

Charles XII. received, at Frederickshall, the blow which terminated his exploits and existence, he clapped his hand upon his sword. Since it excluded not reflection, this mortal pang could not, therefore, be excessive. The brave warrior found himself attacked; he reflected that he ought to defend himself; and thence, it is evident, he felt no more than what he might have suffered from an ordinary blow. That this action was nothing more than the result of a mechanical impulse it would be absurd to assert, as it has been evidently shewn, in our description of man, that the most precipitate movements of the passions depend upon reflection, and are nothing more than effects of an habitual exertion of the mind.

If I have rather enlarged on this topic it is only that I might destroy a prejudice so repugnant to the happiness of man. To this prejudice many have fallen victims; and I have myself known several, of the female sex in particular, who, from the very dread of death, have died in reality. Such terrible alarms seem, indeed, to be particular to those whom Nature or education have endowed with superior sensibility, as the gross of mankind look