

creatures. Neither ten, twenty, nor twenty-four hours are sufficient to distinguish real from apparent death; and there are instances of persons who have been alive in the grave at the end of the second, and even the third day. Why suffer to be interred with precipitation those persons whose lives we ardently wished to prolong? Why, though all men are equally interested in the abolition of it, does the practice still subsist? On the authority of the most able physicians, it incontestably appears, "that the body, though living, is sometimes so far deprived of all vital function, as to have every external appearance of death; that, if in the space of three days, or seventy two hours, no sign of life appears, and on the contrary the body exhales a cadaverous smell, there is an infallible proof of actual death; and that then, though on no account till then, the interment can with safety take place."

Hereafter we shall have occasion to speak of the usages of different nations with respect to obsequies, interments, and embalmments. The greatest part, even of the most savage people, pay more attention than we to their deceased friends. What with us is nothing more than a ceremony, they consider as an essential duty. Far superior is the respect which they pay to  
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