

creases ; error fortifies, itself, and drags us on to misery ; for what misery can be greater than no longer seeing things as they are ; to have judgment perverted by passions ; to act solely by its direction, to appear in consequence unjust or ridiculous to others ; and when the hour of self-examination comes, of being forced to despise ourselves ?

In this state of illusion and darkness we would change the nature of our soul. She was given us for the purposes of knowledge, and we would employ her solely for those of sensation. Could we extinguish her light, far from regretting the loss, with pleasure should we embrace the lot of idiots. As we no longer reason but during intervals, and as these intervals are troublesome, and spent in secret reproaches, we wish to suppress them, and thus proceeding from one illusion to another, we at length endeavour to lose all knowledge and remembrance of ourselves.

A passion without intervals is madness ; and a state of madness is the death of the soul. Violent passions with intervals are fits of folly, a malady of the mind, whose danger consists in its duration and frequency. In those intervals alone it may be said to enjoy health by the resumption