

42.39/55

Transcript

Observations

BOTH

Historical and Moral

UPON THE

BURNING

OF

LONDON,

September 1666.

With an Account of the Losses.

And a most remarkable Parallel between

LONDON and MOSCO, both as

To the PLAGUE and FIRE.

Also an Essay touching the Easterly-Winds.

Written by way of Narrative, for satisfaction

of the present and future Ages

By Rege Sincera.

LONDON Printed by Thomas Ratcliffe,

and to be sold by Robert Pawlet at the

Bible in Chancery-lane. 1667.

Whitehall, September 8.

On the Second instant, at one of the Clock in the morning, there happened to break out a sad and deplorable Fire in Pudding-lane near New-Fishstreet; which falling out at that hour of the night, and in a quarter of the Town (so close built with Wooden pitched Houses.) spread it self so far before day, and with such disraction to the Inhabitants and Neighbours, that care was not taken for the timely preventing the further diffusion of it, by pulling down Houses, as it ought to have have been so that this lamentable Fire in a short time became too bigg to be mastered by any Engines, or working near it. It fell out most unhappily too, that a violent Easterly winde fomented it, and kept it

burning all that day, and the night following spread it self up to Grace-church-street, and downwards from Canon-street to the Waterside, as farr as the Three Cranes in the Vintry.

The People in all parts about it, distracted by the vastness of it, and their particular care to carry away their Goods, many attempts were made to prevent the spreading of it, by pulling down Houses, and making great Intervals, but all in vain, the Fire seising upon the Timber and Rubbish, and so continuing it self even through those spaces, and raging in a bright flame all Monday and Tuesday, notwithstanding his Royal Majesties own, and his Royal Highness indefatigable and personal pains to apply all possible remedies to prevent it, calling and helping the People with their Guards, and a great number of Nobility and Gentry unweariedly assisting therein; for which they were requited with a thousand blessings from the poor distressed People. By the favour of God the winde slackned a little on Tuesday night, and the Flames meeting with Brick buildings at the Temple, by and little it was observed to lose its force on that side; so that on Wednesday morning we began to hope well, and his Royal Highness never despairing, or slackning his personal care, wrought so well that day, assisted in some parts by the Lords of the Council before and behind it, that a stop was put to the Temple-Church, near Holborn-bridge, Pye corner, Aldersgate, Cripple-gate, near the lower end of Coleman-street at the end of Basinghall-street, by the Postern; at the upper end of Bishopsgate-street, and Leadenhall-street, at the Standard in Cornhill, at the Church in Pan-church-street, near Clothworkers-hall in Mincing-lane, at the middle of Mark-lane, and at the Tower-Dock.

On Thursday, by the blessing of God, it was wholly beat down and extinguished, but so as that Evening it unhappily broke out again at the Temple, by the falling of some sparks (as is supposed) upon a pile of Wooden buildings, but His Royal Highness, who watched there that whole night in person, by the great labours and diligence used, and especially by their applying powder to blow up the Houses about it, before day most happily mastered it.

Divers Strangers, Dutch and French, were during the Fire apprehended, upon suspition that they contributed most mischievously to it, who were all imprisoned, and informations prepared to make a severe inquisition thereupon

by my Lord Chief Justice Keeling, assisted by some of the Lords of the Privy-Council; and some principal Members of the City; notwithstanding which suspicions, the manner of the burning all along in a train, and so blown forwards in all its way by strong windes, make us conclude the Whole was an effect of an unhappy chance, or to speak better, the heavy hand of God upon us for our Sinnes, shewing us the terror of his Judgements in thus raising the Fire; and immediately after his miraculous, and never enough to be acknowledged in mercy, in putting a stop to it when we were in the last despair, and that all attempts for the quenching it, however industriously pursued, seemed insufficient. His Majesty then sate hourly in Council, and in his own person making rounds about the City, in all parts of it where the danger and mischief was greatest, till next morning, that he hath sent his Grace the Duke of Arbermarle, whom he called from Sea to assist him in this great occasion, to put his happy and succesfull hand to the finishing of this memorable Deliverance.

About the Tower the seasonable Orders given for plucking down Houses to secure the Magazins of Powder was more especially succesfull, that part being up the winde; notwithstanding which, it came almost to the very gates of it, so as by this early provision the several Stores of Warr lodged in the Tower were entirely saved; and we have further this infinite cause, particulary to give God thanks, that the Fire did not happen in any of those places where his Majesties Naval-stores are kept; so though it hath pleased God to visit us with his own hand, he hath not by dis-furnishing us with the means of carrying on the Warr, subjected us unto all our Enemies.

Through this sad accident it is easie to be imagined, how many Persons were necessitated to remove themselves and Goods into the open fields, where they were forced to continue some time, which could not but work compassion in the Beholders. But His Majesties care was most signal in this occasion, who, besides his personal pains, was frequent in consulting alwayes for relieving those distressed persons; which produced so good effect, as well by His Majesties Proclamations, and the Orders issued to the Neighbours Justices of Peace, to encourage the sending in of Provision to the Markets, which are publicly known, as by other directions, that when His Majesty fearing lest other Orders might not yet have been sufficient, had

commanded the Victualer of his Navy to send Bread into Morefields for relief of the Poor, which for the more speedy supply he sent in Baskets out of the Sea-stores, it was found that the Markets had been already so well supplied, that the People being unaccustomed to the kinde of Bread, declined it, and so it was returned in great part to His Majesties Stores again, without any use made of it.

And we cannot but observe to the confutation of all His Majesties Enemies, who endeavour to perswade the World abroad of great Parties and Disaffection at home against his Majesties Government, that a greater instance of the affection to this City could never be given, than hath been now given in this sad and deplorable accident, when, if at any time, disorder might have been expected from the losses, distraction, and almost desperation of some Persons in their private Fortunes, thousands of people not having to cover them. And yet in all this time, it hath been so far from any appearance of Designes or Attempts against His Majesties Government, His Majesty and His Royal Brother out of their care to stop and prevent the Fire, frequently exposing their Persons with very small Attendants in all parts of the Town, sometimes even to be intermixed with those who laboured in the Business, yet nevertheless there hath not been observed so much as a murmuring word to fall from any; but on the contrary, even those Persons whose Losses rendred their Condition most desperate, and to be fit objects of their Prayers, beholding those frequent instances of His Majesties care of His People, forgot their own misery, and filled the Streets with their Prayers for His Majesty, whose Trouble they seemed to compassionate before their own.

Observations

The Philosophers, Rhetoricians and Lawyers do agree, that all the circumstances of a fact, are happily contained in a Latine Verse framed for that purpose, as well to illustrate the Method, which is the lite of History, as to help the Memory, which is to reap the benefit of it: the Verse runneth thus;

Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando?

*Who hath done it, what hath he done,
Where, by what means, wherefore, how, when?*

Although these Disjunctives seem to first sight to carry no great sence, nevertheless when they shall be throughly examined it will be found, that they do contain all what can be said upon a subject, and that out of them as out of so many living springs may be drawn all what is necessary for the clearing of a propounded Question; and we will not be ashamed in this to follow the method of the Schools and the authority of the learned, knowing that whatsoever fault shall be found in't, will rather be imputed to our incapacity then to the foundation we have built upon. Therefore to begin.

Quis?

Who hath done it?

S E C T I

For the cleaing of the darkness wherein the humane understanding is naturally wrapt up in distinguishing the several accidents and events that happen dayly in this sublunary World. The Philosophers have establishing two principal causes, whereunto every one may have recourse for his satisfaction and the securing of himself, that nothing happeneth by chance, which is the opinion of desperate and Atheistical persons. The first and universal cause is God Almighty, who as he alone hath created the World, so hath he also reserved to himself alone the government thereof, insomuch that the least accidents that befall, depend meerly from his providence, neither is there any thing hidden to him with whom we have to do; it is he without whole leave and knowledge not a hair falleth from our heads, and who telleth us by his Prophet that *There is no evil in the City but he hath done it*. This is that first Cause which ought to captivate our understandings under its will, to make us admit all Events with an equal mind, and submit our patience to his dispensations, saying with *David, I did hold my peace because thou didst it*, Psal.50.vers.21 The other Causes are called Second causes, because most commonly God maketh use of them for the accomplishing of his will, and there are divided into as many branches as ther are individual creatures in the World. By these

a man liveth, being begotten by the feed of his parents; dieth being suffocated, falleth being drunk, is drowned in making shipwrack. Where it is to be observed that several second Causes may concurr together to the production of one and the same effect; as in this sad and lamentable Accident we see the carelesnes of a Baker, the solitariness and darkness of the Night, the I position of old and ruinous Buildings, the narrow-ness of the Streets, the abundance of combustibile and Bituminous matter, the foregoing Summer extra-ordinary hot and dry, violent Eastern Wind, and the want of Engines and Water, concurr as it were unanimously to the production of this wonderfull Conflagration, and to do in four dayes what four Armies of Enemies (not opposed) could scarce have done in eight. The Astrologers, whose science is as absolute as certain, would fain introduce another cause between the first and the second, to wit, the position and influence of the Coelestial bodies; but this accident will contribute much to stop their mouthes: for either they could not foresee it, or else having foreseen it, they should have given us precaution of it, as they do of many other more frivolous things, and of less consequence then this; and which are never true but by a supposition that if they doe not happen in our Countrey, they may happen in another, which is called to Whiten Black; Let us therefore conclude, that the two Causes above mentioned, that is, first and second, are sufficient to move us to humble our selves in the fight of God, who having the year before destroyed in the space of Six moneths about an Hundred thousand people; and seeing our impenitent hearts and feared consciences return again to our first vomiting, of Pride, Drunkenness, Swearing, Falsedealings, Whoring, Treachery, and other vices; after he hath taken away the health of some, he taketh away the wealth of others, and threatneth the rest with an impendent Famine by the last excessive Rains he did send, and may send again in this Sowing-time; and it will avail nothing here to say, as I have heard many, that other Countries, as France and Italy are guilty of as many if not greater Crimes than we are, seeing that God chastiseth every son he loveth, and that he beginneth his Judgements by his own houshold, and this Nation having received more prosperities and blessings from his hand then any other, and accordingly more peculiarly bound to serve and obey him then rest, whom he will find well enough when his due appointed time: *For that servant that knew his lords will*

and prepared not himself, neither disaccording to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes but he that knew not and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes: For unto whom which is given, of him shall be much required, and to whom have committed much of him they will ask the more. Luke, ch 12, V 47,48

Quid?

What hath he done?

S E C T II

The Answer is easie. An Incendie, a Conflagration, a Ruine and devastation by Fire, such (as I believe) did never happen by any natural and ordinary means, for that of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* was supernatural and miraculous, the like being never heard before nor after, that is should rain Fire and Brimstone suddenly, and in such a quantity in fair weather; for the Scripture mentioneth that the Sun was risen upon the Earth, besides, that instead of calcining the said Towns into powder, as Fire and Brimstone will do all solid bodies, it not onely turned them, but also the ground on which they stood into a bottomless bituminous Lake, which to this day remaineth before our eyes for a fearfull Example of the hainousness of Sinne, and of the severity of God's Justice. Concerning the conflagration of Troy, and that of Rome: The first may be fabulous, or exaggerated by the familiar Hyperboles of Poets to whole relation chiefly we owe our belief in that point. As for that of Rome it is to be believed, that those heaps of Stones and Marbles of which she was then builded, gave a great check, if not a stop to the raging of the Fire, and stood in the way of the Tyrants pleasure. Concerning others, as that of (a) *Constantinople*, (b) *Cracow*, (c) *Venice*, (d) *Vienna* in *Austria*, (e) *Delf* in *Holland*, (f) *Malines* and *Antwerp*, they came nothing near this which in three dayes and three nights of about 460 acres of Ground upon which the City of London stood, hath swept away about 350, which is at the rate of four parts in five, having destroyed about 12000 Houses, 87 Parochial Churches, besides 6 or 7 consecrated Chappels, and the magnificent and stately Cathedral Church of St. Paul, the publick and most excellent buildings of the Exchange, Guildhall, Custom house, and all or very near the Halls belonging to every

private Company, besides an innumerable quantity of Goods of all sorts, this City being the best Magazin not onely of England, but also of all Europe; but amongst the rest is a Treasure unspeakable of four Commodities, which for their luggage and cumbersomness, could not be reduced from the jaws of that unmercifull Element, that is Wine, Tobacco, Spices and Books. As for Books, the Booksellers who dwelled for the most part round about the Cathedral Church, had sheltered their Books in a subterranean Church under the Catherdral, called St.Faiths, which was propped up with so strong an Arch and massy Pillars, that it seemed impossible the Fire could do any harm to it; but the Fire having crept into it through the Windows, it seized upon the Pews, and did so try and examine the Arch and Pillars by sucking the moysture of the mortar that bound the Stones together, that it calcined into Sand: So that when the top of the Catherdral fell upon it, it beat it flat, and set all things in an irremediable flame. I have heard judicious men of that Trade affirm, that the onely losse of Books in that place, and Stationers-hall, publick Libraries, and private persons Houses, could amount to no less that 150000 pound. I have seen Bells, and Iron Wares melted, Glass and Eurthen-pots melted together, as it had been by a fire of fusion; the most bigg and solid Stones (as those of the Cathedral) slit, scaled and in some parts calcined to powder by the violence of the flames. Nevertheless, as God's mercy is above all his works, and remembereth it alwayes amongst his judgements, I could not learn of above half a dozen People that did perish by that wofull Conflagration; one of them was of my Acquaintance, and a Watch-maker living in Shooe-lane beginde the Glove-Tavern, his name was Paul Lawell, born in Strabourg, who being about 80 years of age, and dull of hearing, was also deaf to the good admonitions of his Sonne and Friends, and would never desert the House till it fell upon him, and sunk him with the ruines in the Cellar, whereafterwards his Bones, together with his Keys, were found.

Although the loss of so famous a CITY, and of the Riches contained within its Precinct be inestmable, nevertheless to satisfie the curiosity of the Reader, and that of Posteritym as also to give some light unto those, who, with a more mature deliberation, shall attempt the full History of it we will set down the chieftest Heads by which it is valued, leaving the liberty to the judicious Reader to adde to or subtract from as he shall think fit; for we do not

pretend here to give an exact account of all the Losses, which we hope some better Witts, and that are more at leasure, will undertake hereafter, But onely to invite them by this to a more curious and eanest enquiry of the Truth, and so transmit to Prosterity a fearfull Example of God's Judgement, that they may in avoiding Sinne, also avoid the like, to the glory and prayse of his most hold Name.

Let it therefore be said again, that by the computation of the best Geometricians, the City of LONDON within the Walls was seated upon about 460 Acres of Ground, wherein were built about 1,000 Houses, besides Churches, Chapels, Schools, Halls and publick Buildings; out of this quantity of Houses 12000 are thought to be burnt, which is four parts of five, each House being valued one with another at Twenty five pound a years Rent, which at Twelve years Purchase maketh Three hundred pound, the whole amounting to 3600000.

<p>Fourscore and seven Parochial Churches, besides that of St.Pauls the Cathedral, and fix consecrated Chappels, the Exchange, Guildhall, Custome-boufes, the Hall of Companies, and other Publick Buildings amounting to Half as much</p>	<p>1800000 L.</p>
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<p>The Goods that every Private man Loft one with another, valued at half the Value of the Houses</p>	<p>1800000 L.</p>
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<p>About 20 Wharfes of Coal and Wood, valued at 1000 a piece</p>	<p>20000 L.</p>
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<p>About 100000 Boats and Barges, 1000 Cart-loads, with Porters to remove the Goods to and fro, as well for the Houses that were a burning, as for those that stood in fear of it, at 20 shillings a Load.</p>	<p>15000 L.</p>
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Summe 7335000 L.

This being reduced to the Account of French Money, taking one pound Sterling for 13 Livers, amounteth to 1056967500 Livers,

Now O London: it may well be said of thee, *How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people, how is she become widow, she that was great among the Nations, and Princess among the Provinces.* Jerem, Lam chap. I.I. But courage O thou that art now my Countrey, thou art fallen into the hands of God, and not of men; he that chastiseth thee is thy Father, and if he hath a rod to punish thee, he hath also a staff to comfort thee, turn to him and he will turn to thee, for he is a merciful, long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, therefore be not overwhelmed with sorrow, no thing hath befallen thee, but hath happened to others before thee; and if it be true that the likeness and participation of afflictions doth mitigate the sense of them, that I may somewhat allay thy present sorrow, I will relate thee a story that hath much parallel with thine, to shew thou hast not been the onely miserable: It is a true one, written and testified by an Honourable Dutch Merchant who was an eye witness to it; and although it hath been once printed, yet because the Book is scarce, and the Language forrain, I thought thou wouldst not take it ill if I should impart it unto thee.

Moscow the chief City of all the Countreys of the Emperour of Russia, is a very great City, but not well compacted, it hath in compass with the Suburbs, well inhabited, and as full of people as the Town, about three German leagues and a half, which maketh about 14 English miles; the compass of the Town within the walls is about three English miles, the streets and path ways are of great trees set close together, and some boards by the houses side; and it is so dirty in rainy weather, that it is impossible to go thorow the City otherwise then on horse-back; according to the custom of the Countrey where horses are of small value, and of little expence, never being shod for any journey whatsoever, unless it is during the Ice. The houses are but one story high, or two at the most, all built with wood set up at the top on of another; there is in the City, Suburbs and Castel about 5500 Churches, built for the most part like Chappels, most of them, with great trees set one

upon another; The great Dukes Lodging is also built of wood, which he thinketh wholsomer then stone; the Castle is pretty well fortified with walls and broad ditches; it occupieth as much room as all the rest of the City. On one side of it dwells the Sins, on the other the optisions, who are as the Treasurers of the Great Duk, in whole hands (as soon as you come) you must put in all your Merchandises; Being departed from Nerva about the tenth of July 1650, we came on the beginning of August to Moscow, where I found the Great Duke and his Officers busie in seeking out about 30 persons, who fell all under the sword of the Hangman, except one who was cast alive in boiling water, and this because they had taken Bribes, most of them were great Lords, and Familiars with the Great Duke, other were Merchants of Nowogard, with their Wives, Children and Families, accused of Treason in the behalf of the King of Poland. Few days afetr, a horrid Plague invaded the town of Moscow, and the places about it, with such violence, that in four months, there died above 250000 people, and it was particulary observed that in eight days, that is, from the tenth to the eighteenth of August, there died 2703 Priests, and this Plague did continue so fiercely, that in the end of it, every one wondered when he met any body of his acquaintance.

This extraordinary misery was followed the year after on the fifteenth of May, by a strange ruine and conflagration; the occasion was, that the Emperour of the Tartarians, being discontented that the Russians did not pay him some annual Tribute, and hearing besides that the Great Duke by his tyranny and massacres had so depopulated the Countrey, that he should find no great resistance that way, did summon him to pay the said Tribute, but the Great Duke returned nothing in answer but spightful and reproachful words, wherefore the Tartarian came out of his Countrey about the end of February, followed with an Army of 100000 horse, who within the space of two moneths and a half did ride about 500 German leagues which makes 2000 English miles; when they were come about two days journey from the frontiers of the Duke, he resolved to meet them and to give them battle, but he lost it with a prodigious slaughter of his men; The Duke knowing that the Tartarian would seek him out, ran away as fast and as far as he could, he was only within nine leagues of Moscow, when the Tartarians came and encompassed the Town, thinking he was within, they set a fire all the Villages round about it, and

seeing that the war would prove too tedious for them, resolved to burn that great City, or at least the Suburbs of it; for this purpose having placed their Troops round about it, they set fire on all sides, so that it seemed a burning Globe; then did arise so fierce and violent a wind, that it drove the Rafters and long Trees from the Suburbs into the City; the conflagration was so suddan that no body had time to save himself but in that place where he was then; the persons that were burnt in this fire were above 200000, which did happen, because the houses are all of wood, and the streets paved with great Fir-trees set close together, which being Oily and Ronfinous made the incendie unexpressible, so that in four hours time, the City and Suburbs were wholly consumed. I and a young man of Rochel that was my Interpreter, were in the middle of the Fire, in a Magazine vaulted with stone, and extraordinarily strong, whose wall was three foot and a half thick and had no Aire but on two sides, one wherein was the coming in and going out, which was a long Alley, in which there was three iron Gates, distant about six foot one from another; on the other side there was a Window or Grate, fenced with three iron shuttersm distant half a foot from another, we shut them inwardly as well as possibly we could; nevertheless there came in so much smoak, that it was more then sufficient to choak us, had it not been for some Beer that was there, with the which we refreshed our selves now and then. Mnay Lords and Gentlemen were stifled in the Caves where they had retired, because their houses being made of great trees, when they fell they crushed down all that was underneath; others being consumed to ashes, stopt all the passages of going and coming out, so that for want of Air they all perished. The poor Countrey people that have save themselves in the City, with their Cattel from Threescore miles round about, seeing the conflagration, ran all into the Market-place, which is not paved of wood as the rest; nevertheless they were all rosted there, in such sort that the tallest man seemed but a child, so much had the fire contracted their Limbs, and this by reason of the great houses that were round about; a thing more hideous and frightful then any can imagine. In many places of the said Market, the bodies were piled one upon another to the height of half a pike, which put me into a wonderful admiration, being not able to apprehend nor understand, how it was possible they should be so heaped together.

This wonderful conflagration caused all the Fortifications of the Town wall to fall; and all the Ordnance that were upon it to burnt. The walls weer made of Brick, according to the ancient way of buildings less without either Fortifications or Ditches; many that have faved themselves along them, were nevertheless rosted, so fierce and vehement was the fire, among them many Italians and Walloons of my acquaintance; while the fire lasted, we thought that a million of Cannons had been thundering together, and our thoughts were upon nothing but death, thinking that the fire would last some days, because of the great circumference of the Castle and Suburbs, but all this was done in less then four hours time, at the end of which, the noise growing less, we were curious to know whether the Tartarians, of whom we stood in no less fear then of the fire, were entred. They are a Warlike people, though they eat nothing but Roots, and such other like substance, and drink onely water. The greatest Lords among them feed upon Flesh baked between a Horse and Saddle, wherein rideth the Horseman: nevertheless are they very strong, lusty, and inured to all hardship, as also are their Horses, who are wonderful swift, and will travel further in one day, eating nothing but Grass, then ours will do in three feedings upon Oats; therefore the Tartarians come so easily from far so far to invade the Russians. They have also that craft, that they onely come in the Summer for the conveniency of their horses; their Countrey is temperate, from whence they come about the latter end of February, that they may be in Russia about the beginning of June, and go back again into their own countrey at the end of it, least they should be overtaken by the winter in Russia, which if it should fall out they would be all starved because of the great deserts uninhabitated, containing above Three hundred German leagues, and therefore void of all relief, as well for themselves as for their horses, there being then no grasss upon the ground, which constraineth them to make such a journey, which is of above 1200 German leagues in four or five months time with all their Army, which consisteth commonly of about 150000 or 200000 horses as good as can be, but the horseman are but sightly armed, having for all weapons a jack of Mail, a Dart, and Bowe and Arrows, they know nothing of what belongeth to Guns, having in all their Countrey but Two Cities, wherein the Emperor keepeth his

Court, without any Villages or Houses, but are contented to live under Tents, which they have been remove to and fro as they see occasion.

But to come again to our Misery, after we had hearkened a while, we hard some Russians, running to and fro through the smoak, who were talking of walling the Gates to prevent the coming in of the Tartarians, who were expecting when the fire went out. I and my Interpreter being come out of the Magazine, found the Ashes so hot that we durst scarce tread upon them, but necessity compelling us we ran towards the chief Gate, where we found Twenty five or Thirty men escaped from the fire, with whom in few hours we did wall that Gate and the rest and kept a strict watch all that night with some Guns that had been preserved from the fire. In the morning, seeing that the place was not desensible with so few people as we were, we sought the means to get into the Castle, whose entry was then inaccessible; the Governour was very glad to hear of our intention, and cryed to use, we should be very welcom, but it was a most difficult thing to come in, because the Bridges were all burnt, so that we were sain to get over the wall, having instead of Ladders some high Firr-trees thrown from the Castle to us, wherein instead of rounds to get up, they had made some notches with a hatcher to keep us from sliding: we got up then with much adoe; for besides the evident inconveniency of those rough Ladders, we did carry about us the sum of 4000 Thalers, besides some Jewels, which was a great hindrance to us to climb along those high trees, and that which did double our fear was, that was saw before our eyes some of our company, that had nothing but their bodies to save, yet tumble down from the middle of those high trees into the Ditch, full of burnt bodies, so that we could not tread but upon dead corpses, whose heaps were so thick everywhere, that we could not avoid to tread upon them, as if it had been a hill to climb up, and that which did augment our troubles was, that in treading upon them, the Arms and Legs broke like Glafs; the poor Limbs of these Creatures being calcined by the vehement heat of the fire, and our feet sinking into those miserable bodies, the bloud and the filth did squirt in our faces, which begot such a stench all the Town over that it was impossible to subsift in it.

The 25th of May in the evening, as we expected in great perplexity what the Tartarians would attempt against us who were about Four hundred in the Castle: the Tartarians whome we had faluted with our Guns, and killed some of them that were come too neer one of the Cattle-gatse, began to go back the same way that they came in, with so much speed, that the next morning al that torrent was drained up, for which having given God thanks and set our business in order, as well as the present calamity would permit, we went away from that desolate place.

Now O London consider that thy Fate is not peculiar to thy self, and that will allay the bitterness of they sufferings; Remember also, that if thou sanctifiest this affliction to thy use, the Lord promiseth by his Prophet *that those shall reap in joy who did sow in tears* Psal 126.6

Ubi?

Where?

S E C T III

In the richest City of Europe, and perhaps of the world; the greatest Magazine that could be found for all forts of Merchandises, incomparable for the salubritie of the Air, and conveniency of scituation; Magnificent in publique buildings; Illuftrious in good deeds, Renowed for Hostipality, Famous for government, Venerable for antiquity; having subsifted about Two thousand years; inhabited by Citizens whose courage was equal to their fortunes; in a word, a City of which it might be said more truly than Ormus.

Si terrarum orbis quaquapateat annulus esset;

Londinum illius gemma decusque foret.

This circumstance which we tread over so slightly that we may not be suspected of flattery, is not the least that aggravateth the enormity of this accident, there is none of those characters we have given in, but is very true, and might be the worthy employment of a better penn than mine, and the subjects of a full volume.

Quibus auxiliis?

By Whose Help?

S E C T I V

Here we must have recourse to what we have said before in the first Paragrapht, when we spoke of the second causes, and say that God hath made use chiefly of eight things to accomplish this work. The negligence of the Master or his Servents, in whose house the fire did first begin; the solitariness of the night, the narrowness of the place, the weakness of the buildings, the quantity of combustibile and bituminous matters gathered thereabout, the preceding Summer which was extraordinarily hot and dry, the East wind that blew violently all that while, and the want of Engines and water to quench the fire; we shall give every one his little Section, to satisfie the curiosity of these, who inquire so much of the causes that have made this conflagration so violent, dismal and irremediable.

I. Though there can be some accidents which no humane prudence can prevent; as when a main either in his own house, or going through the street, is crashed by a sudden ruine; nevertheless the Philosophers are not to blame, when they say that every one may be the author of this own fortune, for it is certain, that if a man neglecteth or forsaketh that providence given him by nature, he doth together forake the instrument and the means which his good genuis maketh use of to make him avoid the ill accidents that may befall him, for as our foul doth only act by the Organs of our boday, so our Genius either good or bad cannot act but by the means of our foul; now if our foul enjoyeth a sound and temperate body, and doth her functions with purity and facility; that Genius which is always neer hand, and as it were whispering at our ear, doth move and stirr her to the preservation of whatsoever belongeth or concerneth her: if on the contrary, this foul inhabiteth a body dyscratiated, melanchollick, full of obstructions, or drowned in the excesses of eating and drinking, or passions, its nature being igneous, and never ceasing from action; it necessarily followeth, that according to the disposition of the Organes; she

turneth to the wrong way and neglecteth those things wherein she is meerly concerned. Now in things that might be prevented or remedied, it is an invalid excuse to say, I would never have thought that such things should happen. For who can attribute it to a meer accident to put fire in an Oven, and to leave quantity of dry wood, and some fitches of Bacon by it within the sphaere of its activity, and so go to bed, in leaving his providence with his slippers.

I remember that some 36 years ago, in a Town of Brie, a Province of France called Sezane, upon a Sunday morning, a Woman that kept a Chandlers shop having occasion to snuff a candle, threw the snuff into a corner of her shop among some old rags and papers, and so shutting the door went to Mass but within the space of half an hour, and before she could come back again, not only her house, but those of her Neighbours were all in a flame, which being helped by an East-wind which blew at that time, and which is the most dangerous of all the Winds for Incendies, (as we shall shew hereafter) did in the space of a day and a night consume the whole Town, consisting of about four hundred houses. Can this be called a meer accident, since there is no body so void of common sense but might have either foreseen, or prevented so calamitous a consequence?

II. The second cause of this misfortune is the time wherein it did happen, to wit, about one of the clock in the night, when every one is buried in his first sleep; when some for weariness, other by deboistness, have given leave to their cares to retire; when slothfulness and the heat of the bed have riveted a man to his Pillow, and made him almost incapable of waking, much less of acting and helping his Neighbours.

III. The narrowness of the place did also much contribute to this Conflagration, for the Street where it did happen, as also most of those about it, were the narrowest of the City, insomuch that in some a Cart could scarce go along, and in others not at all. The danger I did once run of my life thereabouts by the crowd of Carts, hath caused me many times to make reflexion on the covetousness of the Citizens, and conveniency of Magistrates, who have suffered them from time to time to encroach upon the streets, and so to jet the top of their houses, so as from one side of the street to touch the other, which

as it doth facilitate conflagration, so doth it also hinder the remedy, and besides taketh away the liberty of the air, making it unwholesome, and disfigureth, the Beauty and Symmetry of the City. I hope that for the future his Majesty, his Council, and that of the City, will take care that such disorder happen no more, and will cause this City to be as commodious in its Buildings, as it is happy in its Scituation.

IV. Now followeth the weakness of the buildings, which were almost all of wood, which by age was grown as dry as a chip: This inconvenient will easily be remedied, in building the houses with Stone or Brick, according to the Statutes and Ordinances of Parliament provided and Enacted long ago in that behalf, though for the mos part ill observed.

V. The quantity of combustible and bituminous matter hath given the greatest encouragement to this devouring Fire; for as the place where the fire begun was not far from the Thames, and from those Wharfes where most Merchandises are landed, so Thames-Street, and others thereabout, were almost nothing else but Magazines of combustible and sulphurous Merchandises: Thereabout were a prodigious quantity of Oyl, Butter, Brandy, Pitch, Brimstone, Saltpeter, Cables etc. and by the Thams side were almost all Wharfes full of Coals and Wood. Now as fire of it self is nothing but light which corporisieth it self in the matter, and acteth more or less according to the disposition of it, as we see that a fire of Straw is less violent than that of Coal's; it followeth that this fire having lighted upon these sulphurous and bituminous matters, did feed upon them as in his proper Element, and not only devoured them with ease, but imparts to the next combustible matters a disposition more fitting and apt to receive him. The Nature of this sulphueous fire was evidently seen in the melting of Bells, Iron, Pots, Glasses and other metallique things, and in the calcining of stones and bricks, which no other single fire of wood, coal or other vulgar matter could have done. I remember that some four or five years ago the Lightning fell in Herefoedshire without doing any harm in the Country, but being extinguished of it self, the exhalation of it did mix it self with a strong Westerly wind, that came as far as London, beating down houses, plucking up trees by the roots; and to shew its nitrous

and sulphureous Nature, did as it were neglect to touch wood, but did chiefly stick upon metal, and either broke or bended it; the tokens of it are seen to this day upon the Steeples of Bowchurch, St. Andrew, St. Giles, Cripplegate, the May-Pole and other places. These sulphureous matters were also the cause of another inconveniency, which is, that the fire being corporified in them, did extend the sphaere of his activity at a further distance than ordinary, and cast his burning beams furthest off, mixing more exactly to his Atomes in the Air, which he turneth almost into his own Nature, which was the cause that no body could come neerer that fire than a hundred or tow hundred paces.

VI. The foregoing Summer that was extraordinarily hot and dry, had also disposed the matter of buildings to admit the fire more quickly and easily, by sucking not only the intrinsecal moisture that was in them, but also that of the Air which might have moistured them; for though there be no rain falling, nevertheless there is a certain evapourish moisture in the Air, which if it be not dried up, doth moisten all porous things intrinsecally, and doth condense it self upon the solid ones, in the form of an Oleaginous moisture, as doth appear upon Marbles and Glasses.

VII. In cometh now the East-wind to play his part in the Tragedy. That unfortunate wind, of which it is commanly said, that it is neither good for man nor beast, did blow with such a wonderful fierceness all the time of the conflagration, that it did not only quicken the fire, as Bellows do the Furnaces, but also getting into the streets, and among the houses, when it found any let of hinderance that did recoil it back, it blew equally both to the right and to the left, and caused the fire to burn on all sides, which hath perswaded many that this fire was miraculous: I my self remember, that going into some streets at that time, and having the wind impetuously in my face, I was in hope that at my return I should have it in my back, but it was all one, for the reason aforesaid. It would be here too tedious to speak of the nature of the winds, and to shew many reasons why this wind is so dry for England, as to burn the flowers and leafs of the trees, more then the hottest Sun can do, one which I think satisfactory will serve for all: It is therefore to be observed, that winds do not only participate of the nature of the places where they are begot, but also

of that of the Countries thorough which they pass: Now all the Southern, Western and Northern winds, must pass thorough the great Ocean to come into England, in which passage there mixes with them abundance of vapours which cause their moisture, except the North-wind, wherein the moisture is condensed by the cold; but the East wind to come to use must pass over the greatest Continent of the world, France, Germany, Hungary, Greece. Persia etc. even to China; so that in persuing such a tract of Land, it not only droppeth down by the way his moist Effluviiums, the earth as it were sucking them for its irroration, but also carried along all the hot and dry exhalations that perpetually arise out of the earth, which is the cause of his dry and burning quality. I had formerly a little Garden, where I did bestow as much pains and cares as I could, to bring up some young Fruit-trees that were in't , having the advantage of a very good mould, but being feated Eastward and closed narrowly by a Brickwall on either side; this wind that raigneth constantly here in England in the moneths of March, April, and beginning of May, did in their budding so burn the leaves and flowers, that the hottest Sun could not do the like, so that I was fain to give it over, having been two or three years before I could understand that mystery, and the nature of that wind in this countrey, for there is some other countreys where this wind is salubrious and fruitful enough.

VIII. It was also a great contributing to this misfortune, that the Thames Water-house was out of order, so that the Conduits and Pipes were almost all dry; as also that the Engines had no liberty to play, for the narrowness of the place and crowd of the people, but some of them were tumbled down in the river, and among the rest, that of Clearken-well esteemed one of the best.

And thus courteous Reader, thou seest an admirable concurrence of several causes, for the putting of Gods will in execution; in other Cities that are not subject to conflagrations; as Paris, which is all built of Free-stone, the innundations have several times played their pranks; other Towns; as in Italy that think themselves exempted from fire and water, come to their periods by fearful Earthquakes; others that escape Fire, Water and Earth, do perish by the Meteos of the Air, and are calcined by the Lightening; so that God Almighty never wanteth instruments to compass his will; and it seemeth that

the four Elements, of which this world is compounded, do conspire against the happiness and quietness of man, when by their daily prevarications they go about to confirm the disobedience of our first Parents.

Cur?

Why?

S E C T V

Here it is that we must wholly stoop and humble our selves under the mighty hand of God, and answer with the Apostle, *o the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counsellor?* Rom II 33 let it suffice thee, O man to know that whether he hath done it to punish thee for thy sins, or to try thy Faith and exercise thy Patience; if thou canst make benefit of this affliction, and sanctify it to thy use; We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God.

Quomodo?

How?

S E C T VI

This circumstance is answered by the Contents of the Fourth

Quando?

When?

S E C T VII

When we were newly come out of a Civil war of 20 years standing, where it is thought above 100000 people did perish.

When the Plague had the year before swept away above 100000 people and was still raging.

When the Kingdom was exhausted of Money and Trade lost.

When we had wars with France, Denmark and Holland, and not without fear of divisions among ourselves.

Then even then came this dreadful Fire, after the aggregation of so many Judgements before (like Fobs comforter) after his unwelcom messengers) but then, even then did our seeming utter destruction appear, but by our Heavenly Fathers paternal corrections and by his mercy we are rescued from our fears by peace and quietness, both at home and abroad, restored to hopes of a flourishing Nation, and the most Glorious City of the world.

Crescit sub pondere virtus.

FINIS.