No. 4.

Human frailty.
Said x. 6. - "All flesh is grass; all the glory of man."

This is the sublimest description of the frailty of man.

The voice said, "Cry, if so be it shall be so." All flesh is grass; all the glory of man is grass. The grass withereth, the flower shall flourish; but the spirit of the Lord upholdeth it. Sinners are grass. The grass withereth in the summer; but the spirit of the Lord upholdeth it. Let us make it the source of useful instruction. When we are with thee, teach us."
Psalm 39:14. "I said, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."

There are some truths, of which it is not seemly important to produce the evidence, as it is to give them a permanent and efficacious impression. The consequently we need to be aroused and invited, more than to be convinced. The scenes of nature and the objects of the material world, which daily meet the eye in the walks of business or of amusement, or even when the professed purpose is to observe and reflect, lose very much their power of fixing the attention and are passed over as fleeting. In the same manner some moral and religious truths are so common, that they are laid away among the unheeded notices of the mind, and so obvious that they are either never considered, or thought of as things of no interest. It is not difficult to forget what we never should procure to demn; and when, besides the neglect which familiarity produces, thoughtlessness is confounded by the vain pursuit of pleasure, or by the excitement of passion, it needs no common appeal to awaken moral sensibility from the deep sleep into which...
it has been suffered to fall. Must we be invited to contemplate human frailty? Shall man, the being of a moment, now in the freshness and vigour of health, now in the softness and vigour of health, for the joys of the world, and now is summoned into eternity; shall man be called upon to remember that he lives in a state of weakness and uncertainty? Were it not so common, it might indeed seem strange, that we should ever act as if we could arrest the fleeting forms of moral good, and make them our own; as if we had a permanent interest in the vanities, which have an end? Could you persuade him, that they who dream of being dismissed from this world, hope that they had ever heard of another state of existence, to which the contents of their passions and of unsatisfied desires, was meant to be introductory? No, one must think that such beings were already at home, that the race of glory of pleasure, which pressed upon us, and all that he may be grudged never be at an end, that appetite was to be satisfied by man himself, and broad his treasure, with an anxious hope of the fear of any change.

But we may not presume upon finding an equal restlessness, indifference, or carelessness in the reflection that the world is van and delusive. All iron
vain and delusive. There is enough of life in which we may and ought to be interested, to employ our energy and strength. (We are bound to each other by the tender charities and the enduring ties of society; we have vices to subdue, and virtues to establish and strengthen; we have a God whom we should obey, and a Saviour whom we should love and imitate. To think of founding the hope of permanent happiness merely on the honors the riches, or the pleasures of the world, would be indeed the vainest of dreams; it would be to build your house on the sand, where it must fall when the floods come, and the winds then beat upon it; and if this be your only home, how will you abide the fury of the storm without a shelter, without a resting place? Yet life has other and better objects; it is the means of doing much, the effects of which will not be limited to earth; it affords you opportunities for cultivating and improving good dispositions; you find abundant motives and helps to virtue and patriotism. The sentiment, to engage all your vigor and all your
and religion shrinks not from the prospect, but bid us be anxious and cheerful—shall we not confess, that while the world has immemorable disappointments for us, and very much that is dissatisfaction, it has too something worth living for? some happy opportunities. It seems me, the relation of men and the advantage of science, a full appreciation of all better feelings.

The feeling in men this distinction therefore, when we wish to know with the Psalmist, how frail or we would be made sensible, that life hangs on by a slender thread, that we know not how soon we may be called upon to appear before our Judge, that the best plans cannot prevent, that policy may devise are liable to be frustrated, and that the dearest objects of this world's enjoyments are held by a tenure so slight, as to be broken by chances the most trifling and unforeseen, these are solemn and important truths. For what purpose should we contemplate them? the valuable ends may be gained by making them the subject of frequent and serious meditation? 1. From such reflections we may learn not to be like Martha, careful and troubled about many things, not to create unhappiness which, but for such things. 2. Almost dream ourselves into unhappiness. Instead
of being, as the Apostle emphatically expresses it, "careful for nothing" we are careful for every thing. It is not enough that folks or vanities obtrude themselves in the way. men must step aside from their sphere, to invite the uneasiness which belongs not to their condition. Riches must be accumulated, honor must be acquired, some trifling obstacle, which imagination has made a source of discomfort, must be removed. Before men can embrace the joys of tranquil and uneventful life, Why are men thus industrious in making them selves miserable? Is it because they are in love with misery? The continual desire of the human heart, the vanity of so many undertakings, and the vanity of life itself, are the chief sources of our uncertainty. On the contrary, it is because they pursue with mistakes, that we are careless. The constituents of felicity are few and simple. Divine goodness has placed at least some of them within our reach; and if we will seek for them when need to find, we must not consent to escape disappointment, or to fill the vacancy of an unsatisfied mind. It may be well if we do not incur the guilt of expending in the idle pursuit, the strength of those powers, which ought to have been directed to the true objects, and of vesting that precious sensibility, with which God has entrusted us for nobler uses. To all this sin and folly, the consideration of human frailty may be a powerful check. Why all this tumult and contention among beings who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is the dust? Are you troubled about the affairs of life, when perhaps tomorrow, like will be yours no longer? Do you seek perpetuity for success to make your unhappiness? Remember that soon "success and miscarriage will be to you empty sounds." You are treading on the brink of eternity, and are you still cast a cold look on the tumults and struggles of the world?

The solemnity of the uncertainty and frailty of the world may teach us the importance of cultivating good affections, and of cherishing the tender sympathies of life. Society is the condition, in which our Maker has placed us. We have sorrows that may be alleviated, and apprehensions that may be alleviated, by the intercourse of friendship. There is nothing for the exercise of the best feelings of the heart, as we pass through the various disciplines of life, and experience its suffering or enjoyment. We lose much of our sorrow, when we are confident that others know it, and feel for us; and the solemnity
of the generous mind is made more hearty and
uplifted by participation with others. The pride of
self-sufficiency may, for a moment, persuade
some, that they see not the helms of society; but
life cannot be passed without discovering the er-
rors. The coldness of winter is round this heart,
who has no sentiment of an interest reaching
beyond himself, and interwoven with the views
and interests of others. If then connection with
fellow beings is desirable and necessary, we must
not let it be met by constraint, but the union
of kindness and charity. In endeavouring to make
such the habitual temper of our minds, we may be
much assisted by the consideration, that we cannot
live long, and that while we do live, we are forced
and obliged to say, "God be merciful to us sinners," and we
shall find it heavy work to answer for our own
errors and follies, without scrutinizing and con-
sciences and follies, without scrutinizing and con-
ing those of others. Is the path of life rough and
treacherous? Who, then, would increase the pain
of the journey, by the bitterness of contention in the
vanities of animosity? Are the fair brooks to
which shed around, frequently brightened and life
develop? And shall we not desire the consoling
relief of mutual sympathy and affection? Who
is he, that is ever ready to learn the accusing
on his brother, that knows not how grateful he
he cannot approve, and samples not to lay a rule
hand on the finest feelings of humanity? Let a
being who is sensible that he too is a child of the
dust, as well as his fellow creatures, and that he
for another hour is gone, he may be summoned
from earth, and appears a humble suppliant for
mercy at the bar of his God? None of us, how-
would willingly leave the world, with malignity or
unkindness in his heart; yet if such dispositions
have been suffered to rest there, death may overtake us
before they are banished, and they may constitute
the dress of the soul, when we make in another
world. Let us then be persuaded to have love
and charity for each other. Let us love with the
kindness of pity, even on what we believe to be
error; for errors may be innocent; and it is
not man, "who searcheth the heart, and
with the mean."
By human life is transient and full of un-
certainties, we may learn to support with cheerfulness
the trials and misfortunes which it brings.
Those complain that they are called upon to
bear with patience, when they ought to have
permitted to enjoy. It is true, the world do
not always wear a smile. We are sometimes obliged to toil and struggle against the tempest, at other times to bend to the overwhelming force of evils that cannot be resisted. Yet it is good for us to be afflicted. Even in our present state of imperfection, we can sometimes see, that troubles are our best friends, and that they make us wiser. Remember that your sufferings of affliction are but a few moments, that all the benedictions of our Heavenly Father, the scenes of earth will vanish, and the world and its strength of Christian principles secure removed. Reason and religion bid us to be vigorous, and resolve to be more than before. Besides, how much more moderate and abated by success, or intoxicated by failure or by affliction? Both of prosperity never interrupted might become more painful to the mind, as constant sunshine is more trying to the eye. How safe, whatever we suppose might have been the case, the fact must be allowed, that we are at present in a state of equipoise, and it is important to submit to the distracted, ecstacy of the world, and to live with patience and equanimity. Beneath this promise is, in its proper sense, fulfilled only by religion, and the conviction that suffering is the source of improvement instead of destruction. The world is meant to be the source of improvement instead of a selfish scene; and as we have no reason for action on the events of life, as well the principles of religion as the hopes of the world.
There is yet another purpose, for which we may contemplate the bravery and fidelity of life, and that is, to carry on the cause that Heaven has given us, but just time to look about and prepare. It is to be expected that we may be called to die, and that to prepare for Heaven is more difficult than to die. But we may not reason thus, for we have not only the promise of encouragement, but also the assurance of the salvation of our souls. We have the assurance of the salvation of our souls.

Men complain that life is short and full of troubles, but such we shall find it. In short, means of virtue and vice, to obey the call of pleasure, to satisfy the demand of the passions, or to indulge the caprice of restless desires.

But surely, if we have a hope or a fear that always love to man, we may contemplate the character of the Saviour, and shall we not think that he is the same? Shall we even think of him as a just and merciful Saviour, whose love is infinite? Remember, that no one has ever done anything for us!
Besides, our affections must not be allowed to rest on earth. They cannot indeed, long rest here; and if we value any one thing but what is liable to be exchanged, of vanished from us, by disaster or death, what shall fill the vacancy of a mind without an object, what shall occupy those energies of the soul, which can no longer flow in their wonted course? There are seasons, it is true, when the heart is pleased with gay hopes and flattering prospects, and all that we think of, and all that we do, has an air and freshness, which is not only satisfactory, but delightful. Even defeat and disappointment must serve only to swell the ardor of feeling, and to prompt to more animated efforts. But assuredly no man can pass through life, without being at some time, alone. But we would not forget that it is but possible, that he has that within him, which as the introduction to a scene far nobler and more glorious than the world can give:—something more serious, and that its best delights have not grown up claims a happiness that accident cannot interpolate the immortal mind. He who would rise to that death cannot destroy. We need not fear the thought of the final and disappointment of the world joys will estrange us from society, and that this passion unswerved through its treachery, must treat have a taste for the joys of heaven. We must one path of religious duty, for it is the only path to the enduring connections, which bind us to life. Where. Not a single opportunity of doing or becoming will you find a husband more tender and affecting, good may be lost. We should press to touch the horn of Christ's covenant, for surely the track of one man, or certainly we never shall have God. But

"Read, June 17th, 1813."