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LIBBRIA HIBRALD.

From Kirke White. PICTURES OF MISERY.

It is common for busy and active men to bevert contempt and ridicule into respect.

man who thinks deeply, especially if his reading presevation of which we are indebted to St. | wretch, who, with a child wrapt in her arms, be extensive, will, unless his heart be very cold | Augustine, gives a yet stronger idea of an exist- | with difficulty drags along the road. The man | felt the divine abstraction, I envey them not their and very light, become habituated to a pensive, | ing degeneracy in human nature :- 'Man,' says | with a knapsack, who is walking before her, is | insensibility. For my own part, it is from the or, with more propriety, a mournful cast of he, comes into existence, not as from the hands her husband, and is marching to join his regiment. indulgence of this soothing power that I derive thought. This will arise from two or more par- of a mother, but of a step-dame nature, with a He has been spending, at a dram-shop in the the most exquisite of gratification; at the calm ticular sources-from the view of human nature | body feeble, naked, and fragile, and a mind ex- town they have just left, the supply which the hour of moonlight, amid all the sublime serenity, in general, as demonstrated by the experience | posed to anxiety and care, abject in fear, unmeet | pale and weak appearance of his wife proclaims | the dead stillness of the night; or when the both of past and present times, and from the con- for labour, prone to licentiousness, in which, was necessary for her sustenance, He is now howling storm rages in the heavens, the rain templation of individual instances of human de- however, there still dwell some sparks of the di- half drunk, and is venting the artificial spirits pelts on my roof, and the winds whistle through pravity and of human suffering. The first of | vine mind, though obscured, and, as it were, in | which intoxication excites in the abuse of his | the crannies of my apartment; I feel the div ne these is, indeed, the last in the order of time, for | ruins.' And, in another place, he intimates it as his general views of humanity are in a manner | a current opinion, that man comes into the world consequential, or resulting from a special; but I | as into a state of punishment expiatory of crimes

picuity.

these subjects, I may, with perfect assurance of | tion and experience, there is every ground for | their reply, in quire what have been their sensa- | concluding that man is in a state of misery and tions when they have, for a moment, attained a | depravity quite inconsistent with the happiness | one. more enlarged and capacious notion of the state for which, by a benevolent God, he must have of man in all its bearings and dependencies. been created. We see glaring marks of this in They have found, and the profoundest philoso- our t mes. Prejudice alone blinds us to the abphers have done no more, that they are envelop- surdity and the horror of those systematic mured in mystery, and that the mystery of man's | ders which go by the name of wars, where man situation is not without alarming and fearful falls on man, brother slaughters brother; where circumstances. They have discovered that all death, in every variety of horror, preys on the they know of themselves is that they live, but | finely-fibred human frame,' and where the cries that from whence they came or whither they are of the widow and the orphan rise up to heaven going, is by nature altogether hidden; that im- long after the thunder of the fight and the clang penetrable gloom surrounds them on every side, of arms have ceased, and the b nes of sons, and that they even hold their morrow on the brothers, and husbands slain are grown white on credit of to day, when it is, in fact, buried in the | the field. Customs like these vouch, with most vague and indistinct gulf of the ages to come !- | miraculous organs, for the depravity of the human These are reflections deeply interesting, and lead heart, and these are not the most mournful of wished him to rise. But he soon found that and he will tell you that he derives a pleasure to others so awful, that many gladly shut their | those considerations which present themselves eyes on the giddy and unfathomable depths to the mind of the thinking man. which seem to stretch before them. The medi- Private life is equally fertile in calamitous pertative man, however, endeavours to pursue them | version of reason, and extreme accumulation of | unhappy parent lived to see him make a degrad- | the philosopher, as are the narrow and contractto the farthest stretch of the reasoning powers, misery. On the one hand, we see a large proand to enlarge his conceptions of the mysteries portion of men sedulously employed in the educof his own existence; and the more he learns, tion of their own ruin, pursuing vice in all its and the deeper he penetrates, the more cause | varieties, and sacrificing the peace and happiness

ducements to be continually thoughtful.

tal existence, considered in the abstract, to the good and the bad, the provident and the improviqualities and characters of man, and his condition | dent. But too general a view would distract in a state of society, we see things perhaps equal- our attention: let the reader pardon me if I sudly strange and infinitely more affecting.—In the | denly draw him away from the survey of the sistent with the power of an all-wise and all- | will select a single picture at random. The charmerciful God A perfect harmony runs through acter is common. all the parts of the universe. Plato's sirens sing purest sources, a sadness friendly to the human | along with us. Pliny, in the preface to his | heart, and, by direct consequence, to human na- seventh book, has this remarkable passage: ture in general, is a truth which a little illustra- "The animal about to rule over the rest of the tion will render tolerably clear, and which, when | created animals lies weeping, bound hand and understood in its full force, may probably con- | foot, making his first entrance upon life with | sure of want and disease. sharp pangs, and this for no other crime than that I set out, then, with the proposition, that the heis born man."-Cicero, in a passage, for the select another object. Behold you poor weary have inverted that order for the sake of pers- committed in some previous stage of existence, of which we now retain no recollection.

Of those who have occasionally thought on From these proofs, and from daily observa-

does he find for being serious, and the more in- of the innocent and unoffending to their own brutal gratifications; and on the other, pain, mis-If, again, we turn from the condition of mor- fortune, and misery, overwhelming alike the economy of creation, we perceive nothing incon- crowds of life to a few detached scenes. we

Behold that beautiful female, who is rallying not only from the planetary octave, but through a well dressed young man with so much gaiety all the minutest divisions of the stupendous and humour? Did you ever see so lovely a whole; order, beauty, and perfection, the traces | countenance? There is an expression of vivaciof the great Architect, glow through every par- ty in her fine dark eye which quite captivates ticle of his work. At man, however, we stop: one; and her smile, were it a little less bold, there is one exception. The harmony of order | would be bewitching. How gay and careless ceases, and vice and misery disturb the beauti- she seems! One would suppose she had a very ful consistency of creation, and bring us first ac- light and happy heart. Alas! how appearances quainted with positive evil. We behold men | deceive! This gaiety is all feigned. It is her carried irressistibly away by corrupt principles | business to please, and beneath a fair and paintand vicious inclinations, indulging in propensi- ed outside she conceals an unquiet and forlorn | mind of him who meditates much on these subties, destructive as well to themselves as to those | breast. When she was yet very young, an en- | jects, and who, embracing the whole tissue of around them; the stronger oppressing the weak, | giging but dissolute young man took advantage | causes and effects, sees Misery invariably the er, and the bad persecuting the good! we see of her simplicity, and of the affection with which offspring of Vice, and Vice existing in hostility the depraved in prosperity, the virtuous in ad- he had inspired her, to betray her virtue. At hold the occupations of the retired and the con- | versity, the guilty unpunished, the many tears; but habit | meditative man turn where he will, he finds tratemplative person with contempt. They con- overwhelmed with unprovoked misfortunes, leaving only a kind of ces of the depraved state of Nature, and her consider his speculations as idle and unproductive; From hence we are tempted to think, that He, indistinct regret, and, as she fondly loved her sequent misery. History presents him with little as they participate in none of his feelings, they | whose arm holds the planets in their course, and | betrayer, she experienced, at times, a mingled | but murder, treachery, and crimes of every desare strangers to his motives, his views, and his | directs the comets along their eccentric orbits, | pleasure even in this abandoned situation. But | cription. Biography only strengthens the view delights; they behold him elaborately employed | ceases to exercise his providence over the affairs | this was soon over. Her lover, on pretence of a on what they conceive forwards none of the in- of mankind, and leaves them to be governed and journey into the country, left her for ever. She terests of life, contributes to none of its gratifi- directed by the impulses of a corrupt heart, or soon afterwards heard of his marriage, with an cations, removes none of its inconveniences: the blind workings of chance alone. Yet this agony of grief which few can adequately conthey conclude, therefore, that he is led away by is inconsistent both with the wisdom and good- ceive, and none describe. The calls of want. the delusions of futile philosophy, that he labours | ness of the Deity. If God permit evil, he caus- | however, soon subdued the more distracting for no good, and lives to no end. Of the various es it: the difference is casuistical. We are led ebullitions of anguish. She had no choice left: stances before his eyes frames of mind which they observe in him, no | therefore, to conclude, that it was not always | all the gates of virtue were shut upon her; and one seems to predominate more, and none ap- i thus: that man was created in a far different and I though she really abhorred the course, she was pears to them more absurd, than sadness, which | far happier condition; but that, by some means | obliged to betake herself to vice for support. seems, in some degree, to pervade all his views, or othet, he has forseited the protection of his Her next keeper possessed her person without and shed a solemn tinge over all his thoughts. | Maker. Here then is a mystery. The ancients, | her heart. She has since passed through sever-Sadness, arising from no personal grief, and con | led by reasonings alone, perceived it with a | al hands, and has found, by bitter experience, nected with no individual concern, they regard as | mazement, but did not solve the problem. They | that the vicious, on whose generosity she is moonstruck melancholy, the effect of a mind attempted some explanation of it by the lume thrown, are devoid of all feeling but that of self- to arrest its progress in those around us; and in overcast with constitutional gloom, and diseased | fiction of a golden age and its cession, where, by | gratification, and that even the wages of prostiwith habits of vain and fanciful speculation. - a circular mode of reasoning, they attribute the tution are reluctantly and grudgingly paid. She We can share with the sorrows of the unfor- introduction of vice to their gods having deserted now looks on all men as sharpers. She smiles tunute,' say they, but this monastic spleen mer- | the earth, and the desertion of the gods to the in- | but to entangle and destroy; and while she simits only our derision; it tends to no beneficial troduction of vice. This, however, was the logic | ulates fondness, is intent only on the extorting | good. purpose, it benefits neither its possessor nor socie- of the poets: the philosophers disregarded the of that, at best poor pittance, which her necessity? Those who have thought a little more on | fable, but did not dispute the fact it was intend- | ties loudly demand. Thoughtless as she may this subject than the gay and busy crowd will ed to account for. They often hint at human seem, she is not without an idea of her forlorn draw conclusions of a different nature. That | degeneracy, and some unknown curse hanging | and wretched situation, and she looks only to there is a sulness springing from the noblest and over our being, and even coming into the world | sudden death as her refuge, against that time when her charms shall cease to allure the eye of incontinence, when even the lowest haunts of infamy shall be shut against her, and, without a friend or a hope, she must sink under the pres-

But we will now shift the scene a little, and weary helpmate behind him. She seems to lis- mood of melancholy upon me; I imagine myself ten to his reproaches in patient silence. Her placed upon an eminence, above the crowds face will tell you more than many words, as, who pant below in the dusty tracks of wealth with a warm and meaning look, she surveys the and honour. The black catalogue of crimes and little wretch who is asleep on her arms. The of vice, the sad tissue of wretchedness and woe, turbulent brutality of the man excites no atten- passes in review before me, and I look down uption: she is pondering on the future chance of on man with an eye of pity and commisseration. life, and the probable lot of her heedless little | Though the scenes which I survey be mournful,

of the men. He is the only representative of a ecstatic bliss. once respectable family, and is brought to this mous, and he had nothing to pay them with. sional depressions of benevolent sensibility.

He has now been in that prison many years, and since he is excluded from the benefit of an insolvency act, he has made up his mind to the idea of ending his days there. His wife, whose beauty had decoyed him, since she found he could not support her, deserted him for those who could, leaving him, without friend or companion, to pace, with measured steps, over the court of a country jail, and endeavour to beguile the lastitude of imprisonment, by thinking on the days that are gone, or counting the squares in his grated window in every possible direction, backwards, forwards, and across, till he sighs to find the sum always the same, and that the more anxiously we strive to beguile the moments in their course, the more sluggishly they travel.

If these are accurate pictures of some of the varieties of human suffering, and if such pictures are common even to triteness, what conclusions must we draw as to the condition of man in general, and what must be the prevailing frame of to the intentions and wishes of God? Let the by concentrating it. The philosophers remind him of the existence of evil, by their lessons how to avoid or endure it; and the very poets themselves afford him pleasure, not unconnected with regret, as, either by contrast, exemplification, or deduction, they bring the world and its circum-

That such a one, then, is prone to sadness. who will wonder? If such meditations are beneficial, who will blame them? The discovery of evil naturally leads us to contribute our mite towards the alleviation of the wretchedness is introduces. While we lament vice, we learn to shun it ourselves, and to endeavour, if possible, these high and lofty speculations, we are insensibly, led to think humbly of ourselves, and to lift up our thoughts to Him who is alone the fountain of all perfection and the source of all

MELANCHOLY. Philosophers have divested themselves of their natural apathy, and poets have risen above themselves, in descanting on the pleasures of Melancholy. There is no mind so gross, no understanding so uncultivated, as to be incapable, at certain moments, and amid certain combinations, of feeling that sublime influence upon the spirits which steals the soul from the petty anxieties of

'And fits it to hold converse with the gods.'

I must confess, if such there be who never and the ideas they excite equally sombre; though One other picture, and I have done. The the tears gush as I contemplate them, and my man pacing with a slow step and languid aspect | heart feels heavy with the sorrowful emotions over you prison-court was once a fine dashing | which they inspire; yet are they not unaccomfellow, the admiration of the ladies, and the envy panied with sensations of the purest and most

It is to the spectator alone that Melancholy is situation by unlimited indulgence at that time forbidding; in herself she is soft and interesting, when the check is most necessary. He began to and capable of affording pure and unalloyed defigure in genteel life at an early age. His mis light. Ask the lover why he muses by the side judging mother to whose sole care ho was left, of the purling brook, or plunges into the deep thinking no alliance too good for her darling, gloom of the forest? Ask the unfortunate why cheerfully supplied his extravagance, under the he seeks the still shades of solitude? or the man idea that it would not last long, and that it would | who feels the pangs of disappointed ambition, enable him to shine in those circles where she why he retires into the silent walks of seclusion? habits of prodigality, once well gained, are never | therefrom which nothing else can impart. It is eradicated. His fortune, though genteel, was | the delight of Melancholy; but the melancholy not adequate to such habits of expense. His of these beings is as far removed from that of ing alliance, and come in danger of a jail, and ed complaints of selfishness from the mournful then died of a broken heart. His affairs soon regrets of expansive philanthropy; as are the wound themselves up. His debts were enor- desponding intervals of insanity from the occa-

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