so good as satisfy me.

Cool.—Last time we met, I refused you nothing
you asked; and now I expect that you shall refuse
me nothing that I shall a-ask.

Ogil.—Nothing, Sir, that is in my power, or that
I can do with safety to my reputation and charac-
ter as a Christian. What then are your demands?

Cool.—All that I desire of you is, that as you pro-
mised that on a Sabbath day you would go to my
wife, who now possesses all my effects, and tell her
the following particulars, and tell her in my name to
rectify these matters. First, That I was owing
justly to Provost Crosby, 50l. Scots, and three years'
interest, but on hearing of his death, my good brother,
the Laird of C—!, and I, forged a discharge, narrated
the bond, the sum, and other particulars, with this
honourable clause, "And at the time it had fallen by,
and could not be found." With an obligation on the
Provost's part to deliver up this bond as he could hit
upon it. And this discharge was dated three months
before the Provost's death. And when his son and suc-
cessor, Andrew Crosby, wrote to me concerning this
Bond, I came to him and shewed him the forged dis-
charge, which silenced him; so that I got up my bond
without more ado. And when I heard of Robert Ken-
dey's death, with the same help of C—l, I got a Bill
upon him for 190l. of which I got full and complete
payment, C—l got the half. When I was at Dumfries,
the same day that Robert Grier died, to whom I was
owing an account of 36l. C—l, my goodbrother, was
then at London, and not being able of myself, being
but a bad writer, to make out a discharge of the ac-
count, which I wanted, I met accidentally with one
Robert Boyd, a poor Writer lad in Dumfries; I took
him to Mrs. Carnock's, and gave him a bottle of wine,
and told him I had paid Thomas Grier's account, but
had neglected to get a discharge, and if he would
help me to one I would reward him. He flew away
from me in a great passion, saying, he would rather
be hanged; but if I had a mind for these things, I had
better wait to C—l came home. This gave me great
trouble, fearing what C—l and I had done formerly
was no secret. I followed Boyd to the street, and
made an apology, saying, I was jesting, commending
him for his honesty, and got his promise never to
repeat what had passed. I sent for my cousin B—m
H—rie, your good-brother, who, with no difficulty, for
a guinea and a half, undertook and performed all that
I wanted; and for a guinea more made me up a dis-
charge for 200l. Scots, that I was owing to your
father-in-law, and his friend Mr. Muirhead, which
discharge I gave to John Ewart, when he desired the
money; and he at my desire, produced it to you which you sustained.

A great many of the like instances were told, of which I cannot remember the persons names and things: but, says he, what vexes me more than all these, is the injustice I did Homer Maxwell, tenant to my Lord Nithsdale for whom was factor. I borrowed 2000l. from him, 500l. of which he borrowed from another hand: I gave him my bond and, for reasons I contrived, I obliged him to secrecy. He died within the year, and left nine children, his wife being dead before himself. I came to seal up his papers for my lord's security; his eldest daughter entreated me to look through them all, and to give her an account what was their stock, and what was their debt. I very willingly undertook it, and in going through the papers, I put my own bond in my pocket. His circumstances proving bad, his nine children are now starving. These things I desire you to represent to my wife; and take her brother with you, and let them be immediately rectified, for she has a sufficient fund to do it upon; and if it were done, I think I would be easy and happy; therefore, I hope you will make no delay.

After a short pause, I answered, 'Tis a good errand Cool, you are sending me to do justice to the oppressed and injured; but notwithstanding I see myself come in for 200l. Scots, yet I begged a little time to consider the matter. And since I find you are as much master of reason now as ever, and more than ever, I will reason upon the matter in its general view, and then with respect to the expediency of my being the messenger; and this I will do with all manner of frankness. From what you have said, I see clearly what your present condition is, so that I need not ask any more questions on that head; and you
need not bid me take courage, for at this moment I am no more afraid of you than a new-born child.

Cool.—Well, say on.

Ogil.—Tell me then, since such is your ability, that you can fly a thousand miles in the twinkling of an eye, if your desire to do the oppressed justice, be as great as you pretend what's the reason you don't fly to the coffers of some rich Jew or Banker, where are thousands of gold and silver invisibly lift and invisibly return it to the coffers of the injured? And since your wife has sufficient fund, and more, why cannot you empty her purse invisibly, to make these people amends?

Cool.—Because I cannot.

Ogil.—If these things be rectified, you would be easy and happy; I don't at all credit that for whatever justice may be done to the people, yet the guilt of the base action always remains upon you.

Cool.—Now you think you have silenced me, and gained a noble victory but I will shew you your mistake immediately; for I cannot touch any gold or money by reason of these spirits that are stated guardians of justice and honesty.

Ogil.—What is that you tell me Cool? Do not unworthy fellows break houses every night and yet you, that can put yourself into so many hundred different shapes in a moment cannot do it.

Cool.—It is true, Sir, against the living, men may find out some probable means of securing themselves; but if spirits departed were allowed, then no man would be secure; for, in that case every man I had a prejudice at would soon be beggared.

Ogil.—Might you not go to the mines of Mexico and Peru, where those sums would not be missed?

Cool.—No, Sir, for the same reason.

Ogil.—But, Cool, there is so much treasure lost in
the son, you may easily dive into the bottom of it,
search that, and refund those people their losses,
where no man is injured.

Cool.—You are a little too forward this night, Sir,
and incline much to banter: what I've said might
satisfy you, but since it does not, I'll tell you further,
that no spirits, good nor bad, has the power to take
any money or gold; the good never do, though the
bad, if once in an age, it is no small quarrel: for if
it were allowed them, then they would be very suc-
cessful in their business, and never fail of gaining
their point.

Ogil.—What hinders them Cool?

Cool.—Superior power, that governs and guards all.

Ogil.—You have satisfied me entirely upon that
head. But pray; Cool, what is the reason that you
cannot go to your wife yourself, and tell her what
you have a mind? I should think this a more sure
way to gain your point.

Cool.—Because I will not.

Ogil.—That is not an answer to me, Cool.

Cool.—That is one of the questions I told you long
ago I would not answer: but if you go as I desire, I
promise to give you full satisfaction after you have
done your business. Trust me for once, and believe
me I will not disappoint you.

Upon the 10th of April, 1722, coming from Old
Cambus, upon the post road, I met with Cool on the
head of the heath called the Pees. He asked me, if
I had considered the matter he had recommended? I
told him I had, and was in the same opinion I was in
when we parted; that I would not possibly undertake
his commissions, unless he could give me them in
writing under his hand. I told him that the list of
his grievances were so great, that I could not possibly
remember them without being put in writing; and
that I wanted nothing but reason to determine me in
that, and all other affairs of my life. — I know, says
he, this is a mere evasion; but tell me if the Laird of
Thorston will do it? I am sure, said I, he will not:
and if he should, I would do all that I could to hinder
him; for I think he has as little to do in these matters
as myself. But tell me, Cool, is it not as easy to
write your story as tell it, or ride on what do you call
him? for I have forgot your horse's name.

Cool.—No, Sir, it is not; and perhaps I may con-
vince you of the reasonableness of it afterwards.

Ogil.—I would be glad to hear a reason that is
solid, for not speaking to your wife yourself. But,
however, any rational creature may see what a fool I
would make of myself, if I would go to Dumfries,
and tell your wife you had appeared to me, and told
so many forgeries and villainies that you had commit-
ted, and that she behoved to make reparation; the
consequence might perhaps be, that she would scold
me; for she would be loath to part with any money
she possesses, and therefore tell me I was mad, or
possibly pursue me for a calumny; how would I vin-
dicate myself, how could I prove that you ever spoke
with me? Mr Paton, and other ministers in Dum-
fries, would tell me, the devil had spoken with me;
and why should I repeat these things for truth, which
he that was a liar from the beginning, had told me;
C—p—l and B—r H—rie would be upon me, and
pursue me before the Commissary; every body would
look upon me as a brain-sick or mad; therefore I in-
treat you to do not insist upon sending me so ridicul-
ous an errand. The reasonableness of my demands
I leave to your own consideration, as you did your
former to mine. But dropping the matter till our
next interview, give me leave to enter upon some
more diverting subject; I do not know, Cool, but the
information you have given, may do as much service to mankind, as the redress of all these grievances would amount to.

Mr Ogilvie died very soon after.

In the Arminian Magazine for 1785, (in addition to what is mentioned at the bottom of p. 5. Dr. Hamilton says, “The ensuing relation of what followed,” (viz. An Account of the Conferences,) “wrote in Mr Ogilvie’s own hand, was found in his desk, after his death, by Mrs Ogilvie; she gave it to Mr L., now minister at Oldhamstocks, who gave it to me.”

END OF COOL.
A holy man speaking of Death, styles it with a great deal of elegance and propriety, the King of Terrors, Job xviii. 14, that is to say, the most terrible thing in the world. Nor indeed is there any thing that presents itself to our imagination, which bears a more formidable aspect. It is possible to escape the edge of the sword to stop the mouths of lions, and to quench the rage of fire; but when death once shoots at us the envenomed arrows, of which his quiver is full, when it opens its paternal throat, and vomits forth its devouring flames, it is utterly impossible for us to guard against its fury.

There are a number of warlike inventions wherein to oppose the attempts of the most powerful and implacable enemy, but neither the stratagems of the greatest captains, the most regular fortifications, nor the most victorious and triumphant armies can withstand a single moment at the approach of Death. It pierces, in instant, through the strongest bulwarks, the thickest walls, and the most solid towers. It leaps over the widest ditches, the highest forts, and the most inaccessible rocks. It blows down the strongest baricadoes, and laughs at all our military entrenchments; every where it finds the weakness of our armour, and through the best tempered breast-plate strikes the proudest heart. In the most solitary retirement it comes upon us, and snatches us from the
midst of the most faithful vigilant guards. In short, there is nothing either in nature or art which can protect us from its cruel and insatiable hands.

There are none so barbarous, but are sometimes overcome by the prayers and tears of such as prostrate themselves to implore mercy and compassion; and even those who have the least sense of humanity commonly spare the weakest sex and age. But unmerciful Death has no more respect to such as humble themselves than to those that resist. It regards not the tears of the infantis sucking at the breast, but plucks them from the bosoms of their tender mothers, and dashes them in pieces before their eye. It mocks at the lamentations of the fair and lovely, and delights to trample upon their enchanting beauties. It stops its ears to the supplications of trembling old age, and takes a pride in casting to the ground those venerable oaks which have been so long rooted in the world.

In the day of battle, when Princes or Generals of an army are taken prisoners, they are treated in a different manner from common soldiers, but inexorable Death, who is blind to all distinctions, treads under foot, with the same haughtiness, the prince and the subject, the master and the servant, the nobleman and the vassal, the rich Dives and the begging Lazarus. It blows out with the same blast the most shining luminaries and the most obscure lamps. It has no more respect for the crowns of kings, the Pope's triple crown, and the Cardinal's hat than from the shepherd's crook or the slave's chains. Sooner or later it heaps them all together in the same dark and loathsome prison, and in the same mortar reduces them to dust.

There is no war so furious and cruel, but what admits of some days, or at least some hours of truce,
and even the most inhuman minds are at last weary of their conquest, and cloyed with shedding blood. At every hour and moment it mows down whole nations and kindreds. The flesh of all animals that have lived and died during the space of more than six thousand years hath not been able to glut the ravenous hunger of this devouring monster.

The fortune of war is various, he that wins the victory to-day, to-morrow may be put to flight; and he that rides at present on a triumphal car, may become the footstool of his enemy. But Death is always victorious, and insolently triumphs over all the kings and people of the earth. It never returns to its den without being loaded with spoils, and drenched with blood. The strong Sampsons, and the victorious Davids, who have torn in pieces lions and bears, and cut off the heads of Goliaths have, at last, been devoured and swallowed up by Death. The great Alexanders, and the triumphant Cesars, who made the world tremble before them and subdued most part of the habitable earth could never find any weapons to defend them against this last enemy. When magnificent statues, and stately trophies, were erected to their honour, Death laughed them to scorn, and mocked at their foolish vanity; the rich marbles, whereon so many proud titles were engraved, covering nothing but a little rotten flesh, and a few bones, which Death hath broken and reduced to ashes.

We read, in the Revelation of the prophet Daniel, that king Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream, a great image, whose brightness was excellent, and the form thereof terrible, "its head was of fine gold, its breast and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs of brass, its legs of iron, and its feet partly of iron, and partly of clay."—Dan. ii. 32, 33. As this mighty Prince was beholding it with astonishment, a little stone, cut
out of a mountain without hands, smote the feet of this prodigious statue, which were of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces; not only the iron and the clay were broken, but also the gold, the silver, and the brass, and it all became as chaff which the wind driveth away, Psal. i. 4: For what is all the pomp, glory, power, and dignity of this life, but a smoke driven with the wind and a vapour that soon vanishes? It is like a shadow that flies from us, or a dream that quickly fades away. When man, who was created in the image of God, makes his appearance from the dust, he struts about a little while, and becomes formidable; but as soon as death strikes at his earthly parts, and begins to break his flesh and his bones, all the pomp and power, all the glory and magnificence of the richest, most victorious, and most terrible monarch is changed into a loathsome stench, turns to ashes, and is reduced to nothing, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity."—Eccl. i. 2.

Since therefore Death is so cruel as to spare none, and its power so great that none can either escape or resist, it is no wonder that it becomes so terrible, and fills with fear, anguish, and despair, the minds of all such as have not settled their faith and hope upon God. There is no criminal so hardened but trembles, and is seized with horror, when he sees the scaffold erecting upon which he is condemned to be broken upon the wheel, or when he sees in the fire the red-hot irons with which he is to be pinched to death.

In the midst of a sumptuous banquet, king Belshazzar saw the fingers of a man's hand writing these words upon the wall of his palace, ment. mene, tekel, upharsin; which is thus interpreted by the prophet Daniel; mene, "God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it," tekel, "thou art weighed in the balance, and are found wanting," peres, or upharsin,
"thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" Dan. v. The moment this great monarch cast his eyes upon this miraculous writing "his countenance was changed and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." How much greater cause then has the profane and worldly man to be seized with horror and dismay, who, in the midst of pomp and deceitful pleasures may perceive the frightful hand of Death writing on every wall in his house in capital letters, and even engraving on his forehead, that God hath numbered his days, and that this in which he breathe shall be soon followed by an eternal night! That God hath weighed him in the balance of his justice, and found him light as the wind; and that the Almighty Disposer of all things, to whom vengeance belongs, will soon disrobe him of all his glory and riches. The expectation of Death is more intolerable to them than Death itself; and they had rather cast themselves headlong into the bottomless pit of hell, than endure the terror and fears of it in their guilty consciences. In short, if there be any who die unconcerned, or without any terror upon their conscience, they must be either persons entirely stupid and brutal, or like a drunkard who is thrown from a precipice when fast asleep.