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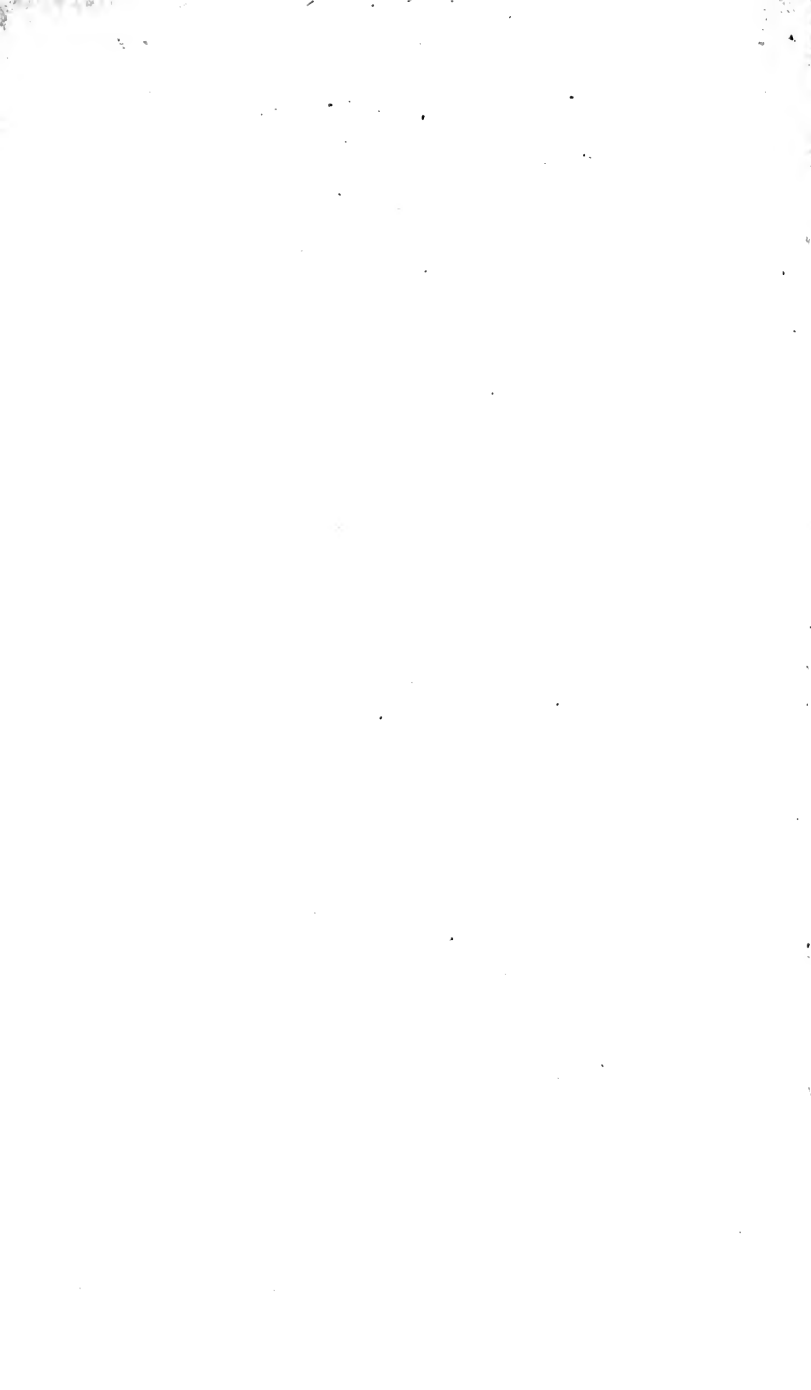
Presented by *President Patterson*

*52
1758*

Division ..

Section ..





ALCIPHRON:
OR, THE
MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.
IN
SEVEN DIALOGUES.

*Containing an APOLOGY for the Christian Religion,
against those who are called Free-thinkers.*

VOLUME *the* FIRST.

George Berkeley



*They have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them
out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. Jerem. ii. 13.
Sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti Philosophi censent, nihil sentiam, non
vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui Philosophi irrideant. Cicero.*

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. TONSON in the *Strand*. 1732.





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THE Author's Design being to consider the Free-thinker in the various Lights of Atheist, Libertine, Enthusiast, Scornor, Critic, Metaphysician, Fatalist, and Sceptic, it must not therefore be imagined, that every one of these Characters agrees with every individual Free-thinker, no more being implied, than that each Part agrees with some or other of the Sect. There may possibly be a Reader who shall think the Character of Atheist agrees with none: But though it hath been often said, there is no such thing as a Speculative Atheist; yet we must allow, there are several Atheists who pretend to Speculation. This the Author knows to be true; and is well assured, that one of the most noted Writers against Christianity in our Times, declared, he had found out a Demonstration against the Being

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of a God. And he doubts not, whoever will be at the pains to inform himself, by a general Conversation, as well as Books, of the Principles and Tenets of our modern Free-thinkers, will see too much Cause to be persuaded that nothing in the ensuing Characters is beyond the Life.

As the Author hath not confined himself to write against Books alone, so he thinks it necessary to make this Declaration. It must not therefore be thought, that Authors are misrepresented, if every Notion of *Alciphron* or *Lysicles* is not found precisely in them. A Gentleman, in private Conference, may be supposed to speak plainer than others write, to improve on their Hints, and draw Conclusions from their Principles.

Whatever they pretend, it is the Author's Opinion, that all those who write either explicitly or by Insinuation against the Dignity, Freedom, and Immortality of the Humane Soul,
may

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may so far forth be justly said to unhinge the Principles of Morality, and destroy the Means of making Men reasonably virtuous. Much is to be apprehended from that Quarter against the Interests of Virtue. Whether the Apprehension of a certain admired Writer*, that the Cause of Virtue is likely to suffer less from its witty Antagonists, than from its tender Nurses, who are apt to overlay it, and kill it with Excess of Care and Cherishing, and make it a mercenary thing by talking so much of its Rewards: whether, I say, this Apprehension be so well founded? the Reader may determine.

As for the Treatise concerning VISION, why the Author annexed it to the MINUTE PHILOSOPHER, will appear upon Perusal of the Fourth Dialogue.

* *Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour,*
Part. II. Sect. 3.



E R R A T A.

- Page 47. l. 15. *after Divinity place a Comma*
 Page 59. l. 5. *for act read acts*
 Page 89. l. 10. *for Mo read No*
 Page 90. l. 13. *for or read for*
 Page 93. l. 23. *for would read should*
 Page 103. l. 19. *for you do read do you*
 Ibid. l. 23. *for Distinct read Instinct*
 Page 140. l. 27. *for that is read that it is*
 Page 141. l. 26. *for confider read considereth*
 Page 174. l. 14. *for it is read is it*
 Page 175. l. 3. *for be related read be so related*
 Page 232. l. 9. *for found read founded*
 Page 265. l. 2. *for this read the*
 Page 281. l. 27. *for lines read lives*
 Page 296. l. 20. *dele is*
 Page 328. l. 17. *for augmentation read argumentation.*
 Page 334. l. 3. *after XXIX. place CRI.*

N. B. Page 191. l. 8. after CRI. what follows is to be inserted.

It is true, the main Scope of all his Writings (as he himself tells us) was to assert the Reality of a Beauty and Charm in moral as well as in natural Subjects: to demonstrate a Taste, which he thinks more effectual than Principle: to recommend Morals on the same Foot with Manners: and so to advance Philosophy on the very Foundation of what is called agreeable and polite. As for Religious Qualms, the Belief of a future State of Rewards and Punishments, and such Matters, this great Man sticks not to declare, that the liberal, polished, and refined Part of Mankind must needs consider them only as Children's Tales and Amusements of the Vulgar. For the sake therefore of the better Sort he hath, in great Goodness and Wisdom, thought of something else, to wit, a Taste or Relish: this he assures us, is at last what will influence: Since according to him whoever has any Impression of Gentility (as he calls it) or Politeness, is so acquainted with the Decorum and Grace of things, as to be readily transported with the Contemplation thereof*.

* See *Characteristics*, Vol. III. *Miscel.* 5. cap. 3. and *Miscel.* 3. cap. 2.



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THE

DIAL. *tions to be esteemed natural. XV. Truth*
 I. *the same, notwithstanding Diversity of*
 ~~~~~ *Opinions. XVI. Rule and Measure of*  
*moral Truths.*

I.  Flattered my self, *Theages*, that before this time I might have been able to have sent you an agreeable Account of the Success of the Affair, which brought me into this remote Corner of the Country. But instead of this, I shou'd now give you the Detail of its Miscarriage, if I did not rather choose to entertain you with some amusing Incidents, which have helped to make me easy under a Circumstance I cou'd neither obviate nor foresee. Events are not in our power ; but it always is, to make a good use even of the very worst. And I must needs own, the Course and Event of this Affair gave opportunity for Reflections, that make me some amends for a great loss of Time, Pains, and Expence. A Life of Action, which takes its Issue from the Counsels, Passions, and Views of other Men, if it doth not draw a Man to imitate, will at least teach him to observe. And a Mind at liberty to reflect on its own Observations, if it produce nothing useful to the World, seldom fails of Entertainment


tertainment to it self. For several Months DIAL.  
 past I have enjoy'd such Liberty and Lei- I.  
 sure in this distant Retreat, far beyond the }  
 Verge of that great Whirlpool of Business,  
 Faction, and Pleasure, which is called  
*the World*. And a Retreat in it self a-  
 greeable, after a long Scene of Trouble  
 and Disquiet, was made much more so by  
 the Conversation and good Qualities of  
 my Host *Euphranor*, who unites in his  
 own Person the Philosopher and the Far-  
 mer: two Characters not so inconsistent in  
 Nature as by Custom they seem to be.  
*Euphranor*, from the time he left the Uni-  
 versity, hath liv'd in this small Town;  
 where he is possessed of a convenient  
 House with a Hundred Acres of Land ad-  
 joining to it; which being improved by  
 his own Labour, yield him a plentiful  
 Subsistence. He hath a good Collection,  
 chiefly of old Books, left him by a Cler-  
 gyman his Uncle, under whose Care he  
 was brought up. And the Business of his  
 Farm doth not hinder him from making  
 good use of it. He hath read much, and  
 thought more; his Health and Strength of  
 Body enabling him the better to bear Fa-  
 tigue of Mind. He is of opinion that he  
 cou'd not carry on his Studies with more  
 Advantage in the Closet than in the Field,  
 where his Mind is seldom idle while he

DIAL. prunes the Trees, follows the Plough, or  
 I. looks after his Flocks. In the House of  
 this honest Friend I became acquainted  
 with *Crito*, a neighbouring Gentleman of  
 distinguished Merit and Estate, who lives  
 in great Friendship with *Euphranor*. Last  
 Summer, *Crito*, whose Parish-Church is  
 in our Town, dining on a Sunday at *Eu-*  
*phranor's*, I happened to inquire after his  
 Guests, whom we had seen at Church with  
 him the Sunday before. They are both  
 well, said *Crito*, but, having once occa-  
 sionally conformed, to see what sort of  
 Assembly our Parish cou'd afford, they had  
 no farther Curiosity to gratify at Church,  
 and so chose to stay at home. How, said  
*Euphranor*, are they then Dissenters? No,  
 replied *Crito*, they are Free-thinkers. *Eu-*  
*phranor*, who had never met with any of  
 this Species or Sect of Men, and but little  
 of their Writings, shew'd a great Desire  
 to know their Principles or System. That  
 is more, said *Crito*, than I will under-  
 take to tell you. Their Writers are of  
 different Opinions. Some go farther, and  
 explain themselves more freely than others.  
 But the current general Notions of the  
 Sect are best learned from Conversation  
 with those who profess themselves of it.  
 Your Curiosity may now be satisfy'd, if  
 you and *Dion* wou'd spend a Week at my  
 House

House with these Gentlemen, who seem D I A L.  
 very ready to declare and propagate their I.  
 Opinions. *Alcipbron* is above Forty, and }  
 no Stranger either to Men or Books. I  
 knew him first at the Temple, which, up-  
 on an Estate's falling to him, he quitted,  
 to travel through the polite parts of *Eu-*  
*rope*. Since his Return he hath lived in  
 the Amusements of the Town, which be-  
 ing grown stale and tasteless to his Palate,  
 have flung him into a sort of splenetic  
 Indolence. The young Gentleman, *Ly-*  
*sicles*, is a near Kinsman of mine, one of  
 lively Parts, and a general Insight into  
 Letters; who, after having passed the  
 Forms of Education, and seen a little of  
 the World, fell into an Intimacy with  
 Men of Pleasure, and Free-thinkers, I am  
 afraid much to the damage of his Consti-  
 tution and his Fortune. But what I most  
 regret, is the Corruption of his Mind by  
 a Set of pernicious Principles, which, ha-  
 ving been observed to survive the Pas-  
 sions of Youth, forestal even the remote  
 Hopes of Amendment. They are both  
 Men of Fashion, and wou'd be agreeable  
 enough, if they did not fancy themselves  
 Free-thinkers. But this, to speak the Truth,  
 has given them a certain Air and Manner,  
 which a little too visibly declare they think  
 themselves wiser than the rest of the World.

DIAL. I shou'd therefore be not at all displeas'd  
 I. if my Guests met with their Match,  
 where they least expected it, in a Country  
 Farmer. I shall not, replied *Euphranor*,  
 pretend to any more than barely to inform  
 my self of their Principles and Opinions.  
 For this end I propose to-morrow to set a  
 Week's Task to my Labourers, and ac-  
 cept your Invitation, if *Dion* thinks good.  
 To which I gave consent. Mean while,  
 said *Crito*, I shall prepare my Guests, and  
 let them know that an honest Neighbour  
 hath a mind to discourse them on the Sub-  
 ject of their Free-thinking. And, if I am  
 not mistaken, they will please themselves  
 with the Prospect of leaving a Convert  
 behind them, even in a Country-Village.  
 Next Morning *Euphranor* rose early, and  
 spent the Forenoon in ordering his Af-  
 fairs. After Dinner we took our Walk  
 to *Crito's*, which lay through half a do-  
 zen pleasant Fields planted round with  
 Plane-trees, that are very common in this  
 part of the Country. We walked under  
 the delicious Shade of these Trees for  
 about an Hour before we came to *Crito's*  
 House, which stands in the middle of a  
 small Park, beautify'd with two fine  
 Groves of Oak and Walnut, and a wind-  
 ing Stream of sweet and clear Water. We  
 met a Servant at the Door with a small  
 Bas-



Basket of Fruit which he was carrying DIAL.  
 into a Grove, where he said his Master I.  
 was with the two Strangers. We found   
 them all three sitting under a Shade. And  
 after the usual Forms at first meeting, *Euphranor* and I sat down by them. Our  
 Conversation began upon the Beauty of  
 this rural Scene, the fine Season of the  
 Year, and some late Improvements which  
 had been made in the adjacent Country  
 by new Methods of Agriculture. Whence  
*Alciphron* took occasion to observe, That  
 the most valuable Improvements came la-  
 test. I should have small Temptation,  
 said he, to live where Men have neither  
 polished Manners, nor improved Minds,  
 though the Face of the Country were ever  
 so well improved. But I have long ob-  
 served, that there is a gradual Progress in  
 humane Affairs. The first Care of Man-  
 kind is to supply the Cravings of Nature :  
 in the next place they study the Conve-  
 niencies and Comforts of Life. But the  
 subduing Prejudices, and acquiring true  
 Knowledge, that *Herculean* Labour is the  
 last, being what demands the most perfect  
 Abilities, and to which all other Advan-  
 tages are preparative. Right, said *Euphra-  
 nor*, *Alciphron* hath touched our true Defect.  
 It was always my Opinion, That as soon  
 as we had provided Subsistence for the Bo-

DIAL. dy, our next Care should be to improve  
 I. the Mind. But the Desire of Wealth steps  
 between and engrosseth Mens Thoughts.

II. *ALC.* Thought is that which we are told distinguisheth Man from Beast: and Freedom of Thought makes as great a difference between Man and Man. It is to the noble Asserters of this Privilege and Perfection of Humane kind, the Free-thinkers I mean, who have sprung up and multiplied of late Years, that we are indebted for all those important Discoveries, that Ocean of Light which hath broke in and made its way, in spite of Slavery and Superstition. *Euphranor*, who is a sincere Enemy to both, testified a great Esteem for those Worthies who had preserved their Country from being ruined by them, having spread so much Light and Knowledge over the Land. He added, That he liked the Name and Character of a Free-thinker: but in his Sense of the Word, every honest Inquirer after Truth in any Age or Country was intitled to it. He therefore desired to know what this Sect was that *Alciphron* had spoken of as newly sprung up? what were their Tenets? what were their Discoveries? and wherein they employ'd themselves, for the benefit of Mankind? Of all which, he  
 shou'd

shou'd think himself obliged, if *Alciphron* DIAL. would inform him. That I shall, very I. easily, replied *Alciphron*, for I profess myself one of the number, and my most intimate Friends are some of the most considerable among them. And perceiving that *Euphranor* heard him with Respect, he proceeded very fluently. You must know, said he, that the Mind of Man may be fitly compared to a piece of Land. What stubbing, plowing, digging, and harrowing, is to the one; that thinking, reflecting, examining, is to the other. Each hath its proper Culture; and as Land that is suffered to lie waste and wild for a long Tract of Time, will be overspread with Brush-Wood, Brambles, Thorns, and such Vegetables which have neither Use nor Beauty; even so there will not fail to sprout up in a neglected uncultivated Mind, a great number of Prejudices and absurd Opinions, which owe their Origin partly to the Soil it self, the Passions and Imperfections of the Mind of Man; and partly to those Seeds which chance to be scattered in it by every Wind of Doctrine, which the Cunning of Statesmen, the Singularity of Pedants, the Superstition of Fools, or the Imposture of Priests, shall raise. Represent to your self the Mind of Man, or Humane Nature in general, that  
for

DIAL. for so many Ages had lain obnoxious to  
 I. the Frauds of designing, and the Follies of  
 weak Men: How it must be over-run  
 with Prejudices and Errors: what firm  
 and deep Roots they must have taken: and  
 consequently how difficult a Task it must  
 be to extirpate them: And yet this Work,  
 no less difficult than glorious, is the Em-  
 ployment of the modern Free-thinkers.  
*Alciphron* having said this, made a Pause,  
 and looked round on the Company. Truly,  
 said I, a very laudable Undertaking! We  
 think, said *Euphranor*, that it is praise-  
 worthy to clear and subdue the Earth, to  
 tame brute Animals, to fashion the Out-  
 sides of Men, provide Sustenance for their  
 Bodies, and cure their Maladies. But what  
 is all this in comparison of that most ex-  
 cellent and useful Undertaking; to free  
 Mankind from their Errors, and to im-  
 prove and adorn their Minds? For things  
 of less Merit towards the World, Altars  
 have been raised, and Temples built in  
 ancient Times. Too many in our Days,  
 replied *Alciphron*, are such Fools as not  
 to know their best Benefactors from their  
 worst Enemies: They have a blind Re-  
 spect for those who enslave them; and  
 look upon their Deliverers as a dangerous  
 Sort of Men, that wou'd undermine re-  
 ceived Principles and Opinions. *EUPH.*

It

It were a great pity such worthy ingenious DIAL.  
 Men shou'd meet with any Discourage- I.  
 ment. For my part, I shou'd think a Man, }  
 who spent his Time in such a painful im-  
 partial Search after Truth, a better Friend  
 to Mankind than the greatest Statesman  
 or Hero; the Advantage of whose Labours  
 is confined to a little Part of the World,  
 and a short Space of Time; whereas a  
 Ray of Truth may enlighten the whole  
 World, and extend to future Ages. *ALC.*  
 It will be some time, I fear, before the  
 common Herd think as you do. But the  
 better Sort, the Men of Parts and polite  
 Education, pay a due Regard to the Pa-  
 trons of Light and Truth.

III. *EUPH.* The Clergy, no doubt, are  
 on all Occasions ready to forward and ap-  
 plaud your worthy Endeavours. Upon hear-  
 ing this, *Lyficles* cou'd hardly refrain from  
 Laughing. And *Alciphron*, with an Air of  
 Pity, told *Euphranor*, that he perceived he  
 was unacquainted with the real Character  
 of those Men: For, saith he, you must  
 know, that of all Men living they are our  
 greatest Enemies. If it were possible,  
 they wou'd extinguish the very Light of  
 Nature, turn the World into a Dungeon,  
 and keep Mankind for ever in Chains and  
 Darknes. *EUPH.* I never imagined any  
 thing

DIAL. thing like this of our Protestant Clergy, particularly those of the established Church; whom, if I may be allowed to judge by what I have seen of them and their Writings, I shou'd have thought Lovers of Learning and useful Knowledge.

*ALC.* Take my Word for it, Priests of all Religions are the same: wherever there are Priests, there will be Priestcraft: and wherever there is Priestcraft, there will be a persecuting Spirit, which they never fail to exert to the utmost of their Power against all those who have the Courage to think for themselves, and will not submit to be hoodwinked and manacled by their reverend Leaders. Those great Masters of Pedantry and Jargon have coined several Systems, which are all equally true, and of equal Importance to the World. The contending Sects are each alike fond of their own, and alike prone to discharge their Fury upon all who dissent from them. Cruelty and Ambition being the darling Vices of Priests and Churchmen all the World over, they endeavour in all Countries to get an Ascendant over the rest of Mankind; and the Magistrate having a joint Interest with the Priest in subduing, amusing, and scaring the People, too often lends a hand to the Hierarchy; who never think their Authority and Possessions secure, so long as those

who differ from them in opinion are allowed to partake even in the common Rights belonging to their Birth or Species. To represent the matter in a true figure to your selves a Monstre or Spectre made up of Superstition and Enthusiasm, the joint Issue of Statecraft and Priestcraft, rattling Chains in one Hand, and with the other brandishing a flaming Sword over the Land, and menacing Destruction to all who shall dare to follow the Dictates of Reason and Common Sense. Do but consider this, and then say if there was not Danger as well as Difficulty in our Undertaking. Yet, such is the generous Ardour that Truth inspires, our Free-thinkers are neither overcome by the one, nor daunted by the other. In spite of both we have already made so many Profelytes among the better Sort, and their Numbers increase so fast, that we hope we shall be able to carry all before us, beat down the Bulwarks of all Tyranny, Secular or Ecclesiastical, break the Fetters and Chains of our Countrymen, and restore the original inherent Rights, Liberties, and Prerogatives of Mankind. *Euphranor* heard this Discourse with his Mouth open and his Eyes fixed upon *Alciphron*, who, having uttered it with no small Emotion, stopt to draw Breath and recover himself:

But


DIAL.  
I.



DIAL. But finding that no body made answer,  
 I. he refum'd the Thread of his Discourfe,  
 and turning to *Euphranor* fpoke in a lower  
 Note what follows. The more innocent  
 and honeft a Man is, the more liable is  
 he to be impos'd on by the fpecious Pre-  
 tences of other Men. You have probably  
 met with certain Writings of our Divines  
 that treat of Grace, Vertue, Goodnefs, and  
 fuch matters, fit to amufe and deceive a  
 fimple honeft Mind. But believe me when  
 I tell you they are all at bottom (however  
 they may gild their Defigns) united by one  
 common Principle in the fame Intereft. I  
 will not deny there may be here and there  
 a poor half-witted Man that means no  
 mifchief: but this I will be bold to fay,  
 that all the Men of Senfe among them  
 are true at bottom to thefe three Purfuits  
 of Ambition, Avarice, and Revenge.

IV. While *Alciphron* was fpeaking, a  
 Servant came to tell him and *Lyficles*, that  
 fome Men who were going to *London*  
 waited to receive their Orders. Where-  
 upon they both rofe and went towards  
 the Houfe. They were no fooner gone,  
 but *Euphranor* addreffing himfelf to *Crito*  
 faid, he believed that poor Gentleman had  
 been a great Sufferer for his Free-thinking:  
 for that he feem'd to exprefs himfelf with  
 the



the Passion and Resentment natural to Men D I A L  
 who have received very bad Usage. I be- I.  
 lieve no such thing, answered *Crito*, but   
 have often observed those of his Sect run  
 into two Faults of Conversation, declaim-  
 ing and bantering, just as the tragic or the  
 comic Humour prevails. Sometimes they  
 work themselves into high Passions, and  
 are frightened at Spectres of their own  
 raising. In those Fits every Country-Cu-  
 rate passes for an Inquisitor. At other  
 times they affect a sly facetious Manner,  
 making use of Hints and Allusions, ex-  
 pressing little, insinuating much, and upon  
 the whole seeming to divert themselves  
 with the Subject and their Adversaries.  
 But if you wou'd know their Opinions,  
 you must make them speak out and keep  
 close to the Point. Persecution for Free-  
 thinking is a Topic they are apt to enlarge  
 on though without any just Cause, every  
 one being at full Liberty to think what  
 he pleases, there being no such thing in  
*England* that I know as Persecution for  
 Opinion, Sentiment, or Thought. But in  
 every Country, I suppose, some Care is  
 taken to restrain petulant Speech: and,  
 whatever Mens inward Thoughts may be,  
 to discourage an outward Contempt of  
 what the Public esteemeth Sacred. Whether  
 this Care in *England* hath of late been so  
 exces-

DIAL. excessive, as to distress the Subjects of this

I. once free and easy Government: whether  
 ~~~~~ the Free-thinkers can truly complain of  
 any Hardship upon the score of Conscience
 or Opinion: you will better be able to
 judge, when you hear from themselves an
 account of the Numbers, Progress, and
 Notions of their Sect: which I doubt not
 they will communicate fully and freely,
 provided no body present seems shocked or
 offended. For in that case it is possible
 good Manners may put them upon some
 Reserve. Oh! said *Euphranor*, I am never
 angry with any Man for his Opinion: whe-
 ther he be *Jew*, *Turk*, or *Idolater*, he may
 speak his Mind freely to me without fear
 of offending. I shou'd even be glad to hear
 what he hath to say, provided he saith it
 in an ingenuous candid Manner. Whoever
 digs in the Mine of Truth, I look on as
 my Fellow-labourer: but if, while I am
 taking true pains, he diverts himself with
 teizing me and flinging dust in mine Eyes,
 I shall soon be tired of him.

V. In the mean time *Alcipbron* and
Lysicles having dispatched what they went
 about returned to us. *Lysicles* sat down
 where he had been before. But *Alcipbron*
 stood over-against us, with his Arms folded
 across, and his Head reclined on the left
 Shoulder

Shoulder in the Posture of a Man medi-DIAL.
 rating. We fate silent not to disturb his I.
 thoughts ; and after two or three Minutes
 he uttered those Words, Oh Truth, Oh Li-
 berty ! After which he remained musing
 as before. Upon this *Euphranor* took the
 freedom to interrupt him. *Alciphron*, said
 he, it is not fair to spend your Time in
 Soliloquies. The Conversation of learned
 and knowing Men is rarely to be met with
 in this Corner, and the Opportunity you
 have put into my Hands I value too much,
 not to make the best use of it. *ALC.*
 Are you then in earnest a Votary of Truth,
 and is it possible you shou'd bear the
 liberty of a fair Inquiry ? *EUPH.* It is
 what I desire of all things. *ALC.* What!
 upon every Subject ? upon the Notions you
 first sucked in with your Milk, and which
 have been ever since nursed by Parents,
 Pastors, Tutors, religious Assemblies, Books
 of Devotion, and such Methods of pre-
 possessing Mens Minds. *EUPH.* I love
 Information upon all Subjects that come
 in my way, and especially upon those
 that are most important. *ALC.* If then
 you are in earnest, hold fair and stand
 firm, while I probe your Prejudices and
 extirpate your Principles.

Dum veteres avias tibi de pulmone revello.

DIAL. Having said thus, *Alciphron* knit his Brows
 I. and made a short Pause, after which he
 proceeded in the following manner. If
 we are at the pains to dive and penetrate
 into the bottom of things, and analyse
 Opinions into their first Principles, we
 shall find that those Opinions, which are
 thought of greatest Consequence, have the
 slightest Original, being derived either
 from the casual Customs of the Country
 where we live, or from early Instruction
 instilled into our tender Minds, before we
 are able to discern between Right and
 Wrong, True and False. The Vulgar (by
 whom I understand all those who do not
 make a free Use of their Reason) are apt to
 take these Prejudices for Things sacred and
 unquestionable, believing them to be im-
 printed on the Hearts of Men by God
 himself, or convey'd by Revelation from
 Heaven, or to carry with them so great
 Light and Evidence as must force an As-
 sent without any Inquiry or Examination.
 Thus the shallow Vulgar have their Heads
 furnished with sundry Conceits, Principles,
 and Doctrines, religious, moral, and political,
 all which they maintain with a Zeal pro-
 portionable to their want of Reason. On
 the other hand, those who duly employ
 their Faculties in the search of Truth, take
 especial care to weed out of their Minds
 and

and extirpate all such Notions or Prejudices as were planted in them, before they arrived at the free and intire use of Reason. This difficult task hath been successfully performed by our modern Free-thinkers, who have not only dissected with great Sagacity the received Systemes, and traced every established Prejudice to the Fountain-head, the true and genuine Motives of Assent: But also, having been able to embrace in one comprehensive View the several Parts and Ages of the World, they observed a wonderful variety of Customs and Rites, of Institutions Religious and Civil, of Notions and Opinions very unlike and even contrary one to another: A certain Sign they cannot all be true. And yet they are all maintained by their several Partizans with the same positive Air and warm Zeal; and if examined will be found to bottom on one and the same Foundation, the Strength of Prejudice. By the help of these Remarks and Discoveries, they have broke through the Bands of popular Custom, and having freed themselves from Imposture, do now generously lend a Hand to their Fellow-Subjects, to lead them into the same Paths of Light and Liberty. Thus, Gentlemen, I have given you a summary Account of the Views and Endeavours of those Men who

DIAL. are called Free-thinkers. If in the Course of
 I. what I have said or shall say hereafter, there
 be some things contrary to your pre-con-
 ceived Opinions, and therefore shocking
 and disagreeable, you will pardon the Free-
 dom and Plainness of a Philosopher; and
 consider that, whatever displeasure I give
 you of that kind, I do it in strict regard
 to Truth and Obedience to your own
 Commands. I am very sensible, that Eyes
 long kept in the dark, cannot bear a sud-
 den View of noon Day-light, but must be
 brought to it by degrees. It is for this
 Reason, the ingenious Gentlemen of our
 Profession are accustomed to proceed gra-
 dually, beginning with those Prejudices to
 which Men have the least Attachment,
 and thence proceeding to undermine the
 rest by slow and insensible Degrees, till
 they have demolished the whole Fabric
 of Humane Folly and Superstition. But
 the little time I can propose to spend here
 obligeth me to take a shorter course, and
 be more direct and plain than possibly
 may be thought to suit with Prudence
 and good Manners. Upon this, we as-
 sured him he was at full Liberty to speak
 his Mind of Things, Persons, and Opini-
 ons without the least Reserve. It is a
 Liberty, replied *Alciphron*, that we Free-
 thinkers are equally willing to give and
 take.

take. We love to call things by their D I A L.
 right Names, and cannot endure that I.
 Truth shou'd suffer through Complai-
 fance. Let us therefore lay it down for
 a Preliminary, that no Offence be taken
 at any thing whatsoever shall be said on
 either side. To which we all agreed.

VI. In order then, said *Alciphron*, to find out the Truth, we will suppose that I am bred up, for Instance, in the Church of *England*: When I come to maturity of Judgment, and reflect on the particular Worship and Opinions of this Church, I do not remember when or by what means they first took possession of my Mind, but there I find them from time immemorial. Then casting an Eye on the Education of Children, from whence I can make a judgment of my own, I observe they are instructed in religious Matters before they can reason about them, and consequently that all such Instruction is nothing else but filling the tender Mind of a Child with Prejudices. I do therefore reject all those Religious Notions, which I consider as the other Follies of my Childhood. I am confirmed in this way of thinking, when I look abroad into the World, where I observe Papiſts and several Sects of Dissenters, which do all

DIAL. agree in a general Profession of Belief in

I. Christ, but differ vastly one from another
 in the Particulars of Faith and Worship.
 I then enlarge my View so as to take in
Jews and *Mahometans*, between whom
 and the Christians I perceive indeed some
 small Agreement in the Belief of one God;
 but then they have each their distinct
 Laws and Revelations, for which they ex-
 press the same regard. But extending my
 view still further to Heathenish and Ido-
 latrous Nations I discover an endless Va-
 riety, not only in particular Opinions and
 Modes of Worship, but even in the very
 Notion of a Deity, wherein they widely
 differ one from another, and from all the
 forementioned Sects. Upon the whole,
 instead of Truth simple and uniform I
 perceive nothing but Discord, Opposition,
 and wild Pretensions, all springing from
 the same Source to wit the Prejudice of
 Education. From such Reasonings and
 Reflections as these, thinking Men have
 concluded that all Religions are alike false
 and fabulous. One is a Christian, ano-
 ther a Jew, a third a Mahometan, a fourth
 an Idolatrous Gentile, but all from one
 and the same Reason, because they happen
 to be bred up each in his respective Sect.
 In the same manner, therefore, as each
 of these contending Parties condemns the
 rest,

rest, so an unprejudiced stander-by will DIAL. I.
condemn and reject them all together, ob-
serving that they all draw their Origin
from the same fallacious Principle, and
are carried on by the same Artifice to an-
swer the same Ends of the Priest and the
Magistrate.

VII. *EUPH.* You hold then that the Magistrate concurs with the Priest in imposing on the People. *ALC.* I do, and so must every one who considers things in a true Light. For you must know, the Magistrate's principal Aim is to keep the People under him in awe. Now the public Eye restrains Men from open Offences against the Laws and Government. But to prevent secret Transgressions, a Magistrate finds it expedient, that Men shou'd believe there is an Eye of Providence watching over their private Actions and Designs. And, to intimidate those who might otherwise be drawn into Crimes by the Prospect of Pleasure and Profit, he gives them to understand, that whoever escapes Punishment in this Life will be sure to find it in the next; and that so heavy and lasting as infinitely to overbalance the Pleasure and Profit accruing from his Crimes. Hence, the Belief of a God, the Immortality of the Soul, and a


DIAL. future State of Rewards and Punishments

I. have been esteemed useful Engines of
 Government. And to the End that these
 notional airy Doctrines might make a sensible Impression, and be retained on the minds of Men, skilful Rulers have in the severall civilized Nations of the Earth devised Temples, Sacrifices, Churches, Rites, Ceremonies, Habits, Music, Prayer, Preaching, and the like spiritual Trumpery, whereby the Priest maketh temporal Gains, and the Magistrate findeth his Account in frightening and subduing the People. This is the Original of the Combination between Church and State, of Religion by Law established, of Rights, Immunities, and Incomes of Priests all over the World: There being no Government but would have you fear God that you may honour the King or Civil Power. And you will ever observe that politic Princes keep up a good Understanding with their Clergy, to the end that they in return, by inculcating Religion and Loyalty into the Minds of the People, may render them tame, timorous, and slavish. *Crito* and I heard this Discourse of *Alciphron* with the utmost Attention, though without any Appearance of Surprise, there being indeed nothing in it to us new or unexpected. But *Euphranor*,
 who

who had never before been present at DIAL. such Conversation, could not help shewing some Astonishment; which *Lyficles* I. observing, asked him with a lively Air, how he liked *Alciphron's* Lecture. It is, said he, the first I believe that you ever heard of the Kind, and requireth a strong Stomach to digest it. *EUPH.* I will own to you, that my Digestion is none of the quickest; but it hath sometimes, by degrees, been able to master things which at first appeared indigestible. At present I admire the free Spirit and Eloquence of *Alciphron*; but, to speak the Truth, I am rather astonished, than convinced of the Truth of his Opinions. How (said he, turning to *Alciphron*) is it then possible you shou'd not believe the Being of a God? *ALC.* To be plain with you, I do not.

VIII. But this is what I foresaw, a Flood of Light let in at once upon the Mind being apt to dazzle and disorder rather than enlighten it. Was I not pinched in Time, the regular way would be to have begun with the Circumstantials of Religion, next to have attacked the Mysteries of Christianity, after that proceeded to the practical Doctrines, and in the last place to have extirpated that
which

DIAL. which of all other religious Prejudices,
 I. being the first taught, and Basis of the
 rest, hath taken the deepest Root in our
 Minds, I mean, the Belief of a God. I
 do not wonder it sticks with you, ha-
 ving known several very ingenious Men
 who found it difficult to free themselves
 from this Prejudice. *EUPH.* All Men
 have not the same Alacrity and Vigour in
 thinking: For my own part, I find it
 a hard Matter to keep pace with you.
ALC. To help you, I will go a little
 way back, and resume the Thread of my
 Reasoning. First I must acquaint you,
 That having applied my Mind to con-
 template the Idea of Truth, I discovered
 it to be of a stable, permanent, and uni-
 form nature; not various and changeable,
 like Modes or Fashions, and things de-
 pending on Fancy. In the next place,
 having observed several Sects, and Subdi-
 visions of Sects espousing very different
 and contrary Opinions, and yet all pro-
 fessing Christianity, I rejected those Points
 wherein they differed, retaining only that
 which was agreed to by all, and so be-
 came a *Latitudinarian*. Having after-
 wards, upon a more enlarged View of
 things, perceived that Christians, Jews,
 and Mahometans had each their different
 Systems of Faith, agreeing only in the Be-
 lief

lief of one God, I became a *Deist*. Last-DIAL.
 ly, extending my View to all the other I.
 various Nations which inhabit this Globe, 
 and finding they agreed in no one Point
 of Faith, but differed one from another,
 as well as from the forementioned Sects,
 even in the Notion of a God, in which
 there is as great Diversity as in the Me-
 thods of Worship, I thereupon became
 an *Atheist*; it being my Opinion, that a
 Man of Courage and Sense should follow
 his Argument wherever it leads him, and
 that nothing is more ridiculous than to
 be a Free-thinker by halves. I approve
 the Man who makes thorough Work, and,
 not content with lopping off the Branches,
 extirpates the very Root from which they
 sprung.

IX. Atheism therefore, that Bugbear of
 Women and Fools, is the very Top and
 Perfection of Free-thinking. It is the
 grand *Arcanum* to which a true Genius
 naturally riseth, by a certain Climax or
 Gradation of Thought, and without which
 he can never possess his Soul in absolute
 Liberty and Repose. For your thorough
 Conviction in this main Article, do but
 examine the Notion of a God with the
 same Freedom that you would other Pre-
 judices. Trace it to the Fountain-head,
 and

DIAL. and you shall not find that you had it by

I. any of your Senses, the only true Means
 of discovering what is real and substantial in Nature. You will find it lying amongst other old Lumber in some obscure Corner of the Imagination, the proper Receptacle of Visions, Fancies, and Prejudices of all Kinds: And if you are more attached to this than the rest, it is only because it is the oldest. This is all, take my Word for it, and not mine only, but that of many more the most ingenious Men of the Age, who, I can assure you, think as I do on the Subject of a Deity. Though some of them hold it proper to proceed with more Reserve in declaring to the World their Opinion in this Particular, than in most others. And it must be owned, there are still too many in *England* who retain a foolish Prejudice against the Name of Atheist. But it lessens every Day among the better sort; and when it is quite worn out, our Free-thinkers may then, (and not till then) be said to have given the finishing Stroke to Religion; it being evident that so long as the Existence of God is believed, Religion must subsist in some Shape or other. But the Root being once plucked up, the Scions which shot from it will of course wither and decay. Such
 are

are all those whimsical Notions of CON-DIAL. science, Duty, Principle, and the like, I. which fill a Man's Head with Scruples, awe him with Fears, and make him a more thorough Slave than the Horse he rides. A Man had better a thousand times be hunted by Bailiffs or Messengers than haunted by these Spectres, which embarrass and embitter all his Pleasures, creating the most real and fore Servitude upon Earth. But the Free-thinker, with a vigorous flight of Thought breaks through those airy Springes, and asserts his original Independency. Others indeed may talk, and write, and fight about Liberty, and make an outward Pretence to it, but the Free-thinker alone is truly free. *Alciphron* having ended this Discourse with an Air of Triumph, *Euphranor* spoke to him in the following manner. You make clear Work. The Gentlemen of your Profession are, it seems, admirable Weeders. You have rooted up a World of Notions, I should be glad to see what fine things you have planted in their stead. *ALC.* Have Patience, good *Euphranor*. I will shew you in the first place, That whatever was found and good we leave untouched, and encourage it to grow in the Mind of Man. And secondly, I will shew you what

DIAL. what excellent things we have planted

I. in it. You must know then, that pur-
 ~~~~~  
 suing our close and severe Scrutiny, we do at last arrive at something solid and real, in which all Mankind agree, to wit, the Appetites, Passions, and Senses: These are founded in Nature, are real, have real Objects, and are attended with real and substantial Pleasures; Food, Drink, Sleep, and the like animal Enjoyments being what all Men like and love. And if we extend our view to the other kinds of Animals, we shall find them all agree in this, that they have certain natural Appetites and Senses, in the gratifying and satisfying of which they are constantly employ'd. Now these real natural good things which include nothing of Notion or Fancy, we are so far from destroying, that we do all we can to cherish and improve them. According to us, every wise Man looks upon himself, or his own bodily Existence in this present World, as the Centre and ultimate End of all his Actions and Regards. He considers his Appetites as natural Guides directing to his proper Good, his Passions and Senses as the natural true Means of enjoying this Good. Hence he endeavours to keep his Appetites in high Relish, his Passions and Senses strong  
 and



and lively, and to provide the greatest DIAL. Quantity and Variety of real Objects suited to them, which he studieth to enjoy I. by all possible means, and in the highest Perfection imaginable. And the Man who can do this without Restraint, Remorse, or Fear, is as happy as any other Animal whatsoever, or as his Nature is capable of being. Thus I have given you a succinct View of the Principles, Discoveries, and Tenets of the select Spirits of this enlightned Age.

X. *Crito* remark'd, that *Alciphron* had spoke his Mind with great Clearness. Yes, replied *Euphranor*, we are obliged to the Gentleman for letting us at once into the Tenets of his Sect. But, if I may be allowed to speak my Mind, *Alciphron*, though in compliance with my own Request, hath given me no small Uneasiness. You need, said *Alciphron*, make no Apology for speaking freely what you think to one who professeth himself a Free-thinker. I shou'd be sorry to make one, whom I meant to oblige, uneasy. Pray let me know wherein I have offended. I am half ashamed, replied *Euphranor*, to own that I who am no great Genius have a Weakness incidental to little ones. I would say that

DIAL. I have favourite Opinions, which you represent to be Errors and Prejudices. For Instance, the Immortality of the Soul is a Notion I am fond of, as what supports the Mind with a very pleasing Prospect. And if it be an Error, I should perhaps be of *Tully's* Mind, who in that Case professed he should be sorry to know the Truth, acknowledging no sort of Obligation to certain Philosophers in his Days, who taught, the Soul of Man was mortal. They were, it seems, Predecessors to those who are now called Free-thinkers; which Name being too general and indefinite, inasmuch as it comprehends all those who think for themselves, whether they agree in Opinion with these Gentlemen or no, it shou'd not seem amiss to assign them a specific Appellation or peculiar Name, whereby to distinguish them from other Philosophers, at least in our present Conference. For I cannot bear to argue against Free-thinking and Freethinkers.

ALC. In the Eyes of a wise Man Words are of small Moment. We do not think Truth attached to a Name. EUPH. If you please then, to avoid Confusion, let us call your Sect by the same Name that *Tully* (who understood the force of Language) bestow'd upon them. ALC. With all

all my Heart. Pray what may that Name D I A L.  
 be? *EUPH.* Why, he calls them *Minute Philosophers*. Right, said *Crito*, the I.  
 modern Free-thinkers are the very same with those *Cicero* called Minute Philosophers, which Name admirably suits them, they being a sort of Sect which diminish all the most valuable things, the Thoughts, Views, and Hopes of Men; all the Knowledge, Notions, and Theories of the Mind they reduce to Sense; Humane Nature they contract and degrade to the narrow low Standard of Animal Life, and assign us only a small Pittance of Time instead of Immortality. *Alciphron* very gravely remarked, That the Gentlemen of his Sect had done no Injury to Man; and that if he be a little, shortlived, contemptible Animal, it was not their saying it made him so: And they were no more to blame for whatever Defects they discover, than a faithful Glafs for making the Wrinkles which it only shews. As to what you observe, said he, of those we now call Free-thinkers, having been anciently termed *Minute Philosophers*, it is my opinion this Appellation might be derived from their considering things minutely, and not swallowing them in the gross, as other Men are used to do. Besides, we  
 D all

DIAL. all know the best Eyes are necessary to

I. discern the minutest Objects: It seems  
 therefore, that Minute Philosophers might  
 have been so called from their distinguished  
 Perspicacity. *EUPH.* O *Alci-  
 phron!* these Minute Philosophers (since  
 that is their true Name) are a sort of  
 Pirates who plunder all that come in  
 their way. I consider my self as a Man  
 left stript and desolate on a bleak Beach.


XI. But who are these profound and  
 learned Men that of late Years have de-  
 molished the whole Fabric, which Law-  
 givers, Philosophers, and Divines, had been  
 erecting for so many Ages? *Lyficles* hear-  
 ing these Words, smiled, and said he be-  
 lieved *Euphranor* had figured to himself  
 Philosophers in square Caps and long  
 Gowns; but, thanks to these happy  
 Times, the Reign of Pedantry was over.  
 Our Philosophers, said he, are of a very  
 different Kind from those aukward Stu-  
 dents, who think to come at Knowledge  
 by poring on dead Languages, and old  
 Authors, or by sequestering themselves  
 from the Cares of the World to meditate  
 in Solitude and Retirement. They  
 are the best bred Men of the Age, Men  
 who know the World, Men of Pleasure,  
 Men of Fashion, and fine Gentlemen.

*EUPH.*

*EUPH.* I have some small Notion of DIAL.  
 the People you mention, but shou'd never  
 have taken them for Philosophers. I.

*CRI.* Nor would any one else till of  
 late. The World it seems was long un-  
 der a Mistake about the way to Know-  
 ledge, thinking it lay through a tedious  
 Course of Academical Education and  
 Study. But among the Discoveries of the  
 present Age, one of the principal is, the  
 finding out that such a Method doth ra-  
 ther retard and obstruct, than promote  
 Knowledge. *ALC.* Academical Study  
 may be compris'd in two Points, Read-  
 ing and Meditation. Their Reading is  
 chiefly employ'd on ancient Authors in  
 dead Languages: so that a great Part of  
 their Time is spent in learning Words;  
 which, when they have mastered with  
 infinite pains, what do they get by it  
 but old and obsolete Notions, that are  
 now quite exploded and out of use?  
 Then, as to their Meditations, what can  
 they possibly be good for? He that  
 wants the proper Materials of Thought,  
 may think and meditate for ever to no  
 purpose: Those Cobwebs spun by Scho-  
 lars out of their own Brains being alike  
 unserviceable, either for Use or Orna-  
 ment. Proper Ideas or Materials are on-  
 ly to be got by frequenting good Com-

DIAL. pany. I know several Gentlemen, who,  
 I. since their Appearance in the World, have  
 spent as much time in rubbing off the  
 Rust and Pedantry of a College-Education, as they had done before in acquiring it. *LYS.* I'll undertake, a Lad of Fourteen, bred in the modern way, shall make a better Figure, and be more considered in any Drawing-Room or Assembly of polite People, than one of Four-and-twenty, who hath lain by a long time at School and College. He shall say better things, in a better manner, and be more liked by good Judges. *EUPH.* Where doth he pick up all this Improvement? *CRI.* Where our grave Ancestors wou'd never have look'd for it, in a Drawing-Room, a Coffee-House, a Chocolate-House, at the Tavern, or Groom-Porter's. In these and the like fashionable Places of Resort, it is the Custom for polite Persons to speak freely on all Subjects, religious, moral, or political. So that a young Gentleman who frequents them is in the way of hearing many instructive Lectures, seasoned with Wit and Raillery, and uttered with Spirit. Three or four Sentences from a Man of Quality spoke with a good Air, make more Impression, and convey more Knowledge, than a dozen  
 Disser-

Differtations in a dry Academical way. DIAL.  
*EUPH.* There is then no Method I.  
 or Course of Studies in those Places. 

*LYS.* None but an easy free Conversation, which takes in every thing that offers, without any Rule or Design. *EUPH.* I always thought that some Order was necessary to attain any useful degree of Knowledge; that Haste and Confusion begat a conceited Ignorance; that to make our Advances sure, they shou'd be gradual, and those Points first learned which might cast a Light on what was to follow. *ALC.* So long as Learning was to be obtained only by that slow formal course of Study, few of the better sort knew much of it; but now it is grown an Amusement, our young Gentry and Nobility imbibe it insensibly amidst their Diversions, and make a considerable Progress. *EUPH.* Hence probably the great number of Minute Philosophers. *CRI.* It is to this that Sect is owing for so many ingenious Proficients of both Sexes. You may now commonly see (what no former Age ever saw) a young Lady, or a *Petit Maitre* nonplus a Divine or an old-fashioned Gentleman, who hath read many a *Greek* and *Latin* Author, and spent much Time in hard methodical Study. *EUPH.* It shou'd seem then that Me-


DIAL. thod, Exactness, and Industry are a Dis-

I. advantage. Here *Alcipbron*, turning to  
*Lyficles*, said he could make the Point  
 very clear, if *Euphranor* had any Notion  
 of Painting. *EUPH.* I never saw a  
 first-rate Picture in my Life, but have a  
 tolerable Collection of Prints, and have  
 seen some good Drawings. *ALC.* You  
 know then the difference between the  
*Dutch* and the *Italian* manner. *EUPH.* I  
 have some Notion of it. *ALC.* Sup-  
 pose now a Drawing finished by the  
 nice and laborious Touches of a *Dutch*  
 Pencil, and another off-hand scratched  
 out in the free manner of a great *Ita-*  
*lian* Master. The *Dutch* Piece, which  
 hath cost so much Pains and Time, will  
 be exact indeed, but without that Force,  
 Spirit, or Grace, which appear in the  
 other, and are the Effects of an easy free  
 Pencil. Do but apply this, and the  
 Point will be clear. *EUPH.* Pray in-  
 form me, did those great *Italian* Masters  
 begin and proceed in their Art without  
 any choice of Method or Subject, and  
 always draw with the same Ease and  
 Freedom? Or did they observe some  
 Method, beginning with simple and ele-  
 mentary Parts, an Eye, a Nose, a Finger,  
 which they drew with great Pains and  
 Care, often drawing the same thing, in  
 order



order to draw it correctly, and so proceeding with Patience and Industry, till after a considerable length of Time they arrived at the free masterly manner you speak of. If this were the Case, I leave you to make the Application. *ALC.* You may dispute the Matter if you please. But a Man of Parts is one thing, and a Pedant another. Pains and Method may do for some sort of People. A Man must be a long time kindling wet Straw into a vile smothering Flame, but Spirits blaze out at once. *EUPH.* The Minute Philosophers have, it seems, better Parts than other Men, which qualifies them for a different Education. *ALC.* Tell me, *Euphranor*, what is it that gives one Man a better Mien than another; more Politeness in Dress, Speech, and Motion? Nothing but frequenting good Company. By the same means Men get insensibly a delicate Taste, a refined Judgment, a certain Politeness in thinking and expressing one's self. No wonder if you Countrymen are strangers to the Advantage of polite Conversation, which constantly keeps the Mind awake and active, exercising its Faculties, and calling forth all its Strength and Spirit on a thousand different Occasions and Subjects, that never came in the way of a Book-worm in a College, no

DIAL. more than of a Ploughman. *CRI.* Hence  
 I. those lively Faculties, that Quickness of  
 { Apprehension, that Slyness of Ridicule,  
 that egregious Talent of Wit and Humour, which distinguish the Gentlemen of your Profession. *EUPH.* It should seem then that your Sect is made up of what you call fine Gentlemen. *LYS.* Not altogether, for we have among us some contemplative Spirits of a coarser Education; who, from observing the Behaviour and Proceedings of Apprentices, Watermen, Porters, and the Assemblies of Rabble in the Streets, have arrived at a profound Knowledge of Humane Nature; and made great Discoveries about the Principles, Springs, and Motives of moral Actions. These have demolished the received Systems, and done a world of good in the City. *ALC.* I tell you we have Men of all Sorts and Professions, plodding Citizens, thriving Stockjobbers, skilful Men in Business, polite Courtiers, gallant Men of the Army; but our chief Strength and Flower of the Flock are those promising young Men who have the Advantage of a modern Education. These are the growing Hopes of our Sect, by whose Credit and Influence in a few Years we expect to see those great things accomplished that we have in view. *EUPH.* I cou'd never have  
 imagined

imagined your Sect so considerable. *ALC.* DIAL. I.  
 There are in *England* many honest Folk as much in the dark about these Matters as your self. 


XII. To judge of the prevailing Opinion among People of Fashion, by what a Senator saith in the House, a Judge upon the Bench, or a Priest in the Pulpit, who all speak according to Law, that is, to the reverend Prejudices of our Forefathers, would be wrong. You should go into good Company, and mind what Men of Parts and Breeding say, those who are best heard and most admired, as well in public Places of Resort, as in private Visits. He only who hath these Opportunities, can know our real Strength, our Numbers, and the Figure that we make. *EUPH.* By your Account, there must be many Minute Philosophers among the Men of Rank and Fortune. *ALC.* Take my word for it, not a few, and they do much contribute to the spreading our Notions. For he who knows the World must observe, that Fashions constantly descend. It is therefore the right way to propagate an Opinion from the upper end. Not to say that the Patronage of such Men is an Encouragement to our Authors. *EUPH.*

DIAL. *EUPH.* It seems then you have Authors  
 I. among you. *LYS.* That we have, several, and those very great Men, who have obliged the World with many useful and profound Discoveries. *CRI. Moschon*, for instance, hath proved that Man and Beast are really of the same Nature: That consequently a Man need only indulge his Senses and Appetites to be as happy as a Brute. *Gorgias* hath gone further, demonstrating Man to be a Piece of Clock-work, or Machine; and that Thought or Reason are the same thing as the Impulse of one Ball against another. *Cimon* hath made noble use of these Discoveries, proving as clearly as any Proposition in Mathematics, That Conscience is a Whim, and Morality a Prejudice; and that a Man is no more accountable for his Actions than a Clock is for striking. *Tryphon* hath written irrefragably on the Usefulness of Vice. *Thrasenor* hath confuted the foolish Prejudice Men had against Atheism, shewing, that a Republick of Atheists might live very happily together. *Demylus* hath made a Jest of Loyalty, and convinced the World there is nothing in it: To him and another Philosopher of the same Stamp this Age is indebted for discovering, that Public Spirit is an idle Enthusiasm which  
 seizeth

feizeth only on weak Minds. It would be D I A L.  
 endless to recount the Discoveries made I.  
 by Writers of this Sect. *LYS.* But the Master-piece and finishing Stroke is a learned Anecdote of our great *Diagoras*, containing a Demonstration against the Being of God; which it is conceived the Public is not yet ripe for. But I am assured by some judicious Friends who have seen it, that it is as clear as Day-light, and will do a world of Good, at one Blow demolishing the whole System of Religion. These Discoveries are published by our Philosophers, sometimes in just Volumes, but often in Pamphlets and loose Papers for their readier Conveyance through the Kingdom. And to them must be ascribed that absolute and independent Freedom, which groweth so fast, to the Terror of all Bigots. Even the Dull and Ignorant begin to open their Eyes, and to be influenced by the Example and Authority of so many ingenious Men. *EUPH.* It shou'd seem by this Account that your Sect extend their Discoveries beyond Religion; and that Loyalty to his Prince, or Reverence for the Laws, are but mean things in the Eye of a Minute Philosopher. *LYS.* Very mean; we are too wise to think there is any thing Sacred either in King or Constitution, or indeed


DIAL. indeed in any thing else. A Man of Sense

I. may perhaps seem to pay an occasional  
 { Regard to his Prince, but this is no more  
 at bottom than what he pays to God  
 when he kneels at the Sacrament to qua-  
 lify himself for an Office. Fear God, and  
 honour the King, are a pair of slavish  
 Maxims, which had for a long time  
 cramped Humane Nature, and awed not  
 only weak Minds, but even Men of good  
 Understanding, till their Eyes, as I observ-  
 ed before, were opened by our Philoso-  
 phers. *EUPH.* Methinks I can easily  
 comprehend, that when the Fear of God  
 is quite extinguished, the Mind must be  
 very easy with respect to other Duties,  
 which become outward Pretences and For-  
 malities, from the Moment that they quit  
 their hold upon the Conscience: and Con-  
 science always supposeth the Being of a  
 God. But I still thought that *Englishmen*  
 of all Denominations (how widely soever  
 they might differ as to some particular  
 Points) agreed in the Belief of a God, and  
 of so much at least as is called Natural  
 Religion. *ALC.* I have already told you  
 my own Opinion of those Matters, and  
 what I know to be the Opinion of many  
 more. *CRI.* Probably, *Euphranor*, by  
 the Title of *Deists*, which is sometimes  
 given to Minute Philosophers, you have  
 been

been misled to imagine they believe and *DIAL.* worship a God according to the Light of *I.* Nature: but by living among them, you  may soon be convinced of the contrary. They have neither Time, nor Place, nor Form of Divine Worship: They offer neither Prayers nor Praises to God in Public: and in their private Practice shew a Contempt or Dislike even of the Duties of Natural Religion. For instance, the saying Grace before and after Meals is a plain Point of Natural Worship, and was once universally practised; but in proportion as this Sect prevailed it hath been laid aside, not only by the Minute Philosophers themselves, who would be infinitely ashamed of such a Weakness as to beg God's Blessing, or give God Thanks for their daily Food; but also by others who are afraid of being thought Fools by the Minute Philosophers. *EUPH.* Is it possible that Men, who really believe a God, should yet decline paying so easy and reasonable a Duty for fear of incurring the Contempt of Atheists? *CRI.* I tell you there are many, who believing in their Hearts the Truth of Religion, are yet afraid or ashamed to own it, lest they should forfeit their Reputation with those who have the good luck to pass for great  
Wits

DIAL. Wits and Men of Genius. *ALC.* O *Euphranor*, we must make Allowance for *Crito's* Prejudice: he is a worthy Gentleman, and means well. But doth it not look like Prejudice, to ascribe the Respect that is paid our ingenious Free-thinkers rather to good Luck than to Merit? *EUPH.* I acknowledge their Merit to be very wonderful, and that those Authors must needs be great Men who are able to prove such Paradoxes: for Example, That so knowing a Man as a Minute Philosopher should be a meer Machine, or at best no better than a Brute. *ALC.* It is a true Maxim, That a Man should think with the Learned, and speak with the Vulgar. I should be loth to place a Gentleman of Merit in such a Light, before prejudiced and ignorant Men. The Tenets of our Philosophy have this in common with many other Truths, in Metaphysics, Geometry, Astronomy, and Natural Philosophy, that vulgar Ears cannot bear them. All our Discoveries and Notions are in themselves true and certain; but they are at present known only to the better sort, and would sound strange and odd among the Vulgar. But this, it is to be hoped, will wear off with Time. *EUPH.* I do not wonder that vulgar Minds should be startled at the



the Notions of your Philosophy. *CRI. DIAL.*  
 Truly a very curious sort of Philosophy, I.  
 and much to be admired! 

XIII. The profound Thinkers of this Way have taken a direct contrary Course to all the great Philosophers of former Ages, who made it their Endeavour to raise and refine Humane Kind, and remove it as far as possible from the Brute; to moderate and subdue Mens Appetites; to remind them of the Dignity of their Nature; to awaken and improve their superior Faculties, and direct them to the noblest Objects; to possess Mens Minds with a high Sense of the Divinity of the supreme Good, and the Immortality of the Soul. They took great pains to strengthen the Obligations to Virtue; and upon all those Subjects have wrought out noble Theories, and treated with singular Force of Reason. But it seems our Minute Philosophers act the reverse of all other wise and thinking Men; it being their End and Aim to erase the Principles of all that is great and good from the Mind of Man, to unhinge all Order of civil Life, to undermine the Foundations of Morality, and, instead of improving and ennobling our Natures, to bring us down to the Maxims and way of thinking  
 of

DIAL. of the most uneducated and barbarous

I. Nations; and even to degrade Humane Kind to a level with brute Beasts. And all the while they would pass upon the World for Men of deep Knowledge. But in effect, what is all this negative Knowledge better than downright savage Ignorance? That there is no Providence, no Spirit, no future State, no moral Duty: truly a fine System for an honest Man to own, or an ingenious Man to value himself upon! *Alciphron*, who heard this Discourse with some Uneasiness, very gravely replied. Disputes are not to be decided by the Weight of Authority, but by the Force of Reason. You may pass, indeed, general Reflexions on our Notions, and call them brutal and barbarous if you please: But it is such Brutality and such Barbarism as few could have attained to, if Men of the greatest Genius had not broke the Ice; there being nothing more difficult than to get the better of Education, and conquer old Prejudices. To remove and cast off a heap of Rubbish that has been gathering upon the Soul from our very Infancy, requires great Courage, and great Strength of Faculties. Our Philosophers therefore do well deserve the Name of *Esprits forts*, *Men of strong Heads*, *Free-thinkers*, and such like

Appel-

Appellations, betokening great Force and Liberty of Mind. It is very possible, the Heroic Labours of these Men may be represented (for what is not capable of Misrepresentation?) as a piratical plundering and stripping the Mind of its Wealth and Ornaments; when it is in truth the divesting it only of its Prejudices, and reducing it to its untainted original State of Nature. Oh Nature! the genuine Beauty of pure Nature! *EUPH.* You seem very much taken with the Beauty of Nature. Be pleased to tell me, *Alciphron*, what those things are which you esteem natural, or by what Mark I may know them.

XIV. *ALC.* For a thing to be natural, for instance, to the Mind of Man, it must appear originally therein, it must be universally in all Men, it must be invariably the same in all Nations and Ages. These Limitations of Original, Universal, and Invariable, exclude all those Notions found in the Humane Mind, which are the Effect of Custom and Education. The Case is the same with respect to all other Species of Beings. A Cat, for Example, hath a natural Inclination to pursue a Mouse, because it agrees with the fore-mentioned Marks. But if a Cat be taught

DIAL. to play Tricks, you will not say those

I. Tricks are natural. For the same Reason, if upon a Plumbtree, Peaches and Apricots are ingrafted, no body will say they are the natural Growth of the Plumbtree.

*EUPH.* But to return to *Man*: It seems you allow those things alone to be natural to him, which shew themselves upon his first Entrance into the World; to wit, the Senses, and such Passions and Appetites as are discovered upon the first application of their respective Objects. *ALC.* That is my Opinion.

*EUPH.* Tell me, *Alciphron*, if from a young Appletree, after a certain Period of Time, there should shoot forth Leaves, Blossoms, and Apples; would you deny these things to be natural, because they did not discover and display themselves in the tender Bud? *ALC.* I would not.

*EUPH.* And suppose that in Man, after a certain Season, the Appetite of Lust, or the Faculty of Reason shall shoot forth, open, and display themselves, as Leaves and Blossoms do in a Tree; would you therefore deny them to be natural to him, because they did not appear in his original Infancy? *ALC.* I acknowledge I would not.

*EUPH.* It seems therefore, that the first Mark of a thing's being natural to the Mind was not warily laid down by you; to wit, that it should

appear

appear originally in it. *ALC.* It seems DIAL.  
 so. *EUPH.* Again, inform me, *Alciphron*, I.  
 whether you do not think it natural for  
 an Orange-plant to produce Oranges?

*ALC.* I do. *EUPH.* But plant it in  
 the North-end of *Great-Britain*, and it  
 shall with care produce, perhaps, a good  
 Sallad: in the Southern parts of the same  
 Island, it may with much Pains and Cul-  
 ture thrive and produce indifferent Fruit:  
 but in *Portugal*, or *Naples*, it will produce  
 much better, with little or no pains. Is  
 this true, or not? *ALC.* It is true.

*EUPH.* The Plant being the same in all  
 Places, doth not produce the same Fruit;  
 Sun, Soil, and Cultivation making a dif-  
 ference. *ALC.* I grant it. *EUPH.* And  
 since the Case is, you say, the same with  
 respect to all Species; why may we not  
 conclude, by a parity of Reason, that things  
 may be natural to Humane Kind, and  
 yet neither found in all Men, nor invari-  
 ably the same where they are found?

*ALC.* Hold, *Euphranor*, you must explain  
 your self further. I shall not be over hasty  
 in my Concessions. *LYS.* You are in the  
 right, *Alciphron*, to stand upon your guard.  
 I do not like these ensnaring Questions.


*EUPH.* I desire you to make no Conces-  
 sions in complaisance to me, but only to  
 tell me your Opinion upon each Particular,

DIAL. that we may understand one another, know

I. wherein we agree, and proceed jointly in finding out the Truth. But (added *Euphranor*, turning to *Crito* and me) if the Gentlemen are against a free and fair Inquiry, I shall give them no further Trouble. *ALC.* Our Opinions will stand the Test. We fear no Trial; proceed as you please. *EUPH.* It seems then that from what you have granted it should follow, Things may be natural to Men, although they do not actually shew themselves in all Men, nor in equal Perfection; there being as great difference of Culture, and every other Advantage, with respect to Humane Nature, as is to be found with respect to the vegetable Nature of Plants; to use your own Similitude. Is it so, or not? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Answer me, *Alciphron*, do not Men in all Times and Places, when they arrive at a certain Age, express their Thoughts by Speech? *ALC.* They do. *EUPH.* Should it not seem then, that Language is natural? *ALC.* It should. *EUPH.* And yet there is a great variety of Languages. *ALC.* I acknowledge there is. *EUPH.* From all this will it not follow, a thing may be natural and yet admit of Variety? *ALC.* I grant it will. *EUPH.* Should it not seem therefore to follow, that a thing may be natural

to Mankind, though it have not those Marks or Conditions assigned; though it be not original, universal and invariable? *ALC.* It should. *EUPH.* And that consequently religious Worship and civil Government may be natural to Man, notwithstanding they admit of sundry Forms and different Degrees of Perfection? *ALC.* It seems so. *EUPH.* You have granted already that Reason is natural to Mankind. *ALC.* I have. *EUPH.* Whatever therefore is agreeable to Reason is agreeable to the Nature of Man. *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Will it not follow from hence that Truth and Virtue are natural to Man? *ALC.* Whatever is reasonable I admit to be natural. *EUPH.* And as those Fruits, which grow from the most generous and mature Stock, in the choicest Soil, and with the best Culture, are most esteemed; even so ought we not to think, those sublime Truths, which are the Fruits of mature Thought, and have been rationally deduced by Men of the best and most improved Understandings, to be the choicest Productions of the rational Nature of Man? And if so, being in Fact reasonable, natural and true, they ought not to be esteemed unnatural Whims, Errors of Education, and groundless Prejudices, because they are raised, and forwarded, by manuring

DIAL. and cultivating our tender Minds : Be-

I.  cause they take early Root, and sprout forth betimes, by the Care and Diligence of our Instructors. *ALC.* Agreed, provided still they may be rationally deduced. But to take this for granted, of what Men vulgarly call the Truths of Morality and Religion, would be begging the Question.

*EUPH.* You are in the right; I do not, therefore, take for granted, that they are rationally deduced: I only suppose that, if they are, they must be allowed natural to Man, or in other Words agreeable to, and growing from, the most excellent and peculiar Part of Humane Nature.

*ALC.* I have nothing to object to this.

*EUPH.* What shall we think then of your former Assertions? That nothing is natural to Man but what may be found in all Men, in all Nations and Ages of the World: That to obtain a genuine View of Humane Nature, we must extirpate all the Effects of Education and Instruction, and regard only the Senses, Appetites, and Passions, which are to be found originally in all Mankind: That, therefore, the Notion of a God can have no Foundation in Nature, as not being originally in the Mind, nor the same in all Men. Be pleased to reconcile these Things with your late Concessions, which the Force  
of



of Truth seems to have extorted from DIAL.  
you. I.

XV. *ALC.* Tell me, *Euphranor*, whether Truth be not one and the same uniform invariable Thing: And, if so, whether the many different and inconsistent Notions which Men entertain of God and Duty be not a plain Proof there is no Truth in them. *EUPH.* That Truth is constant and uniform I freely own, and that consequently Opinions repugnant to each other cannot be true: But I think it will not hence follow they are all alike false. If among various Opinions about the same Thing, one be grounded on clear and evident Reasons; that is to be thought true, and others only so far as they consist with it. Reason is the same, and rightly applied will lead to the same Conclusions in all Times and Places. *Socrates*, two thousand Years ago, seems to have reasoned himself into the same Notion of a God, which is entertained by the Philosophers of our Days, if you will allow that Name to any who are not of your Sect. And the Remark of *Confucius*, That a Man should guard in his Youth against Lust, in Manhood against Faction, and in old Age against Covetousness, is as current Morality in *Europe* as

DIAL. in *China*. *ALC.* But still it would be a  
 I. Satisfaction if all Men thought the same  
 Way, Difference of Opinions implying  
 Uncertainty. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Alciphron*,  
 what you take to be the Cause of a Lunar  
 Eclipse. *ALC.* The Shadow of the Earth  
 interposing between the Sun and Moon.  
*EUPH.* Are you assured of this? *ALC.*  
 Undoubtedly. *EUPH.* Are all Mankind  
 agreed in this Truth? *ALC.* By no Means.  
 Ignorant and barbarous People assign dif-  
 ferent ridiculous Causes of this Appearance.  
*EUPH.* It seems then there are  
 different Opinions about the Nature of an  
 Eclipse. *ALC.* There are. *EUPH.* And  
 nevertheless one of these Opinions is  
 true. *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Diversity,  
 therefore, of Opinions about a Thing  
 doth not hinder, but that Thing may be,  
 and one of the Opinions concerning it  
 may be true. *ALC.* I acknowledge it.  
*EUPH.* It should seem, therefore, that  
 your Argument against the Belief of a God  
 from the Variety of Opinions about his  
 Nature is not conclusive. Nor do I see  
 how you can conclude against the Truth  
 of any moral or religious Tenet, from the  
 various Opinions of Men upon the same  
 Subject. Might not a Man as well argue,  
 that no historical Account of a Matter of  
 Fact can be true, when different Relations  
 are

are given of it? Or may we not as well DIAL. infer, that because the several Sects of I. Philosophy maintain different Opinions, none of them can be in the right, not even the *Minute Philosophers* themselves? During this Conversation *Lysicles* seemed uneasy, like one that wished in his Heart there was no God. *Alciphron*, said he, methinks you sit by very tamely, while *Euphranor* saps the Foundation of our Tenets. Be of good Courage, replied *Alciphron*, a skilful Gamester has been known to ruin his Adversary, by yielding him some Advantage at first. I am glad, said he, turning to *Euphranor*, that you are drawn in to argue and make your Appeals to Reason. For my part, wherever Reason leads, I shall not be afraid to follow. Know then, *Euphranor*, that I freely give up what you now contend for. I do not value the Success of a few crude Notions thrown out in a loose Discourse, any more than the *Turks* do the Loss of that vile Infantry they place in the Front of their Armies, for no other End but to waste the Powder, and blunt the Swords of their Enemies. Be assured, I have in reserve a Body of otherguess Arguments, which I am ready to produce. I will undertake to prove. ----- EUPH. O *Alciphron*! I do not doubt your Faculty of proving.  
But

DIAL. But before I put you to the Trouble of  
 I. any farther Proofs, I should be glad to  
 know whether the Notions of your Minute Philosophy are worth proving. I mean, whether they are of Use and Service to Mankind?

XVI. *ALC.* As to that, give me leave to tell you, a Thing may be useful to one Man's Views, and not to another's: But Truth is Truth whether useful or not, and must not be measured by the Convenience of this or that Man, or Party of Men. *EUPH.* But is not the general Good of Mankind to be regarded as a Rule or Measure of moral Truths, of all such Truths as direct or influence the moral Actions of Men? *ALC.* That Point is not clear to me. I know, indeed, that Legislators, and Divines, and Politicians have always alledged, That it is necessary to the welbeing of Mankind, that they should be kept in Awe by the slavish Notions of Religion and Morality. But granting all this, how will it prove these Notions to be true? Convenience is one Thing, and Truth is another. A genuine Philosopher, therefore, will overlook all Advantages, and consider only Truth it self as such. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Alciphron*, is your genuine Philosopher a wise Man,  
 or

or a Fool? *ALC.* Without Question, *DIAL.*  
 the wisest of Men. *EUPH.* Which is I.  
 to be thought the wise Man, he who  
 acts with design, or he who acts at ran-  
 dom? *ALC.* He who act with design.  
*EUPH.* Whoever acts with design, acts  
 for some End. Doth he not? *ALC.*  
 He doth. *EUPH.* And a wise Man for  
 a good End? *ALC.* True. *EUPH.* And  
 he sheweth his Wisdom, in making  
 choice of fit Means to obtain his End.  
*ALC.* I acknowledge it. *EUPH.* By  
 how much, therefore, the End proposed  
 is more excellent, and by how much fitter  
 the Means employed are to obtain it, so  
 much the wiser is the Agent to be esteem-  
 ed. *ALC.* This seems to be true. *EUPH.*  
 Can a rational Agent propose a more ex-  
 cellent End than Happiness? *ALC.* He  
 cannot. *EUPH.* Of good Things, the  
 greater Good is most excellent. *ALC.*  
 Doubtless. *EUPH.* Is not the general  
 Happiness of Mankind a greater Good,  
 than the private Happiness of one Man,  
 or of some certain Men? *ALC.* It is  
*EUPH.* Is it not, therefore, the most  
 excellent End? *ALC.* It seems so. *EUPH.*  
 Are not then those who pursue this End  
 by the properest Methods to be thought  
 the wisest Men? *ALC.* I grant they  
 are. *EUPH.* Which is a wise Man  
 governed


DIAL. governed by, wise or foolish Notions?

I *ALC.* By wise, doubtless. *EUPH.* It  
 seems then to follow, that he who pro-  
 motes the general welbeing of Mankind  
 by the proper necessary Means, is truly  
 wise, and acts upon wise Grounds. *ALC.*  
 It should seem so. *EUPH.* And is not  
 Folly of an opposite Nature to Wisdom?  
*ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Might it not there-  
 fore be inferred, that those Men are fool-  
 ish who go about to unhinge such Prin-  
 ciples as have a necessary Connexion  
 with the general Good of Mankind?  
*ALC.* Perhaps this might be granted:  
 But at the same Time I must observe,  
 that it is in my power to deny it. *EUPH.*  
 How! you will not surely deny the  
 Conclusion, when you admit the Pre-  
 mises. *ALC.* I would fain know upon  
 what Terms we argue; whether, in this  
 Progress of Question and Answer, if a  
 Man makes a Slip it be utterly irretrieva-  
 ble? For if you are on the catch to lay  
 Hold of every Advantage, without allow-  
 ing for Surprise or Inattention, I must tell  
 you this is not the Way to convince my  
 Judgment. *EUPH.* O *Alciphron!* I aim  
 not at Triumph, but at Truth. You  
 are therefore at full Liberty to unravel  
 all that hath been said, and to recover  
 or correct any Slip you have made. But  
 then

then you must distinctly point it out: DIAL.  
 otherwise it will be impossible ever to I.  
 arrive at any Conclusion. *ALC.* I agree ~  
 with you upon these Terms jointly to  
 proceed in search of Truth, for to that  
 I am sincerely devoted. In the Progress  
 of our present Inquiry I was, it seems,  
 guilty of an Oversight, in acknowledging  
 the general Happiness of Mankind to be  
 a greater Good than the particular Happiness  
 of one Man. For in Fact, the individual  
 Happiness of every Man alone  
 constitutes his own entire Good. The  
 Happiness of other Men making no part  
 of mine, is not with respect to me a  
 Good: I mean a true natural Good. It  
 cannot therefore be a reasonable End to  
 be proposed by me in Truth and Nature,  
 (for I do not speak of political Pretences)  
 since no wise Man will pursue an End  
 which doth not concern him. This is  
 the Voice of Nature. Oh Nature! thou  
 art the Fountain, Original, and Pattern of  
 all that is Good and Wise. *EUPH.* You  
 would like then to follow Nature, and  
 propose her as a Guide and Pattern for  
 your Imitation. *ALC.* Of all Things.  
*EUPH.* Whence do you gather this Re-  
 spect for Nature? *ALC.* From the Ex-  
 cellency of her Productions. *EUPH.* In  
 a Vegetable, for Instance, you say there  
 is

DIAL. is Use and Excellency, because the several  
 I. Parts of it are so connected and fitted to  
 each other, as to protect and nourish the  
 whole, make the Individual grow, and  
 propagate the Kind, and because in its  
 Fruits or Qualities it is adapted to please  
 the Sense, or contribute to the Benefit of  
 Man. *ALC.* Even so. *EUPH.* In like  
 manner, do you not infer the Excellency  
 of Animal Bodies from observing the  
 Frame and Fitness of their several Parts,  
 by which they mutually conspire to the  
 wellbeing of each other as well as of the  
 whole? Do you not also observe a natu-  
 ral Union and Consent between Animals  
 of the same Kind, and that even diffe-  
 rent Kinds of Animals have certain Qua-  
 lities and Instincts whereby they contri-  
 bute to the Exercise, Nourishment, and De-  
 light of each other? Even the inanimate  
 unorganized Elements seem to have an Ex-  
 cellence relative to each other. Where  
 was the Excellency of Water, if it did not  
 cause Herbs and Vegetables to spring from  
 the Earth, and put forth Flowers and  
 Fruits? And what would become of the  
 Beauty of the Earth, if it was not warm-  
 ed by the Sun, moistened by Water, and  
 fanned by Air? Throughout the whole  
 System of the visible and natural World,  
 do you not perceive a mutual Connexion  
 and



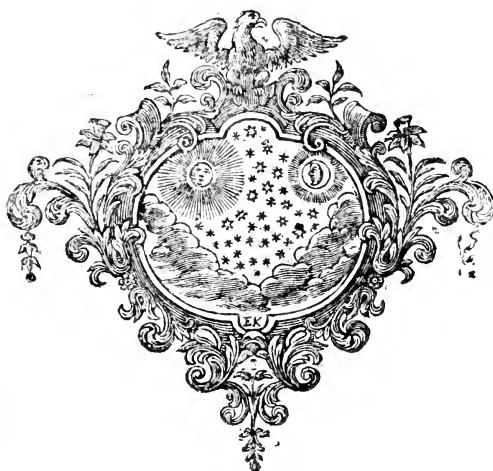
and Correspondence of Parts? And is it DIAL.  
 not from hence that you frame an Idea I.  
 of the Perfection, and Order, and Beauty  
 of Nature? *ALC.* All this I grant.   
*EUPH.* And have not the Stoics heretofore  
 said, (who were no more Bigots than you are) and did you not your self  
 say, this Pattern of Order was worthy the  
 Imitation of rational Agents? *ALC.* I do  
 not deny this to be true. *EUPH.* Ought  
 we not therefore to infer the same Union,  
 Order, and Regularity in the moral World  
 that we perceive to be in the natural?  
*ALC.* We ought. *EUPH.* Should it  
 not therefore seem to follow that rea-  
 sonable Creatures were, as the Philoso-  
 phical Emperor \* observes, made one for  
 another; and consequently that *Man* ought  
 not to consider himself as an independ-  
 ent Individual, whose Happiness is not  
 connected with that of other Men; but  
 rather as the part of a whole, to the  
 common Good of which he ought to con-  
 spire, and order his Ways and Actions  
 suitably, if he would live according to  
 Nature? *ALC.* Supposing this to be true,  
 what then? *EUPH.* Will it not follow,  
 that a wise Man should consider and pur-  
 sue his private Good, with regard to, and

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\* M. Antonin. l. 4.

**DIAL.** in conjunction with, that of other Men?  
**I.** in granting of which, you thought your  
 self guilty of an Oversight. Though, indeed, the Sympathy of Pain and Pleasure, and the mutual Affections by which Mankind are knit together, have been always allowed a plain Proof of this Point: And though it was the constant Doctrine of those, who were esteemed the wisest and most thinking Men among the Ancients, as the Platonists, Peripatetics, and Stoics: to say nothing of Christians, whom you pronounce to be an unthinking prejudiced sort of People. *ALC.* I shall not dispute this Point with you. *EUPH.* Since therefore we are so far agreed, should it not seem to follow from the Premises; That the belief of a God, of a future State, and of moral Duties, are the only wise, right, and genuine Principles of Humane Conduct, in case they have a necessary Connexion with the welbeing of Mankind? This Conclusion you have been led to by your own Concessions, and by the Analogy of Nature. *ALC.* I have been drawn into it step by step through several Preliminaries, which I cannot well call to mind; but one thing I observe, that you build on the necessary Connexion those Principles have with the welbeing of Mankind: which is a Point neither  
 proved

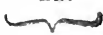
proved nor granted. *LYS.* This I take DIAL.  
to be a grand fundamental Prejudice, as I I.  
doubt not, if I had time I could make ap- }  
pear. But it is now late, and we will, if  
you think fit, defer this Subject till To-  
morrow. Upon which Motion of *Lysicles*  
we put an end to our Conversation for  
that Evening.







## THE SECOND DIALOGUE.

- I. *Vulgar Error, That Vice is hurtful.*
- II. *The Benefit of Drunkenness, Gaming, and Whoring.*
- III. *Prejudice against Vice wearing off.*
- IV. *Its Usefulness illustrated in the Instances of Callicles and Telesilla.*
- V. *The Reasoning of Lyicles in behalf of Vice examined.*
- VI. *Wrong to punish Actions when the Doctrines whence they flow are tolerated.*
- VII. *Hazardous Experiment of the Minute Philosophers.*
- VIII. *Their Doctrine of Circulation and Revolution.*
- IX. *Their Sense of a Reformation.*
- X. *Riches alone not the Public Weal.*
- IX. *Authority of Minute Philosophers: their Prejudice against Religion.*
- XII. *Effects of Luxury: Virtue, whether notional?*
- XIII. *Pleasure of Sense.*
- XIV. *What sort of Pleasure most natural to Man.*
- XV. *Dignity of Humane Nature.*
- XVI. *Pleasure mistaken.*
- XVII. *Amusements, Misery, and Cowardise of Minute Philosophers.*
- XVIII. *Rakes cannot reckon.*
- XIX. *Abilities and Success of Minute Philosophers.*
- XX. *Happy Effects of the Minute Philosophy in particular*

*icular Instances.* XXI. *Their free No-* D I A L ·  
*tions about Government.* XXII. *England* II.  
*the proper Soil for Minute Philosophy.*   
 XXIII. *The Policy and Address of its*  
*Professors.* XXIV. *Merit of Minute*  
*Philosophers towards the Public.* XXV.  
*Their Notions and Character.* XXVI.  
*Their Tendency towards Popery and*  
*Slavery.*


I.  EXT Morning, *Alciphron* and  
*Lysicles* said, the Weather was  
 so fine, they had a mind to  
 spend the Day abroad, and  
 take a cold Dinner under a Shade in some  
 pleasant Part of the Country. Where-  
 upon, after Breakfast, we went down to  
 a Beach about half a Mile off; where we  
 walked on the smooth Sand, with the  
 Ocean on one Hand, and on the other  
 wild broken Rocks, intermixed with sha-  
 dy Trees and Springs of Water, till the  
 Sun began to be uneasy. We then with-  
 drew into a hollow Glade, between two  
 Rocks, where we had no sooner seated  
 our selves, but *Lysicles*, addressing himself  
 to *Euphranor*, said: I am now ready to  
 perform what I undertook last Evening,  
 which was to shew, there is nothing in  
 that necessary Connexion which some  
 Men imagine between those Principles

DIAL. you contend for, and the public Good. I  
 II. freely own, that if this Question was to  
 be decided by the Authority of Legislators  
 or Philosophers, it must go against us.  
 For those Men generally take it for granted,  
 that Vice is pernicious to the Public;  
 and that Men cannot be kept from Vice  
 but by the Fear of God, and the Sense of  
 a future State; whence they are induced  
 to think the Belief of such Things necessary  
 to the welbeing of humane Kind. This false  
 Notion hath prevailed for many Ages in  
 the World, and done an infinite Deal of  
 Mischief, being in Truth the Cause of  
 religious Establishments, and gaining the  
 Protection and Encouragement of Laws  
 and Magistrates to the Clergy and their  
 Superstitions. Even some of the wisest  
 among the Ancients, who agreed with our  
 Sect in denying a Providence, and the  
 Immortality of the Soul, had nevertheless  
 the Weakness to lie under the common  
 Prejudice that Vice was hurtful to  
 Societies of Men. But *England* hath  
 of late produced great Philosophers  
 who have undeceived the World, and  
 proved to a Demonstration that private  
 Vices are public Benefits. This  
 Discovery was reserved to our Times,  
 and our Sect hath the Glory of it. *CRI.*  
 It is possible some Men of fine Under-  
 standing

ing might in former Ages have had a DIAL.  
 Glimpse of this important Truth : But II.  
 it may be presumed they lived in ignorant   
 Times and bigoted Countries, which  
 were not ripe for such a Discovery. *LYS.*  
 Men of narrow Capacities and short Sight,  
 being able to see no further than one Link  
 in a Chain of Consequences, are shocked  
 at small Evils which attend upon Vice.  
 But those who can enlarge their View,  
 and look thro' a long Series of Events,  
 may behold Happiness resulting from Vice,  
 and Good springing out of Evil, in a thou-  
 sand Instances. To prove my Point, I  
 shall not trouble you with Authorities, or  
 far-fetch'd Arguments, but bring you to  
 plain Matter of Fact. Do but take a  
 View of each particular Vice, and trace  
 it through its Effects and Consequences,  
 and then you will clearly perceive the Ad-  
 vantage it brings to the Public,

II. Drunkenness, for Instance, is by  
 your sober Moralists thought a pernicious  
 Vice ; but it is for Want of considering  
 the good Effects that flow from it. For,  
 in the first Place, it increases the Malt  
 Tax, a principal Branch of his Majesty's  
 Revenue, and thereby promotes the Safe-  
 ty, Strength, and Glory of the Nation.  
 Secondly, it employs a great Number of  
 F 3 Hands,

DIAL. Hands, the Brewer, the Maltster, the  
 II. Ploughman, the Dealer in Hops, the  
 ~~~~~ Smith, the Carpenter, the Brasier, the  
 Joiner, with all other Artificers necessary
 to supply those enumerated, with their
 respective Instruments and Utensils. All
 which Advantages are procured from
 Drunkenness, in the vulgar Way, by strong
 Beer. This Point is so clear it will admit
 of no Dispute. But while you are forced
 to allow thus much, I foresee you are
 ready to object against Drunkenness oc-
 casioned by Wine and Spirits, as export-
 ing Wealth into foreign Countries. But
 you do not reflect on the Number of
 Hands which even this sets on Work at
 home: The Distillers, the Vintners, the
 Merchants, the Sailors, the Shipwrights,
 with all those who are employed towards
 victualling and fitting out Ships, which,
 upon a nice Computation, will be found
 to include an incredible Variety of Trades
 and Callings. Then for freighting our
 Ships, to answer these foreign Importati-
 ons, all our Manufactures throughout the
 Kingdom are employed, the Spinners, the
 Weavers, the Dyers, the Wool-Combers,
 the Carriers, the Packers: And the same
 may be said of many other Manufactures,
 as well as the Woollen. And if it be
 further considered, how many Men are
 enrich-

enriched by all the forementioned Ways DIAL.
of Trade and Business, and the Expences II.
of these Men, and their Families, in all 
the several Articles of convenient and
fashionable Living, whereby all Sorts of
Trades and Callings, not only at home,
but throughout all Parts wherever our
Commerce reaches, are kept in Employ-
ment ; you will be amazed at the won-
derfully extended Scene of Benefits which
arise from the single Vice of Drunkenness,
so much run down and declaimed against
by all grave Reformers. With as much
Judgment your half-witted Folk are ac-
customed to censure Gaming. And in-
deed (such is the Ignorance and Folly
of Mankind) a Gamester and a Drunkard
are thought no better than public Nusan-
ces, when in truth they do each in
their Way greatly conduce to the public
Benefit. If you look only on the Sur-
face and first Appearance of Things, you
will no doubt think playing at Cards a
very idle and fruitless Occupation. But
dive deeper, and you shall perceive this
idle Amusement employs the Card-maker,
and he sets the Paper-mills at work, by
which the poor Rag-man is supported ;
not to mention the Builders and Workers
in Wood and Iron, that are employed in
erecting and furnishing those Mills. Look


DIAL. still deeper, and you shall find that Candles
 II. and Chair-hire employ the industrious and
 the poor, who, by these Means, come to
 be relieved by Sharpers and Gentlemen,
 who would not give one Penny in Charity.
 But you will say that many Gentlemen
 and Ladies are ruined by Play, without
 considering, that what one Man loses
 another gets, and that consequently as many
 are made as ruined: Money changeth
 Hands, and in this Circulation the Life
 of Business and Commerce consists. When
 Money is spent, it is all one to the Public
 who spends it. Suppose a Fool of Quality
 becomes the Dupe of a Man of mean
 Birth and Circumstance, who has more
 Wit. In this Case, what Harm doth the
 Public sustain? Poverty is relieved,
 Ingenuity is rewarded, the Money stays
 at home, and has a lively Circulation,
 the ingenious Sharper being enabled to
 set up an Equipage and spend handsomely,
 which cannot be done without employing
 a world of People. But you will perhaps
 object, that a Man reduced by Play
 may be put upon desperate Courses hurtful
 to the Public. Suppose the worst,
 and that he turns Highwayman, such
 Men have a short Life and a merry.
 While he lives, he spends, and for one
 that he robs makes Twenty the better

ter for his Expence. And when his time is come, a poor Family may be relieved by fifty or a hundred Pounds set upon his Head. A vulgar Eye looks on many a Man as an idle or mischievous Fellow, whom a true Philosopher viewing in another Light, considers as a Man of pleasant Occupation who diverts himself, and benefits the Public: And that with so much Ease, that he employs a multitude of Men, and sets an infinite Machine in Motion, without knowing the good he does, or even intending to do any; which is peculiar to that Gentleman-like way of doing good by Vice. I was considering Play, and that insensibly led me to the Advantages, which attend robbing on the highway. Oh the beautiful and never enough admired Connexion of Vices! It would take too much Time to shew how they all hang together, and what an infinite deal of good takes its rise from every one of them. One word for a favourite Vice, and I shall leave you to make out the rest your self, by applying the same way of reasoning to all other Vices. A poor Girl, who might not have the spending of half a Crown a Week in what you call an honest way, no sooner hath the good Fortune to be a kept Mistress, but she employs Milliners, Laun-

DIAL.
II.
~

DIAL. Laundresses, Tire-women, Mercers, and
 II. a Number of other Trades to the Benefit
 of her Country. It wou'd be endless to
 trace and pursue every particular Vice
 through its Consequences and Effects, and
 shew the vast Advantage they all are of to
 the Public. The true Springs that actuate
 the great Machine of Commerce, and
 make a flourishing State have been hi-
 therto little understood. Your Moralists
 and Divines have for so many ages been
 corrupting the genuine Sense of Mankind,
 and filling their Heads with such absurd
 Principles, that it is in the power of few
 Men to contemplate real Life with an
 unprejudiced Eye. And fewer still have
 sufficient Parts and Sagacity to pursue a
 long Train of Consequences, Relations, and
 Dependences; which must be done in or-
 der to form a just and intire Notion of
 the public Weal. But, as I said before,
 our Sect hath produced Men capable of
 these Discoveries, who have displayed
 them in a full Light, and made them
 public for the Benefit of their Country.

III. Oh! Said *Euphranor*, who heard
 this Discourse with great Attention, you
Lysicles are the very Man I wanted, elo-
 quent and ingenious, knowing in the
 Principles of your Sect, and willing to
 impart

impart them. Pray tell me, do these D I A L.
Principles find an easy Admiffion in the II.
World? *LYS.* They do among inge- 

nious Men and People of Fashion, though you will fometimes meet with ftrong Prejudices againft them in the middle fort, an Effect of ordinary Talents and mean Breeding. *EUPH.* I fhould wonder if

Men were not fhocked at Notions of fuch a furprifing Nature, fo contrary to all Laws, Education, and Religion. *LYS.*

They wou'd be fhocked much more if it had not been for the skilful Adrefs of our Philofophers; who, confidering that moft Men are influenced by Names rather than Things, have introduced a certain polite way of Speaking, which leffens much of the Abhorrence and Prejudice towards Vice. *EUPH.* Explain me this.

LYS. Thus in our Dialect a vicious Man is a Man of Pleafure: A Sharper is one that plays the whole Game: A Lady is faid to have an Affair: A Gentleman to be Gallant: A Rogue in Bufinefs to be one that knows the World. By this means we have no fuch things as Sots, Debauchees, Whores, Rogues, or the like in the *beau monde*, who may enjoy their Vices without incurring difagreeable Appellations. *EUPH.* Vice then is, it feems, a fine Thing with an ugly Name. *LYS.* Be affured

DIAL. assured it is. *EUPH.* It should seem then,
 II. that *Plato's* fearing lest Youth might be
 corrupted, by those Fables which represented the Gods vicious, was an Effect of his Weakness and Ignorance. *LYS.* It was, take my Word for it. *EUPH.* And yet *Plato* had kept good Company and lived in a Court. And *Cicero*, who knew the World well, had a profound Esteem for him. *CRI.* I tell you, *Euphranor*, that *Plato* and *Tully* might perhaps make a Figure in *Athens* or *Rome* : But were they to revive in our Days, they wou'd pass but for underbred Pedants, there being at most Coffee-houses in *London*, several able Men who could convince them they knew nothing in, what they are valued so much for, Morals and Politics. *LYS.* How many long-headed Men do I know both in the Court-end and the City with five times *Plato's* Sense, who care not one straw what Notion their Sons have of God or Vertue.

IV. *CRI.* I can illustrate this Doctrine of *Lyficles* by Examples that will make you perceive its Force. *Cleophon*, a Minute Philosopher, took strict Care of his Son's Education and entered him betimes in the Principles of his Sect. *Callicles* (that was his Son's Name) being a Youth
 of


of Parts made a notable Progress; info-
 much that before he became of Age he
 killed his old covetous Father with Vexa-
 tion, and soon after ruined the Estate he
 left behind him; or, in other Words,
 made a Present of it to the Public, spread-
 ing the Dunghill collected by his Ancestors
 over the Face of the Nation, and making
 out of one overgrown Estate, several
 pretty Fortunes for ingenious Men, who
 live by the Vices of the Great. *Telefilla*,
 though a Woman of Quality and Spirit,
 made no Figure in the World, till she was
 instructed by her Husband in the Tenets
 of the Minute Philosophy, which he wisely
 thought would prevent her giving any
 Thing in Charity. From that Time she
 took a Turn towards expensive Diversions,
 particularly deep Play: By which Means
 she soon transferred a considerable Share
 of his Fortune, to several acute Men skilled
 in that Mystery, who wanted it more,
 and circulate it quicker than her Husband
 would have done, who in Return hath got
 an Heir to his Estate, having never had a
 Child before. That same *Telefilla*, who
 was good for nothing as long as she be-
 lieved her Catechism, now shines in all
 public Places, is a Lady of Gallantry and
 Fashion, and has by her extravagant Pa-
 rade

DIAL.
 II.

DIAL. rade in Lace, and fine Clothes, raised a

II. Spirit of Expence in other Ladies, very much to the public Benefit, tho', it must be owned, to the Mortification of many frugal Husbands. While *Crito* related these Facts with a grave Face, I could not forbear smiling; which *Lysicles* observing, superficial Minds, said he, may perhaps find something to ridicule in these Accounts: But all who are Masters of a just Way of thinking, must needs see that those Maxims, the Benefit whereof is universal, and the Damage only particular to private Persons or Families, ought to be encouraged in a wise Commonwealth. For my part, said *Euphranor*, I confess my self to be rather dazzled and confounded than convinced by your Reasoning, which, as you observed your self, taking in the Connexion of many distant Points, requires great Extent of Thought to comprehend it. I must therefore intreat you to bear with my Defects, suffer me to take to pieces what is too big to be received at once: And where I cannot keep Pace with you, permit me to follow you Step by Step, as fast as I can. *LYS.* There is Reason in what you say. Every one cannot suddenly take a long Concatenation of Arguments.

V. EUPH.

V. *EUPH.* Your several Arguments DIAL.
 seem to centre in this, that Vice circulates II.
 Money, and promotes Industry, which 
 causeth a People to flourish. Is it not so?
LYS. It is. *EUPH.* And the Reason that
 Vice produceth this Effect, is, because it
 causeth an extravagant Consumption which
 is the most beneficial to the Manufactu-
 rers, their Encouragement consisting in a
 quick demand and high price. *LYS.* True.
EUPH. Hence you think a Drunkard
 most beneficial to the Brewer and the
 Vintner, as causing a quick Consumption
 of Liquor, inasmuch as he drinks more
 than other Men. *LYS.* Without doubt.
EUPH. Say, *Lyficles*, who drinks most, a
 sick Man or a healthy? *LYS.* A healthy.
EUPH. And which is healthiest, a sober
 Man or a Drunkard? *LYS.* A sober Man.
EUPH. A sober Man therefore in Health
 may drink more than a Drunkard when
 he is sick. *LYS.* He may. *EUPH.*
 What think you, will a Man consume
 more Meat and Drink in a long Life or a
 short one? *LYS.* In a long. *EUPH.* A
 sober healthy Man, therefore, in a long
 Life may circulate more Money by eating
 and drinking, than a Glutton or Drunk-
 ard in a short one. *LYS.* What then?
EUPH. Why then, it should seem, that
 he may be more beneficial to the Public,
 even


DIAL. even in this way of eating and drinking.

II. *LYS.* I shall never own that Temperance is the Way to promote drinking. *EUPH.* But you will own that Sickness lessens, and Death puts an End to all drinking. The same Argument will hold, for ought I can see, with respect to all other Vices that impair Mens Health, and shorten their Lives. And if we admit this, it will not be so clear a Point, that Vice hath Merit towards the Public. *LYS.* But admitting that some Artificers or Traders might be as well encouraged by the sober Men as the vicious; what shall we say of those, who subsist altogether by Vice and Vanity? *EUPH.* If such there are, may they not be otherwise employed without Loss to the Public? Tell me, *Lysicles*, is there any Thing in the Nature of Vice, as such that renders it a public Blessing, or is it only the Consumption it occasions? *LYS.* I have already shewn how it benefits the Nation by the Consumption of its Manufactures. *EUPH.* And you have granted that a long and healthy Life consumes more than a short and sickly one; and you will not deny that many consume more than one. Upon the whole then, compute and say, which is most likely to promote the Industry of his Countrymen, a virtuous married Man with a healthy


healthy numerous Offspring, and who DIAL.
 feeds and clothes the Orphans in his II.
 Neighbourhood, or a fashionable Rake a-
 bout Town. I would fain know whether
 Money spent innocently, doth not circu-
 late as well as that spent upon Vice. And
 if so, whether by your own Rule it doth
 not benefit the Public as much? *LYS.*
 What I have proved, I proved plainly,
 and there is no need of more Words about
 it. *EUPH.* You seem to me, to have
 proved nothing, unless you can make it
 out that it is impossible to spend a Fortune
 innocently. I should think the public
 Weal of a Nation consists in the Number
 and good Condition of its Inhabitants;
 Have you any thing to object to this? *LYS.*
 I think not. *EUPH.* To this end which
 would most conduce, the employing Men
 in open Air, and manly Exercise, or in
 sedentary Business within Doors? *LYS.*
 The former, I suppose. *EUPH.* Should it
 not seem therefore, that Building, Garden-
 ing, and Agriculture, would employ Men
 more usefully to the Public, than if Tai-
 lors, Barbers, Perfumers, Distillers, and
 such Arts were multiplied. *LYS.* All this
 I grant; but it makes against you. For
 what moves Men to build and plant but
 Vanity, and what is Vanity but Vice?
EUPH. But if a Man should do those
 VOL. I. G things

DIAL. things for his Convenience or Pleasure,
 II. and in proportion to his Fortune, without
 a foolish Ostentation, or over-rating them
 beyond their due Value, they would not
 then be the Effect of Vice; and how do you
 know but this may be the Case? *CRI.*
 One thing I know, That the readiest way
 to quicken that sort of Industry, and em-
 ploy Carpenters, Mafons, Smiths, and all
 such Trades, would be to put in practice
 the happy Hint of a celebrated Minute
 Philosopher; who by profound Thinking
 has discovered, That burning the City of
London would be no such bad Action, as
 silly prejudiced People might possibly
 imagine; inasmuch as it would produce a
 quick Circulation of Property, transferring
 it from the Rich to the Poor, and employ-
 ing a great Number of Artificers of all
 kinds. This at least cannot be denied, that
 it hath opened a new way of Thinking to
 our Incendiaries, of which the Public
 hath of late begun to reap the Benefit.
EUPH. I cannot sufficiently admire this
 ingenious Thought.

VI. But methinks it would be dange-
 rous to make such Notions publick. *CRI.*
 Dangerous! to whom? *EUPH.* In the
 first place, to the Publisher. *CRI.* That
 is a Mistake; for such Notions have been
 6 published


published and met with due Applause, in D I A L.
 this most wise and happy Age of Free- II.
 thinking, Free-speaking, Free-writing, and 
 Free-acting. *EUPH.* How! may a Man
 then publish and practise such things with
 Impunity? *CRI.* To speak the Truth, I
 am not so clear as to the practic Part. An
 unlucky Accident now and then befalls an
 ingenious Man. The Minute Philosopher
Magirus, being desirous to benefit the Pub-
 lic, by circulating an Estate possessed by a
 near Relation, who had not the heart to
 spend it, soon convinced himself, upon
 these Principles, that it would be a very
 worthy Action to dispatch out of the way
 such a useless Fellow, to whom he was
 next Heir. But for this laudable Attempt,
 he had the Misfortune to be hanged by an
 under-bred Judge and Jury. Could any
 thing be more unjust? *EUPH.* Why
 unjust? *CRI.* Is it not unjust to punish
 Actions, when the Principles from which
 they directly follow are tolerated and ap-
 plauded by the Public? Can any thing be
 more inconsistent, than to condemn in
 Practice what is approved in Speculation?
 Truth is one and the same; it being im-
 possible a thing should be practically
 wrong, and speculatively right. Thus
 much is certain, *Magirus* was perfect
 Master of all this Theory, and argued

DIAL. most acutely about it with a Friend of
 II. mine, a little before he did the Fact for
 which he died. *LYS.* The best on't is,
 the World every Day grows wiser; though
 it must be owned, the Writers of our Sect
 have not yet shaken off all Respect for Hu-
 mane Laws, whatever they may do as to
 Divine. It seems they venture no further,
 than to recommend an inward Principle of
 Vice, operating under an outward Restraint
 of Humane Laws. *CRI.* That Writer
 who considers Man only as an Instrument
 of Passion, who absolves him from all Ties
 of Conscience and Religion, and leaves
 him no Law to respect or to fear, but the
 Law of the Land, is to be sure a Public
 Benefit. You mistake, *Euphranor*, if you
 think the Minute Philosophers idle Theo-
 rists: They are Men of practical Views.
EUPH. As much as I love Liberty, I
 should be afraid to live among such People:
 it would be, as *Seneca* somewhere expresseth
 it, *in libertate bellis ac tyrannis scæviorē*,
LYS. What do you mean by quoting
Plato and *Seneca*? Can you imagine a Free-
 thinker is to be influenced by the Au-
 thority of such old-fashioned Writers?
EUPH. You, *Lysicles*, and your Friend
 have often quoted to me ingenious Mo-
 derns, profound fine Gentlemen, with new
 Names of Authors in the Minute Philoso-
 phy,

phy, to whose Merits I am a perfect Stran- D I A L.
ger. Suffer me in my turn to cite such Au- II.
thorities as I know, and have passed for
many Ages upon the World. 

VII. But, Authority apart, what do you say to Experience? My Observation can reach as far as a private Family: and some wise Men have thought, a Family may be considered as a small Kingdom, or a Kingdom as a great Family. Do you admit this to be true? *LYS.* If I say, *Yes*, you'll make an Inference; and if I say, *No*, you'll demand a Reason. The best way is to say nothing at all. There is, I see, no end of answering. *EUPH.* If you give up the Point you undertook to prove, there is an end at once: But if you hope to convince me, you must answer my Questions, and allow me the Liberty to argue and infer. *LYS.* Well, suppose I admit that a Kingdom may be considered as a great Family. *EUPH.* I shall ask you then, whether ever you knew private Families thrive by those Vices you think so beneficial to the Public? *LYS.* Suppose I have not. *EUPH.* Might not a Man therefore by a Parity of Reason, suspect their being of that Benefit to the Public? *LYS.* Fear not; the next Age will thrive and flourish. *EUPH.* Pray tell me, *Lysicles*: Suppose you saw a Fruit

DIAL. of a new untried Kind: would you recom-

II.  mend it to your own Family to make a full Meal of? *LYS.* I would not. *EUPH.* Why then would you try upon your own Country these Maxims which were never admitted in any other? *LYS.* The Experiment must begin somewhere; and we are resolved our own Country shall have the Honour and Advantage of it. *EUPH.* O *Lyficles!* hath not Old *England* subsisted for many Ages without the help of your Notions? *LYS.* She has. *EUPH.* And made some Figure? *LYS.* I grant it. *EUPH.* Why then should you make her run the Risque of a new Experiment, when it is certain she may do without it? *LYS.* But we would make her do better. We would produce a Change in her that never was seen in any Nation. *EUPH.* *Sallust* observes, that a little before the Downfall of the *Roman* Greatness, Avarice (the Effect of Luxury) had erased the good old Principles of Probity and Justice, had produced a Contempt for Religion, and made every thing venal: while Ambition bred Diffimulation, and caused Men to unite in Clubs and Parties, not from honourable Motives, but narrow and interested Views. The same Historian observes of that great Free-thinker *Catiline*, that he made it his business to insinuate himself

himself into the Acquaintance of young D I A L.
Men, whose Minds unimproved by Years II.
and Experience, were more easily seduced. ~


I know not how it happens, but these Passages have occurred to my Thoughts more than once during this Conversation. *LYS.* *Sallust* was a sententious Pedant. *EUPH.* But consult any Historian; look into any Writer. See, for Instance, what *Xenophon* and *Livy* say of *Sparta* and *Rome*, and then tell me, if Vice be not the likeliest way to ruin and enslave a People. *LYS.* When a Point is clear by its own Evidence, I never think it worth while to consult old Authors about it. *CRI.* It requires much Thought and delicate Observation, to go to the bottom of things. But one who hath come at Truth with Difficulty, can impart it with Ease. I will therefore, *Euphranor*, explain to you in three Words (what none of your old Writers ever dreamt of) the true Cause of Ruin to those States. You must know that Vice and Virtue, being opposite and contradictory Principles, both working at once in a State, will produce contrary Effects, which intestine Discord must needs tend to the Dissolution and Ruin of the whole. But it is the Design of our Minute Philosophers, by making Men wicked upon Principle, a thing unknown to the Ancients, so to weaken and destroy

DIAL. the force of Virtue, that its Effects shall not
 II. be felt in the Public. In which case Vice
 being uncontrolled, without Let or Impediment of Principle; pure and genuine, without Allay of Virtue, the Nation must doubtless be very flourishing and triumphant. *EUPH.* Truly, a noble Scheme! *CRI.* And in a fair way to take effect. For our young Proficients in the Minute Philosophy, having, by a rare Felicity of Education, no Tincture of Bigotry or Prejudice, do far outgo the old Standers and Professors of the Sect; who, though Men of admirable Parts, yet, having had the Misfortune to be imbued in their Childhood with some religious Notions, could never after get intirely rid of them; but still retain some small Grains of Conscience and Superstition, which are a Check upon the noblest Genius. In proof of this, I remember that the famous Minute Philosopher, old *Demodicus*, came one Day from Conversation upon Business with *Timander*, a young Gentleman of the same Sect, full of Astonishment. I am surpris'd, said he, to see so young, and withal so compleat a Villain, and, such was the force of Prejudice, spoke of *Timander* with Abhorrence, not considering that he was only the more egregious and profound Philosopher of the two.

VIII.


VIII. *EUPH.* Though much may be DIAL. hoped from the unprejudiced Education of II. young Gentlemen, yet it seems we are not to expect a settled and intire Happinefs, before Vice reigns pure and unmixed: Till then, much is to be feared from the dangerous Struggle between Vice and Virtue, which may perchance overturn and dissolve this Government, as it hath done others. *LYS.* Mo matter for that, if a better comes in its Place. We have cleared the Land of all Prejudices towards Government or Constitution, and made them fly like other Phantasms before the Light of Reason and good Sense. Men who think deeply cannot see any Reason, why Power should not change Hands as well as Property: Or, why the Fashion of a Government should not be changed as easily as that of a Garment. The perpetual circulating and revolving of Wealth and Power, no matter through what or whose Hands, is that which keeps up Life and Spirit in a State. Those who are even slightly read in our Philosophy, know that of all Prejudices the silliest is an Attachment to Forms. *CRI.* To say no more upon so clear a Point, the overturning a Government may be justified upon the same Principles as the burning a Town, would produce parallel Effects, and equally contribute to
the

DIAL. to the public Good. In both Cases, the
 II. natural Springs of Action are forcibly exerted: And in this general Industry what one loses another gets, a quick Circulation of Wealth and Power making the Sum Total to flourish. *EUPH.* And do the Minute Philosophers publish these Things to the World? *LYS.* It must be confessed our Writers proceed in Politicks with greater Caution than they think necessary with regard to Religion. *CRI.* But those things plainly follow from their Principles, and are to be admitted ~~or~~ the genuine Doctrine of the Sect, expressed perhaps with more Freedom and Perspicuity, than might be thought prudent by those who would manage the Public, or not offend weak Brethren. *EUPH.* And pray, is there not need of Caution, a Rebel, or Incendiary being Characters that many Men have a Prejudice against? *LYS.* Weak People of all Ranks have a world of absurd Prejudices. *EUPH.* But the better Sort, such as Statesmen and Legislators; do you think they have not the same Indisposition towards admitting your Principles? *LYS.* Perhaps they may; but the Reason is plain. *CRI.* This puts me in mind of that ingenious Philosopher, the Gamester *Glau-cus*, who used to say, that Statesmen and Lawgivers may keep a Stir about right
 and

and wrong, just and unjust, but that, in DIAL.
 truth, Property of every Kind had so often II.
 passed from the right Owners by Fraud 
 and Violence, that it was now to be con-
 sidered as lying on the common, and with
 equal Right belonged to every one that
 could seize it. *EUPH.* What are we to
 think then of Laws and Regulations relat-
 ing to Right and Wrong, Crimes and Du-
 ties? *LYS.* They serve to bind weak Minds,
 and keep the Vulgar in awe: But no soon-
 er doth a true Genius arise, but he breaks
 his Way to Greatness, through all the
 Trammels of Duty, Conscience, Religion,
 Law; to all which he sheweth himself in-
 finitely superior.

IX. EUPH. You are, it seems, for
 bringing about a thorough Reformation.
LYS. As to what is commonly called the
 Reformation, I cou'd never see how, or
 wherein the World was the better for
 it. It is much the same as Popery, with
 this Difference, that it is the more prude-
 like and disagreeable Thing of the two.
 A noted Writer of ours makes it too great
 a Compliment, when he computes the
 Benefit of Hooped-petticoats to be nearly
 equal to that of the Reformation. Tho-
 rough Reformation is thorough Liberty.
 Leave Nature at full Freedom to work her
 own

DIAL. own Way, and all will be well. This is
 II. what we aim at, and nothing short of this
 can come up to our Principles. *Crito*,
 who is a zealous Protestant, hearing these
 Words, could not refrain. The worst
 Effect of the Reformation, said he, was
 the rescuing wicked Men from a Darkness
 which kept them in awe. This, as it
 hath proved, was holding out Light to
 Robbers and Murderers. Light in it self
 is good, and the same Light which shews
 a Man the Folly of Superstition, might
 shew him the Truth of Religion, and the
 Madness of Atheism. But to make use
 of Light, only to see the Evils on one Side,
 and never to see, but to run blindly upon
 the worse Extreme; this is to make the
 best of Things produce Evil, in the same
 Sense that you prove the worst of Things
 to produce Good, to wit, accidentally or
 indirectly: And by the same Method of
 arguing, you may prove that even Diseases
 are useful: But whatever Benefit seems
 to accrue to the Public, either from Dis-
 ease of Mind or Body, is not their genuine
 Offspring, and may be obtained without
 them. *Lysicles* was a little disconcerted
 by the affirmative Air of *Crito*; but after
 a short Pause replied briskly, That to con-
 template the public Good was not every
 one's Talent. True, said *Euphranor*, I
 question

question whether every one can frame a **DIAL.**
 Notion of the public Good, much less **II.**
 judge of the Means to promote it. 

X. But you, *Lysicles*, who are master of this Subject, will be pleased to inform me, whether the public Good of a Nation doth not imply the particular Good of its Individuals? *LYS.* It doth. *EUPH.* And doth not the Good or Happiness of a Man consist, in having both Soul and Body sound and in good Condition, enjoying those Things which their respective Natures require, and free from those Things which are odious or hurtful to them. *LYS.* I do not deny all this to be true. *EUPH.* Now it would seem worth while to consider, whether the regular decent Life of a virtuous Man may not as much conduce to this End, as the mad Sallies of Intemperance and Debauchery. *LYS.* I will acknowledge that a Nation may merely subsist, or be kept alive, but it is impossible it would flourish without the Aid of Vice. To produce a quick Circulation of Traffick and Wealth in a State, there must be exorbitant and irregular Motions in the Appetites and Passions. *EUPH.* The more People a Nation contains, and the happier those People are, the more that Nation may be said to flourish. I think

DIAL. think we are agreed in this Point. *LYS.*

II. We are. *EUPH.* You allow then that
 { Riches are not an ultimate End, but
 should only be considered as the Means
 to procure Happiness. *LYS.* I do. *EUPH.*
 It seems, that Means cannot be of Use
 without our knowing the End, and how
 to apply them to it. *LYS.* It seems so.
EUPH. Will it not follow, that in order
 to make a Nation flourish, it is not suffi-
 cient to make it wealthy, without know-
 ing the true End and Happiness of Man-
 kind, and how to apply Wealth towards
 attaining that End? In Proportion as
 these Points are known and practised, I
 think the Nation should be likely to flou-
 rish. But for a People, who neither know
 nor practise them, to gain Riches, seems
 to me the same Advantage that it would
 be for a sick Man to come at Plenty of
 Meat and Drink, which he could not use
 but to his Hurt. *LYS.* This is meer So-
 phistry: It is arguing without persuading.
 Look into common Life: Examine the
 Pursuits of Men: Have a due Respect
 for the Consent of the World; and you
 will soon be convinced, that Riches alone
 are sufficient to make a Nation flourish-
 ing and happy. Give them Riches and
 they will make themselves happy, with-
 out that political Invention, that Trick
 of

of Statesmen and Philosophers, called DIAL.
Virtue. II.

XI. *EUPH.* Virtue then, in your Account, is a Trick of Statesmen. *LYS.* It is. *EUPH.* Why then do your sagacious Sect betray and divulge that Trick or Secret of State, which wise Men have judged necessary for the good Government of the World? *Lyficles* hesitating, *Crito* made answer, That he presumed it was because their Sect, being wiser than all other wise Men, disdained to see the World governed by wrong Maxims, and would set all Things on a right Bottom. *EUPH.* Thus much is certain: If we look into all Institutions of Government, and the political Writings of such as have heretofore passed for wise Men, we shall find a great Regard for Virtue. *LYS.* You shall find a strong Tincture of Prejudice. But, as I said before, consult the Multitude if you would find Nature and Truth. *EUPH.* But among Country Gentlemen, and Farmers, and the better Sort of Tradesmen, is not Virtue a reputable Thing? *LYS.* You pick up Authorities among Men of low Life and vile Education. *EUPH.* Perhaps we ought to pay a decent Respect to the Authority of Minute Philosophers. *LYS.* And I would fain

DIAL. fain know whose Authority should be
 II. more considered, than that of those Gen-
 tlemen who are alone above Prejudice,
 and think for themselves. *EUPH.* How
 doth it appear that you are the only un-
 prejudiced Part of Mankind? May not
 a Minute Philosopher, as well as another
 Man, be prejudiced in Favour of the
 Leaders of his Sect? May not an Atheisti-
 cal Education prejudice towards Atheism?
 What should hinder a Man's being pre-
 judiced against Religion, as well as for it?
 Or can you assign any Reason why an At-
 tachment to Pleasure, Interest, Vice, or
 Vanity, may not be supposed to prejudice
 Men against Virtue? *LYS.* This is plea-
 sant. What! Suppose those very Men in-
 fluenced by Prejudice, who are always
 disputing against it, whose constant Aim
 it is to detect and demolish Prejudices of
 all Kinds! Except their own, replied
Crito, for you must pardon me, if I can-
 not help thinking they have some small
 Prejudice, though not in Favour of Vir-
 tue.

XII. I observe, *Lysicles*, that you al-
 lowed to *Euphranor*, the greater Number
 of happy People are in a State, the more
 that State may be said to flourish: It fol-
 lows therefore, That such Methods as
 mul-

multiply Inhabitants are good, and such DIAL.
as diminish them are bad for the Public. II.

And one would think no Body need be told, that the Strength of a State consists more in the Number and Sort of People, than in any Thing else. But in Proportion as Vice and Luxury, those public Blessings encouraged by this Minute Philosophy, prevail among us, fewer are disposed to marry, too many being diverted by Pleasure, disabled by Disease, or frightned by Expence. Nor doth Vice only thin a Nation, but also debaseth it by a puny degenerate Race. I might add, That it is ruinous to our Manufactures; both as it makes Labour dear, and thereby enables our more frugal Neighbours to undersell us: and also as it diverts the lower sort of People from honest Callings to wicked Projects. If these and such Considerations were taken into the Account, I believe it would be evident to any Man in his Senses, that the imaginary Benefits of Vice bear no Proportion to the solid real Woes that attend it. *Lysicles*, upon this, shook his Head, and smiled at *Crito*, without vouchsafing any other Answer. After which, addressing himself to *Euphranor*, There cannot, said he, be a stronger Instance of Prejudice, than that a Man should at this time of Day preserve a Reverence for that

DIAL. Idol, Virtue, a thing so effectually exposed

II. and exploded by the most knowing Men of the Age, who have shewn, that Man is

a meer Engine, play'd upon and driven about by sensible Objects: and that moral Virtue is only a Name, a Notion, a Chimæra, an Enthusiasm, or at best a Fashion, uncertain and changeable, like all other Fashions.

EUPH. What do you think, *Lyficles*, of Health? Doth it depend on Fancy and Caprice, or is it something real in the bodily Composition of a Man?

LYS. Health is something real, which results from the right Constitution and Temperature of the Organs, and the Fluids circulating through them.

EUPH. This you say is Health of Body.

LYS. It is. *EUPH.* And may we not suppose an healthy Constitution of Soul, when the Notions are right, the Judgments true, the Will regular, the Passions and Appetites directed to their proper Objects, and confined within due Bounds?

This, in regard to the Soul, seems what Health is to the Body. And the Man whose Mind is so constituted, is he not properly called virtuous?


And to produce this healthy Disposition in the Minds of his Countrymen, should not every good Man employ his Endeavours? If these things have any appearance of Truth, as to me

they

they seem to have, it will not then be DIAL.
 so clear a Point, that Virtue is a meer II.
 Whim or Fashion, as you are pleas'd to ~
 represent it: I must own something un-
 expectedly, after what had been discours'd
 in last Evening's Conference, which if you
 would call to mind, it might perhaps save
 both of us some Trouble. *LYS.* Would
 you know the Truth, *Euphranor*? I must
 own I have quite forgot all your Discourse
 about Virtue, Duty, and all such Points,
 which, being of an airy notional nature,
 are apt to vanish, and leave no Trace on
 a Mind accustomed only to receive Im-
 pression from Realities.

XIII. Having heard these Words, *Euphranor* looked at *Crito* and me, and said smiling, I have mistaken my Part: it was mine to learn, and his to instruct. Then addressing himself to *Lysicles*, Deal faithfully, said he, and let me know whether the publick Benefit of Vice be in truth that which makes you plead for it? *LYS.* I love to speak frankly what I think. Know then, that Private Interest is the first and principal Consideration with Philosophers of our Sect. Now of all Interests, Pleasure is that which hath the strongest Charms, and no Pleasures like those which are heightened and

DIAL. enlivened by Licence. Herein consists the
 II: peculiar Excellency of our Principles, that
 they shew People how to serve their
 Country by diverting themselves, causing
 the two Streams of public Spirit and Self-
 love to unite and run in the same Chan-
 nel. I have told you already, that I ad-
 mit a Nation might subsist by the Rules
 of Virtue. But give me leave to say,
 it will barely subsist in a dull, joyless,
 insipid State; whereas the sprightly Ex-
 cesses of Vice inspire Men with Joy. And
 where Particulars rejoice, the Public,
 which is made up of Particulars, must
 do so too: that is, the Public must be
 happy. This I take to be an irrefragable
 Argument. But to give you its full
 Force, and make it as plain as possible,
 I will trace things from their Original.
 Happiness is the End to which created
 Beings naturally tend, but we find that
 all Animals, whether Men or Brutes, do
 naturally and principally pursue real Plea-
 sure of Sense; which is therefore to be
 thought their supreme Good, their true
 End and Happiness. It is for this Men
 live; and whoever understands Life must
 allow that Man to enjoy the Top and
 Flower of it, who hath a quick Sense of
 Pleasure, and withal Spirit, Skill, and
 Fortune, sufficient to gratify every Appe-
 tite

tite, and every Taste. Niggards and Fools D I A L.
 will envy or traduce such a one, be- II.
 cause they cannot equal him. Hence, 
 all that sober Trifling, in Disparagement
 of what every one would be master of
 if he could, a full Freedom and unlimi-
 ted Scope of Pleasure. *EUPH.* Let me
 see whether I understand you. Pleasure
 of Sense, you say, is the chief Pleasure.
LYS. I do. *EUPH.* And this would be
 cramp't and diminished by Virtue. *LYS.* It
 would. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Lyficles*, is
 Pleasure then at the height when the
 Appetites are satisfied? *LYS.* There
 is then only an Indolence, the lively
 Sense of Pleasure being past. *EUPH.* It
 should seem therefore, that the Appetites
 must be always craving to preserve Plea-
 sure alive. *LYS.* That is our Sense of
 the Matter. *EUPH.* The *Greek* Philo-
 sopher therefore was in the right, who
 considered the Body of a Man of Pleasure
 as a leaky Vessel, always filling, and ne-
 ver full. *LYS.* You may divert your
 self with Allegories, if you please. But
 all the while ours is literally the true
 Taste of Nature. Look throughout the
 Universe, and you shall find Birds and
 Fishes, Beasts and Insects, all kinds of
 Animals with which the Creation swarms,
 constantly engaged by Instinct in the Pur-
 suit


DIAL. suit of sensible Pleasure. And shall Man
 II. alone be the grave Fool who thwarts, and
 crosses, and subdues his Appetites, while
 his Fellow-creatures do all most joyfully
 and freely indulge them? *EUPH.* How!
Lyficles! I thought that being governed
 by the Senses, Appetites, and Passions,
 was the most grievous Slavery: and that
 the proper Business of Free-thinkers, or
 Philosophers, had been to set Men free
 from the Power of Ambition, Avarice,
 and Sensuality. *LYS.* You mistake
 the Point. We make Men relish the
 World, attentive to their Interests, live-
 ly and luxurious in their Pleasures,
 without Fear or Restraint either from
 God or Man. We despise those preach-
 ing Writers, who used to disturb or
 cramp the Pleasures and Amusements of
 Humane Life. We hold, that a wise Man
 who meddles with Business, doth it alto-
 gether for his Interest, and refers his In-
 terest to his Pleasure. With us it is a
 Maxim, That a Man should seize the
 Moments as they fly. Without Love, and
 Wine, and Play, and late Hours, we hold
 Life not to be worth living. I grant,
 indeed, that there is something gross and
 ill-bred in the Vices of mean Men, which
 the genteel Philosopher abhors. *CRI.* But
 to cheat, whore, betray, get drunk, do all
 these

these things decently, this is true Wisdom and Elegance of Taste.

W I S D O M .
D I A L .
I I .
}

XIV. *EUPH.* To me, who have been us'd to another way of thinking, this new Philosophy seems difficult to digest. I must therefore beg leave to examine its Principles, with the same Freedom that you do those of other Sects. *LYS.* Agreed. *EUPH.* You say, if I mistake not, that a wise Man pursues only his private Interest, and that this consists in sensual Pleasure, for proof whereof you appeal to Nature. Is not this what you advance? *LYS.* It is. *EUPH.* You conclude therefore, that as other Animals are guided by natural Instinct, Man too ought to follow the Dictates of Sense and Appetite. *LYS.* I do. *EUPH.* But in this, you do not argue as if Man had only Sense and Appetite for his Guides, on which Supposition there might be Truth in what you say? But what if he hath Intellect, Reason, a higher Instinct, and a nobler Life? If this be the Case, and you being Man, live like a Brute, is it not the Way to be defrauded of your true Happiness? to be mortified and disappointed? Consider most sorts of Brutes: you shall perhaps find them have a greater Share of sensual Happiness than Man. *LYS.*

DIAL. *LYS.* To our Sorrow we do. This hath
 II. made several Gentlemen of our Sect envy
 Brutes, and lament the Lot of Humane
 Kind. *CRI.* It was a Consideration of
 this sort, which inspired *Erotylus* with the
 laudable Ambition of wishing himself a
 Snail, upon hearing of certain Particula-
 rities discovered in that Animal by a mo-
 dern Virtuoso. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Lyfi-
 cles*, if you had an inexhaustible Fund of
 Gold and Silver, should you envy another
 for having a little more Copper than you?
LYS. I should not. *EUPH.* Are not Rea-
 son, Imagination, and Sense, Faculties dif-
 fering in Kind, and in Rank higher one
 than another. *LYS.* I do not deny it.
EUPH. Their Acts therefore differ in
 Kind. *LYS.* They do. *EUPH.* Conse-
 quently the Pleasures perfective of those
 Acts are also different. *LYS.* They are.
EUPH. You admit therefore three sorts
 of Pleasure: Pleasure of Reason, Pleasure
 of Imagination, and Pleasure of Sense.
LYS. I do. *EUPH.* And, as it is reasona-
 ble to think, the Operation of the highest
 and noblest Faculty to be attended with
 the highest Pleasure, may we not suppose
 the two former to be as Gold or Silver,
 and the latter only as Copper? Whence it
 should seem to follow, that Man need not
 envy or imitate a Brute. *LYS.* And ne-
 vertheless


vertheless there are very ingenious Men DIAL.
 who do. And surely every one may be II.
 allowed to know what he wants, and 
 wherein his true Happiness consists.

EUPH. Is it not plain that different Animals have different Pleasures? Take a Hog from his Ditch or Dunghil, lay him on a rich Bed, treat him with Sweetmeats, and Music, and Perfumes. All these things will be no Entertainment to him. Do not a Bird, a Beast, a Fish, amuse themselves in various manners, inso-much that what is pleasing to one may be Death to another? Is it ever seen that one of these Animals quits its own Element or Way of living, to adopt that of another? And shall Man quit his own Nature to imitate a Brute? *LYS.* But Sense is not only natural to Brutes: is it not also natural to Man? *EUPH.* It is, but with this Difference: it maketh the Whole of a Brute, but is the lowest Part or Faculty of a Humane Soul. The Nature of any Thing is peculiarly that which doth distinguish it from other Things, not what it hath in common with them. Do you allow this to be true? *LYS.* I do. *EUPH.* And is not Reason that which makes the principal Difference between Man and other Animals? *LYS.* It is. *EUPH.* Reason therefore being the principal

DIAL. cipal part of our Nature, whatever is
 II. most reasonable should seem most natural
 to Man. Must we not therefore think

rational Pleasures more agreeable to Humane Kind, than those of Sense? Man and Beast having different Natures, seem to have different Faculties, different Enjoyments, and different sorts of Happiness. You can easily conceive, that the sort of Life which makes the Happiness of a Mole or a Bat, would be a very wretched one for an Eagle. And may you not as well conceive that the Happiness of a Brute can never constitute the true Happiness of a Man? A Beast, without Reflexion or Remorse, without Foresight or Appetite of Immortality, without Notion of Vice or Virtue, or Order, or Reason, or Knowledge! What Motives, what Grounds can there be for bringing down Man, in whom are all these things, to a Level with such a Creature? What Merit, what Ambition in the Minute Philosopher to make such an Animal a Guide or Rule for Humane Life?

XV. *LYS.* It is strange, *Euphranor*, that one who admits Freedom of Thought as you do, should yet be such a Slave to Prejudice. You still talk of Order and Virtue, as of real things, as if our Philosophers

Philosophers had never demonstrated, that D I A L.
 they have no Foundation in Nature, and II.
 are only the Effects of Education. I know, 
 said *Crito*, how the Minute Philosophers
 are accustomed to demonstrate this Point.
 They consider the animal Nature of Man,
 or Man so far forth as he is Animal ; and
 it must be owned that considered in that
 Light, he hath no Sense of Duty, no Notion
 of Virtue. He therefore, who should look
 for Virtue among meer Animals, or Hu-
 mane Kind as such, would look in the
 wrong place. But that Philosopher, who
 is attentive only to the Animal Part of his
 Being, and raiseth his Theories from the
 very dregs of our Species, may probably
 upon second Thoughts find himself mis-
 taken. Look you, *Crito*, said *Lysicles*,
 my Argument is with *Euphranor*, to whom
 addressing his Discourse ; I observe, said
 he, that you stand much upon the Dig-
 nity of Humane Nature. This Thing of
 Dignity is an old worn-out Notion, which
 depends on other Notions, old and stale, and
 worn-out, such as an immaterial Spirit,
 and a Ray derived from the Divinity. But
 in these Days Men of Sense make a Jest
 of all this Grandeur and Dignity : and
 many there are would gladly exchange
 their Share of it for the Repose and Free-
 dom, and Sensuality of a Brute. But Com-
parisons

DIAL. parisons are odious: waving therefore all
 II. Inquiry concerning the respective Excel-
 lencies of Man and Beast, and whether it
 is beneath a Man to follow or imitate
 Brute Animals, in judging of the chief
 Good and Conduct of Life and Manners, I
 shall be content to appeal to the Autho-
 rity of Men themselves, for the Truth of
 my Notions. Do but look abroad into
 the World, and ask the common run of
 Men, whether Pleasure of Sense be not the
 only true, solid, substantial Good of their
 Kind? *EUPH.* But might not the same
 vulgar sort of Men prefer a Piece of Sign-
 post Painting to one of *Raphael's*, or a
Grubstreet Ballad to an Ode of *Horace*? Is
 there not a real Difference between good
 and bad Writing? *LYS.* There is. *EUPH.*
 And yet you will allow there must be a
 Maturity and Improvement of Understand-
 ing to discern this Difference, which doth
 not make it therefore less real. *LYS.* I
 will. *EUPH.* In the same manner what
 should hinder, but there may be in Nature
 a true Difference between Vice and Vir-
 tue, although it require some Degree of
 Reflexion and Judgment to observe it? In
 order to know whether a thing be agree-
 able to the rational Nature of Man, it
 seems one should rather observe and con-
 sult those who have most employ'd or im-
 proved

proved their Reason. *LYS.* Well, I shall DIAL.
 not insist on consulting the common Herd II.
 of Mankind. From the ignorant and gross ~
 Vulgar, I might my self appeal in ma-
 ny Cases to Men of Rank and Fashion.
EUPH. They are a sort of Men I have
 not the Honour to know much of by my
 own Observation. But I remember a Re-
 mark of *Aristotle*, who was himself a
 Courtier and knew them well. ‘ Virtue,
 ‘ faith he, * and good Sense are not the
 ‘ Property of high Birth or a great Estate.
 ‘ Nor if they who possess these Advanta-
 ‘ ges, wanting a Taste for rational Plea-
 ‘ sures, betake themselves to those of Sense;
 ‘ ought we therefore to esteem them eli-
 ‘ gible, any more than we should the Toys
 ‘ and Pastimes of Children, because they
 ‘ seem so to them?’. And indeed one may
 be allowed to question, whether the truest
 Estimate of Things was to be expected from
 a Mind intoxicated with Luxury, and
 dazzled with the Splendor of high living.

*Cùm stupet insanis acies fulgoribus, & cùm
 Acclinis falsis animus meliora recusat.* Hor.

Crito upon this observed, that he knew an
English Nobleman, who in the Prime of

* *Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 10. c. 6.*

DIAL. Life professeth a liberal Art, and is the

II. first Man of his Profession in the World :
 and that he was very sure, he had more
 Pleasure from the Exercise of that elegant
 Art, than from any sensual Enjoyment
 within the Power of one of the largest
 Fortunes, and most bountiful Spirits in
Great Britain.

XVI. *LYS.* But why need we have
 Recourse to the Judgment of other Men in
 so plain a Case? I appeal to your own
 Breast: consult that, and then say if sen-
 sible Pleasure be not the chief Good of
 Man. *EUPH.* I, for my part, have of-
 ten thought those Pleasures which are
 highest in the Esteem of Sensualists so far
 from being the chiefest Good, that it seem-
 ed doubtful upon the whole, whether they
 were any Good at all, any more than the
 meer Removal of Pain. Are not our Wants
 and Appetites uneasy? *LYS.* They are.
EUPH. Doth not sensual Pleasure con-
 sist in satisfying them? *LYS.* It doth.
EUPH. But the Cravings are tedious, the
 Satisfaction momentary. Is it not so?
LYS. It is, but what then? *EUPH.*
 Why then it should seem that sensual Plea-
 sure is but a short Deliverance from long
 Pain. A long Avenue of Uneasiness leads
 to a Point of Pleasure, which ends in Dis-
 gust

gust or Remorse. *CRI.* And he who pur- DIAL.
 sues this *ignis fatuus* imagines himself a II.
 Philosopher and Free-thinker. *LYS.* Pe- ~
 dants are governed by Words and Notions,
 while the wiser Men of Pleasure follow
 Fact, Nature, and Sense. *CRI.* But what
 if notional Pleasures should in fact prove
 the most real and lasting? Pure Pleasures
 of Reason and Imagination neither hurt
 the Health, nor waste the Fortune, nor
 gall the Conscience. By them the Mind
 is long entertained without loathing or
 satiety. On the other hand a Notion
 (which with you it seems passeth for no-
 thing) often embitters the most lively
 sensual Pleasures, which at bottom will
 be found also to depend upon Notion
 more than perhaps you imagine: it being
 a vulgar Remark, that those things are
 more enjoyed by Hope and Foretaste of the
 Soul, than by Possession. Thus much is
 yielded, that actual Enjoyment is very
 short, and the Alternative of Appetite
 and Disgust long as well as uneasy. So
 that, upon the whole, it should seem
 those Gentlemen, who are called Men of
 Pleasure from their eager Pursuit of it,
 do in reality with great Expence of For-
 tune, Ease, and Health purchase Pain.
LYS. You may spin out plausible Argu-
 ments, but will after all find it a difficult
 Matter

DIAL. Matter to convince me, that so many ingenious Men should not be able to distinguish between Things so directly opposite as Pain and Pleasure. How is it possible to account for this? CRI. I believe a Reason may be assigned for it, but to Men of Pleasure no Truth is so palatable as a Fable. *Jove* once upon a time having ordered, that Pleasure and Pain should be mixed in equal Proportions in every Dose of Humane Life: upon a Complaint that some Men endeavoured to separate what he had joined, and taking more than their Share of the Sweet, would leave all the Sour for others, commanded *Mercury* to put a stop to this Evil, by fixing on each Delinquent a Pair of invisible Spectacles, which should change the Appearance of Things, making Pain look like Pleasure, and Pleasure like Pain, Labour like Recreation, and Recreation like Labour. From that Time the Men of Pleasure are eternally mistaking and repenting. LYS. If your Doctrine takes place I would fain know what can be the Advantage of a great Fortune, which all Mankind so eagerly pursue? CRI. It is a common Saying with *Eucrates*, That a Great Fortune is an edged Tool, which a hundred may come at, for one who knows how to use it, so much easier is the Art of Getting than that of Spending. What
its

its Advantage is I will not say, but I will DIAL.
 venture to declare what it is not. I am II.
 sure that where Abundance excludes Want, and
 Enjoyment prevents Appetite, there is
 not the quickest Sense of those Pleasures
 we have been speaking of: in which the
 Footman hath often a greater Share than
 his Lord, who cannot enlarge his Stomach
 in proportion to his Estate.

XVII. Reasonable and well-educated
 Men of all Ranks have, I believe, pretty
 much the same Amusements, notwith-
 standing the Difference of their Fortunes:
 But those who are particularly distin-
 guished, as Men of Pleasure, seem to pos-
 sess it in a very small degree. *EUPH.* I
 have heard that among Persons of that
 Character, a Game of Cards is esteemed a
 chief Diversion. *LYS.* Without Cards
 there could be no living for People of
 Fashion. It is the most delightful way of
 passing an Evening when Gentlemen and
 Ladies are got together, who would other-
 wise be at a loss what to say or do with
 themselves. But a Pack of Cards is so
 engaging, that it doth not only employ
 them when they are met, but serves to
 draw them together. *Quadrille* gives them
 Pleasure in prospect during the dull Hours
 of the Day, they reflect on it with Delight,

DIAL. and it furnishes Discourse when it is over.

II. *CRI.* One would be apt to suspect these
 ~~~~~  
 People of Condition pass their Time but heavily, and are but little the better for their Fortunes, whose chief Amusement is a thing in the power of every Footman, who is as well qualified to receive Pleasure from Cards as a Peer. I can easily conceive that when People of a certain Turn are got together, they should prefer doing any thing to the *Ennui* of their own Conversation: but it is not easy to conceive there is any great Pleasure in this. What a Card-table can afford, requires neither Parts nor Fortune to judge of. *LYS.* Play is a serious Amusement, that comes to the Relief of a Man of Pleasure, after the more lively and affecting Enjoyments of Sense. It kills Time beyond any thing; and is a most admirable Anodyne to divert or prevent Thought, which might otherwise prey upon the Mind. *CRI.* I can easily comprehend, that no Man upon Earth ought to prize Anodynes for the Spleen, more than a Man of Fashion and Pleasure. An ancient Sage speaking of one of that Character, saith he is made wretched by Disappointments and Appetites, *λυπείται ἀποτυγχάνων καὶ ἐπιθυμῶν.* And if this was true of the *Greeks* who lived in the Sun, and had so much Spirit,

I am apt to think it is still more so of DIAL. our modern *English*. Something there is II. in our Climate and Complexion, that makes Idleness no where so much its own Punishment as in *England*, where an uneducated fine Gentleman pays for his momentary Pleasures, with long and cruel Intervals of Spleen; for relief of which he is driven into sensual Excesses, that produce a proportionable Depression of Spirits, which, as it createth a greater Want of Pleasures, so it lessens the Ability to enjoy them. There is a Cast of Thought in the Complexion of an *Englishman*, which renders him the most unsuccessful Rake in the World. He is (as *Aristotle* expresseth it) at variance with himself. He is neither Brute enough to enjoy his Appetites, nor Man enough to govern them. He knows and feels that what he pursues is not his true Good; his Reflexion serving only to shew him that Misery which his habitual Sloth and Indolence will not suffer him to remedy. At length being grown odious to himself, and abhorring his own Company, he runs into every idle Assembly, not from the Hopes of Pleasure, but meerly to respite the Pain of his own Mind. Listless and uneasy at the present, he hath no Delight in reflecting on what is past, or in the Prospect of any thing to

**DIAL.** come. This Man of Pleasure, when after  
**II.** a wretched Scene of Vanity and Woe his  
 animal Nature is worn to the Stumps,  
 wishes and dreads Death by turns, and is  
 sick of living, without having ever tried  
 or known the true Life of Man. *EUPH.*  
 It is well this sort of Life, which is of so  
 little Benefit to the Owner, conduceth so  
 much to that of the Public. But pray tell  
 me, do these Gentlemen set up for Minute  
 Philosophers? *CRI.* That Sect you must  
 know, contains two sorts of Philosophers,  
 the Wet and the Dry. Those I have been  
 describing are of the former Kind. They  
 differ rather in Practice than in Theory.  
 As an older, graver, or duller Man, from  
 one that is younger, and more capable or  
 fond of Pleasure. The dry Philosopher  
 passeth his Time but drily. He has the  
 Honour of Pimping for the Vices of more  
 sprightly Men, who in return offer some  
 small Incense to his Vanity. Upon this  
 Encouragement, and to make his own  
 Mind easy when it is past being pleased,  
 he employs himself in justifying those  
 Excesses he cannot partake in. But to re-  
 turn to your Question, those miserable Folk  
 are mighty Men for the Minute Philoso-  
 phy. *EUPH.* What hinders them then  
 from putting an end to their Lives? *CRI.*  
 Their not being persuaded of the Truth of  
 what

what they profess. Some indeed, in a Fit D I A L.  
of Despair, do now and then lay violent II.  
hands on themselves. And as the Minute Philosophy prevails, we daily see more  
Examples of Suicide. But they bear no proportion to those who would put an end  
to their Lives if they durst. My Friend *Clinias*, who had been one of them, and a  
Philosopher of rank, let me into the secret History of their Doubts and Fears, and ir-  
resolute Resolutions of making away with themselves; which last he assures me is a  
frequent Topic with Men of Pleasure, when they have drunk themselves into a  
little Spirit. It was by virtue of this mechanical Valour the renowned Philosopher  
*Hermocrates* shot himself through the Head. The same thing hath since been practised  
by several others, to the great Relief of their Friends. Splenetic, worried, and  
frightened out of their Wits, they run upon their Doom with the same Courage as  
a Bird runs into the Mouth of a Rattle Snake; not because they are bold to die,  
but because they are afraid to live. *Clinias* endeavoured to fortify his Irreligion by the  
Discourse and Opinion of other Minute Philosophers, who were mutually strength-  
ened in their own Unbelief by his. After this manner, Authority working in a Cir-  
cle, they endeavoured to atheize one another.

DIAL. ther. But though he pretended, even to a  
 II. Demonstration, against the Being of a God,  
 yet he could not inwardly conquer his own  
 Belief. He fell sick, and acknowledged this  
 Truth; is now a sober Man and a Christian; owns he was never so happy as since he became such, nor so wretched as while he was a Minute Philosopher. And he who has tried both Conditions, may be allowed a proper Judge of both. *LYS.* Truly, a fine Account of the brightest and bravest Men of the Age! *CRI.* Bright and Brave are fine Attributes. But our Curate is of opinion, that all your Free-thinking Rakes are either Fools or Cowards. Thus he argues; If such a Man doth not see his true Interest he wants Sense; if he doth, but dare not pursue it, he wants Courage. In this manner, from the Defect of Sense and Courage, he deduceth that whole Species of Men, who are so apt to value themselves upon both those Qualities. *LYS.* As for their Courage, they are at all times ready to give Proof of it: and for their Understanding, thanks to Nature, it is of a size not to be measured by Country Parsons.

XVIII. *EUPH.* But *Socrates*, who was no Country Parson, suspected your Men of Pleasure were such through Ignorance. *LYS.* Ignorance! of what? *EUPH.* Of the  
 the



the Art of computing. It was his Opinion D I A L.  
 that Rakes cannot reckon \*. And that for II.  
 want of this Skill they make wrong Judgments about Pleasure, on the right Choice of which their Happiness depends. *LYS.* I do not understand you. *EUPH.* Do you grant that Sense perceiveth only sensible things? *LYS.* I do. *EUPH.* Sense perceiveth only things present. *LYS.* This too I grant. *EUPH.* Future Pleasures, therefore, and Pleasures of the Understanding, are not to be judged of by actual Sense. *LYS.* They are not. *EUPH.* Those therefore who judge of Pleasure by Sense, may find themselves mistaken at the foot of the Account.


† *Cum lapidosa chiragra*  
*Contudit articulos veteris ramalia fagi,*  
*Tum crassos transisse dies lucemque palustrem,*  
*Et sibi jam seri vitam ingemuere relictam.*

To make a right Computation, should you not consider all the Faculties, and all the Kinds of Pleasure, taking into your Account the Future as well as the Present, and rating them all according to their true Value? *CRI.* The *Epicureans* themselves allowed, that Pleasure which

\* Plato in Protag.

† Perſius, Sat. 5.

DIAL. procures a greater Pain, or hinders a greater Pleasure, should be regarded as a Pain; and, that Pain which procures a greater Pleasure, or prevents a greater Pain, is to be accounted a Pleasure. In order therefore to make a true Estimate of Pleasure, the great Spring of Action, and that from whence the Conduct of Life takes its Bias, we ought to compute intellectual Pleasures and future Pleasures, as well as present and sensible: We ought to make Allowance in the Valuation of each particular Pleasure, for all the Pains and Evils, for all the Disgust, Remorse, and Shame that attend it: We ought to regard both Kind and Quantity, the Sincerity, the Intensity, and the Duration of Pleasures. Let a Free-thinker but bethink himself, how little of Humane Pleasure consists in actual Sensation, and how much in Prospect! Let him then compare the Prospect of a virtuous Believer with that of an unbelieving Rake. *EUPH.* And all these Points duly considered, will not *Socrates* seem to have had Reason of his Side, when he thought Ignorance made Rakes, and particularly their being ignorant of what he calls the Science of More and Less, Greater and Smaller, Equality and Comparison, that is to say, of the Art of Computing? *LYS.* All this Discourse seems

seems notional. For real Abilities of *DIAL.* every kind, it is well known we have *II.* the brightest Men of the Age among us.  But all those who know the World do calculate, that what you call a good Christian, who hath neither a large Conscience, nor unprejudiced Mind, must be unfit for the Affairs of it. Thus you see, while you compute your selves out of Pleasure, others compute you out of Business. What then are you good for with all your Computation? *EUPH.* I have all imaginable Respect for the Abilities of Free-thinkers. My only Fear was, their Parts might be too lively for such slow Talents as Forecast and Computation, the Gifts of ordinary Men.

XIX. *CRI.* I cannot make them the same Compliment that *Euphranor* does. For though I shall not pretend to characterize the whole Sect, yet thus much I may truly affirm: That those who have fallen in my way have been mostly raw Men of Pleasure, old Sharpers in Business, or a third sort of lazy Sciologists, who are neither Men of Business, nor Men of Speculation, but set up for Judges or Critics in all kinds, without having made a Progress in any. These, among Men of the World, pass for profound Theorists,  
and

DIAL. and among speculative Men would seem  
 II. to know the World: a conceited Race,  
 ~~~~~ equally useles to the Affairs and Studies  
 of Mankind! Such as these, for the most
 part, seem to be Sectaries of the Minute
 Philosophy. I will not deny that now
 and then you may meet with a Man of
 easy Manners, that, without those Faults
 and Affectations, is carried into the Party
 by the meer Stream of Education, Fa-
 shion, or Company; all which do in this
 Age prejudice Men against Religion, even
 those who mechanically rail at Preju-
 dice. I must not forget that the Minute
 Philosophers have also a strong Party a-
 mong the Beaux and fine Ladies; and,
 as Affectations out of Character are often
 the strongest, there is nothing so dogma-
 tical and invincible as one of these
 fine things, when it sets up for Free-
 thinking. But, be these Professors of the
 Sect never so dogmatical, their Authority
 must needs be small with Men of Sense.
 For who would choose for his Guide in
 the Search of Truth, a Man whose
 Thoughts and Time are taken up with
 Dress, Visits, and Diversions? Or whose
 Education hath been behind a Counter,
 or in an Office? Or whose Speculations
 have been employed on the Forms of Bu-
 siness, who is only well read in the ways
 and

and Commerce of Mankind, in Stock-DIAL.
 jobbing, Purloining, Supplanting, Bribing? II.

Or would any Man in his Senses give a Fig for Meditations and Discoveries made over a Bottle? And yet it is certain, that instead of Thought, Books, and Study, most Free-thinkers are the Profelytes of a Drinking-Club. Their Principles are often settled, and Decisions on the deepest Points made, when they are not fit to make a Bargain. *LYS.* You forget our Writers, *Crito.* They make a World of Profelytes. *CRI.* So would worse Writers in such a Cause. Alas! how few read! and of these, how few are able to judge? How many wish your Notions true? How many had rather be diverted than instructed? How many are convinced by a Title? I may allow your Reasons to be effectual, without allowing them to be good. Arguments, in themselves of small Weight, have great Effect, when they are recommended by a mistaken Interest, when they are pleaded for by Passion, when they are countenanced by the Humour of the Age: and above all, with some sort of Men, when they are against Law, Government, and established Opinions: things which, as a wise or good Man would not depart from without clear Evidence, a weak or a bad Man will affect to disparage
 on


DIAL. on the slightest Grounds. *LYS.* And

II. yet the Arguments of our Philosophers alarm. *CRI.* The Force of their Reasoning is not what alarms: their Contempt of Laws and Government is alarming: their Application to the Young and Ignorant is dangerous. *EUPH.* But without disputing or disparaging their Talent at Ratiocination, it seems very possible their Success might not be owing to that alone. May it not in some measure be ascribed to the Defects of others, as well as to their own Perfections? My Friend *Eucrates* used to say, that the Church would thrive and flourish beyond all Opposition, if some certain Persons minded Piety more than Politics, Practics than Polemics, Fundamentals than Confectories, Substance than Circumstance, Things than Notions, and Notions than Words. *LYS.* Whatever may be the Cause, the Effects are too plain to be denied. And when a considering Man observes that our Notions do, in this most learned and knowing Age, spread and multiply, in opposition to established Laws, and every Day gain ground against a Body so numerous, so learned, so well supported, protected, encouraged for the Service and Defence of Religion: I say, when a Man observes and considers all this, he will be apt

apt to ascribe it to the force of Truth, DIAL.
 and the merits of our Cause; which, had II.
 it been supported with the Revenues and ~
 Establishments of the Church and Uni-
 versities, you may guess what a Figure it
 would make, by the Figure that it makes
 without them. *EUPH.* It is much to
 be pitied, that the learned Professors of
 your Sect do not meet with the Encou-
 ragement they deserve. *LYS.* All in due
 time. People begin to open their Eyes. It
 is not impossible but those Revenues that
 in ignorant Times were applied to a
 wrong Use, may, in a more enlightned Age,
 be applied to a better. *CRI.* But why Pro-
 fessors and Encouragement for what needs
 no teaching? An Acquaintance of mine
 has a most ingenious Footman that can
 neither write nor read, who learned your
 whole System in half an Hour: He knows
 when and how to nod, shake his Head,
 smile, and give a Hint as well as the
 ablest Sceptic, and is in Fact a very Mi-
 nute Philosopher. *LYS.* Pardon me, it
 takes Time to unlearn religious Prejudi-
 ces, and requires a strong Head. *CRI.* I
 do not know how it might have been
 once upon a Time. But in the present
 laudable Education, I know several who
 have been imbued with no religious No-
 tions at all; and others who have had them
 so

DIAL. so very slight, that they rubbed off with-
 II. out the least Pains.

XX. *Panope*, young and beautiful, under the Care of her Aunt, an Admirer of the Minute Philosophy, was kept from learning the Principles of Religion, that she might not be accustomed to believe without a Reason, nor assent to what she did not comprehend. *Panope* was not indeed prejudiced with religious Notions, but got a Notion of Intriguing, and a Notion of Play, which ruined her Reputation by fourteen, and her Fortune by four and twenty. I have often reflected on the different Fate of two Brothers in my Neighbourhood. *Cleon* the elder being designed an accomplished Gentleman, was sent to Town, had the first part of his Education in a great School: What Religion he learned there was soon unlearned in a certain celebrated Society, which, till we have a better, may pass for a Nursery of Minute Philosophers. *Cleon* dressed well, could cheat at Cards, had a nice Palate, understood the Mystery of the Die, was a mighty Man in the Minute Philosophy. And having shined a few Years in these Accomplishments, he died before thirty, childless and rotten, expressing the utmost Indignation that

that he could not outlive that old Dog his DIAL.
 Father; who, having a great Notion of II.
 polite Manners, and Knowledge of the 
 World, had purchased them to his fa-
 vourite Son, with much Expence, but had
 been more frugal in the Education of
Chærephon, the younger Son; who was
 brought up at a Country-School, and en-
 tered a Commoner in the University,
 where he qualified himself for a Parso-
 nage in his Father's Gift, which he is
 now possessed of, together with the E-
 state of the Family, and a numerous Off-
 spring. *LYS.* A Pack of unpolished Cubbs,
 I warrant. *CRI.* Less polished, perhaps,
 but more sound, more honest, and likely
 to be more useful than many who pass
 for fine Gentlemen. *Crates*, a worthy
 Justice of the Peace in this County, ha-
 ving had a Son miscarry at *London*, by
 the Conversation of a Minute Philoso-
 pher, used to say with a great Air of
 Complaint: If a Man spoils my Corn, or
 hurts my Cattle, I have a Remedy against
 him: But if he spoils my Children, I
 have none. *LYS.* I warrant you, he
 was for penal Methods: He would have
 had a Law to persecute tender Con-
 sciences. *CRI.* The tender Conscience
 of a Minute Philosopher! He who tu-
 tored the Son of *Crates*, soon after did
 Justice

DIAL. Justice on himself. For he taught *Lycidas*, a modest young Man, the Principles of his Sect. *Lycidas*, in return, debauched his Daughter, an only Child: Upon which, *Charmides*, (that was the Minute Philosopher's Name) hanged himself. Old *Bubalion* in the City is carking, and starving, and cheating, that his Son may drink and game, keep Mistresses, Hounds, and Horses, and die in a Jail. *Bubalion* nevertheless thinks himself wise, and passeth for one that minds the main Chance. He is a Minute Philosopher, which Learning he acquired behind the Counter, from the Works of *Prodicus* and *Tryphon*. This same *Bubalion* was one Night at Supper, talking against the Immortality of the Soul, with two or three grave Citizens, one of whom the next Day declared himself Bankrupt, with five thousand Pound of *Bubalion's* in his Hands: And the Night following he received a Note from a Servant, who had during his Lecture waited at Table, demanding the Sum of fifty Guineas to be laid under a Stone, and concluding with most terrible Threats and Imprecations. *LVS.* Not to repeat what hath been already demonstrated, That the Public is at bottom no Sufferer by such Accidents, which in truth are inconvenient only to private

private Persons, who in their turn too may reap the Benefit of them: I say, not to repeat all that hath been demonstrated on that Head, I shall only ask you whether there would not be Rakes and Rogues, although we did not make them? Believe me, the World always was, and always will be the same, as long as Men are Men. *CRI.* I deny that the World is always the same. Humane Nature, to use *Alciphron's* Comparison, is like Land, better or worse, as it is improved, and according to the Seeds or Principles sown in it. Though no body held your Tenets, I grant there might be bad Men by the Force of corrupt Appetites and irregular Passions. But where Men, to the Force of Appetite and Passion, add that of Opinion, and are wicked from Principle, there will be more Men wicked, and those more incurably and outrageously so. The Error of a lively Rake lies in his Passions, and may be reformed: But the dry Rogue who sets up for Judgment, is incorrigible. It is an Observation of *Aristotle's*, That there are two sorts of Debauchees, the ἀνεταής, and the ἀκόλας, of which the one is so against his Judgment, the other with it: And that there may be hopes of the former, but none of the latter. And in

DIAL. fact I have always observed, that a Rake
 II. who was a Minute Philosopher, when

grown old, becomes a Sharper in Business.

LYS. I could name you several such who
 have grown most noted Patriots. CRI.

Patriots! such Patriots as *Catiline* and
Marc Antony. LYS. And what then?

Those famous *Romans* were brave, though
 unsuccessful. They wanted neither Sense
 nor Courage; and if their Schemes had
 taken effect, the brisker Part of their Coun-
 trymen had been much the better for
 them.

XXI. The Wheels of Government go
 on, though wound up by different Hands:
 if not in the same Form, yet in some o-
 ther, perhaps a better. There is an end-
 less Variety in things: weak Men, indeed,
 are prejudiced towards Rules and Systemes
 in Life and Government: and think if
 these are gone, all is gone: But a Man of
 a great Soul and free Spirit, delights
 in the noble Experiment of blowing up
 Systemes, and dissolving Governments, to
 mold them anew upon other Principles,
 and in another Shape. Take my Word for
 it: there is a plastic Nature in things that
 seeks its own End. Pull a State to pieces,
 jumble, confound, and shake together the
 Particles of Humane Society, and then let
 them

them stand a while, and you shall soon see them settle of themselves in some convenient Order, where heavy Heads are lowest, and Men of Genius uppermost. *EUPH.* *Lysicles* speaks his Mind freely. *LYS.* Where was the Advantage of Free-thinking, if it were not attended with Free-speaking; or of Free-speaking, if it did not produce Free-acting? We are for thorough, independent, original Freedom. Inward Freedom without outward is good for nothing, but to set a Man's Judgment at variance with his Practice. *CRI.* This free Way of *Lysicles* may seem new to you: it is not so to me. As the Minute Philosophers lay it down for a Maxim, That there is nothing sacred of any kind, nothing but what may be made a Jest of, exploded, and changed like the Fashion of their Clothes: so nothing is more frequent than for them to utter their Schemes and Principles, not only in select Companies, but even in public. In a certain Part of the World, where ingenious Men are wont to retail their Speculations, I remember to have seen a *Valetudinarian* in a long Wig and a Cloke, sitting at the upper End of a Table, with half a dozen of Disciples about him. After he had talked about Religion in a Manner, and with an Air that would make

DIAL. one think, Atheism established by Law
 II. and Religion only tolerated, he entered
 upon Civil Government: and observed to
 his Audience, that the natural World was
 in a perpetual Circulation. Animals, said
 he, who draw their Sufenance from the
 Earth, mix with that same Earth, and in
 their turn become Food for Vegetables,
 which again nourish the Animal Kind:
 The Vapours that ascend from this Globe,
 descend back upon it in Showers: The
 Elements alternately prey upon each other:
 That which one part of Nature loseth a-
 nother gains; the Sum total remaining
 always the same, being neither bigger
 nor lesser, better nor worse, for all these
 intestine Changes. Even so, said this
 learned Professor, the Revolutions in the
 civil World are no Detriment to Humane
 Kind: one part whereof rises as the other
 falls, and wins by another's Loss. A Man
 therefore who thinks deeply, and hath an
 Eye on the whole Systeme, is no more a
 Bigot to Government than to Religion.
 He knows how to suit himself to Occasi-
 ons, and make the best of every Event: For
 the rest, he looks on all Translations of
 Power and Property, from one Hand to
 another, with a Philosophic Indifference.
 Our Lecturer concluded his Discourse with
 a most ingenious Analysis of all political
 and

and moral Virtues, into their first Principles and Causes, shewing them to be meer Fashions, Tricks of State, and Illusions on the Vulgar. *LYS.* We have been often told of the good Effects of Religion and Learning, Churches and Universities: But I dare affirm, that a dozen or two ingenious Men of our Sect have done more towards advancing real Knowledge by extemporaneous Lectures in the Compass of a few Years, than all the Ecclesiastics put together for as many Centuries. *EUPH.* And the Nation no doubt thrives accordingly. But, it seems, *Crito*, you have heard them discourse. *CRI.* Upon hearing this, and other Lectures of the same Tendency, methought it was needless to establish Professors for the Minute Philosophy in either University: while there are so many spontaneous Lecturers in every Corner of the Streets, ready to open Mens Eyes, and rub off their Prejudices about Religion, Loyalty, and public Spirit. *LYS.* If Wishing was to any purpose, I could wish for a Telescope that might draw into my view things future in Time, as well as distant in Place. Oh! that I could but look into the next Age, and behold what it is that we are preparing to be, the glorious Harvest of our Principles: the Spreading of which hath produced a visi-

DIAL.
II.
}

DIAL. ble Tendency in the Nation towards something great and new. *CRI.* One thing I dare say you would expect to see, be the Changes and Agitations of the Public what they will, that is, every Free-thinker upon his Legs. You are all Sons of Nature, who chearfully follow the Fortunes of the common Mass. *LYS.* And it must be owned we have a Maxim, that *each should take care of one.* *CRI.* Alas, *Lysicles*, you wrong your own Character. You would fain pass upon the World and upon your selves for interested cunning Men: But can any thing be more disinterested than to sacrifice all Regards to the abstracted Speculation of Truth? Or can any thing be more void of all Cunning than to publish your Discoveries to the World, teach others to play the whole Game, and arm Mankind against your selves?

XXII. If a Man may venture to suggest so mean a Thought as the Love of their Country, to Souls fired with the Love of Truth, and the Love of Liberty, and grasping the whole Extent of Nature: I would humbly propose it to you, Gentlemen, to observe the Caution practised by all other Discoverers, Projectors, and Makers of Experiments, who never hazard all on the first Trial. Would it not be prudent to try the
the

the Success of your Principles on a small D I A L. Model in some remote Corner? For instance, set up a Colony of Atheists in *Monomotapa*, and see how it prospers, before you proceed any further at home: Half a dozen Shipload of Minute Philosophers might easily be spared upon so good a Design. In the mean time, you Gentlemen, who have found out that there is nothing to be hoped or feared in another Life: that Conscience is a Bugbear: that the Bands of Government, and the Cement of Humane Society are rotten things, to be dissolved and crumbled into nothing, by the Argumentation of every Minute Philosopher: be so good as to keep these sublime Discoveries to your selves: Suffer us, our Wives, our Children, our Servants, and our Neighbours, to continue in the Belief and way of Thinking established by the Laws of our Country. In good earnest, I wish you would go try your Experiments among the *Hottentots* or *Turks*. *LYS.* The *Hottentots* we think well of, believing them to be an unprejudiced People: but it is to be feared their Diet and Customs would not agree with our Philosophers: As for the *Turks*, they are Bigots, who have a Notion of God and a Respect for Jesus Christ. I question whether it might be safe to venture among

DIAL. them. *CRI.* Make your Experiment
II. then in some other part of *Christendom.*

↳ *LYS.* We hold all other Christian Nations to be much under the power of Prejudice: even our Neighbours the *Dutch* are too much prejudiced in favour of their Religion by Law established, for a prudent Man to attempt Innovations under their Government. Upon the whole, it seems we can execute our Schemes no where with so much Security, and such Prospect of Success as at home. Not to say that we have already made a good Progress. Oh! that we could but once see a Parliament of true, stanch, libertine Free-thinkers!
CRI. God forbid! I should be sorry to have such Men for my Servants, not to say, for my Masters. *LYS.* In that we differ.


XXIII. But you will agree with me, that the right Way to come at this was to begin with extirpating the Prejudices of particular Persons. We have carried on this Work for many Years with much Art and Industry, and at first with Secrecy, working like Moles under Ground, concealing our Progress from the Public, and our ultimate Views from many, even of our own Profelytes, blowing the Coals between polemical Divines, laying hold

on


on and improving every Incident, which DIAL. the Passions and Folly of Churchmen afforded, to the Advantage of our Sect. As II. our Principles obtained, we still proceeded to farther Inferences: and as our Numbers multiplied, we gradually disclosed our Selves and our Opinions: where we are now, I need not say. We have stubbed, and weeded, and cleared Humane Nature to that degree, that in a little time, leaving it alone without any Labouring or Teaching, you shall see natural and just Ideas sprout forth of themselves. CRI. But I have heard a Man, who had lived long, and observed much, remark that the worst and most unwholsom Weed was this same Minute Philosophy. We have had, said he, divers epidemical Distempers in the State, but this hath produced of all others the most destructive Plague. Enthusiasm had its Day, its Effects were violent, and soon over: This infects more quietly, but spreads widely: The former bred a Fever in the State: this breeds a Consumption and final Decay. A Rebellion, or an Invasion, alarms and puts the Public upon its Defence; but a Corruption of Principles works its Ruin more slowly perhaps, but more surely. This may be illustrated by a Fable I somewhere met with in the Writings of a *Swiss* Philosopher, setting forth

DIAL. forth the Original of Brandy and Gunpowder. The Government of the North being once upon a time vacant, the Prince of the Power of the Air convened a Council in Hell: wherein, upon Competition between two Dæmons of Rank, it was determined they should both make trial of their Abilities, and he should succeed who did most Mischief. One made his Appearance in the Shape of Gunpowder, the other in that of Brandy: The former was a declared Enemy, and roared with a terrible Noise, which made Folks afraid, and put them on their guard: The other passed as a Friend and a Physician through the World, disguised himself with Sweets, and Perfumes, and Drugs, made his way into the Ladies Cabinets, and the Apothecaries Shops, and under the Notion of helping Digestion, comforting the Spirits, and cheering the Heart, produced direct contrary Effects; and having insensibly thrown great numbers of Humane Kind into a lingring, but fatal Decay, was found to People Hell and the Grave so fast as to merit the Government, which he still possesses.

XXIV. *LYS.* Those who please may amuse themselves with Fables and Allegories. This is plain *English*: Liberty is a good

good Thing, and we are the Support of D I A L.
Liberty. *CRI.* To me it seems that Li- II.
berty and Virtue were made for each 
other. If any Man wish to enslave his
Country, nothing is a fitter Preparative
than Vice: And nothing leads to Vice so
surely as Irreligion. For my part I cannot
comprehend or find out, after having con-
sidered it in all Lights, how this crying
down Religion should be the Effect of
honest Views towards a just and legal Li-
berty. Some seem to propose an Indul-
gence in Vice; others may have in pro-
spect the Advantages which needy and am-
bitious Men are used to make in the Ruin
of a State: One may indulge a pert petu-
lant Spirit; another hope to be esteemed
among Libertines, when he wants Wit to
please, or Abilities to be useful. But, be
Mens Views what they will, let us exa-
mine what Good your Principles have
done: Who has been the better for the
Instructions of these Minute Philosophers?
Let us compare what we are in respect of
Learning, Loyalty, Honesty, Wealth,
Power and public Spirit with what we
have been. Free-thinking (as it is called)
hath wonderfully grown of late Years.
Let us see what hath grown up with it, or
what Effects it hath produced. To make
a Catalogue of Ills is disagreeable: And
the

DIAL. the only Blessing it can pretend to is Luxury: That same Blessing which revenged the World upon old *Rome*: That same Luxury that makes a Nation, like a diseased pampered Body, look full and fat with one Foot in the Grave. *LYS.* You mistake the Matter. There are no People who think and argue better about the public Good of a State than our Sect; who have also invented many Things tending to that End, which we cannot as yet conveniently put in practice. *CRI.* But one Point there is, from which it must be owned the Public hath already received some Advantage, which is the Effect of your Principles flowing from them, and spreading as they do: I mean that old *Roman* Practice of Self-murder, which at once puts an End to all Distress, ridding the World and themselves of the miserable. *LYS.* You were pleased before to make some Reflexions on this Custom, and laugh at the Irresolution of our Free-thinkers: But I can aver for Matter of Fact, that they have often recommended it by their Example as well as Arguments: And that is solely owing to them that a Practice, so useful and magnanimous, hath been taken out of the Hands of Lunatics, and restored to that Credit among Men of Sense, which it anciently had. In what-

whatever Light you may consider it, this D I A L.
 is in fact a solid Benefit. But the best II.
 Effect of our Principles is that Light and 
 Truth so visibly spread abroad in the
 World. From how many Prejudices, Er-
 rors, Perplexities, and Contradictions have
 we freed the Minds of our Fellow-Sub-
 jects? How many hard Words and intri-
 cate absurd Notions had possessed the
 Minds of Men before our Philosophers
 appeared in the World? But now even
 Women and Children have right and
 found Notions of Things. What say you
 to this, *Crito*? *CRI.* I say, with respect
 to these great Advantages of destroying
 Men and Notions, that I question whe-
 ther the Public gains as much by the latter
 as it loseth by the former. For my own
 part I had rather my Wife and Children
 all believed what they had no Notion of,
 and daily pronounced Words without a
 Meaning, than that any one of them should
 cut his Throat, or leap out of a Window.
 Errors and Nonsense as such are of small
 Concern in the Eye of the Public, which
 consider not the metaphysical Truth of
 Notions, so much as the Tendency they
 have to produce Good or Evil. Truth it
 self is valued by the Public, as it hath an
 Influence, and is felt in the Course of Life.
 You may confute a whole Shelf of School-
 men,

DIAL. men, and discover many speculative

II. Truths, without any great Merit towards
 your Country. But if I am not mistaken,
 the Minute Philosophers are not the Men
 to whom we are most beholden for Discoveries
 of that Kind. This, I say, must be allowed;
 supposing, what I by no Means grant, your
 Notions to be true. For, to say plainly what
 I think, the Tendency of your Opinions is
 so bad, that no good Man can endure them,
 and your Arguments for them so weak that
 no wise Man will admit them. *LYS.* Has it
 not been proved as clear as the Meridian Sun,
 that the politer Sort of Men lead much
 happier Lives, and swim in Pleasure since
 the spreading of our Principles? But, not
 to repeat or insist further on what has
 been so amply deduced, I shall only add,
 that the Advantages flowing from them,
 extend to the tenderest Age and the softer
 Sex. Our Principles deliver Children from
 Terrors by Night, and Ladies from sple-
 netic Hours by Day. Instead of these old
 fashioned Things, Prayers and the Bible,
 the grateful Amusements of Drums, Dice,
 and Billet-doux have succeeded. The fair
 Sex have now nothing to do but dress and
 paint, drink and game, adorn and divert
 themselves, and enter into all the sweet
 Society of Life. *CRI.* I thought, *Lyficles,*
 the

the Argument from Pleasure had been ex-
 hausted: But since you have not done
 with that Point, let us once more by *Eu-*
phranor's Rule cast up the Account of
 Pleasure and Pain, as Credit and Debt un-
 der distinct Articles. We will set down
 in the Life of your fine Lady, rich Clothes,
 Dice, Cordials, Scandal, late Hours against
 Vapours, Distaste, Remorse, Losses at Play,
 and the terrible Distress of ill spent Age
 increasing every Day: Suppose no cruel
 Accident of Jealousy, no Madness or In-
 famy of Love: Yet at the Foot of the Ac-
 count you shall find that empty, giddy, gau-
 dy, fluttering thing, not half so happy as a
 Butterfly, or a Grasshopper on a Summer's
 Day. And for a Rake or Man of Pleasure,
 the Reckoning will be much the same, if
 you place Listlessness, Ignorance, Rotten-
 ness, Loathing, Craving, Quarrelling, and
 such Qualities or Accomplishments over-
 against his little Circle of fleeting Amuse-
 ments: Long Woe against momentary
 Pleasure: And if it be considered, that
 when Sense and Appetite go off, though
 he seek Refuge from his Conscience in the
 Minute Philosophy, yet in this you will
 find, if you sift him to the Bottom, that
 he affects much, believes little, knows no-
 thing. Upon which *Lyficles* turning to me
 observed, that *Crito* might dispute against
 Fact

D I A L.
 II.

DIAL. Fact if he pleased, but that every one must
 II. see the Nation was the merrier for their
 Principles. True, answered *Crito*, we are a
 merry Nation indeed: Young Men laugh
 at the old: Children despise their Parents:
 and Subjects make a Jest of the Govern-
 ment: Happy Effects of the Minute Phi-
 losophy!

XXV. *LYS.* Infer what Effects you
 please, that will not make our Principles
 less true. *CRI.* Their Truth is not what
 I am now considering. The Point at pre-
 sent is the Usefulness of your Principles:
 And to decide this Point we need only
 take a short View of them fairly propos'd
 and laid together: That there is no God or
 Providence: That Man is as the Beasts that
 perish: That his Happiness as theirs con-
 sists in obeying Animal Instincts, Appetites,
 and Passions: That all Stings of Consci-
 ence and Sense of Guilt are Prejudices and
 Errors of Education: That Religion is a
 State Trick: That Vice is beneficial to the
 Public: That the Soul of Man is corporeal
 and dissolveth like a Flame or Vapour:
 That Man is a Machine actuated accord-
 ing to the Laws of Motion: That conse-
 quently he is no Agent or Subject of Guilt:
 That a wise Man will make his own par-
 ticular individual Interest in this present
 Life,

Life, the Rule and Measure of all his DIAL. Actions: These, and such Opinions, are, II. it seems, the Tenets of a Minute Philosopher, who is himself according to his own Principles an Organ play'd on by sensible Objects, a Ball bandied about by Appetites, and Passions: So subtile is he as to be able to maintain all this by artful Reasonings: So sharp-sighted and penetrating to the very Bottom of Things as to find out, that the most interestèd occult Cunning is the only true Wisdom. To compleat his Character, this curious Piece of Clock-Work, having no Principle of Action within it self, and denying that it hath or can have any one free Thought or Motion, sets up for the Patron of Liberty, and earnestly contends for *Free-thinking*. *Crito* had no sooner made an end, but *Lysicles* address'd himself to *Euphranor* and me: *Crito*, said he, has taken a world of Pains, but convinc'd me only of one single Point, to wit, That I must despair of Convincing him. Never did I, in the whole Course of my Life, meet with a Man so deeply immerse'd in Prejudice; let who will pull him out for me. But I entertain better Hopes of you. I can answer, said I, for my self, that my Eyes and Ears are always open to Conviction: I am attentive to all that passës, and upon the whole shall form,

DIAL. whether right or wrong, a very impartial

II. Judgment. *Crito*, said *Euphranor*, is a more enterprising Man than I, thus to rate and lecture a Philosopher. For my part, I always find it easier to learn than to teach. I shall therefore beg your Assistance to rid me of some Scruples about the Tendency of your Opinions; which I find my self unable to master, though never so willing. This done, though we should not tread exactly in the same Steps, nor perhaps go the same Road; yet we shall not run in all Points diametrically opposite one to another.


XXVI. Tell me now, *Lysicles*, you who are a minute Observer of Things, whether a Shade be more agreeable at Morning or Evening, or Noon-day. *LYS.* Doubtless at Noon-day. *EUPH.* And what disposeth Men to Rest? *LYS.* Exercise. *EUPH.* When do Men make the greatest Fires? *LYS.* In the coldest Weather. *EUPH.* And what creates a Love for iced Liquors? *LYS.* Excessive Heat. *EUPH.* What if you raise a Pendulum to a great Height on one Side? *LYS.* It will, when left to it self, ascend so much the higher on the other. *EUPH.* It should seem, therefore, that Darkness ensues from Light, Rest from Motion, Heat from

from Cold, and in general that one Ex-DIAL. Extreme is the Consequence of another. II.

LYS. It should seem so. *EUPH.* And doth not this Observation hold in the civil as well as natural World? Doth not Power produce Licence, and Licence Power? Do not Whigs make Tories, and Tories Whigs? Bigots make Atheists, and Atheists Bigots? *LYS.* Granting this to be true. *EUPH.* Will it not hence follow that as we abhor Slavish Principles, we should avoid running into licentious ones? I am, and always was, a sincere Lover of Liberty, legal *English* Liberty; which I esteem a chief Blessing, Ornament, and Comfort of Life, and the great Prerogative of an *Englishman*. But is it not to be feared, that upon the Nation's Running into a Licentiousness which hath never been endured in any civilized Country, Men feeling the intolerable Evils of one Extreme may naturally fall into the other? You must allow, the Bulk of Mankind are not Philosophers like you and *Alciphron*. *LYS.* This I readily acknowledge. *EUPH.* I have another Scruple about the Tendency of your Opinions. Suppose you should prevail and destroy this Protestant Church and Clergy: How could you come at the Popish? I am credibly informed there is a great Number of Emissaries of the

DIAL. Church of *Rome* disguised in *England*:

II. Who can tell what Harvest a Clergy so numerous, so subtle, and so well furnished with Arguments to work on vulgar and uneducated Minds, may be able to make in a Country despoiled of all Religion, and feeling the Want of it? Who can tell whether the Spirit of Free-thinking ending with the Opposition, and the Vanity with the Distinction, when the whole Nation are alike Infidels, who can tell, I say, whether in such a Juncture the Men of Genius themselves may not affect a new Distinction, and be the first Converts to Popery? *LYS.* And suppose they should. Between Friends it would be no great Matter. These are our Maxims. In the first Place we hold it would be best to have no Religion at all. Secondly, we hold that all Religions are indifferent: If, therefore, upon Trial, we find the Country cannot do without a Religion, why not Popery as well as another? I know several ingenious Men of our Sect, who, if we had a Popish Prince on the Throne, would turn Papists to-morrow. This is a Paradox, but I shall explain it. A Prince whom we compliment with our Religion, to be sure must be grateful. *EUPH.* I understand you. But what becomes of Free-thinking all the while? *LYS.* Oh! we should

should have more than ever of that, for DIAL.
 we should keep it all to our selves. As II.
 for the Amusement of retailing it, the 
 Want of this would be largely compen-
 sated by solid Advantages of another Kind.
EUPH. It seems then, by this Account,
 the Tendency you observed in the Nation
 towards something great and new proves a
 Tendency towards Popery and Slavery.
LYS. Mistake us not, good *Euphranor*.
 The Thing first in our Intention is Con-
 summate Liberty: But if this will not do,
 and there must after all be such Things
 tolerated as Religion and Government,
 we are wisely willing to make the best of
 both. *CRI.* This puts me in mind of a
 Thought I have often had, That Minute
 Philosophers are Dupes of the Jesuits.
 The two most avowed, professed, busy
 Propagators of Infidelity in all Companies,
 and upon all Occasions, that I ever met
 with, were both Bigotted Papists; and
 being both Men of considerable Estates,
 suffered considerably on that Score; which
 it is wonderful their Thinking Disciples
 should never reflect upon. *Hegemon*, a
 most distinguished Writer among the
 Minute Philosophers, and Hero of the
 Sect, I am well assured, was once a Papist,
 and never heard that he professed any
 other Religion. I know that many of

DIAL. the Church of *Rome* abroad, are pleased
 II. with the Growth of Infidelity among us,
 as hoping it may make way for them.
 The Emissaries of *Rome* are known to
 have personated several other Sects, which
 from time to time have sprung up amongst
 us; and why not this of the Minute Phi-
 losophers, of all others the best calcula-
 ted to ruin both Church and State? I my
 self have known a Jesuit abroad talk a-
 mong *English* Gentlemen like a Free-
 thinker. I am credibly informed, that
 Jesuits, known to be such by the Minute
 Philosophers at home, are admitted into
 their Clubs: And I have observed them
 to approve, and speak better of the Je-
 suits, than of any other Clergy whatso-
 ever. Those who are not acquainted with
 the subtle Spirit, the refined Politics, and
 wonderful Oeconomy of that renowned
 Society, need only read the Account given
 of them by the Jesuit, *Inchofer*, in his
 Book *De Monarchia Solipsorum*; and those
 who are, will not be surprized they should
 be able to make Dupes of our Minute
 Philosophers: Dupes, I say, for I can
 never think they suspect they are only
 Tools to serve the Ends of cunninger Men
 than themselves. They seem to me drunk
 and giddy with a false Notion of Liberty,
 and spur'd on by this Principle to make
 mad

mad Experiments on their Country, they agree only in pulling down all that stands in their Way; without any concerted Scheme, and without caring or knowing what to erect in its stead. To hear them, as I have often done, descant on the moral Virtues, resolve them into Shame, then laugh at Shame as a Weakness, admire the unconfined Lives of Savages, despise all Order and Decency of Education; one would think the Intention of these Philosophers was, when they had pruned and weeded the Notions of their Fellow-Subjects, and divested them of their Prejudices, to strip them of their Clothes, and fill the Country with naked Followers of Nature, enjoying all the Privileges of Brutality. Here *Crito* made a pause, and fixed his Eyes on *Alciphron*, who during this whole Conversation had sat thoughtful and attentive, without saying a Word; and with an Air, one while dissatisfied at what *Lyficles* advanced, another, serene and pleased, seeming to approve some better Thought of his own. But the Day being now far spent, *Alciphron* proposed to adjourn the Argument till the following; when, said he, I shall set Matters on a new Foundation, and in so full and clear a Light, as, I doubt

DIAL.
II.

DIAL. not, will give intire Satisfaction. So
II. we changed the Discourse, and after a
Repast upon cold Provisions, took a walk
on the Strand, and in the cool of the
Evening returned to *Crito's*.






THE THIRD DIALOGUE.


I. Alciphron's account of Honour. II. Character and Conduct of Men of Honour. III. Sense of moral Beauty. IV. The *Honestum* or τὸ καλὸν of the Ancients. V. Taste for moral Beauty whether a sure Guide or Rule. VI. Minute Philosophers ravished with the Abstract Beauty of Virtue. VII. Their Virtue alone disinterested and heroic. VIII. Beauty of sensible Objects what and how perceived? IX. The Idea of Beauty explained by Painting and Architecture. X. Beauty of the moral System, wherein it consists. XI. It supposeth a Providence. XII. Influence of τὸ καλὸν and τὸ πρέπον. XIII. Enthusiasm of Cratylus compared with the Sentiments of Aristotle. XIV. Compared with the Stoical Principles. XV. Minute Philosophers, their Talent for Raillery and Ridicule. XVI. The Wisdom of those who make Virtue alone its own Reward.

THE

DIAL.

III.


I.  HE following Day as we fate round the Tea-table, in a Summer Parlour which looks into the Garden, *Alciphron* after the first Dish turned down his Cup, and reclining back in his Chair proceeded as follows. Above all the Sects upon Earth it is the peculiar Privilege of ours, not to be tied down by any Principles. While other Philosophers profess a fervile Adherence to certain Tenets, ours assert a noble Freedom, differing not only one from another, but very often the same Man from himself. Which Method of Proceeding, beside other Advantages, hath this annexed to it, that we are of all Men the hardest to confute. You may, perhaps, confute a particular Tenet, but then this affects only him who maintains it, and so long only as he maintains it. Some of our Sect dogmatize more than others, and in some more than other Points. The Doctrine of the Usefulness of Vice is a Point wherein we are not all agreed. Some of us are great Admirers of Virtue. With others the Points of Vice and Virtue are problematical. For my own part, though I think the Doctrine maintained Yesterday by *Lysicles* an ingenious Speculation; yet, upon the whole, there are divers Reasons which

incline me to depart from it, and rather DIAL.
 to espouse the virtuous side of the Question; III.
 with the smallest, perhaps, but the most 
 contemplative and laudable Part of our
 Sect. It seemeth, I say, after a nice In-
 quiry and balancing on both sides, that we
 ought to prefer Virtue to Vice; and that
 such Preference would contribute both to
 the public Weal, and the Reputation of
 our Philosophers. You are to know then,
 we have among us several that without
 one Grain of Religion, are Men of the
 nicest Honour, and therefore Men of Vir-
 tue, because Men of Honour. Honour is a
 noble unpolluted Source of Virtue, with-
 out the least Mixture of Fear, Interest,
 or Superstition. It hath all the Advan-
 tages, without the Evils, which attend Re-
 ligion. It is the Mark of a great and fine
 Soul, and is to be found among Persons of
 Rank and Breeding. It affects the Court,
 the Senate, and the Camp, and in general
 every Rendezvous of People of Fashion.
EUPH. You say then, That Honour is the
 Source of Virtue. *ALC.* I do. *EUPH.*
 Can a thing be the Source of it self?
ALC. It cannot. *EUPH.* The Source,
 therefore, is distinguished from that of
 which it is the Source. *ALC.* Doubtless.
EUPH. Honour then is one thing, and
 Virtue another, *ALC.* I grant it. Virtuous

DIAL.ous Actions are the Effect, and Honour is
 III. the Source or Cause of that Effect. *EUPH.*


— Tell me. Is Honour the Will producing those Actions, or the final Cause for which they are produced; or right Reason, which is their Rule and Limit, or the Object about which they are conversant? Or do you by the Word *Honour* understand a Faculty, or Appetite? All which are supposed, in one Sense or other, to be the Source of Humane Actions. *ALC.* Nothing of all this. *EUPH.* Be pleased then to give me some Notion or Definition of it. *Alciphron* having mused a while answered, that he defined Honour to be a Principle of virtuous Actions. To which *Euphranor* replied; if I understand it rightly, the Word Principle is variously taken. Sometimes by Principles, we mean the Parts of which a Whole is composed, and into which it may be resolved. Thus the Elements are said to be Principles of compound Bodies. And thus Words, Syllables, and Letters are the Principles of Speech. Sometimes by Principle we mean a small particular Seed, the Growth or gradual Unfolding of which doth produce an organized Body, animal or vegetable, in its proper Size and Shape. Principles at other times are supposed to be certain fundamental Theorems in Arts and Sciences, in Religion and Politics.

Let


Let me know in which of these Senses, DIAL.
 or whether it be in some other Sense, III.
 that you understand the Word, when you 
 say, Honour is a Principle of Virtue.
 To this *Alciphron* replied, that for his
 part, he meant it in none of those Senses,
 but defined Honour to be a certain Ardour
 or Enthusiasm that glowed in the Breast of
 a gallant Man. Upon this, *Euphranor* ob-
 served, it was always admitted to put the
 Definition in place of the thing defined.
 Is this allowed, said he, or not? *ALC.*
 It is. *EUPH.* May we not therefore say,
 that a Man of Honour is a warm Man,
 or an Enthusiast? *Alciphron* hearing this,
 declared, that such Exactness was to no
 purpose; that Pedants, indeed, may dis-
 pute and define, but could never reach
 that high Sense of Honour which distin-
 guished the fine Gentleman, and was a
 thing rather to be felt than explained.

II. *Crito*, perceiving that *Alciphron*
 could not bear being pressed any farther
 on that Article, and willing to give some
 Satisfaction to *Euphranor*, said, That of
 himself indeed he should not undertake to
 explain so nice a Point; but he would re-
 tail to them part of a Conversation he
 once heard between *Nicander* a Minute
 Philosopher, and *Meneclès* a Christian,
 upon

DIAL. upon the same Subject, which was for
 III. Substance as follows. *M.* From what
 Principle are you Gentlemen virtuous?
N. From Honour. We are Men of Honour.
M. May not a Man of Honour debauch another's Wife, or get drunk, or sell a Vote, or refuse to pay his Debts, without lessening or tainting his Honour?
N. He may have the Vices and Faults of a Gentleman: But is obliged to pay Debts of Honour, that is, all such as are contracted by Play. *M.* Is not your Man of Honour always ready to resent Affronts, and engage in Duels?
N. He is ready to demand and give Gentleman's Satisfaction upon all proper Occasions. *M.* It should seem by this Account, that to ruin Tradesmen, break Faith to one's own Wife, corrupt another Man's, take Bribes, cheat the Public, cut a Man's Throat for a Word, are all Points consistent with your Principle of Honour. *N.* It cannot be denied that we are Men of Gallantry, Men of Fire, Men who know the World, and all that. *M.* It seems therefore that Honour among Infidels is like Honesty among Pirates: something confined to themselves, and which the Fraternity perhaps may find their Account in, but every one else should be on his guard against. By this Dialogue, continued
Crito,

Crito, a Man who lives out of the grand DIAL.
Monde, may be enabled to form some III.
 Notion of what the World calls Ho- 
 nour, and Men of Honour. *EUPH.* I
 must intreat you not to put me off with
Nicander's Opinion, whom I know nothing
 of: but rather give me your own Judg-
 ment, drawn from your own Observation
 upon Men of Honour. *CRI.* If I must
 pronounce, I can very sincerely assure you
 that by all I have heard or seen, I could
 never find, that Honour, considered as a
 Principle distinct from Conscience, Reli-
 gion, Reason, and Virtue, was more than
 an empty Name. And I do verily believe,
 that those who build upon that Notion
 have less Virtue than other Men; and
 that what they have or seem to have, is
 owing to Fashion, (being of the reputable
 Kind) if not to a Conscience early imbued
 with religious Principles, and afterwards
 retaining a Tincture from them, without
 knowing it. These two Principles seem
 to account for all that looks like Virtue
 in those Gentlemen. Your Men of Fashion,
 in whom animal Life abounds, a sort of
 Bullies in Morality, who disdain to have
 it thought they are afraid of Conscience;
 these descant much upon Honour, and
 affect to be called Men of Honour, rather
 than conscientious or honest Men. But,
 by

DIAL. by 'all that I could ever observe, this specious Character, where there is nothing of Conscience or Religion underneath, to give it Life and Substance, is no better than a Meteor or painted Cloud. *EUPH.* I had a confused Notion that Honour was something nearly connected with Truth: and that Men of Honour were the greatest Enemies to all Hypocrisy, Fallacy, and Disguise. *CRI.* So far from that, an Infidel, who sets up for the nicest Honour, shall, without the least grain of Faith or Religion, pretend himself a Christian, take any Test, join in any Act of Worship, kneel, pray, receive the Sacrament to serve an Interest. The same Person, without any Impeachment of his Honour, shall most solemnly declare and promise, in the face of God and the World, that he will love his Wife, and forsaking all others, keep only to her, when at the same time it is certain, he intends never to perform one Tittle of his Vow; and convinceth the whole World of this as soon as he gets her in his Power, and her Fortune, for the sake of which this Man of untainted Honour makes no Scruple to cheat and lye. *EUPH.* We have a Notion here in the Country, that it was of all things most odious, and a Matter of much Risque and Peril, to give the Lye

to a Man of Honour. *CRI.* It is very *DIAL.* true. He abhors to take the Lye, but not *III.* to tell it. 

III. Alciphron, having heard all this with great Composure of Mind and Countenance, spake as follows. You are not to think, that our greatest Strength lies in our greatest Number, Libertines, and meer Men of Honour. No: we have among us Philosophers of a very different Character, Men of curious Contemplation, not governed by such gross things as Sense and Custom, but of an abstracted Virtue and sublime Morals: and the less religious the more virtuous. For Virtue of the high and disinterested Kind, no Man is so well qualified as an Infidel, it being a mean and selfish thing to be virtuous through Fear or Hope. The Notion of a Providence, and future State of Rewards and Punishments, may indeed tempt or scare Men of abject Spirit into Practices contrary to the natural Bent of their Souls, but will never produce a true and genuine Virtue. To go to the bottom of things, to analyse Virtue into its first Principles, and fix a Scheme of Duty on its true Basis, you must understand, that there is an Idea of Beauty natural to the Mind of Man. This all Men desire, this they are pleased and

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DIAL. delighted with for its own sake, purely
 III. from an Instinct of Nature. A Man needs
 no Arguments to make him discern and
 approve what is beautiful: it strikes at
 first Sight, and attracts without a Reason.
 And as this Beauty is found in the Shape
 and Form of corporeal Things; so also is
 there analogous to it, a Beauty of another
 Kind, an Order, a Symmetry, and Comeli-
 ness in the moral World. And as the Eye
 perceiveth the one, so the Mind doth, by a
 certain interior Sense, perceive the other;
 which Sense, Talent, or Faculty, is ever
 quickest and purest in the noblest Minds.
 Thus as by Sight I discern the Beauty of
 a Plant or an Animal, even so the Mind
 apprehends the moral Excellence, the
 Beauty, and Decorum of Justice and
 Temperance. And as we readily pro-
 nounce a Dress becoming or an Attitude
 graceful, we can, with the same free un-
 tutored Judgment, at once declare, whe-
 ther this or that Conduct or Action be
 comely and beautiful. To relish this kind
 of Beauty, there must be a delicate and
 fine Taste: But where there is this natu-
 ral Taste, nothing further is wanting,
 either as a Principle to convince, or as a
 Motive to induce Men to the Love of Vir-
 tue. And more or less there is of this
 Taste or Sense in every Creature that hath
 Reason.

Reason. All rational Beings are by nature social. They are drawn one towards another by natural Affections. They unite and incorporate into Families, Clubs, Parties, and Commonwealths by mutual Sympathy. As by means of the sensitive Soul, our several distinct Parts and Members do consent towards the animal Functions, and are connected in one Whole: Even so, the several Parts of these rational Systems, or Bodies Politic, by virtue of this moral or interior Sense, are held together, have a Fellow-feeling, do succour and protect each other, and jointly cooperate towards the same End. Hence that Joy in Society, that Propension towards doing good to our Kind, that Gratulation and Delight in beholding the virtuous Deeds of other Men, or in reflecting on our own. By Contemplation of the Fitness and Order of the Parts of a moral System, regularly operating, and knit together by benevolent Affections, the Mind of Man attaineth to the highest Notion of Beauty, Excellence, and Perfection. Seized and rapt with this sublime Idea, our Philosophers do infinitely despise and pity whoever shall propose or accept any other Motive to Virtue. Interest is a mean ungenerous thing, destroying the Merit of Virtue: and Falshood of every kind is inconsistent with the genuine Spirit

DIAL. of Philofophy. *CRI.* The Love there-

III. fore that you bear to moral Beauty, and your Paſſion for abſtracted Truth, will not ſuffer you to think with Patience of thoſe fraudulent Impoſitions upon Mankind, Providence, the Immortality of the Soul, and a future Retribution of Rewards and Punishments; which under the Notion of promoting, do, it ſeems, deſtroy all true Virtue, and at the ſame time contradict and diſparage your noble Theories, manifeſtly tending to the Perturbation and Diſquiet of Mens Minds, and filling them with fruitleſs Hopes, and vain Terrors.

ALC. Mens firſt Thoughts and natural Notions are the beſt in moral Matters. And there is no need that Mankind ſhould be preached, or reaſoned, or frightened into Virtue, a thing ſo natural and congenial to every Humane Soul. Now if this be the Caſe, as it certainly is, it follows that all the Ends of Society are ſecured without Religion, and that an Infidel bids fair to be the moſt virtuous Man, in a true, ſublime, and heroic Senſe.

IV. *EUPH.* O *Alciphron!* while you talk, I feel an Affection in my Soul, like the Trembling of one Lute upon ſtriking the uniſon Strings of another. Doubtleſs there is a Beauty of the Mind, a Charm in

Virtue, a Symmetry and Proportion in the moral World. This moral Beauty was known to the Ancients by the Name of *Honestum*, or τὸ καλόν. And in order to know its Force and Influence, it may not be amiss to inquire, what it was understood to be, and what Light it was placed in by those who first considered it, and gave it a Name. Τὸ καλόν, according to *Aristotle*, is the ἐπαινετόν, or laudable: according to *Plato*, it is the ἡδύ, or ὠφέλιμον, pleasant, or profitable, which is meant with respect to a reasonable Mind, and its true Interest. Now I would fain know whether a Mind, which considers an Action as laudable, be not carried beyond the bare Action it self, to regard the Opinion of others concerning it? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* And whether this be a sufficient Ground or Principle of Virtue, for a Man to act upon, when he thinks himself removed from the Eye and Observation of every other intelligent Being? *ALC.* It seems not. *EUPH.* Again, I ask whether a Man, who doth a thing pleasant or profitable as such, might not be supposed to forbear doing it, or even to do the contrary, upon the prospect of greater Pleasure or Profit? *ALC.* He might. *EUPH.* Doth it not follow from hence, that the Beauty of Virtue, or τὸ καλόν, in

DIAL. either *Aristotle's* or *Plato's* Sense, is not a
 III. sufficient Principle or Ground, to engage
 { sensual and worldly-minded Men in the
 Practice of it? *ALC.* What then?
EUPH. Why, then it will follow that
 Hope of Reward and Fear of Punishment
 are highly expedient to cast the Balance
 of Pleasant and Profitable on the Side of
 Virtue, and thereby very much conduce to
 the Benefit of Humane Society. *Alciphron*
 upon this appealed: Gentlemen, said he,
 you are Witnesses of this unfair Proceed-
 ing of *Euphranor*, who argues against us,
 from Explications given by *Plato* and
Aristotle of the Beauty of Virtue, which are
 things we have nothing to say to; the
 Philosophers of our Sect abstracting from
 all Praise, Pleasure, and Interest, when
 they are enamoured and transported with
 that sublime Idea. I beg pardon, replied
Euphranor, for supposing the Minute Phi-
 losophers of our Days think like those
 ancient Sages. But you must tell me, *Al-
 ciphron*, since you do not think fit, to adopt
 the Sense of *Plato* or *Aristotle*, what Sense
 it is in which you understand the Beauty
 of Virtue? Define it, explain it, make me
 to understand your Meaning, that so we
 may argue about the same thing, without
 which we can never come to a Conclu-
 sion,

V. *ALC.*

V. *ALC.* Some things are better understood by Definitions and Descriptions: but I have always observed, that those who would define, explain, and dispute about this Point, make the least of it. Moral Beauty is of so peculiar and abstracted a nature, something so subtile, fine, and fugacious, that it will not bear being handled and inspected, like every gross and common Subject. You will, therefore, pardon me, if I stand upon my Philosophic Liberty; and choose rather to intrench my Self, within the general and indefinite Sense, rather than, by entering into a precise and particular Explication of this Beauty, perchance lose sight of it; or give you some Hold whereon to cavil, and infer, and raise Doubts, Queries, and Difficulties about a Point as clear as the Sun, when nobody reasons upon it. *EUPH.* How say you, *Alciphron*, is that Notion clearest when it is not considered? *ALC.* I say, it is rather to be felt than understood, a certain *je ne sçay quoy*. An Object, not of the discursive Faculty, but of a peculiar Sense, which is properly called the moral Sense, being adapted to the Perception of moral Beauty, as the Eye to Colours, or the Ear to Sounds. *EUPH.* That Men have certain instinctive Sensations or Passions from Nature, which make them

DIAL. amiable and useful to each other, I am
 III. clearly convinced. Such are a Fellow-feeling with the Distressed, a Tendernefs for our Offspring, an Affection towards our Friends, our Neighbours, and our Country, an Indignation againft things bafe, cruel, or unjust. Thefe Paſſions are implanted in the Humane Soul, with feveral other Fears and Appetites, Aversions and Defires, ſome of which are ſtrongeſt and uppermoſt in one Mind, others in another. Should it not therefore ſeem a very uncertain Guide in Morals, for a Man to follow his Paſſion or inward Feeling? And would not this Rule infallibly lead different Men different ways, according to the Prevalency of this or that Appetite or Paſſion? *ALC.* I do not deny it. *EUPH.* And will it not follow from hence, that Duty and Virtue are in a fairer way of being praſtiſed, if Men are led by Reason and Judgment; balancing low and ſenſual Pleaſures with thoſe of a higher Kind, comparing preſent Loſſes with future Gains, and the Uneaſineſs and Diſguſt of every Vice, with the delightful Practice of the oppoſite Virtue, and the pleaſing Reflexions and Hopes which attend it? Or, can there be a ſtronger Motive to Virtue, than the ſhewing that conſidered in all Lights it is every Man's true Intereſt?

VI. *ALC.*

VI. *ALC.* I tell you, *Euphranor*, we DIAL.
 condemn the Virtue of that Man, who III.
 computes and deliberates, and must have
 a Reason for being virtuous. The refined
 Moralists of our Sect are ravished and
 transported with the abstract Beauty of
 Virtue. They disdain all forinsecal Mo-
 tives to it; and love Virtue only for Vir-
 tue's sake. Oh Rapture! Oh Enthusiasm!
 Oh the Quintessence of Beauty! Methinks
 I could dwell for ever on this Contem-
 plation. But rather than entertain my
 self, I must endeavour to convince you.
 Make an Experiment on the first Man
 you meet. Propose a villanous or un-
 just Action. Take his first Sense of the
 Matter, and you shall find he detests it.
 He may, indeed, be afterwards misled by
 Arguments, or overpowered by Tempta-
 tion; but his original, unpremeditated, and
 genuine Thoughts, are just and orthodox.
 How can we account for this but by a moral
 Sense, which, left to it self, hath as quick
 and true a Perception of the Beauty and
 Deformity of Humane Actions, as the Eye
 hath of Colours. *EUPH.* May not this
 be sufficiently accounted for, by Con-
 science, Affection, Passion, Education,
 Reason, Custom, Religion, which Princi-
 ples and Habits, for ought I know, may
 be what you metaphorically call a Moral
 Sense?


DIAL. Sense? *ALC.* What I call a Moral Sense, is
 III. strictly, properly, and truly such, and in
 ~~~~~ Kind different from all those things you  
 enumerate. It is what all Men have, though  
 all may not observe it. Upon this, *Euphro-*  
*nor* smiled, and said, *Alciphron* has made  
 Discoveries where I least expected it. For,  
 said he, in regard to every other Point, I  
 should hope to learn from him: but for  
 the Knowledge of my self, or the Faculties  
 and Powers of my own Mind, I should  
 have looked at home. And there I might  
 have looked long enough, without finding  
 this new Talent, which even now after be-  
 ing tutored I cannot comprehend. For  
*Alciphron*, I must needs say, is too Sublime  
 and Ænigmatical upon a Point, which of  
 all others ought to be most clearly under-  
 stood. I have often heard that your deepest  
 Adepts and oldest Professors in Science are  
 the obscurest. *Lysicles* is young, and speaks  
 plain. Would he but favour us with his  
 Sense of this Point, it might perhaps prove  
 more upon a Level with my Apprehension.

VII. *Lysicles* shook his Head, and in a  
 grave and earnest manner addressed the  
 Company. Gentlemen, said he, *Alciphron*  
 stands upon his own Legs. I have no part  
 in these refined Notions he is at present en-  
 gaged to defend. If I must subdue my  
 Passions,

Passions, abstract, contemplate, be ena-D I A L.  
 moured of Virtue; in a word, if I must III.  
 be an Enthusiast: I owe so much Deference }  
 to the Laws of my Country, as to choose  
 being an Enthusiast in their way. Be-  
 sides, it is better being so for some End than  
 for none. This Doctrine hath all the so-  
 lid Inconveniencies, without the amusing  
 Hopes and Prospects of the Christian. *ALC.*  
 I never counted on *Lysicles* for my Second  
 in this Point; which after all doth not need  
 his Assistance or Explication. All Subjects  
 ought not to be treated in the same man-  
 ner. The way of Definition and Divi-  
 sion is dry and pedantic. Besides, the  
 Subject is sometimes too obscure, sometimes  
 too simple for this Method. One while  
 we know too little of a Point, another  
 too much, to make it plainer by Discourse.  
*CRI.* To hear *Alciphron* talk, puts me in  
 mind of that ingenious *Greek*, who ha-  
 ving wrapt a Man's Brother up in a Cloke,  
 asked him whether he knew that Person?  
 being ready, either by keeping on, or pul-  
 ling off the Cloke, to confute his Answer,  
 whatever it should be. For my part, I be-  
 lieve, if Matters were fairly stated, that  
 rational Satisfaction, that Peace of Mind,  
 that inward Comfort, and conscientious  
 Joy, which a good Christian finds in good  
 Actions, would not be found to fall short  
of

DIAL. of all the Ecstasy, Rapture, and Enthusiasm

III. supposed to be the Effect of that high and  
 { undescribed Principle. In earnest can any  
 Ecstasy be higher, any Rapture more affecting,  
 than that which springs from the Love of God and Man,  
 from a Conscience void of Offence, and an inward Discharge of  
 Duty, with the secret Delight, Trust, and Hope that attend it? *ALC.* O *Euphranor*, we Votaries of Truth do not envy, but pity, the groundless Joys and mistaken Hopes of a Christian. And, as for Conscience and rational Pleasure, How can we allow a Conscience without allowing a vindictive Providence? Or how can we suppose, the Charm of Virtue consists in any Pleasure, or Benefit attending virtuous Actions, without giving great Advantages to the Christian Religion, which, it seems excites its Believers to Virtue by the highest Interests and Pleasures in Reverſion. Alas! shou'd we grant this, there would be a Door opened to all those rusty Declaimers upon the Necessity and Usefulness of the great Points of Faith, the Immortality of the Soul, a Future State, Rewards and Punishments, and the like exploded Conceits; which, according to our System and Principles, may perhaps produce a low, popular, interested Kind of Virtue, but must absolutely destroy and extinguish it in the sublime and heroic Sense.


VIII. *EUPH.* What you now say is D I A L.  
 very intelligible: I wish I understood your III.  
 main Principle as well. *ALC.* And are   
 you then in earnest at a loss? Is it possible  
 you should have no Notion of Beauty, or  
 that having it you should not know it to  
 be amiable, amiable I say, in it self, and  
 for it self? *EUPH.* Pray tell me, *Alci-*  
*phron*, are all Mankind agreed in the No-  
 tion of a beauteous Face? *ALC.* Beauty  
 in Humane Kind seems to be of a more  
 mixt and various Nature: forasmuch as  
 the Passions, Sentiments, and Qualities of  
 the Soul being seen through and blending  
 with the Features, work differently on dif-  
 ferent Minds, as the Sympathy is more or  
 less. But with regard to other things is  
 there no steady Principle of Beauty? Is  
 there upon Earth a Humane Mind with-  
 out the Idea of Order, Harmony, and Pro-  
 portion? *EUPH.* O *Alciphron*, it is my  
 Weakness that I am apt to be lost in Ab-  
 stractions and Generalities, but a particular  
 thing is better suited to my Faculties. I  
 find it easy to consider and keep in View  
 the Objects of Sense; let us therefore try  
 to discover what their Beauty is, or where-  
 in it consists; and so, by the help of these  
 sensible things, as a Scale or Ladder, ascend  
 to moral and intellectual Beauty. Be pleased  
 then to inform me, what it is we call  
 Beauty

DIAL. Beauty in the Objects of Sense? *ALC.*

III. Every one knows Beauty is that which  
 pleases. *EUPH.* There is then Beauty in  
 the Smell of a Rose, or the Taste of an  
 Apple. *ALC.* By no means. Beauty is,  
 to speak properly, perceived only by the  
 Eye. *EUPH.* It cannot therefore be defi-  
 ned in gneral that which pleaseth. *ALC.*  
 I grant it cannot. *EUPH.* How then  
 shall we limit or define it? *Alciphron*, after  
 a short Pause, said, that Beauty consisted  
 in a certain Symmery or Proportion plea-  
 sing to the Eye. *EUPH.* Is this Proportion  
 one and the same in all things, or it is diffe-  
 rent in different Kinds of Things? *ALC.*  
 Different doubtless. The Proportions of an  
 Ox would not be beautiful in an Horse.  
 And we observe also in things Inanimate,  
 that the Beauty of a Table, a Chair, a  
 Door, consists in different Proportions.  
*EUPH.* Doth not this Proportion imply  
 the Relation of one thing to another? *ALC.*  
 It doth. *EUPH.* And are not these Rela-  
 tions founded in Size and Shape? *ALC.*  
 They are. *EUPH.* And to make the Pro-  
 portions just, must not those mutual Rela-  
 tions of Size and Shape in the Parts be  
 such, as shall make the whole compleat  
 and perfect in its Kind? *ALC.* I grant  
 they must. *EUPH.* Is not a thing said to  
 be perfect in its Kind, when it answers the  
 End



End for which it was made? *ALC.* It is. *DIAL.*  
*EUPH.* The Parts, therefore, in true Pro- III.

portions must be related, and adjusted to  one another, as that they may best conspire to the Use and Operation of the Whole.

*ALC.* It seems so. *EUPH.* But the comparing Parts one with another, the considering them as belonging to one Whole, and the referring this Whole to its Use or End, should seem the Work of Reason: Should it not? *ALC.* It should. *EUPH.*

Proportions therefore are not, strictly speaking, perceived by the Sense of Sight, but only by Reason through the Means of Sight. *ALC.* This I grant. *EUPH.* Consequently Beauty, in your Sense of it, is an Object, not of the Eye, but of the Mind.

*ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* The Eye, therefore, alone cannot see that a Chair is handsom, or a Door well proportioned. *ALC.* It seems to follow; but I am not clear as to this Point. *EUPH.* Let us see if there

be any Difficulty in it. Could the Chair you sit on, think you, be reckon'd well proportioned or handsom, if it had not such a Height, Breadth, Wideness, and was not so far reclined as to afford a convenient Seat? *ALC.* It could not. *EUPH.* The Beauty, therefore, or Symmetry of a Chair cannot be apprehended but by knowing its use, and comparing its Figure with  
 that

DIAL. that use, which cannot be done by the Eye  
 III. alone, but is the Effect of Judgment. It  
 is therefore, one thing to see an Object,  
 and another to discern its Beauty. *ALC.*  
 I admit this to be true.

IX. *EUPH.* The Architects judge a Door to be of a beautiful Proportion, when its Height is double of the Breadth. But if you should invert a well-proportion'd Door making its Breadth become the Height, and its Height the Breadth, the Figure would still be the same, but without that Beauty in one Situation, which it had in another. What can be the Cause of this, but that in the forementioned Supposition, the Door would not yield a convenient Entrance to Creatures of a Humane Figure? But, if in any other Part of the Universe, there should be supposed rational Animals of an inverted Stature, they must be supposed to invert the Rule for Proportion of Doors: and to them that would appear beautiful, which to us was disagreeable. *ALC.* Against this I have no Objection. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Alciphron*, is there not something truly decent and beautiful in Drefs? *ALC.* Doubtless there is. *EUPH.* Are any likelier to give us an Idea of this Beauty in Drefs, than Painters and Sculptors, whose proper Business and Study  
 it

it is, to aim at graceful Representations? DIAL. *ALC.* I believe not. *EUPH.* Let us then III. examine the Draperies of the great Masters in these Arts: How, for instance, they use to clothe a Matron, or a Man of Rank. Cast an eye on those Figures: (said he, pointing to some Prints after *Raphael* and *Guido*, that hung upon the Wall) what Appearance, do you think, an *English* Courtier or Magistrate, with his *Gothic*, succinct, plaited Garment, and his full-bottom'd Wig; or one of our Ladies in her unnatural Dress, pinched, and stiffened, and enlarged with Hoops and Whale-bone, and Buckram, must make; among those Figures so decently clad in Draperies, that fall into such a variety of natural, easy, and ample Folds; that appear with so much Dignity and Simplicity; that cover the Body without incumbering it, and adorn without altering the Shape? *ALC.* Truly, I think they must make a very ridiculous Appearance. *EUPH.* And what do you think this proceeds from? Whence is it that the Eastern Nations, the *Greeks*, and the *Romans*, naturally ran into the most becoming Dresses; while our *Gothic* Gentry, after so many Centuries racking their Inventions, mending, and altering, and improving, and whirling about in a perpetual Rotation of Fashions, have never

DIAL. yet had the Luck to stumble on any that was


III. not absurd and ridiculous? Is it not from  
 hence, that instead of consulting Use, Reason, and Convenience, they abandon themselves to irregular Fancy, the unnatural Parent of Monsters? Whereas the Ancients, considering the Use and End of Dress, made it subservient to the Freedom, Ease, and Convenience of the Body, and, having no Notion of mending or changing the natural Shape, they aimed only at shewing it with Decency and Advantage. And, if this be so, are we not to conclude that the Beauty of Dress depends on its Subserviency to certain Ends and Uses?

ALC. This appears to be true. EUPH. This subordinate relative Nature of Beauty, perhaps will be yet plainer, if we examine the respective Beauties of a Horse and a Pillar. *Virgil's* Description of the former is,

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*Illi ardua cervix,  
 Argutumque caput, brevis alvus, obesaque terga,  
 Luxuriatque toris animosum pectus.*

Now I would fain know, whether the Perfections and Uses of a Horse may not be reduced to these three Points, Courage, Strength, and Speed? and whether each of the Beauties enumerated doth not occasion, or betoken one of these Perfections? After

ter the same manner, if we inquire into DIAL.  
 the Parts and Proportions of a beautiful III.  
 Pillar, we shall perhaps find them answer   
 to this same Idea. Those who have con-  
 sidered the Theory of Architecture, tell  
 us \*, the Proportions of the three *Grecian*  
 Orders were taken from the Humane Body,  
 as the most beautiful and perfect Produc-  
 tion of Nature. Hence were derived those  
 graceful Ideas of Columns, which had a  
 Character of Strength without Clumsiness,  
 or of Delicacy without Weakness. Those  
 beautiful Proportions were, I say, taken  
 originally from Nature, which, in her  
 Creatures, as hath been already observed,  
 referreth them to some End, Use, or Design.  
 The *Gonfiessa* also, or Swelling, and the  
 Diminution of a Pillar, is it not in such  
 Proportion, as to make it appear strong and  
 light at the same time? In the same manner,  
 must not the whole Entablature, with its  
 Projections, be so proportioned as to seem  
 great but not heavy, light but not little;  
 inasmuch as a Deviation into either Ex-  
 treme would thwart that Reason and Use of  
 Things, wherein their Beauty is founded,  
 and to which it is subordinate? The En-  
 tablature, and all its Parts and Ornaments,  
 Architrave, Freeze, Cornice, Triglyphs,

\* See the learned Patriarch of *Aquileia's* Commentary  
 on *Vitruvius*, l. 4. c. 1.

DIAL. Metopes, Modiglions, and the rest, have  
 III. each an Use, or Appearance of Use, in giving Firmness and Union to the Building, in protecting it from the Weather, and casting off the Rain, in representing the Ends of Beams with their Intervals, the Production of Rafters, and so forth. And if we consider the graceful Angles in Frontispieces, the Spaces between the Columns, or the Ornaments of their Capitels; shall we not find, that their Beauty riseth from the Appearance of Use, or the Imitation of natural Things, whose Beauty is originally founded on the same Principle? which is, indeed, the grand Distinction between *Græcian* and *Gothic* Architecture; the latter being fantastical, and for the most part founded neither in Nature, nor in Reason, in Necessity nor Use, the Appearance of which accounts for all the Beauty, Grace, and Ornament of the other. *CRI.* What *Euphranor* has said confirms the Opinion I always entertained, that the Rules of Architecture were founded, as all other Arts which flourished among the *Greeks*, in Truth, and Nature, and good Sense. But the Ancients, who, from a thorough Consideration of the Grounds and Principles of Art, formed their Idea of Beauty, did not always confine themselves strictly to the same Rules and Proportions: But, whenever

ever the particular Distance, Position, Ele-  
 vation, or Dimension of the Fabric, or its  
 Parts seem'd to require it, made no Scruple  
 to depart from them, without deserting the  
 original Principles of Beauty, which go-  
 vern'd whatever Deviations they made.  
 This Latitude or License might not, per-  
 haps, be safely trusted with most modern  
 Architects, who in their bold Sallies seem  
 to act without Aim or Design; and to be  
 govern'd by no Idea, no Reason, or Princi-  
 ple of Art, but pure Caprice, join'd with  
 a thorough Contempt of that noble Sim-  
 plicity of the Ancients, without which  
 there can be no Unity, Gracefulness, or  
 Grandeur in their Works; which of con-  
 sequence must serve only to disfigure and  
 dishonour the Nation, being so many Mo-  
 numents to future Ages of the Opulence  
 and ill Taste of the present; which, it is  
 to be fear'd, would succeed as wretchedly  
 and make as mad Work in other Affairs,  
 were Men to follow, instead of Rules,  
 Precepts, and Models, their own Taste and  
 first Thoughts of Beauty. *ALC.* I should  
 now, methinks, be glad to see a little more  
 distinctly, the Use and Tendency of this Di-  
 gression upon Architecture. *EUPH.* Was  
 not Beauty the very thing we inquired  
 after? *ALC.* It was. *EUPH.* What  
 think you, *Alciphron*, can the Appearance

DIAL. of a thing please at this Time, and in this


III. Place, which pleased two thousand Years ago, and two thousand Miles off, without some real Principle of Beauty? *ALC.* It cannot. *EUPH.* And is not this the Case with respect to a just Piece of Architecture? *ALC.* No body denies it. *EUPH.* Architecture, the noble Offspring of Judgment and Fancy, was gradually formed in the most polite and knowing Countries of *Asia, Egypt, Greece, and Italy.* It was cherished and esteemed by the most flourishing States, and most renowned Princes, who with vast Expence improved and brought it to Perfection. It seems, above all other Arts, peculiarly conversant about Order, Proportion, and Symmetry. May it not therefore be supposed on all accounts, most likely to help us to some rational Notion of the *je ne sçay quoy* in Beauty? And, in effect, have we not learned from this Digression, that as there is no Beauty without Proportion, so Proportions are to be esteemed just and true, only as they are relative to some certain Use or End, their Aptitude and Subordination to which End is, at bottom, that which makes them please and charm? *ALC.* I admit all this to be true,

X. *EUPH.*



X. *EUPH.* According to this Doctrine, D I A L.  
 I would fain know what Beauty can be III.  
 found in a moral System, formed, connected, and governed by Chance, Fate or any other blind unthinking Principle? Forasmuch as without Thought there can be no End or Design; and without an End there can be no Use, and without Use there is no Aptitude or Fitness of Proportion, from whence Beauty springs. *ALC.* May we not suppose a certain vital Principle of Beauty, Order, and Harmony diffused throughout the World, without supposing a Providence inspecting, punishing, and rewarding the moral Actions of Men? Without supposing the Immortality of the Soul, or a Life to come; in a word, without admitting any Part of what is commonly called Faith, Worship, and Religion? *CRI.* Either you suppose this Principle intelligent, or not intelligent: If the latter, it is all one with Chance, or Fate, which was just now argued against: If the former, let me intreat *Alciphron* to explain to me, wherein consists the Beauty of a moral System, with a supreme Intelligence at the Head of it, which neither protects the Innocent, punishes the Wicked, nor rewards the Virtuous? To suppose indeed a Society of rational Agents acting under the Eye of Providence, concurring

DIAL. in one Design to promote the common Benefit of the Whole, and conforming their

III.  Actions to the established Laws and Order of the Divine Parental Wisdom: Wherein each particular Agent shall not consider himself apart, but as the Member of a great City, whose Author and Founder is God: In which the Civil Laws are no other, than the Rules of Virtue, and the Duties of Religion: And where every one's true Interest is combined with his Duty: To suppose this would be delightful: On this Supposition, a Man need be no Stoic or Knight-errant, to account for his Virtue. In such a System Vice is Madness, Cunning is Folly, Wisdom and Virtue are the same thing, where, notwithstanding all the crooked Paths and By-roads, the wayward Appetites and Inclinations of Men, sovereign Reason is sure to reform whatever seems amiss, to reduce that which is devious, make straight that which is crooked, and in the last Act, wind up the whole Plot, according to the exactest Rules of Wisdom and Justice. In such a System or Society, governed by the wisest Precepts, enforced by the highest Rewards and Discouragements, it is delightful to consider, how the Regulation of Laws, the Distribution of Good and Evil, the Aim of moral Agents, do all conspire in due Subordination


ordination to promote the noblest End, to DIAL. wit, the compleat Happiness or Well- III. being of the whole. In contemplating the Beauty of such a moral System, we may cry out with the Psalmist, *Very excellent Things are spoken of thee, thou City of God.*

XI. In a System of Spirits, subordinate to the Will, and under the Direction, of the Father of Spirits, governing them by Laws, and conducting them by Methods fuitable to wise and good Ends, there will be great Beauty. But in an incoherent fortuitous System, governed by Chance, or in a blind System governed by Fate, or in any System where Providence doth not preside, how can Beauty be, which cannot be without Order, which cannot be without Design? When a Man is conscious that his Will is inwardly conformed to the Divine Will, producing Order and Harmony in the Universe, and conducting the whole by the justest Methods to the best End: This gives a beautiful Idea. But on the other hand, a Consciousness of Virtue overlooked, neglected, distressed by Men, and not regarded or rewarded by God, ill-used in this World, without Hope or Prospect of being better used in another, I would fain know, where is the Pleasure of this Reflexion, where is the Beauty

DIAL. Beauty of this Scene? Or, how could any

III. Man, in his Senses, think the spreading  
 such Notions the way to spread or propagate  
 Virtue in the World? Is it not, I beseech you,  
 an ugly System in which you can suppose no  
 Law and prove no Duty, wherein Men thrive  
 by Wickedness and suffer by Virtue? Would it  
 not be a disagreeable Sight to see an honest  
 Man peeled by Sharpers, to see virtuous Men  
 injured and despised while Vice triumphed?  
 An Enthusiast may entertain himself with  
 Visions and fine Talk about such a System;  
 but when it comes to be considered by Men  
 of cool Heads, and close Reason, I believe they  
 will find no Beauty nor Perfection in it; nor  
 will it appear, that such a moral System can  
 possibly come from the same Hand, or be of a  
 Piece with the natural, throughout which there  
 shines so much Order, Harmony, and Proportion.

ALC. Your Discourse serves to confirm me  
 in my Opinion. You may remember, I declared,  
 that touching this Beauty of Morality in the  
 high Sense, a Man's first Thoughts are best;  
 and that, if we pretend to examine, and inspect,  
 and reason, we are in danger to lose Sight of  
 it. That in Fact there is such a Thing cannot  
 be doubted, when we consider that in these  
 Days some of our Philosophers have a high

high Sense of Virtue, without the least DIAL. Notion of Religion, a clear Proof of the III. Usefulness and Efficacy of our Principles! 

XII. *CRI.* Not to dispute the Virtue of Minute Philosophers, we may venture to call its Cause in question, and make a doubt, whether it be an inexplicable Enthusiastic Notion of Moral Beauty, or rather, as to me it seems, what was already assigned by *Euphranor*, Complexion, Custom, and Religious Education? But, allowing what Beauty you please to Virtue in an Irreligious System, it cannot be less in a Religious, unless you will suppose that her Charms diminish as her Dowry increaseth. The Truth is, a Believer hath all the Motives from the Beauty of Virtue in any Sense whatsoever that an Unbeliever can possibly have, besides other Motives which an Unbeliever hath not. Hence it is plain, that those of your Sect, who have Moral Virtue, owe it not to their peculiar Tenets, which serve only to lessen the Motives to Virtue. Those therefore, who are good, are less good, and those who are bad are more bad, than they would have been were they Believers. *EUPH.* To me it seems, those heroic Infidel Inamorato's of abstracted Beauty are much to be pitied, and much to be admired. *Lysicles*,  
hearing

DIAL. hearing this, said with some Impatience;

III. Gentlemen, You shall have my whole  
 Thoughts upon this Point plain and frank. All that is said about a Moral Sense, or Moral Beauty, in any Signification, either of *Alciphron* or *Euphranor*, or any other, I take to be at bottom meer Bubble and Pretence. The καλόν and the πρέπον, the beautiful and the decent, are Things outward, relative, and superficial, which have no Effect in the dark, but are specious Topics to discourse and exspatiate upon, as some formal Pretenders of our Sect, though in other Points very Orthodox, are used to do. But should one of them get into Power, you would find him no such Fool as *Euphranor* imagines, He would soon shew he had found out, that the Love of one's Country is a Prejudice: That Mankind are Rogues and Hypocrites, and that it were Folly to sacrifice one's self for the sake of such: That all Regards center in this Life, and that, as this Life is to every Man his own Life, it clearly follows that Charity begins at home. Benevolence to Mankind is perhaps pretended, but Benevolence to himself is practised by the Wise. The livelier Sort of our Philosophers do not scruple to own these Maxims; and as for the graver, if they are true to their Principles, one may guess what

what they must think at the Bottom. DIAL. III.  
 CRI. Whatever may be the Effect of pure Theory upon certain select Spirits, of a peculiar Make, or in some other Parts of the World; I do verily think that in this Country of ours, Reason, Religion, Law, are all together little enough to subdue the Outward to the Inner Man; and that it must argue a wrong Head and weak Judgment to suppose, that without them Men will be enamoured of the golden Mean. To which my Countrymen perhaps are less inclined than others, there being in the Make of an *English* Mind a certain Gloom and Eagerness, which carries to the sad Extreme; Religion to Fancifulness; Free-thinking to Atheism; Liberty to Rebellion: Nor should we venture to be governed by Taste, even in Matters of less Consequence. The beautiful in Dress, Furniture, and Building, is, as *Euphranor* hath observed, something real and well grounded: And yet our *English* do not find it out of themselves. What wretched Work do they and other Northern People make, when they follow their own Taste of Beauty in any of these Particulars, instead of acquiring the true, which is to be got from ancient Models and the Principles of Art, as in the Case of Virtue from great Models and Meditation, so far

DIAL. as natural Means can go? But in no Case

III. is it to be hoped, that τὸ καλὸν will be the leading Idea of the many, who have quick Senses, strong Passions, and gross Intellects.

XIII. *ALC.* The fewer they are, the more ought we to esteem and admire such Philosophers, whose Souls are touched and transported with this sublime Idea. *CRI.* But then one might expect from such Philosophers, so much good Sense and Philanthropy, as to keep their Tenets to themselves, and consider their weak Brethren, who are more strongly affected by certain Senses and Notions of another Kind, than that of the Beauty of pure disinterested Virtue. *Cratylus*, a Man prejudiced against the Christian Religion, of a crazy Constitution, of a Rank above most Mens Ambition, and a Fortune equal to his Rank, had little Capacity for sensual Vices, or Temptation to dishonest ones. *Cratylus* having talked himself, or imagined that he had talked himself, into a Stoical Enthusiasm about the Beauty of Virtue, did, under the Pretence of making Men heroically virtuous, endeavour to destroy the Means of making them reasonably and humanly so: A clear Instance, that neither Birth nor Books nor Conversation can introduce



roduce a Knowledge of the World into a D I A L.  
 conceited Mind, which will ever be its III.  
 own Object, and contemplate Mankind in }  
 its own Mirrour! *ALC.* *Cratylus* was a  
 Lover of Liberty, and of his Country, and  
 had a mind to make Men incorrupt and  
 virtuous, upon the purest and most disinter-  
 ested Principles. *CRI.* His Conduct  
 seems just as wise, as if a Monarch should  
 give out, that there was neither Jail nor  
 Executioner in his Kingdom to enforce  
 the Laws, but that it would be beautiful  
 to observe them, and that in so doing Men  
 would taste the pure Delight which re-  
 sults from Order and *Decorum*. *ALC.* After  
 all, is it not true that certain ancient Phi-  
 losophers, of great Note, held the same  
 Opinion with *Cratylus*, declaring that he  
 did not come up to the Character, or de-  
 serve the Title of a good Man, who prac-  
 tised Virtue for the sake of any Thing but  
 its own Beauty? *CRI.* I believe, indeed,  
 that some of the Ancients said such Things  
 as gave Occasion for this Opinion. *Aris-  
 totle* \* distinguisheth between two Charac-  
 ters of a good Man, the one he calleth  
*ἀγαθός*, or simply good, the other *καλός*  
*καγαθός*, from whence the Compound  
 Term *καλοκαγαθία*, which cannot, per-  
 haps, be rendered by any one Word in our

\* *Ethic. ad Eudemum, lib. 7. cap. ult.*

DIAL. Language. But his Sense is plainly this :


III. ἀγαθὸς he defineth to be that Man to whom  
 { the good Things of Nature are good: For, according to him, those Things, which are vulgarly esteemed the greatest Goods, as Riches, Honours, Power, and Bodily Perfections, are indeed good by Nature, but they happen nevertheless to be hurtful and bad to some Persons, upon the account of evil Habits: Inasmuch as neither a Fool, nor an unjust Man, nor an Intemperate can be at all the better for the Use of them, any more than a sick Man for using the Nourishment proper for those who are in Health. But καλὸς ἀγαθὸς is that Man in whom are to be found all Things worthy and decent and laudable, purely as such, and for their own sake, and who practiseth Virtue from no other Motive but the sole Love of her own innate Beauty. That Philosopher observes likewise, that there is a certain political Habit, such as the *Spartans* and others had, who thought Virtue was to be valued and practised on account of the natural Advantages that attend it. For which Reason he adds, They are indeed good Men, but they have not the καλοκαγαθία. or supreme consummate Virtue. From hence it is plain that, according to *Aristotle*, a Man may be a good Man without believing Virtue its own Reward, or being only  
 moved

moved to Virtue by the Sense of moral Beauty. It is also plain that he distinguisheth the political Virtue of Nations, which the Publick is every where concerned to maintain, from this sublime and speculative Kind. It might also be observed, that his exalted Idea did consist with supposing a Providence, which inspects and rewards the Virtues of the best Men. For, saith he in another Place\*, if the Gods have any Care of Humane Affairs, as it appears they have, it should seem reasonable to suppose, they are most delighted with the most excellent Nature, and most approaching their own, which is the Mind, and that they will reward those who chiefly love and cultivate what is most dear to them. The same Philosopher observes †, that the Bulk of Mankind are not naturally disposed to be awed by Shame, but by Fear: nor to abstain from vicious Practices, on account of their Deformity, but only of the Punishment which attends them. And again ‡, he tells us, that Youth, being of it self averse from Abstinence and Sobriety, should be under the Restraint of Laws regulating their Education and Employment, and that the same Discipline should be continued even after they became Men. For which, saith

\* Ad Nicom. l. 10. c. 8. † Ibid. c. 9. ‡ Ibid.  
VOL. I, O he,

DIAL. he, we want Laws, and, in one Word, for  
 III. the whole ordering of Life: inasmuch as  
 the Generality of Mankind obey rather  
 Force than Reason, and are influenced rather  
 by Penalties, than the Beauty of Virtue; *ζημίαις ἢ τῷ καλῷ*. From all which  
 it is very plain, what *Aristotle* would have  
 thought of those, who should go about to  
 lessen or destroy the Hopes and Fears of  
 Mankind, in order to make them virtuous on  
 this sole Principle of the Beauty of Virtue.

XIV. *ALC.* But, whatever the *Stagiri-  
 rite* and his Peripatetics might think, is it  
 not certain the Stoics maintained this Doc-  
 trine in its highest Sense, asserting the  
 Beauty of Virtue to be all-sufficient; that  
 Virtue was her own Reward; that this  
 alone could make a Man happy, in spite  
 of all those things which are vulgarly  
 esteemed the greatest Woes and Miseries of  
 Humane Life? And all this they held at  
 the same time that they believed the Soul  
 of Man to be of a corporeal Nature, and  
 in Death dissipated like a Flame or Vapour.  
*CRI.* It must be owned, the Stoics some-  
 times talk, as if they believed the Morta-  
 lity of the Soul. *Seneca*, in a Letter of his  
 to *Lucilius*, speaks much like a Minute  
 Philosopher, in this Particular. But in  
 several other Places, he declares himself of  
 a clear

a clear contrary Opinion, affirming, that DIAL.  
 the Souls of Men after Death mount aloft III.  
 into the Heavens, look down upon Earth,   
 entertain themselves with the Theory of  
 Cœlestial Bodies, the Course of Nature,  
 and the Conversation of wise and excel-  
 lent Men, who having lived in distant  
 Ages and Countries upon Earth, make one  
 Society in the other World. It must also  
 be acknowledged, that *Marcus Antoninus*  
 sometimes speaks of the Soul as perishing  
 or dissolving into its Elementary Parts:  
 But it is to be noted, that he distinguisheth  
 three Principles in the Composition of  
 Humane Nature, the *σῶμα*, *ψυχὴ*, *νῆς*, \*  
 Body, Soul, Mind; or as he otherwise  
 expresseth himself, *σαρκία*, *πνευμάτιον*, and  
*ἡγεμονικόν*, Flesh, Spirit, and governing  
 Principle. What he calls the *ψυχὴ*, or  
 Soul, containing the brutal Part of our  
 Nature, is indeed represented as a Com-  
 pound dissoluble, and actually dissolved  
 by Death: But the *νῆς*, or *τὸ ἡγεμονικόν*, the  
 Mind or ruling Principle, he held to be of  
 a pure Cœlestial Nature, *θεοῦ ἀπόσπασμα*  
 a Particle of God, which he sends back  
 intire to the Stars and the Divinity. Be-  
 sides, among all his magnificent Lessons  
 and splendid Sentiments, upon the Force  
 and Beauty of Virtue, he is positive as to

L. 3. c. 16.

O 2

the

DIAL. the Being of God, and that not meerly as

III. a plastic Nature, or Soul of the World, but in the strict Sense of a Providence inspecting and taking care of Humane Affairs\*. The Stoics therefore, though their Style was high, and often above Truth and Nature, yet, it cannot be said, that they so resolved every Motive to a virtuous Life into the sole Beauty of Virtue, as to endeavour to destroy the Belief of the Immortality of the Soul and a distributive Providence. After all, allowing the disinterested Stoics (therein not unlike our modern Quietists) to have made Virtue its own sole Reward, in the most rigid and absolute Sense, yet what is this to those who are no Stoics? If we adopt the whole Principles of that Sect, admitting their Notions of Good and Evil, their celebrated Apathy, and, in one Word, setting up for compleat Stoics, we may possibly maintain this Doctrine with a better Grace: at least it will be of a Piece, and consistent with the Whole. But he who shall borrow this splendid Patch from the Stoics, and hope to make a Figure by inserting it in a Piece of modern Composition, seasoned with the Wit and Notions of these Times, will indeed make a Figure, but

\* Marc. Antonin. l. 2. §. 11.

perhaps

perhaps it may not be in the Eyes of a DIAL. wife Man the Figure he intended.

III.



XV. Though it must be owned, the present Age is very indulgent to every thing that aims at profane Raillery; which is alone sufficient to recommend any fantastical Composition to the Public. You may behold the Tinsel of a modern Author pass upon this knowing and learned Age for good Writing; affected Strains for Wit; Pedantry for Politeness; Obscurities for Depths; Ramblings for Flights; the most aukward Imitation for original Humour; and all this upon the sole Merit of a little artful Profaneness. *ALC.* Every one is not alike pleased with Writings of Humour, nor alike capable of them. It is the fine Irony of a Man of Quality, 'That certain Reverend Authors, who can condescend to Lay-wit, are nicely qualified to hit the Air of Breeding and Gentility, and that they will in time, no doubt, refine their Manner to the Edification of the polite World; who have been so long seduced by the way of Raillery and Wit.' The Truth is, the various Taste of Readers requireth various Kinds of Writers. Our Sect hath provided for this with great Judgment. To proselyte the graver sort we have certain

DIAL. profound Men at Reason and Argument.

III. For the Coffee-houses and Populace, we have Declaimers of a copious Vein. Of such a Writer it is no Reproach to say, *fluit lutulentus*; he is the fitter for his Readers. Then, for Men of Rank and Politeness, we have the finest and wittiest *Railleurs* in the World, whose Ridicule is the sure Test of Truth. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Alciphron*, are those ingenious *Railleurs* Men of Knowledge? *ALC.* Very knowing. *EUPH.* Do they know, for instance, the *Copernican* System, or the Circulation of the Blood? *ALC.* One would think you judged of our Sect, by your Country Neighbours: There is no body in Town but knows all those Points. *EUPH.* You believe then, Antipodes, Mountains in the Moon, and the Motion of the Earth. *ALC.* We do. *EUPH.* Suppose, five or six Centuries ago, a Man had maintained these Notions among the *Beaux Esprits* of an *English* Court; how do you think they would have been received? *ALC.* With great Ridicule. *EUPH.* And now it would be ridiculous to ridicule them. *ALC.* It would. *EUPH.* But Truth was the same then and now. *ALC.* It was. *EUPH.* It should seem, therefore, that Ridicule is no such sovereign Touchstone and Test of Truth, as you Gentle-



Gentlemen imagine. *ALC.* One thing we know: Our Raillery and Sarcasms gall the black Tribe, and that is our Comfort. D I A L. III.


*CRI.* There is another thing it may be worth your while to know: That Men in a laughing Fit may applaud a Ridicule, which shall appear contemptible when they come to themselves: witness the Ridicule of *Socrates* by the Comic Poet, the Humour and Reception it met with no more proving that, than the same will yours, to be just, when calmly considered by Men of Sense. *ALC.* After all, thus much is certain, our ingenious Men make Converts by deriding the Principles of Religion. And, take my Word, it is the most successful and pleasing Method of Conviction. These Authors laugh Men out of their Religion, as *Horace* did out of their Vices: *Admissi circum præcordia ludunt.* But a Bigot cannot relish or find out their Wit.

XVI. *CRI.* Wit, without Wisdom, if there be such a thing, is hardly worth finding. And as for the Wisdom of these Men, it is of a Kind so peculiar, one may well suspect it. *Cicero* was a Man of Sense, and no Bigot, nevertheless he makes *Scipio* own himself much more vigilant and vigorous in the Race of Virtue, from

DIAL. supposing Heaven the Prize\*. And he introduceth *Cato* declaring, he would never have undergone those virtuous Toils for the Service of the Public, if he had thought his Being was to end with this Life†. *ALC.* I acknowledge *Cato*, *Scipio*, and *Cicero*, were very well for their Times: but you must pardon me, if I do not think they arrived at the high consummate Virtue of our modern Free-thinkers. *EUPH.* It should seem then, that Virtue flourisheth more than ever among us. *ALC.* It should. *EUPH.* And this abundant Virtue is owing to the Method taken by your profound Writers to recommend it. *ALC.* This I grant. *EUPH.* But you have acknowledged, that the Enthusiastic Lovers of Virtue are not the many of your Sect, but only a few select Spirits. To which *Alciphron* making no Answer, *Crito* address'd himself to *Euphranor*: To make, said he, a true Estimate of the Worth and Growth of modern Virtue, you are not to count the virtuous Men, but rather to consider the Quality of their Virtue. Now you must know, the Virtue of these refined Theorists is something so pure and genuine, that a very little goes far, and is in truth invaluable. To which that reasonable in-

\* *Soran. Scipionis.*† *De Senectute.*

terested Virtue, of the old *English* or *Spartan* kind, can bear no Proportion. *EUPH.* III.

Tell me, *Alciphron*, are there not Diseases of the Soul, as well as of the Body? 

*ALC.* Without doubt. *EUPH.* And are not those Diseases, vicious Habits?

*ALC.* They are. *EUPH.* And, as bodily Distempers are cured by Physic, those of the Mind are cured by Philosophy: are they not?

*ALC.* I acknowledge it. *EUPH.* It seems, therefore, that Philosophy is a Medicine for the Soul of Man. *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* How

shall we be able to judge of Medicines, or know which to prefer? Is it not from the Effects wrought by them?

*ALC.* Doubtless. *EUPH.* Where an Epidemical Distemper rages, suppose a new Physician

should condemn the known established Practice, and recommend another Method of Cure: Would you not, in proportion as the Bills of Mortality increased, be tempted to suspect this new Method, notwithstanding all the plausible Discourse of its Abettors?

*ALC.* This serves only to amuse and lead us from the Question. *CRI.* It puts me in mind of my Friend *Lamprocles*, who needed but one Argument against Infidels. I observed, said he, that, as Infidelity grew, there grew Corruption of every kind, and new Vices. This simple

Obser-

DIAL. Observation on Matter of Fact was sufficient to make him, notwithstanding the  
 III. Remonstrance of several ingenious Men, imbue and season the Minds of his Children betimes with the Principles of Religion. The new Theories, which our acute Moderns have endeavoured to substitute in place of Religion, have had their full Course in the present Age, and produced their Effect on the Minds and Manners of Men. That Men are Men, is a sure Maxim: But it is as sure that *Englishmen* are not the same Men they were: whether better or worse, more or less virtuous, I need not say. Every one may see and judge. Though, indeed, after *Aristides* had been banished, and *Socrates* put to death at *Athens*, a Man, without being a Conjuror, might guess what the Beauty of Virtue could do in *England*. But there is now neither room nor occasion for Guessing. We have our own Experience to open our Eyes; which yet if we continue to keep shut, till the Remains of religious Education are quite worn off from the Minds of Men; it is to be feared we shall then open them wide, not to avoid, but to behold and lament our Ruin. *ALC.* Be the Consequences what they will, I can never bring my self to be of a mind with those, who measure Truth by Convenience.

venience. Truth is the only Divinity that I adore. Wherever Truth leads, I shall follow. D I A L. III.

*EUPH.* You have then a Passion for Truth? *ALC.* Undoubtedly.

*EUPH.* For all Truths? *ALC.* For all.

*EUPH.* To know, or to publish them?

*ALC.* Both. *EUPH.* What! would

you undeceive a Child that was taking

Physic? Would you officiously set an Ene-

my right, that was making a wrong At-

tack? Would you help an enraged Man

to his Sword? *ALC.* In such Cases,

common Sense directs one how to behave.

*EUPH.* Common Sense, it seems then,

must be consulted whether a Truth be sa-

lutory or hurtful, fit to be declared or

concealed. *ALC.* How! you would have

me conceal and stifle the Truth, and

keep it to my self? Is this what you

aim at? *EUPH.* I only make a plain

Inference from what you grant. As for

my self, I do not believe your Opinions

true. And although you do, you should

not therefore, if you would appear con-

sistent with yourself, think it necessary or

wise to publish hurtful Truths. What

Service can it do Mankind to lessen the

Motives to Virtue, or what Damage to in-

crease them? *ALC.* None in the World.

But I must needs say, I cannot reconcile

the received Notions of a God and Pro-

vidence

DIAL. vidence to my Understanding, and my Nature abhors the Baseness of conniving at a Falshood. *EUPH.* Shall we therefore appeal to Truth, and examine the Reasons by which you are withheld from believing these Points? *ALC.* With all my Heart, but enough for the present. We will make this the Subject of our next Conference.






## THE FOURTH DIALOGUE.

- I. *Prejudices concerning a Deity.* II. *Rules laid down by Alciphron to be observed in proving a God.* III. *What sort of Proof he expects.* IV. *Whence we collect the Being of other Thinking Individuals.* V. *The same Method à fortiori proves the Being of God.* VI. *Alciphron's second Thoughts on this Point.* VII. *God speaks to Men.* VIII. *How Distance is perceived by Sight.* IX. *The proper Objects of Sight at no distance.* X. *Lights, Shades, and Colours, variously combined form a Language.* XI. *The Signification of this Language learned by Experience.* XII. *God explaineth himself to the Eyes of Men by the arbitrary Use of sensible Signs.* XIII. *The Prejudice and two-fold Aspect of a Minute Philosopher.* XIV. *God present to Mankind, informs, admonishes, and directs them in a sensible manner.* XV. *Admirable Nature and Use of this visual Language.* XVI. *Minute Philosophers content to admit a God in certain Senses.* XVII. *Opinion of some, who hold that Knowledge and Wisdom*


DIAL.  
IV.



*dom are not properly in God. XVIII. Dangerous Tendency of this Notion. XIX. Its Original. XX. The Sense of Schoolmen upon it. XXI. Scholastic Use of the Terms Analogy and Analogical explained: Analogical Perfections of God misunderstood. XXII. God intelligent, wise, and good, in the proper Sense of the Words. XXIII. Objection from moral Evil considered. XXIV. Men argue from their own Defects against a Deity. XXV. Religious Worship reasonable and expedient.*

I.  ARLY the next Morning, as I looked out of my Window, I saw *Alciphron* walking in the Garden, with all the Signs of a Man in deep Thought. Upon which I went down to him. *Alciphron*, said I, this early and profound Meditation puts me in no small Fright. How so! Because I should be sorry to be convinced there was no God. The Thought of Anarchy in Nature is to me more shocking than in Civil Life: inasmuch as Natural Concerns are more important than Civil, and the Basis of all others. I grant, replied *Alciphron*, that some Inconvenience may possibly follow from disproving a God: but as to what you say of Fright and Shocking, all that is nothing



thing but Prejudice, meer Prejudice. Men DIAL.  
 frame an Idea or Chimæra in their own IV.  
 Minds, and then fall down and worship it.   
 Notions govern Mankind : but of all No-  
 tions, that of God's governing the World  
 hath taken the deepest Root, and spread  
 the farthest: It is therefore in Philosophy  
 an heroical Atchievement to dispossess this  
 imaginary Monarch of his Government,  
 and banish all those Fears and Spectres  
 which the Light of Reason alone can dispel;

*Non radii solis, non lucida tela diei*

*Discutiunt, sed Naturæ species ratioque\*.*

My Part, said I, shall be to stand by, as I  
 have hitherto done, and take Notes of all  
 that passeth during this memorable Event:  
 while a Minute Philosopher not six Foot  
 high attempts to dethrone the Monarch of  
 the Universe. Alas! replied *Alciphron*,  
 Arguments are not to be measured by Feet  
 and Inches. One Man may see more than  
 a Million: and a short Argument, managed  
 by a Free-thinker, may be sufficient to  
 overthrow the most Gigantic Chimæra.  
 As we were engaged in this Discourse, *Crito*  
 and *Euphranor* joined us. I find you have  
 been beforehand with us to day, said *Crito*  
 to *Alciphron*, and taken the Advantage of  
 Solitude and early Hours, while *Eu-*  
*phranor* and I were asleep in our Beds.

\* Lucretius.

DIAL. We may therefore expect to see Atheism  
 IV. placed in the best Light, and supported  
 by the strongest Arguments.

II. *ALC.* The Being of a God is a Subject upon which there has been a world of Common-place, which is needless to repeat. Give me leave therefore to lay down certain Rules and Limitations, in order to shorten our present Conference. For as the End of Debating is to persuade, all those Things which are foreign to this End, should be left out of our Debate. First then, let me tell you, I am not to be persuaded by Metaphysical Arguments: such for Instance as are drawn from the Idea of an All-perfect Being, or the Absurdity of an infinite Progression of Causes. This sort of Arguments I have always found dry and jejune: and, as they are not suited to my way of Thinking, they may perhaps puzzle, but never will convince me. Secondly, I am not to be persuaded by the Authority either of past or present Ages, of Mankind in general, or of particular wise Men: all which passeth for little or nothing with a Man of sound Argument and free Thought. Thirdly, All Proofs drawn from Utility or Convenience are foreign to the Purpose. They may prove indeed the Usefulness of the  
 Notion,

Notion, but not the Existence of the DIAL.  
 Thing. Whatever Legislators or States- IV.  
 men may think, Truth and Convenience }  
 are very different Things to the rigorous  
 Eyes of a Philosopher. And now, that  
 I may not seem partial, I will limit myself  
 also not to object, in the first place, from  
 any thing that may seem irregular or un-  
 accountable in the Works of Nature,  
 against a Cause of infinite Power and  
 Wisdom: because I already know the An-  
 swer you would make, to wit, That no  
 one can judge of the Symmetry and Use  
 of the Parts of an infinite Machine, which  
 are all relative to each other, and to the  
 whole, without being able to comprehend  
 the intire Machine, or the whole Universe.  
 And in the second place, I shall engage my  
 self not to object against the Justice and  
 Providence of a Supreme Being, from the  
 Evil that befalls good Men, and the Pro-  
 sperity which is often the Portion of  
 wicked Men in this Life: because I know  
 that, instead of admitting this to be an  
 Objection against a Deity, you would make  
 it an Argument for a future State; in  
 which there shall be such a Retribution of  
 Rewards and Punishments, as may vindi-  
 cate the Divine Attributes, and set all  
 Things right in the End. Now these An-  
 swers, though they should be admitted for

DIAL. good ones, are in truth no Proofs of the

IV. Being of God, but only Solutions of certain Difficulties which might be objected, supposing it already proved by proper Arguments. Thus much I thought fit to premise, in order to save Time and Trouble both to you and myself. CRI. I think that, as the proper End of our Conference ought to be supposed the Discovery and Defence of Truth, so Truth may be justified, not only by persuading its Adversaries, but, where that cannot be done, by shewing them to be unreasonable. Arguments, therefore, which carry Light, have their Effect, even against an Opponent who shuts his Eyes, because they shew him to be obstinate and prejudiced. Besides, this Distinction between Arguments that puzzle and that convince, is least of all observed by Minute Philosophers, and need not therefore be observed by others in their favour. But, perhaps, *Euphranor* may be willing to encounter you on your own Terms, in which Case I have nothing farther to say.


III. *EUPH.* *Alciphron* acts like a skilful General, who is bent upon gaining the Advantage of the Ground, and alluring the Enemy out of their Trenches. We, who believe a God, are intrenched within  
Tra-

Tradition, Custom, Authority, and Law. DIAL. IV.

And nevertheless, instead of attempting to force us, he proposes that we should voluntarily abandon these Intrenchments, and make the Attack: when we may act on the defensive with much Security and Ease, leaving him the Trouble to dispossess us of what we need not resign. Those Reasons (continued he, addressing himself to *Alciphron*) which you have mustered up in this Morning's Meditation, if they do not weaken, must establish our Belief of a God: for the utmost is to be expected from so great a Master in his Profession, when he sets his Strength to a Point.

*ALC.* I hold the confused Notion of a Deity, or some invisible Power, to be of all Prejudices the most unconquerable. When half a dozen ingenious Men are got together over a Glass of Wine, by a chearful Fire, in a Room well lighted; we banish with ease all the Spectres of Fancy or Education, and are very clear in our Decisions. But, as I was taking a solitary Walk before it was broad Day-light in yonder Grove, methought the Point was not quite so clear: nor could I readily recollect the Force of those Arguments, which used to appear so conclusive at other times. I had I know not what Awe upon my Mind, and seemed haunted by a sort of Panic,

DIAL. which I cannot otherwise account for,  
 IV. than by supposing it the Effect of Prejudice: For you must know, that I, like the rest of the World, was once upon a Time catechised and tutored into the Belief of a God, or Spirit. There is no surer Mark of Prejudice, than the believing a Thing without Reason. What Necessity then can there be that I should set myself the difficult Task of proving a Negative, when it is sufficient to observe, that there is no Proof of the Affirmative, and that the admitting it without Proof is unreasonable? Prove therefore your Opinion, or, if you cannot, you may indeed remain in possession of it, but you will only be possessed of a Prejudice. *EUPH.* O *Alciphron*, to content you we must prove, it seems, and we must prove upon your own Terms. But, in the first place, let us see what sort of Proof you expect. *ALC.* Perhaps I may not expect it, but I will tell you what sort of Proof I would have: And that is in short, such Proof as every Man of Sense requires of a Matter of Fact, or the Existence of any other particular thing. For Instance, should a Man ask why I believe there is a King of *Great Britain*? I might answer, Because I had seen him: Or a King of *Spain*? Because I had seen those who saw him. But

as for this King of Kings, I neither saw DIAL.  
 him myself, nor any one else that ever did IV.  
 see him. Surely if there be such a thing   
 as God, it is very strange that he should  
 leave himself without a Witness; that  
 Men should still dispute his Being; and  
 that there should be no one evident, sen-  
 sible, plain Proof of it, without recourse  
 to Philosophy or Metaphysics. A Matter  
 of Fact is not to be proved by Notions,  
 but by Facts. This is clear and full to  
 the Point. You see what I would be at.  
 Upon these Principles I defy Superstition.  
*EUPH.* You believe then as far as you  
 can see. *ALC.* That is my Rule of Faith.  
*EUPH.* How! will you not believe the  
 Existence of Things which you hear, un-  
 less you also see them? *ALC.* I will not  
 say so neither. When I insisted on Seeing,  
 I would be understood to mean Perceiving  
 in general. Outward Objects make very  
 different Impressions upon the animal Spi-  
 rits, all which are comprised under the  
 common Name of Sense. And whatever  
 we can perceive by any Sense we may be  
 sure of.

*IV. EUPH.* What! do you believe  
 then there are such things as animal Spi-  
 rits? *ALC.* Doubtless. *EUPH.* By  
 what Sense do you perceive them? *ALC.*


**DIAL.** I do not perceive them immediately by any  
**IV.** of my Senses. I am nevertheless persuaded  
 of their Existence, because I can collect it  
 from their Effects and Operations. They  
 are the Messengers, which running to and  
 fro in the Nerves, preserve a Communica-  
 tion between the Soul and outward Ob-  
 jects. *EUPH.* You admit then the Being  
 of a Soul. *ALC.* Provided I do not ad-  
 mit an immaterial Substance, I see no In-  
 convenience in admitting there may be  
 such a Thing as a Soul. And this may be  
 no more than a thin fine Texture of subtile  
 Parts or Spirits residing in the Brain.  
*EUPH.* I do not ask about its Nature.  
 I only ask whether you admit that there  
 is a Principle of Thought and Action, and  
 whether it be perceivable by Sense. *ALC.*  
 I grant that there is such a Principle, and  
 that it is not the Object of Sense itself,  
 but inferred from Appearances which are  
 perceived by Sense. *EUPH.* If I under-  
 stand you rightly, from animal Functions  
 and Motions, you infer the Existence of  
 animal Spirits; and from reasonable Acts,  
 you infer the Existence of a reasonable  
 Soul. Is it not so? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.*  
 It should seem, therefore, that the Being  
 of Things imperceptible to Sense may be  
 collected from Effects and Signs, or sen-  
 sible Tokens. *ALC.* It may. *EUPH.*  
 Tell



Tell me, *Alciphron*, is not the Soul that DIAL.  
 which makes {the principal Distinction be- IV.  
 tween a real Person and a Shadow, a living }  
 Man and a Carcase? *ALC.* I grant it is.  
*EUPH.* I cannot, therefore, know that  
 you for Instance are a distinct thinking In-  
 dividual, or a living real Man, by surer  
 or other Signs, than those from which it  
 can be inferred that you have a Soul.  
*ALC.* You cannot. *EUPH.* Pray tell  
 me, are not all Acts immediately and pro-  
 perly perceived by Sense reducible to Mo-  
 tion? *ALC.* They are. *EUPH.* From  
 Motions therefore you infer a Mover, or  
 Cause: and from reasonable Motions (or  
 such as appear calculated for a reasonable  
 End) a rational Cause, Soul, or Spirit.  
*ALC.* Even so.

V. *EUPH.* The Soul of Man actuates  
 but a small Body, an insignificant Parti-  
 cle, in respect of the great Masses of Na-  
 ture, the Elements, and heavenly Bodies,  
 and System of the World. And the Wis-  
 dom that appears in those Motions, which  
 are the Effect of Humane Reason, is in-  
 comparably less than that which disco-  
 vers it self, in the Structure and Use of  
 organized natural Bodies, Animal or Ve-  
 getable. A Man with his Hand can make  
 no Machine so admirable as the Hand it

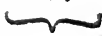
DIAL. self: Nor can any of those Motions, by  
 IV. which we trace out Humane Reason, ap-  
 proach the Skill and Contrivance of those  
 wonderful Motions of the Heart and  
 Brain and other vital Parts, which do not  
 depend on the Will of Man. *ALC.* All  
 this is true. *EUPH.* Doth it not fol-  
 low then, that from natural Motions, in-  
 dependent of Man's Will, may be in-  
 ferred both Power and Wisdom incompa-  
 rably greater than that of the Humane  
 Soul? *ALC.* It should seem so. *EUPH.*  
 Further, is there not in natural Produc-  
 tions and Effects a visible Unity of Coun-  
 sel and Design? Are not the Rules fixed  
 and immoveable? Do not the same Laws  
 of Motion obtain throughout? The same  
 in *China* and here, the same two thou-  
 sand Years ago, and at this Day? *ALC.*  
 All this I do not deny. *EUPH.* Is there  
 not also a Connexion or Relation between  
 Animals and Vegetables; between both,  
 and the Elements; between the Elements,  
 and heavenly Bodies; so that from their  
 mutual Respects, Influences, Subordina-  
 tions, and Uses, they may be collected to  
 be Parts of one Whole, conspiring to one  
 and the same End, and fulfilling the same  
 Design? *ALC.* Supposing all this to be  
 true. *EUPH.* Will it not then follow,  
 that this vastly great or infinite Power  
 and

and Wisdom must be supposed in one DIAL.  
 and the same Agent, Spirit, or Mind; and IV.  
 that we have, at least, as clear, full, and   
 immediate Certainty of the Being of this  
 infinitely wise and powerful Spirit, as of  
 any one Humane Soul whatsoever besides  
 our own? *ALC.* Let me consider: I sus-  
 pect we proceed too hastily. What! Do  
 you pretend you can have the same As-  
 surance of the Being of God, that you  
 can have of mine whom you actually see  
 stand before you and talk to you? *EUPH.*  
 The very same, if not greater. *ALC.*  
 How do you make this appear? *EUPH.*  
 By the Person *Alciphron* is meant an in-  
 dividual thinking Thing, and not the  
 Hair, Skin, or visible Surface, or any  
 Part of the outward Form, Colour, or  
 Shape of *Alciphron*. *ALC.* This I grant.  
*EUPH.* And in granting this, you grant  
 that, in a strict Sense, I do not see *Alci-*  
*phron*, i. e. that individual thinking Thing,  
 but only such visible Signs and Tokens,  
 as suggest and infer the Being of that in-  
 visible thinking Principle or Soul. Even  
 so, in the self same manner it seems to  
 me, that though I cannot with Eyes of  
 Flesh behold the invisible God; yet I do  
 in the strictest Sense behold and perceive  
 by all my Senses such Signs and Tokens,  
 such Effects and Operations, as suggest,  
 indicate,

DIAL. indicate, and demonstrate an invisible

IV. God, as certainly and with the same Evidence, at least, as any other Signs, perceived by Sense, do suggest to me the Existence of your Soul, Spirit, or thinking Principle; which I am convinced of only by a few Signs or Effects, and the Motions of one small organized Body: Whereas I do at all Times and in all Places, perceive sensible Signs, which evince the Being of God. The Point, therefore, doubted or denied by you at the beginning now seems manifestly to follow from the Premises. Throughout this whole Inquiry, have we not considered every Step with Care, and made not the least Advance without clear Evidence? You and I examined and assented singly to each foregoing Proposition: What shall we do then with the Conclusion? For my part, if you do not help me out, I find my self under an absolute Necessity of admitting it for true. You must therefore be content, henceforward to bear the Blame, if I live and die in the Belief of a God.


VI. *ALC.* It must be confessed, I do not readily find an Answer. There seems to be some Foundation for what you say. But on the other hand, if the Point was so clear as you pretend, I cannot conceive how

how so many sagacious Men of our Sect DIAL.  
 should be so much in the dark, as not to IV.  
 know or believe one Syllable of it. *EUPH.* 

O *Alciphron*, it is not our present Business to account for the Oversights, or vindicate the Honour of those great Men the Free-thinkers, when their very Existence is in danger of being called in question. *ALC.* How so? *EUPH.* Be pleased to recollect the Concessions you have made, and then shew me, if the Arguments for a Deity be not conclusive, by what better Argument you can prove the Existence of that thinking Thing, which in strictness constitutes the Free-thinker. As soon as *Euphranor* had uttered these Words, *Alciphron* stopt short and stood in a Posture of Meditation, while the rest of us continued our Walk and took two or three Turns, after which he joined us again with a smiling Countenance, like one who had made some Discovery. I have found, said he, what may clear up the Point in dispute, and give *Euphranor* intire Satisfaction; I would say an Argument which will prove the Existence of a Free-thinker, the like whereof cannot be applied to prove the Existence of a God. You must know then, that your Notion of our perceiving the Existence of God, as certainly and immediately as we do  
 that

DIAL. that of a Humane Person, I could by  
 IV. no Means digest, though I must own it  
 puzzled me, till I had considered the  
 Matter. At first methought, a particular  
 Structure, Shape, or Motion was the  
 most certain Proof of a thinking, rea-  
 sonable Soul. But a little Attention sa-  
 tisfied me, that these Things have no  
 necessary Connexion with Reason, Know-  
 ledge, and Wisdom. And that allowing  
 them to be certain Proofs of a living  
 Soul, they cannot be so of a thinking and  
 reasonable one. Upon second Thoughts,  
 therefore, and a minute Examination of  
 this Point, I have found that nothing  
 so much convinces me of the Existence  
 of another Person as his speaking to  
 me. It is my hearing you talk that,  
 in strict and philosophical Truth, is to  
 me the best Argument for your Being.  
 And this is a peculiar Argument in-  
 applicable to your Purpose: For you  
 will not, I suppose, pretend that God  
 speaks to Man in the same clear and  
 sensible manner, as one Man doth to  
 another.

VII. *EUPH.* How! is then the Im-  
 pression of Sound so much more evident  
 than that of other Senses? Or, if it be,  
 is the Voice of Man louder than that of  
 Thun-

Thunder? *ALC.* Alas! You mistake the *DIAL.*  
 Point. What I mean is not the Sound of *IV.*  
 Speech meerly as such, but the arbitrary   
 Use of sensible Signs, which have no Similitude or necessary Connexion with the  
 Things signified; so as by the apposite Management of them, to suggest and exhibit  
 to my Mind an endless Variety of Things, differing in Nature, Time, and Place:  
 thereby informing me, entertaining me, and directing me how to act, not only with  
 regard to Things near and present, but also, with regard to Things distant and  
 future. No matter, whether these Signs are pronounced or written, whether they  
 enter by the Eye or the Ear: They have the same Use, and are equally Proofs of  
 an intelligent, thinking, designing Cause.

*EUPH.* But what if it should appear that God really speaks to Man; would this  
 content you? *ALC.* I am for admitting no inward Speech, no holy Instincts, or Sug-  
 gestions of Light or Spirit. All that, you must know, passeth with Men of Sense  
 for nothing. If you do not make it plain to me, that God speaks to Men by out-  
 ward sensible Signs, of such sort and in such manner, as I have defined, you do  
 nothing. *EUPH.* But if it shall appear plainly, that God speaks to Men, by the  
 Intervention and Use of arbitrary, out-  
 ward,

DIAL. ward, sensible Signs, having no Resem-  
 IV. blance or necessary Connexion with the  
 Things they stand for and suggest: If  
 it shall appear, that by innumerable Com-  
 binations of these Signs, an endless Va-  
 riety of Things is discovered and made  
 known to us; and that we are thereby  
 instructed or informed in their different  
 Natures; that we are taught and admo-  
 nished what to shun, and what to pur-  
 sue; and are directed how to regulate our  
 Motions, and how to act with respect to  
 Things distant from us, as well in Time as  
 Place; will this content you? *ALC.* It  
 is the very Thing I would have you make  
 out; for therein consists the Force and  
 Use and Nature of Language.

VIII. *EUPH.* Look, *Alciphron*, do you  
 not see the Castle upon yonder Hill?  
*ALC.* I do. *EUPH.* Is it not at a great  
 Distance from you? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.*  
 Tell me, *Alciphron*, is not Distance a Line  
 turned End-wise to the Eye? *ALC.*  
 Doubtless. *EUPH.* And can a Line, in  
 that Situation, project more than one  
 single Point on the Bottom of the Eye?  
*ALC.* It cannot. *EUPH.* Therefore the  
 Appearance of a long and of a short Dis-  
 tance is of the same Magnitude, or rather  
 of no Magnitude at all, being in all Cases  
 one




one single Point. *ALC.* It seems so. *DIAL.*  
*EUPH.* Should it not follow from hence IV.  
 that Distance is not immediately perceived  
 by the Eye? *ALC.* It should, *EUPH.*  
 Must it not then be perceived by the Me-  
 diation of some other Thing? *ALC.* It  
 must. *EUPH.* To discover what this is,  
 let us examine what Alteration there may  
 be in the Appearance of the same Object,  
 placed at different Distances from the Eye.  
 Now I find by Experience that, when an  
 Object is removed still farther and farther  
 off in a direct Line from the Eye, its vi-  
 sible Appearance still grows lesser and  
 fainter: And this Change of Appearance,  
 being proportional and universal, seems to  
 me to be that by which we apprehend the  
 various Degrees of Distance. *ALC.* I  
 have nothing to object to this. *EUPH.*  
 But Littleness or Faintness, in their own  
 Nature, seem to have no necessary Con-  
 nexion with greater Length of Distance.  
*ALC.* I admit this to be true. *EUPH.*  
 Will it not follow then, that they could  
 never suggest it but from Experience?  
*ALC.* It will. *EUPH.* That is to say,  
 we perceive Distance, not immediately,  
 but by Mediation of a Sign, which hath  
 no Likeness to it, or necessary Connexion  
 with it, but only suggests it from repeated  
 Experience, as Words do Things. *ALC.*  
 Hold,

DIAL. Hold, *Euphranor*: Now I think of it, the

IV. Writers in Optics tell us of an Angle made  
 by the two Optic Axes, where they meet  
 in the visible Point or Object; which  
 Angle, the obtuser it is the nearer it shews  
 the Object to be, and by how much the  
 acuter by so much the farther off; and  
 this from a necessary demonstrable Con-  
 nexion. *EUPH.* The Mind then finds  
 out the Distance of Things by Geometry.  
*ALC.* It doth. *EUPH.* Should it not  
 follow, therefore, that no body could see  
 but those who had learned Geometry,  
 and knew something of Lines and Angles?  
*ALC.* There is a sort of natural Geome-  
 try, which is got without Learning.  
*EUPH.* Pray inform me, *Alciphron*, in  
 order to frame a Proof of any Kind, or  
 deduce one Point from another, is it not  
 necessary, that I perceive the Connexion  
 of the Terms in the Premises, and the  
 Connexion of the Premises with the Con-  
 clusion: And, in general, to know one  
 Thing by means of another, must I not  
 first know that other Thing? when I per-  
 ceive your Meaning by your Words, must  
 I not first perceive the Words themselves?  
 and must I not know the Premises before  
 I infer the Conclusion? *ALC.* All this is  
 true. *EUPH.* Whoever, therefore, col-  
 lects a nearer Distance from a wider Angle,

or a farther Distance from an acuter Angle, **DIAL.**  
must first perceive the Angles themselves. **IV.**

And he who doth not perceive those Angles,   
can infer nothing from them. Is it so or  
not? *ALC.* It is as you say. *EUPH.*

Ask now the first Man you meet, whether  
he perceives or knows any Thing of those  
Optic Angles? Or whether he ever thinks  
about them, or makes any Inferences from  
them, either by natural or artificial Geo-  
metry? What Answer do you think he

would make? *ALC.* To speak the Truth,  
I believe his Answer would be, that he  
knew nothing of those Matters. *EUPH.*

It cannot therefore be, that Men judge of  
Distance by Angles: Nor consequently  
can there be any Force in the Argument  
you drew from thence, to prove that Dis-  
tance is perceived by means of something  
which hath a necessary Connexion with it.

*ALC.* I agree with you.

**IX.** *EUPH.* To me it seems, that a Man  
may know whether he perceives a Thing  
or no: and if he perceives it, whether it  
be immediately or mediately: and if me-  
diately, whether by means of something  
like or unlike, necessarily or arbitrarily  
connected with it. *ALC.* It seems so.  
*EUPH.* And is it not certain, that Distance  
is perceived only by Experience, if it be

DIAL. neither perceived immediately by itself,

IV. nor by Means of any Image, nor of any  
 Lines and Angles, which are like it, or have  
 a necessary Connexion with it? *ALC.* It is.  
*EUPH.* Doth it not seem to follow from  
 what hath been said and allowed by you,  
 that before all Experience a Man would  
 not imagine, the Things he saw were at  
 any Distance from him? *ALC.* How! let  
 me see. *EUPH.* The Littleness or Faint-  
 ness of Appearance, or any other Idea or  
 Sensation, not necessarily connected with,  
 or resembling Distance, can no more sug-  
 gest different Degrees of Distance, or any  
 Distance at all, to the Mind, which hath  
 not experienced a Connexion of the things  
 signifying and signified, than Words can  
 suggest Notions before a Man hath learned  
 the Language. *ALC.* I allow this to be  
 true. *EUPH.* Will it not thence follow,  
 that a Man born blind, and made to see,  
 would, upon first receiving his Sight, take  
 the things he saw, not to be at any Distance  
 from him, but in his Eye, or rather in his  
 Mind? *ALC.* I must own it seems so:  
 And yet, on the other hand, I can hardly  
 persuade myself, that, if I were in such a  
 State, I should think those Objects, which  
 I now see at so great Distance, to be at no  
 Distance at all. *EUPH.* It seems then,  
 that you now think the Objects of Sight  
 are

are at a Distance from you. *ALC.* Doubt-  
less I do. Can any one question but yon-  
der Castle is at a great Distance? *EUPH.*

DIAL<sup>o</sup>  
IV.

Tell me, *Alciphron*, can you discern the  
Doors, Windows, and Battlements of that  
same Castle? *ALC.* I cannot. At this Dis-  
tance it seems only a small round Tower.

*EUPH.* But I, who have been at it, know  
that it is no small round Tower, but a  
large square Building with Battlements  
and Turrets, which it seems you do not  
see. *ALC.* What will you infer from

thence? *EUPH.* I would infer, that the  
very Object, which you strictly and pro-  
perly perceive by Sight, is not that Thing  
which is several Miles distant. *ALC.*

Why so? *EUPH.* Because a little round  
Object is one Thing, and a great square  
Object is another. Is it not? *ALC.* I can-

not deny it. *EUPH.* Tell me, is not the  
visible Appearance alone the proper Ob-  
ject of Sight? *ALC.* It is. What think

you now, (said *Euphranor* pointing to-  
wards the Heavens) of the visible Appear-  
ance of yonder Planet? Is it not a round  
luminous Flat, no bigger than a Sixpence?

*ALC.* What then? *EUPH.* Tell methen,  
what you think of the Planet itself. Do  
you not conceive it to be a vast Opaque  
Globe, with several unequal Risings and  
Vallies? *ALC.* I do. *EUPH.* How can

Q 2

you

DIAL. you therefore conclude, that the proper  
 IV. Object of your Sight exists at a Distance?

**ALC.** I confess I know not. **EUPH.** For your farther Conviction, do but consider that crimson Cloud. Think you that if you were in the very Place where it is, you would perceive any Thing like what you now see? **ALC.** By no means. I should perceive only a dark Mist. **EUPH.** Is it not plain, therefore, that neither the Castle, the Planet, nor the Cloud, which you see here, are those real ones which you suppose exist at a Distance?


X. **ALC.** What am I to think then? Do we see any thing at all, or is it altogether Fancy and Illusion? **EUPH.** Upon the whole, it seems the proper Objects of Sight are Light and Colours, with their several Shades and Degrees; all which, being infinitely diversified and combined, form a Language wonderfully adapted to suggest and exhibit to us the Distances, Figures, Situations, Dimensions, and various Qualities of tangible Objects: not by Similitude, nor yet by Inference of necessary Connexion, but by the arbitrary Imposition of Providence: just as Words suggest the Things signified by them. **ALC.** How! Do we not, strictly speaking, perceive by Sight such Things as  
 Trees,

Trees, Houses, Men, Rivers, and the DIAL. like? *EUPH.* We do, indeed, perceive IV. or apprehend those Things by the Faculty of Sight. But will it follow from thence, that they are the proper and immediate Objects of Sight, any more than that all those Things are the proper and immediate Objects of Hearing, which are signified by the Help of Words or Sounds? *ALC.* You would have us think then, that Light, Shades, and Colours, variously combined, answer to the several Articulations of Sound in Language: and that, by means thereof, all Sorts of Objects are suggested to the Mind through the Eye, in the same Manner as they are suggested by Words or Sounds through the Ear: that is, neither from necessary Deduction to the Judgment, nor from Similitude to the Fancy, but purely and solely from Experience, Custom, and Habit. *EUPH.* I would not have you think any Thing, more than the Nature of Things obligeth you to think, nor submit in the least to my Judgment, but only to the Force of Truth: which is an Imposition that I suppose the freest Thinkers will not pretend to be exempt from. *ALC.* You have led me, it seems, Step by Step, till I am got I know not where. But I shall try to get out again, if not

DIAL. by the Way I came, yet by some other  
 IV. of my own finding. Here *Alciphron*,  
 having made a short Pause, proceeded as follows.

XI. Answer me, *Euphranor*, should it not follow from these Principles, that a Man born blind, and made to see, would at first Sight, not only not perceive their Distance, but also not so much as know the very Things themselves which he saw, for Instance, Men or Trees? which surely to suppose must be absurd. *EUPH.* I grant, in consequence of those Principles, which both you and I have admitted, that such a one would never think of Men, Trees, or any other Objects that he had been accustomed to perceive by Touch, upon having his Mind filled with new Sensations of Light and Colours, whose various Combinations he doth not yet understand, or know the Meaning of; no more than a *Chinese*, upon first hearing the Words *Man* and *Tree*, would think of the Things signified by them. In both Cases, there must be Time and Experience, by repeated Acts, to acquire a Habit of knowing the Connexion between the Signs and Things signified; that is to say, of understanding the Language, whether of the Eyes or of the Ears. And I conceive no Absurdity in  
 all



all this. *ALC.* I see, therefore, in strict D I A L.  
 Philosophical Truth, that Rock only in IV.  
 the same Sense that I may be said to hear 

*EUPH.* In the very same. *ALC.* How comes it to pass then, that every one shall say he sees, for Instance, a Rock or a House, when those Things are before his Eyes; but no body will say he hears a Rock or a House, but only the Words or Sounds themselves, by which those things are said to be signified or suggested, but not heard? Besides, if Vision be only a Language speaking to the Eyes, it may be asked; When did Men learn this Language? To acquire the Knowledge of so many Signs, as go to the making up a Language, is a Work of some Difficulty. But will any Man say he hath spent Time or been at Pains, to learn this Language of Vision? *EUPH.* No Wonder, we cannot assign a Time beyond our remotest Memory. If we have been all practising this Language, ever since our first Entrance into the World: If the Author of Nature constantly speaks to the Eyes of all Mankind, even in their earliest Infancy, whenever the Eyes are open in the Light, whether alone or in Company: It doth not seem to me at all strange, that Men should not be aware they had ever learned

DIAL. a Language, begun so early, and practised  
 IV. so constantly, as this of Vision. And, if  
 we also consider that it is the same throughout the whole World, and not, like other Languages, differing in different Places: it will not seem unaccountable, that Men should mistake the Connexion between the proper Objects of Sight and the Things signified by them, to be found in necessary Relation, or Likeness: Or, that they should even take them for the same things. Hence it seems easy to conceive, why Men, who do not think, should confound in this Language of Vision the Signs with the Things signified, otherwise than they are wont to do, in the various particular Languages formed by the several Nations of Men.

XII. It may be also worth while to observe, that Signs being little considered in themselves, or for their own sake, but only in their relative Capacity, and for the sake of those things whereof they are Signs, it comes to pass, that the Mind often overlooks them, so as to carry its Attention immediately on to the Things signified. Thus, for example, in reading we run over the Characters with the slightest regard, and pass on to the meaning. Hence it is frequent for Men to say,  
 they

they see Words, and Notions, and Things, DIAL. in reading of a Book: whereas in Strict- IV. nefs, they see only the Characters, which suggest Words, Notions, and Things. And by parity of Reason, may we not suppose, that Men, not resting in, but overlooking the immediate and proper Objects of Sight, as in their own Nature of small moment, carry their Attention onward to the very Things signified, and talk as if they saw the secondary Objects? which, in Truth and Strictness, are not seen, but only suggested and apprehended by means of the proper Objects of Sight, which alone are seen. *ALC.* To speak my Mind freely, this Dissertation grows tedious, and runs into Points too dry and minute for a Gentleman's Attention. I thought, said *Crito*, we had been told, the Minute Philosophers loved to consider things closely and minutely. *ALC.* That is true, but in so polite an Age, who would be a meer Philosopher? There is a certain Scholastic Accuracy which ill suits the Freedom and Ease of a well-bred Man. But, to cut short this Chicane, I propound it fairly to your own Conscience, whether you really think that God himself speaks every Day and in every Place to the Eyes of all Men? *EUPH.* That is really and in truth my Opinion: and it should be yours

DIAL. yours too, if you are consistent with your  
 IV. self, and abide by your own Definition of  
 Language. Since you cannot deny, that the  
 Great Mover and Author of Nature constantly explaineth himself to the Eyes of Men by the sensible Intervention of arbitrary Signs, which have no Similitude or Connexion with the Things signified; so as by compounding and disposing them, to suggest and exhibit an endless Variety of Objects, differing in Nature, Time, and Place, thereby informing and directing Men how to act with respect to things distant and future, as well as near and present. In consequence, I say, of your own Sentiments and Concessions, you have as much reason to think, the universal Agent or God speaks to your Eyes, as you can have for thinking any particular Person speaks to your Ears. *ALC.* I cannot help thinking, that some Fallacy runs throughout this whole Ratiocination, though perhaps I may not readily point it out. Hold! let me see! In Language the Signs are arbitrary, are they not? *EUPH.* They are. *ALC.* And consequently, they do not always suggest real Matters of Fact. Whereas this natural Language, as you call it, or these visible Signs, do always suggest Things in the same uniform way, and have the same constant regular Connexion

nexion with Matters of Fact: whence it should seem, the Connexion was necessary, and therefore, according to the Definition premised, it can be no Language. How do you solve this Objection? *EUPH.* You may solve it your self, by the help of a Picture or Looking-glass. *ALC.* You are in the right. I see there is nothing in it. I know not what else to say to this Opinion more, than that it is so odd and contrary to my way of thinking, that I shall never assent to it.

XIII. *EUPH.* Be pleas'd to recollect your own Lectures upon Prejudice, and apply them in the present Case. Perhaps they may help you to follow where Reason leads, and to suspect Notions which are strongly riveted, without having been ever examined. *ALC.* I disdain the Suspicion of Prejudice. And I do not speak only for my self. I know a Club of most ingenious Men, the freest from Prejudice of any Men alive, who abhor the Notion of a God, and I doubt not would be very able to untie this Knot. Upon which Words of *Alciphron*, I, who had acted the Part of an indifferent Stander-by, observed to him: That it misbecame his Character and repeated Professions, to own an Attachment to the Judgment, or build upon


DIAL. upon the presumed Abilities of other Men,  
 IV. how ingenious soever: and that this Proceeding might encourage his Adversaries to have recourse to Authority, in which perhaps they would find their Account more than he. Oh! said *Crito*, I have often observed the Conduct of Minute Philosophers. When one of them has got a Ring of Disciples round him, his Method is to exclaim against Prejudice, and recommend Thinking and Reasoning, giving to understand that himself is a Man of deep Researches and close Argument, one who examines impartially, and concludes warily. The same Man in other Company, if he chance to be pressed with Reason, shall laugh at Logic, and assume the lazy supine Airs of a fine Gentleman, a Wit, a Railleur, to avoid the Dryness of a regular and exact Inquiry. This double Face of the Minute Philosopher is of no small Use to propagate and maintain his Notions. Though to me it seems a plain Case, that if a fine Gentleman will shake off Authority, and appeal from Religion to Reason, unto Reason he must go: And if he cannot go without Leading-Strings, surely he had better be led by the Authority of the Public, than by that of any Knot of Minute Philosophers. *ALC.* Gentlemen, this Discourse is very irksome and

and needless. For my part, I am a Friend D I A L.  
 to Inquiry. I am willing Reason should IV.  
 have its full and free Scope. I build on ~  
 no Man's Authority. For my part, I have  
 no Interest in denying a God. Any Man  
 may believe or not believe a God, as he  
 pleases, for me. But after all, *Euphranor*  
 must allow me to stare a little at his  
 Conclusions. *EUPH.* The Conclusions  
 are yours as much as mine, for you were  
 led to them by your own Concessions.

XIV. You it seems stare to find, that  
 God is not far from every one of us; and  
 that in him we live, and move, and have  
 our Being. You, who in the beginning of  
 this Morning's Conference, thought it  
 strange, that God should leave himself  
 without a Witness, do now think it strange  
 the Witness should be so full and clear.  
*ALC.* I must own I do. I was aware,  
 indeed, of a certain Metaphysical Hypo-  
 thesis, of our seeing all things in God by  
 the Union of the Humane Soul with the  
 intelligible Substance of the Deity, which  
 neither I, nor any one else could make  
 Sense of. But I never imagined it could  
 be pretended, that we saw God with our  
 fleshly Eyes, as plain as we see any Hu-  
 mane Person whatsoever, and that he daily  
 speaks to our Senses in a manifest and  
 clear

DIAL. clear Dialect. *CRI.* As for that Metaphysical Hypothesis, I can make no more of it than you. But I think it plain, This optic Language hath a necessary Connexion with Knowledge, Wisdom, and Goodness. It is equivalent to a constant Creation, betokening an immediate Act of Power and Providence. It cannot be accounted for by mechanical Principles, by Atoms, Attractions, or Effluvia. The instantaneous Production and Reproduction of so many Signs combined, dissolved, transposed, diversified, and adapted to such an endless variety of Purposes, ever shifting with the Occasions, and suited to them, being utterly inexplicable and unaccountable by the Laws of Motion, by Chance, by Fate, or the like blind Principles, doth set forth and testify the immediate Operation of a Spirit or thinking Being: and not meerly of a Spirit, which every Motion or Gravitation may possibly infer, but of one wise, good, and provident Spirit, who directs, and rules, and governs the World. Some Philosophers, being convinced of the Wisdom and Power of the Creator, from the Make and Contrivance of organized Bodies, and orderly System of the World, did nevertheless imagine, that he left this System, with all its Parts and Contents well adjusted and put in motion, as an Artist




Artist leaves a Clock, to go thenceforward D I A L.  
of it self for a certain Period. But this IV.  
visual Language proves, not a Creator   
meerly, but a provident Governor actually  
and intimately present and attentive to all  
our Interests and Motions: who watches  
over our Conduct, and takes care of our  
minutest Actions and Designs, throughout  
the whole course of our Lives, informing,  
admonishing, and directing incessantly, in  
a most evident and sensible manner. This  
is truly wonderful. *EUPH.* And is it not  
so, that Men should be encompassed by  
such a Wonder, without reflecting on it?

XV. Something there is of Divine and  
Admirable in this Language, addressed to  
our Eyes, that may well awaken the Mind,  
and deserve its utmost Attention: it is  
learned with so little Pains: it expresseth  
the Differences of Things so clearly and  
aptly: it instructs with such Facility and  
Dispatch, by one Glance of the Eye con-  
veying a greater Variety of Advices, and a  
more distinct Knowledge of Things, than  
could be got by a Discourse of several  
Hours. And, while it informs, it amuses  
and entertains the Mind with such singular  
Pleasure and Delight. It is of such excel-  
lent Use in giving a Stability and Perma-  
nency to Humane Discourse, in recording  
Sounds

DIAL. Sounds and bestowing Life on dead Lan-  
 IV. guages, enabling us to converse with Men  
 of remote Ages and Countries. And it  
 answers so apposite to the Uses and Neces-  
 sities of Mankind, informing us more dis-  
 tinctly of those Objects, whose Nearness  
 and Magnitude qualify them to be of  
 greatest Detriment or Benefit to our Bodies,  
 and less exactly, in proportion as their Lit-  
 tleness or Distance make them of less Con-  
 cern to us. *ALC.* And yet these strange  
 Things affect Men but little. *EUPH.*  
 But they are not strange, they are familiar;  
 and that makes them be overlooked.  
 Things which rarely happen strike; where-  
 as Frequency lessens the Admiration of  
 Things, though in themselves ever so ad-  
 mirable. Hence a common Man, who is  
 not used to think and make Reflexions,  
 would probably be more convinced of the  
 Being of a God, by one single Sentence  
 heard once in his Life from the Sky, than  
 by all the Experience he has had of this  
 visual Language, contrived with such  
 exquisite Skill, so constantly addressed to  
 his Eyes, and so plainly declaring the  
 Nearness, Wisdom, and Providence of him  
 with whom we have to do. *ALC.* After  
 all, I cannot satisfy my self, how Men  
 should be so little surpris'd or amazed a-  
 bout this visive Faculty, if it was really of  
 a Nature

2 Nature so surprizing and amazing. DIAL.

*EUPH.* But let us suppose a Nation IV.

of Men blind from their Infancy, a- 

mong whom a Stranger arrives, the only

Man who can see in all the Country: Let

us suppose this Stranger travelling with

some of the Natives, and that one while he

foretells to them, that, in case they walk

straight forward, in half an Hour they

shall meet Men, or Cattle, or come to

a House: that if they turn to the right,

and proceed, they shall in a few Minutes

be in danger of falling down a Preci-

pice: that shaping their course to the

left, they will in such a time arrive at

a River, a Wood, or a Mountain. What

think you? Must they not be infinite-

ly surpris'd, that one, who had never

been in their Country before, should

know it so much better than them-

selves? And would not those Predic-

tions seem to them as unaccountable and

incredible, as Prophecy to a Minute

Philosopher? *ALC.* I cannot deny it.

*EUPH.* But it seems to require intense

Thought, to be able to unravel a Pre-

judice that has been so long forming,

to get over the vulgar Error of Ideas

common to both Senses, and so to di-

stinguish between the Objects of Sight

DIAL. and Touch\*, which have grown (if I may  
 IV. so say) blended together in our Fancy, as  
 to be able to suppose our selves exactly in  
 the State, that one of those Men would  
 be in, if he were made to see. And yet  
 this I believe is possible, and might seem  
 worth the pains of a little Thinking, especially to those Men whose proper Employment and Profession it is to think, and unravel Prejudices, and confute Mistakes. I frankly own I cannot find my way out of this Maze, and should gladly be set right by those who see better than my self. *CRI.* The pursuing this Subject in their own Thoughts would possibly open a new Scene to those speculative Gentlemen of the Minute Philosophy. It puts me in mind of a Passage in the Psalmist, where he represents God to be covered with Light as with a Garment, and would methinks be no ill Comment on that ancient Notion of some Eastern Sages: That God had Light for his Body, and Truth for his Soul. This Con-

\* See the annexed Treatise, wherein this Point and the whole Theory of Vision are more fully explained: The Paradoxes of which Theory, though at first received with great Ridicule, by those who think Ridicule the Test of Truth, were many Years after surprisngly confirmed, by a Case of a Person made to see, who had been blind from his Birth. See Philos. Transact. Num. 402.

versation lasted till a Servant came to tell DIAL.  
 us the Tea was ready: Upon which we IV.  
 walked in, and found *Lysicles* at the Tea-  
 table.

XVI. As soon as we sat down, I am glad, said *Alciphron*, that I have here found my Second, a fresh Man to maintain our common Cause, which, I doubt, *Lysicles* will think hath suffered by his Absence. *LYS.* Why so? *ALC.* I have been drawn into some Concessions you won't like. *LYS.* Let me know what they are. *ALC.* Why, that there is such a thing as a God, and that his Existence is very certain. *LYS.* Bless me! How came you to entertain so wild a Notion? *ALC.* You know we profess to follow Reason wherever it leads. And in short I have been reasoned into it. *LYS.* Reasoned! You should say amused with Words, bewildered with Sophistry. *EUPH.* Have you a mind to hear the same Reasoning that led *Alciphron* and me Step by Step, that we may examine whether it be Sophistry or no? *LYS.* As to that, I am very easy. I guess all that can be said on that Head. It shall be my Business to help my Friend out, whatever Arguments drew him in. *EUPH.* Will you admit the Premises, and deny the Conclusions?

DIAL. fions? *LYS.* What if I admit the Con-  
IV. clusion? *EUPH.* How! will you grant

there is a God? *LYS.* Perhaps I may.

*EUPH.* Then we are agreed. *LYS.*

Perhaps not. *EUPH.* O *Lyficles!* you are  
a subtle Adversary. I know not what you  
would be at. *LYS.* You must know

then, that at bottom the Being of God  
is a Point in it self of small consequence,  
and a Man may make this Concession  
without yielding much. The great Point

is, what Sense the Word God is to be taken  
in. The very *Epicureans* allowed the Be-

ing of Gods: but then they were indolent  
Gods, unconcerned with Humane Affairs.

*Hobbes* allowed a corporeal God: and *Spino-*  
*noza* held the Universe to be God. And

yet no body doubts they were stanch  
Free-thinkers. I could wish indeed the

Word God were quite omitted, because in  
most Minds it is coupled with a sort of

superstitious Awe, the very Root of all  
Religion. I shall not, nevertheless, be

much disturbed, though the Name be re-  
tained, and the Being of God allowed in

any Sense, but in that of a Mind: which  
knows all things, and beholds Humane

Actions, like some Judge or Magistrate,  
with infinite Observation and Intelligence.

The Belief of a God in this Sense fills a  
Man's Mind with Scruples, lays him un-

der


der Constraints, and imbitters his very Be-  
 ing: But in another Sense, it may be at-  
 tended with no great ill Consequence.

DIAL.  
 IV.  
 ~~~~~

This I know was the Opinion of our
 great *Diagoras*, who told me he would
 never have been at the pains to find out
 a Demonstration that there was no God,
 if the received Notion of God had been
 the same with that of some Fathers and
 Schoolmen. *EUPH.* Pray what was
 that?

XVII. *LYS.* You must know, *Diago-
 ras*, a Man of much Reading and Inquiry,
 had discovered, that once upon a time the
 most profound and speculative Divines
 finding it impossible to reconcile the At-
 tributes of God, taken in the common
 Sense, or in any known Sense, with Hu-
 mane Reason, and the Appearances of
 things, taught that the Words Knowledge,
 Wisdom, Goodness, and such like, when
 spoken of the Deity, must be understood
 in a quite different Sense, from what they
 signify in the vulgar Acceptation, or from
 any thing that we can form a Notion of, or
 conceive. Hence, whatever Objections
 might be made against the Attributes of
 God they easily solved, by denying those
 Attributes belonged to God, in this or that,
 or any known particular Sense or Notion:
 which was the same thing as to deny they

DIAL. belonged to him at all. And thus denying
 IV. the Attributes of God, they in effect deny'd his Being, though perhaps they were not aware of it. Suppose, for instance, a Man should object that future Contingencies were inconsistent with the Foreknowledge of God, because it is repugnant that certain Knowledge should be of an uncertain thing: it was a ready and an easy Answer to say, that this may be true, with respect to Knowledge taken in the common Sense, or in any Sense that we can possibly form any Notion of: but that there would not appear the same Inconsistency, between the contingent Nature of Things and Divine Foreknowledge, taken to signify somewhat that we know nothing of, which in God supplies the place of what we understand by Knowledge; from which it differs not in Quantity or Degree of Perfection, but altogether, and in kind, as Light doth from Sound; and even more, since these agree in that they are both Sensations: whereas Knowledge in God hath no sort of Resemblance or Agreement with any Notion, that Man can frame of Knowledge. The like may be said of all the other Attributes, which indeed may by this means be equally reconciled with every thing, or with nothing. But all Men who think must needs see,

see, this is cutting Knots, and not untying D I A L.
 them. For how are things reconciled IV.
 with the Divine Attributes, when these 
 Attributes themselves are in every intelli-
 gible Sense denied; and consequently the
 very Notion of God taken away, and
 nothing left but the Name, without any
 Meaning annexed to it? In short, the Be-
 lief that there is an unknown Subject of
 Attributes absolutely unknown, is a very
 innocent Doctrine: which the acute *Dia-*
goras well saw, and was therefore wonder-
 fully delighted with this System.

XVIII. For, said he, if this could once
 make its way, and obtain in the World,
 there would be an end of all natural or
 rational Religion, which is the Basis both
 of the Jewish and the Christian: for he
 who comes to God, or enters himself in
 the Church of God, must first believe
 that there is a God, in some intelligible
 Sense: and not only that there is some-
 thing in general without any proper No-
 tion, though never so inadequate, of any
 of its Qualities or Attributes: for this
 may be Fate, or Chaos, or Plastic Na-
 ture, or any thing else as well as God.
 Nor will it avail to say, there is some-
 thing in this unknown Being analogous
 to Knowledge and Goodness: that is to

DIAL. say, which produceth those Effects, which
 IV. we could not conceive to be produced by
 Men in any Degree, without Knowledge
 and Goodness. For this is in Fact to
 give up the Point in dispute between
 Theists and Atheists, the Question having
 always been, not whether there was a
 Principle, (which Point was allowed by all
 Philosophers as well before as since
Anaxagoras) but whether this Principle was
 a *vēs*, a thinking intelligent Being: that is
 to say, whether that Order and Beauty and
 Use, visible in Natural Effects, could be
 produced by any thing but a Mind or Intel-
 ligence, in the proper Sense of the Word?
 And whether there must not be true, real,
 and proper Knowledge in the first Cause?
 We will therefore acknowledge, that all
 those natural Effects which are vulgarly
 ascribed to Knowledge and Wisdom, pro-
 ceed from a Being in which there is,
 properly speaking, no Knowledge or Wis-
 dom at all, but only something else, which,
 in reality, is the Cause of those things
 which Men, for want of knowing better,
 ascribe to what they call Knowledge, and
 Wisdom, and Understanding. You wonder
 perhaps to hear a Man of Pleasure, who
 diverts himself as I do, philosophize at
 this rate. But you should consider, that
 much is to be got by conversing with in-
 genious

genious Men, which is a short way to DIAL. Knowledge, that saves a Man the Drud- IV. gery of Reading and Thinking. And now we have granted to you that there is a God in this indefinite Sense, I would fain see what use you can make of this Concession. You cannot argue from unknown Attributes, or which is the same thing, from Attributes in an unknown Sense. You cannot prove, that God is to be loved for his Goodness, or feared for his Justice, or respected for his Knowledge: All which Consequences, we own, would follow from those Attributes admitted in an intelligible Sense. But we deny, that those or any other Consequences can be drawn from Attributes admitted in no particular Sense, or in a Sense which none of us understand. Since, therefore, nothing can be inferred from such an Account of God, about Conscience, or Worship, or Religion, you may even make the best of it: And, not to be singular, we will use the Name too, and so at once there is an End of Atheism. *EUPH.* This Account of a Deity is new to me. I do not like it, and therefore shall leave it to be maintained by those who do.

XIX. *CRI.* It is not new to me. I remember not long since to have heard a Minute


DIAL. Minute Philosopher triumph upon this
 IV. very Point ; which put me on inquiring
 what Foundation there was for it in the
 Fathers or Schoolmen. And for ought
 that I can find, it owes its Original to
 those Writings, which have been publish-
 ed under the Name of *Dionysius the Areo-*
pagite. The Author of which, it must
 be owned, hath written upon the Divine
 Attributes in a very singular Style. In
 his Treatise of the Cœlestial Hierarchy*
 he saith, that God is something above all
 Essence and Life, ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν ἐσῖαν καὶ ζωὴν:
 and again in his Treatise of the Divine
 Names †, that he is above all Wisdom and
 Understanding, ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν σοφίαν καὶ συνείησιν,
 ineffable and innominable, ἀρρητὸν καὶ
 ἀνόητον: the Wisdom of God he terms
 an unreasonable, unintelligent, and fool-
 ish Wisdom; ἢ ἄλογον καὶ ἀνοητὸν καὶ μωρὰν
 σοφίαν. But then the Reason he gives,
 for expressing himself in this strange Man-
 ner, is, that the Divine Wisdom is the
 Cause of all Reason, Wisdom, and Under-
 standing, and therein are contained the
 Treasures of all Wisdom and Knowledge.
 He calls God ὑπέρσοφον and ὑπέρζωον:
 As if Wisdom and Life were Words not
 worthy to express the Divine Perfections:
 And he adds, that the Attributes unin-

* De Hierarch. Cœlest. c. 2.

† De Nom. Div. c. 7.

telligent and unperceiving must be ascrib-
 ed to the Divinity, not κατ' ἔλλειψιν by
 way of Defect, but καθ' ὑπεροχὴν by way of
 Eminency: which he explains by our
 giving the Name of Darkness to Light
 inaccessible. And, notwithstanding the
 Harshness of his Expressions in some
 Places, he affirms over and over in others,
 that God knows all Things; not that
 he is beholden to the Creatures for his
 Knowledge, but by knowing himself,
 from whom they all derive their Being,
 and in whom they are contained as in their
 Cause. It was late before these Writings
 appear to have been known in the World:
 And although they obtained Credit during
 the Age of the Schoolmen, yet since cri-
 tical Learning hath been cultivated, they
 have lost that Credit, and are at this Day
 given up for spurious, as containing feve-
 ral evident Marks of a much later Date
 than the Age of *Dionysius*. Upon the
 whole, although this Method of growing
 in Expression, and dwindling in Notion,
 of clearing up Doubts by Nonsense, and
 avoiding Difficulties by running into af-
 fected Contradictions, may perhaps pro-
 ceed from a well-meant Zeal; yet it ap-
 pears not to be according to Knowledge,
 and instead of reconciling Atheists to the
 Truth, hath, I doubt, a Tendency to con-
 firm

DIAL. firm them in their own Persuasion. It
 IV. should seem, therefore, very weak and
 rash in a Christian to adopt this harsh
 Language of an Apocryphal Writer, pre-
 ferably to that of the Holy Scriptures.
 I remember, indeed, to have read of a
 certain Philosopher, who lived some Cen-
 turies ago, that used to say, if these sup-
 posed Works of *Dionysius* had been known
 to the Primitive Fathers, they would have
 furnished them admirable Weapons against
 the Hæretics, and would have saved a
 world of Pains. But the Event since their
 Discovery hath by no means confirmed his
 Opinion. It must be owned, the celebrat-
 ed *Picus* of *Mirandula*, among his Nine
 Hundred Conclusions (which that Prince,
 being very young, proposed to maintain
 by public Disputation at *Rome*) hath this
 for one; to wit, that it is more improper
 to say of God, he is an Intellect or intelli-
 gent Being, than to say of a reasonable
 Soul that it is an Angel: Which Doctrine
 it seems was not relished. And *Picus*,
 when he comes to defend it, supports
 himself altogether by the Example and
 Authority of *Dionysius*, and in effect ex-
 plains it away into a meer verbal Diffe-
 rence, affirming, that neither *Dionysius* nor
 himself ever meant to deprive God of
 Knowledge, or to deny that he knows all
 Things;

Things : But that, as Reason is of kind D I A L.
 peculiar to Man, so by Intellection he un- IV.
 derstands a kind or manner of Knowing 
 peculiar to Angels : And that the Know-
 ledge, which is in God, is more above the
 Intellection of Angels, than Angel is above
 Man. He adds that, as his Tenet consists
 with admitting the most perfect Know-
 ledge in God, so he would by no Means
 be understood to exclude from the Deity
 Intellection itself, taken in the common
 or general Sense, but only that peculiar
 sort of Intellection proper to Angels, which
 he thinks ought not to be attributed to
 God any more than Humane Reason*.
Picus, therefore, though he speaks as the
 Apocryphal *Dionysius*, yet when he ex-
 plains himself, it is evident he speaks like
 other Men. And although the formen-
 tioned Books of the Cœlestial Hierarchy
 and of the Divine Names, being attribu-
 ted to a Saint and Martyr of the Apostoli-
 cal Age, were respected by the Schoolmen;
 yet it is certain they rejected or softned his
 harsh Expressions, and explained away or
 reduced his Doctrine to the received No-
 tions taken from Holy Scripture, and the
 Light of Nature.

* Pic. Mirand. in Apolog. p. 155. Ed. Bas.

DIAL. XX. *Thomas Aquinas* expreffeth his Sense
 IV. of this Point in the following manner. All
 ~~~~~ Perfections, faith he, derived from God to  
 the Creatures are in a certain higher Sense,  
 or (as the Schoolmen term it) eminently in  
 God. Whenever, therefore, a Name bor-  
 rowed from any Perfection in the Creature  
 is attributed to God, we must exclude from  
 its Signification every thing that belongs to  
 the imperfect Manner, wherein that Attri-  
 bute is found in the Creature. Whence he  
 concludes, that Knowledge in God is not  
 an Habit, but a pure Act \*. And again the  
 fame Doctor observes, that our Intellect gets  
 its Notions of all forts of Perfections from  
 the Creatures, and that as it apprehends  
 thofe Perfections, fo it fignifies them by  
 Names. Therefore, faith he, in attributing  
 thefe Names to God, we are to confider  
 two Things; firft, The Perfections them-  
 felves as Goodnefs, Life, and the like,  
 which are properly in God; and, fecondly,  
 The Manner which is peculiar to the Crea-  
 ture, and cannot, ftrictly and properly speak-  
 ing, be faid to agree to the Creator †. And  
 although *Suarez*, with other Schoolmen,  
 teacheth, that the Mind of Man conceiv-  
 eth Knowledge and Will to be in God, as  
 Faculties or Operations, by Analogy only

\* Sum. Theolog. p. 1. Quæft. 14. Art. 1.

† Ibid. Quæft. 13. Art. 3.



to created Beings ; yet he gives it plainly DIAL.  
 as his Opinion, that when Knowledge is IV.  
 said not to be properly in God, it must be understood in a Sense including Imperfection, such as discursive Knowledge, or the like imperfect kind found in the Creatures: And that, none of those Imperfections in the Knowledge of Men or Angels belonging to the formal Notion of Knowledge, or to Knowledge as such, it will not thence follow that Knowledge, in its proper formal Sense, may not be attributed to God: And of Knowledge taken in general for the clear evident understanding of all Truth, he expressly affirms that it is in God, and that this was never denied by any Philosopher who believed a God \*. It was, indeed, a current Opinion in the Schools, that even Being itself should be attributed analogically to God and the Creatures. That is, they held that God, the supreme, independent, self-originate Cause and Source of all Beings, must not be supposed to exist in the same Sense with created Beings, not that he exists less truly, properly, or formally than they, but only because he exists in a more eminent and perfect Manner.

XXI. But to prevent any Man's being led, by mistaking the Scholastic Use of the

\* Suarez Disp. Metaph. Tom. 2. Disp. 30. Sect. 15.


DIAL. Terms *Analogy* and *Analogical*, into an  
 IV. Opinion that we cannot frame in any Degree, a true and proper Notion of Attributes applied by Analogy, or, in the School Phrase, predicated analogically, it may not be amiss to inquire into the true Sense and Meaning of those Words. Every one knows, that Analogy is a *Greek* Word used by Mathematicians, to signify a Similitude of Proportions. For Instance, when we observe that Two is to Six, as Three is to Nine, this Similitude or Equality of Proportion is termed Analogy. And although Proportion strictly signifies the Habitude or Relation of one Quantity to another, yet in a looser and translated Sense, it hath been applied to signify every other Habitude: And consequently the Term Analogy comes to signify all Similitude of Relations, or Habitudes whatsoever. Hence, the Schoolmen tell us there is Analogy between Intellect and Sight: Forasmuch as, Intellect is to the Mind, what Sight is to the Body? And that he who governs the State is analogous to him who steers a Ship. Hence a Prince is analogically stiled a Pilot, being to the State as a Pilot is to his Vessel\*. For the farther clearing of this Point it is to be observed, that a two-fold Analogy is distinguished by the School-

\* Vide Cajetan. de Nom. Analog. c. 3.

men, metaphorical and proper. Of the DIAL.  
 first Kind there are frequent Instances in IV.  
 Holy Scripture, attributing Humane Parts }  
 and Passions to God. When he is repre-  
 sented as having a Finger, an Eye, or an  
 Ear: when he is said to repent, to be an-  
 gry, or grieved: every one sees the Analo-  
 gy is meerly metaphorical. Because those  
 Parts and Passions, taken in the proper  
 Signification, must in every Degree neces-  
 sarily, and from the formal Nature of the  
 Thing, include Imperfection. When  
 therefore it is said, The Finger of God  
 appears in this or that Event, Men of  
 common Sense mean no more, but  
 that it is as truly ascribed to God, as the  
 Works wrought by Humane Fingers are  
 to Man: and so of the rest. But the Case  
 is different, when Wisdom and Know-  
 ledge are attributed to God. Passions and  
 Senses, as such, imply Defect: but in  
 Knowledge simply, or as such, there is  
 no Defect. Knowledge therefore, in the  
 proper formal Meaning of the Word,  
 may be attributed to God proportiona-  
 bly, that is, preserving a Proportion to the  
 infinite Nature of God. We may say,  
 therefore, that as God is infinitely above  
 Man, so is the Knowledge of God infi-  
 nitely above the Knowledge of Man,  
 and this is what *Cajetan* calls *Analogia*

DIAL. *proprie facta*. And after this same Analogy, we must understand all those Attributes to belong to the Deity, which in themselves simply, and as such, denote Perfection. We may therefore consistently with what hath been premised, affirm that all sorts of Perfection, which we can conceive in a finite Spirit, are in God, but without any of that Alloy which is found in the Creatures. This Doctrine therefore of Analogical Perfections in God, or our knowing God by Analogy, seems very much misunderstood and misapplied by those who would infer from thence: that we cannot frame any direct or proper Notion, though never so inadequate, of Knowledge or Wisdom, as they are in the Deity: or understand any more of them than one born blind can of Light and Colours.

XXII. And now, Gentlemen, it may be expected I should ask your Pardon for having dwelt so long on a Point of Metaphysics, and introduced such unpolished and unfashionable Writers, as the Schoolmen, into good Company: but as *Lysicles* gave the Occasion, I leave him to answer for it. *LYS.* I never dreamt of this dry Dissertation. But, if I have been the Occasion of discussing these Scholastic Points,

Points, by my unlucky mentioning the DIAL. Schoolmen, it was my first Fault of the IV. Kind, and I promise it shall be the last. 

The meddling with crabbed Authors of any sort, is none of my Taste. I grant one meets now and then with a good Notion in what we call dry Writers, such an one for example as this I was speaking of, which I must own struck my Fancy. But then for these, we have such as *Prodicus* or *Diagoras*, who look into obsolete Books, and save the rest of us that trouble. CRI. So you pin your Faith upon them. LYS. It is only for some odd Opinions, and Matters of Fact, and critical Points. Besides, we know the Men to whom we give credit: They are judicious and honest, and have no End to serve but Truth. And I am confident some Author or other has maintained the forementioned Notion in the same Sense as *Diagoras* related it. CRI. That may be. But it never was a received Notion, and never will, so long as Men believe a God: the same Arguments that prove a first Cause, proving an intelligent Cause: Intelligent, I say, in the proper Sense: Wise and Good in the true and formal Acceptation of the Words. Otherwise it is evident, that every Syllogism brought to prove those Attributes, or (which is the same thing) to prove the

DIAL. Being of a God, will be found to consist  
 IV. of four Terms, and consequently can conclude nothing. But for your part, *Alciphron*, you have been fully convinced, that God is a thinking intelligent Being in the same Sense with other Spirits, though not in the same imperfect Manner or Degree.

XXIII. *ALC.* And yet I am not without my Scruples: For with Knowledge you infer Wisdom, and with Wisdom Goodness. Tho I cannot see that it is either wise, or good, to enact such Laws as can never be obey'd. *CRI.* Doth any one find fault with the Exactness of Geometrical Rules, because no one in Practice can attain to it? The Perfection of a Rule is useful, even though it is not reached. Many may approach what all may fall short of. *ALC.* But how is it possible to conceive God so good, and Man so wicked? It may perhaps with some Colour be alledged, that a little soft shadowing of Evil sets off the bright and luminous Parts of the Creation, and so contributes to the Beauty of the whole Piece: But, for Blots so large and so black it is impossible to account by that Principle. That there should be so much Vice, and so little Virtue upon Earth, and that the Laws of God's Kingdom should be so ill observed

observed by his Subjects, is what can never be reconciled with that surpassing Wisdom and Goodness of the supreme Monarch. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Alcipbron*, would you argue that a State was ill administered, or judge of the Manners of its Citizens, by the Disorders committed in the Goal or Dungeon? *ALC.* I would not. *EUPH.* And for ought we know, this Spot with the few Sinners on it, bears no greater Proportion to the Universe of Intelligences, than a Dungeon doth to a Kingdom. It seems we are led not only by Revelation, but by common Sense, observing and inferring from the Analogy of visible Things, to conclude there are innumerable Orders of intelligent Beings more happy and more perfect than Man: whose Life is but a Span, and whose Place, this earthly Globe, is but a Point, in respect of the whole System of God's Creation. We are dazzled indeed with the Glory and Grandeur of things here below, because we know no better. But I am apt to think, if we knew what it was to be an Angel for one Hour, we should return to this World, though it were to sit on the brightest Throne in it, with vastly more Loathing and Reluctance, than we would now descend into a leathsome Dungeon or Sepulchre.

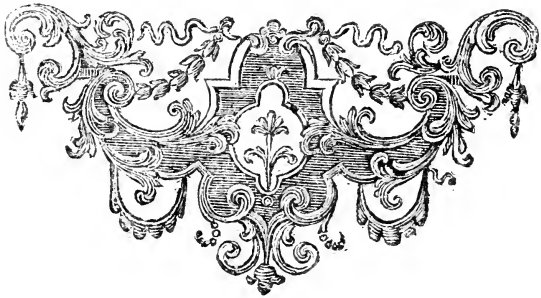
DIAL. XXIV. CRI. To me it seems natural,  
 IV, that such a weak, passionate, and short-  
 sighted Creature as Man, should be ever  
 liable to Scruples of one kind or other.  
 But, as this same Creature is apt to be  
 over-positive in judging, and over-hasty in  
 concluding, it falls out, that these Dif-  
 ficulties and Scruples about God's Con-  
 duct are made Objections to his Being.  
 And so Men come to argue from their own  
 Defects, against the Divine Perfections.  
 And, as the Views and Humours of Men  
 are different, and often opposite, you may  
 sometimes see them deduce the same a-  
 theistical Conclusion from contrary Pre-  
 mises. I knew an Instance of this in two  
 Minute Philosophers of my Acquaintance,  
 who used to argue each from his own  
 Temper against a Providence. One of  
 them, a Man of a choleric and vindictive  
 Spirit, said he could not believe a Provi-  
 dence: because *London* was not swallowed  
 up or consumed by Fire from Heaven:  
 the Streets being, as he said, full of People,  
 who shew no other Belief or Worship of  
 God, but perpetually praying that he  
 would damn, rot, sink, and confound  
 them. The other, being of an indolent  
 and easy Temper, concluded there could  
 be no such thing as a Providence: for that  
 a Being of consummate Wisdom must  
 needs



needs employ himself better, than in mind-DIAL. ing the Prayers, and Actions, and little In- IV. terests of Mankind. *ALC.* After all, if God have no Passions, how can it be true that Vengeance is his? Or how can he be said to be jealous of his Glory? *CRI.* We believe that God executes Vengeance without Revenge, and is jealous without Weakness, just as the Mind of Man sees without Eyes, and apprehends without Hands.

XXV. *ALC.* To put a Period to this Discourse, we will grant, there is a God in this dispassionate Sense: but what then? What hath this to do with Religion or Divine Worship? To what purpose are all these Prayers, and Praises, and Thanksgivings, and Singing of Psalms, which the foolish Vulgar call serving God? What Sense, or Use, or End is there in all these things? *CRI.* We worship God, we praise and pray to him: not because we think that he is proud of our Worship, or fond of our Praise or Prayers, and affected with them as Mankind are: or that all our Service can contribute in the least Degree to his Happiness or Good: But because it is good for us, to be so disposed towards God: because it is just and right, and suitable to the Nature of  
S 4
Things,

DIAL. Things, and becoming the Relation we  
 IV. stand in to our supreme Lord and Govern-  
 } nor. *ALC.* If it be good for us to  
 worship God, it should seem that the  
 Christian Religion, which pretends to  
 teach Men the Knowledge and Worship  
 of God, was of some Use and Benefit to  
 Mankind. *CRI.* Doubtless. *ALC.* If  
 this can be made appear, I shall own my  
 self very much mistaken. *CRI.* It is now  
 near Dinner time. Wherefore, if you  
 please, we will put an end to this Con-  
 versation for the present, and to Morrow  
 Morning resume our Subject.






## THE FIFTH DIALOGUE.

- I. *Minute Philosophers join in this Cry, and follow the Scent of others.* II. *Worship prescribed by the Christian Religion suitable to God and Man.* III. *Power and Influence of the Druids.* IV. *Excellency and Usefulness of the Christian Religion.* V. *It ennobles Mankind, and makes them happy.* VI. *Religion neither Bigotry nor Superstition.* VII. *Physicians and Physic for the Soul.* VIII. *Character of the Clergy.* IX. *Natural Religion and Humane Reason not to be disparaged.* X. *Tendency and Use of the Gentile Religion.* XI. *Good Effects of Christianity.* XII. *Englishmen compared with ancient Greeks and Romans.* XIII. *The Modern Practice of Duelling.* XIV. *Character of the Old Romans, how to be formed.* XV. *Genuine Fruits of the Gospel.* XVI. *Wars and Factions not an Effect of the Christian Religion.* XVII. *Civil Rage and Massacres in Greece and Rome.* XVIII. *Virtue of ancient Greeks.* XIX. *Quarrels of Polemical Divines.* XX. *Tyranny, Usurpation, Sophistry of Ecclesiastics.*

DIAL.  
IV.




*stastics. XXI. The Universities censured. XXII. Divine Writings of a certain modern Critic. XXIII. Learning the Effect of Religion. XXIV. Barbarism of the Schools. XXV. Restoration of Learning and polite Arts, to whom owing. XXVI. Prejudice and Ingratitude of Minute Philosophers. XXVII. Their Pretensions and Conduct inconsistent. XXVIII. Men and Brutes compared with respect to Religion. XXIX. Christianity the only Means to establish Natural Religion. XXX. Free-thinkers mistake their Talents; have a strong Imagination. XXXI. Tithes and Church-lands. XXXII. Men distinguished from Humane Creatures. XXXIII. Distribution of Mankind into Birds, Beasts, and Fishes. XXXIV. Plea for Reason allowed, but Unfairness taxed. XXXV. Freedom a Blessing or a Curse as it is used. XXXVI. Priestcraft not the reigning Evil.*

I.  E amused our selves next Day, every one to his Fancy, till Nine of the Clock, when Word was brought that the Tea-table was set in the Library: which is a Gallery on a Ground-floor, with an arched Door at one End opening

opening into a Walk of Limes; where, as soon as we had drank Tea, we were tempted by fine Weather to take a Walk which led us to a small Mount of easy Ascent, on the Top whereof we found a Seat under a spreading Tree. Here we had a Prospect on one Hand of a narrow Bay or Creek of the Sea, inclosed on either Side by a Coast beautified with Rocks and Woods, and green Banks and Farm-houses. At the End of the Bay was a small Town placed upon the Slope of a Hill, which from the Advantage of its Situation made a considerable Figure. Several Fishing-boats and Lighters gliding up and down on a Surface as smooth and bright as Glass enlivened the Prospect. On the other Side we looked down on green Pastures, Flocks, and Herds, basking beneath in Sun-shine, while we in our superior Situation enjoyed the Freshness of Air and Shade. Here we felt that sort of joyful Instinct which a rural Scene and fine Weather inspire; and proposed no small Pleasure, in resuming and continuing our Conference without Interruption till Dinner: But we had hardly seated ourselves, and looked about us, when we saw a Fox run by the Foot of our Mount into an adjacent Thicket. A few Minutes after, we  
heard


D I A L.  
V.  
~~~~~

DIAL. heard a confused Noise of the opening of
 V. Hounds, the winding of Horns, and the
 ~~~~~ roaring of Country Squires. While our  
 Attention was suspended by this Event, a  
 Servant came running out of Breath and  
 told *Crito*, that his Neighbour *Ctesippus*, a  
 Squire of Note, was fallen from his Horse  
 attempting to leap over a Hedge, and  
 brought into the Hall, where he lay for  
 dead. Upon which we all rose and walked  
 hastily to the House, where we found *Cte-*  
*sippus* just come to himself, in the midst of  
 half a dozen Sun-burnt Squires in Frocks  
 and short Wigs, and Jockey-Boots. Being  
 asked how he did? he answered it was  
 only a broken Rib. With some Difficulty  
*Crito* persuaded him to lie on a Bed till the  
 Chirurgeon came. These Fox-hunters,  
 having been up early at their Sport, were  
 eager for Dinner, which was accordingly  
 hastened. They passed the Afternoon in  
 a loud rustic Mirth, gave Proof of their  
 Religion and Loyalty by the Healths they  
 drank, talked of Hounds and Horses and  
 Elections, and Country Affairs, till the  
 Chirurgeon, who had been employed a-  
 bout *Ctesippus*, desired he might be put  
 into *Crito's* Coach, and sent home, hav-  
 ing refused to stay all Night. Our Guests  
 being gone, we reposed ourselves after  
 the

the Fatigue of this tumultuous Visit, and DIAL.  
 next Morning assembled again at the Seat V.  
 on the Mount. Now *Lysicles*, being a   
 nice Man, and a *bel esprit*, had an infinite  
 Contempt for the rough Manners and  
 Conversation of Fox-hunters, and could  
 not reflect with Patience that he had lost,  
 as he called it, so many Hours in their  
 Company. I flattered myself, said he, that  
 there had been none of this Species remain-  
 ing among us: Strange that Men should  
 be diverted with such uncouth Noise and  
 Hurry, or find Pleasure in the Society of  
 Dogs and Horses! How much more ele-  
 gant are the Diversions of the Town!  
 There seems, replied *Euphranor*, to be  
 some Resemblance between Fox-hunters  
 and Free-thinkers; the former exerting  
 their animal Faculties in Pursuit of Game,  
 as you Gentlemen employ your Intellec-  
 tuals in the Pursuit of Truth. The Kind  
 of Amusement is the same, although the  
 Object be different. *LYS.* I had rather be  
 compared to any Brute upon Earth than a  
 rational Brute. *CRI.* You would then  
 have been less displeas'd with my Friend  
*Pythocles*, whom I have heard compare  
 the common sort of Minute Philosophers,  
 not to the Hunters, but the Hounds. For,  
 said he, you shall often see among the  
 Dogs


DIAL. Dogs a loud Babler, with a bad Nose,  
 V. lead the unskilful Part of the Pack; who  
 ~~~~~ join all in his Cry without following any  
 Scent of their own, any more than the
 Herd of Free-thinkers follow their own
 Reason.

II. But *Pythocles* was a blunt Man, and must never have known such Reasoners among them as you Gentlemen, who can sit so long at an Argument, dispute every Inch of Ground, and yet know when to make a reasonable Concession. *LYS.* I don't know how it came to pass, but methinks *Alciphron* makes Concessions for himself and me too. For my own part, I am not altogether of such a yielding Temper: But yet I don't care to be singular neither. *CRI.* Truly, *Alciphron*, when I consider where we are got, and how far we are agreed, I conceive it probable we may agree altogether in the End. You have granted that a Life of Virtue is upon all Accounts eligible, as most conducive both to the general and particular Good of Mankind: And you allow, that the Beauty of Virtue alone is not a sufficient Motive with Mankind to the Practice of it. This led you to acknowledge, that the Belief of a God would be very useful in the
 World:

World: And that consequently you should DIAL.
 be disposed to admit any reasonable Proof V.
 of his Being: Which Point hath been 
 proved, and you have admitted the Proof.
 If then we admit a Divinity, why not
 Divine Worship? And if Worship, why
 not Religion to teach this Worship? And
 if a Religion, why not the Christian, if
 a better cannot be assigned, and it be al-
 ready established by the Laws of our Coun-
 try, and handed down to us from our
 Fore-fathers? Shall we believe a God,
 and not pray to him for future Benefits nor
 thank him for the past? Neither trust in
 his Protection, nor love his Goodness, nor
 praise his Wisdom, nor adore his Power?
 And if these Things are to be done, can
 we do them in a Way more suitable to the
 Dignity of God or Man, than is prescribed
 by the Christian Religion? ALC. I am
 not perhaps altogether sure that Religion
 must be absolutely bad for the Public: But
 I cannot bear to see Policy and Religion
 walk hand in hand: I do not like to see
 Humane Rights attached to the Divine:
 I am for no *Pontifex Maximus*, such as in
 ancient or in modern *Rome*: No high
 Priest, as in *Judæa*: No Royal Priests, as
 in *Ægypt* and *Sparta*: No such Things as
Dairos of *Japan*, or *Lamas* of *Tartary*.

III. I knew

DIAL. III. I knew a late witty Gentleman of
 V. our Sect, who was a great Admirer of the
 ancient *Druids*. He had a mortal Antipa-
 thy to the present established Religion,
 but used to say he should like well to see
 the *Druids* and their Religion restored, as
 it anciently flourished in *Gaul* and *Britain*;
 for it would be right enough that there
 should be a Number of contemplative Men
 set apart to preserve a Knowledge of Arts
 and Sciences, to educate Youth, and teach
 Men the Immortality of the Soul and the
 moral Virtues. Such, said he, were the
Druids of old, and I should be glad to
 see them once more established among us.
 CRI. How would you like, *Alciphron*,
 that Priests should have Power to decide
 all Controversies, adjudge Property, distri-
 bute Rewards and Punishments: that
 all who did not acquiesce in their Decrees
 should be excommunicated, held in Abhor-
 rence, excluded from all Honours and Pri-
 vileges, and deprived of the common Bene-
 fit of the Laws: and that now and then,
 a Number of Lay-men should be cram-
 med together in a Wicker-idol, and burnt
 for an Offering to their Pagan Gods? How
 should you like living under such Priests
 and such a Religion? ALC. Not at all. Such
 a Situation would by no means agree with
 Free-

Free-thinkers. *CRI.* And yet such were DIAL.
 the *Druids*, and such their Religion, if we V.
 may trust *Cæsar's* Account of them*. *LYS.* 
 I am now convinced more than ever, there
 ought to be no such Thing as an established
 Religion of any kind. Certainly all the
 Nations of the World have been hitherto
 out of their Wits. Even the *Athenians*
 themselves, the wisest and freest People
 upon Earth, had, I know not what, foolish
 Attachment to their established Church.
 They offered, it seems, a Talent as a Re-
 ward to whoever should kill *Diagoras* the
Melian, a Free-thinker of those Times,
 who derided their Mysteries: And *Prota-*
goras, another of the same Turn, narrow-
 ly escaped being put to Death, for having
 wrote something that seemed to contradict
 their received Notions of the Gods. Such
 was the Treatment our generous Sect met
 with at *Athens*. And I make no doubt,
 but these *Druids* would have sacrificed
 many a Holocaust of Free-thinkers. I
 would not give a single Farthing to ex-
 change one Religion for another. Away
 with all together, Root and Branch, or
 you had as good do nothing. No *Druids*
 or Priests of any sort for me: I see no oc-
 casion for any of them.

* De Bello Gallico, l. 6.

DIAL. IV. *EUPH.* What *Lysicles* saith, puts
 V. me in mind of the Close of our last Con-
 ference, wherein it was agreed in the fol-
 lowing, to resume the Point we were then
 entered upon: to wit, the Use or Benefit
 of the Christian Religion, which *Alciphron*
 expected *Crito* should make appear. *CRI.*
 I am the readier to undertake this Point,
 because I conceive it to be no difficult one,
 and that one great Mark of the Truth of
 Christianity is, in my Mind, its Tendency
 to do Good, which seems the North-Star to
 conduct our Judgment in moral Mat-
 ters, and in all things of a practic Na-
 ture; moral or practical Truths being
 ever connected with universal Benefit. But
 to judge rightly of this Matter, we should
 endeavour to act like *Lysicles* upon another
 Occasion, taking into our View the Sum
 of Things, and considering Principles as
 branched forth into Consequences to the
 utmost Extent we are able. We are not
 so much to regard the Humour or Caprice,
 or imaginary Distresses of a few idle Men,
 whose Conceit may be offended, though
 their Conscience cannot be wounded; but
 fairly to consider the true Interest of Indi-
 viduals, as well as of Humane Society.
 Now the Christian Religion, considered as
 a Fountain of Light, and Joy, and Peace,

as a Source of Faith, and Hope, and Cha-
 rity, (and that it is so, will be evident to
 whoever takes his Notion of it from the
 Gospel) must needs be a Principle of Hap-
 piness and Virtue. And he who sees not,
 that the destroying the Principles of good
 Actions must destroy good Actions, sees
 nothing: And he who, seeing this, shall
 yet persist to do it, if he be not wicked;
 who is?

V. To me it seems the Man can see nei-
 ther deep nor far, who is not sensible of
 his own Misery, Sinfulness, and Depen-
 dence; who doth not perceive, that this
 present World is not designed or adapted to
 make rational Souls happy; who would
 not be glad of getting into a better State;
 and who would not be overjoy'd to find,
 that the Road leading thither was the Love
 of God and Man, the practising every
 Virtue, the living reasonably while we are
 here upon Earth, proportioning our Esteem
 to the Value of Things, and so using this
 World as not to abuse it. For this is what
 Christianity requires. It neither enjoins
 the Nastiness of the Cynic, nor the Insen-
 sibility of the Stoic. Can there be a higher
 Ambition than to overcome the World, or
 a wiser than to subdue ourselves, or a
 T 2 more

DIAL. more comfortable Doctrine than the Re-
 V. mission of Sins, or a more joyful Prospect
 than that of having our base Nature re-
 newed and assimilated to the Deity, our
 being made Fellow-Citizens with Angels
 and Sons of God? Did ever *Pythagoreans*,
 or *Platonists*, or *Stoics*, even in Idea or in
 Wish, propose to the Mind of Man purer
 Means, or a nobler End? How great a
 Share of our Happiness depends upon
 Hope! How totally is this extinguished
 by the Minute Philosophy! On the other
 hand, how is it cherished and raised by
 the Gospel! Let any Man who thinks in
 earnest but consider these things, and then
 say which he thinks deserveth best of Man-
 kind, he who recommends, or he who
 runs down Christianity? Which he thinks
 likelier to lead a happy Life, to be a hope-
 ful Son, an honest Dealer, a worthy Pa-
 triot, He who sincerely believes the Gos-
 pel, or He who believes not one Tittle of
 it? He who aims at being a Child of
 God, or He who is contented to be
 thought, and to be, one of *Epicurus's*
 Hogs? And in fact, do but scan the Cha-
 racters, and observe the Behaviour of the
 common sort of Men on both sides: Ob-
 serve, and say which live most agreeably to
 the Dictates of Reason? How things
 should


should be, the Reason is plain: how they are, I appeal to Fact.

DIAL.
V.
}

VI. *ALC.* It is wonderful to observe how things change Appearance, as they are viewed in different Lights, or by different Eyes. The Picture, *Crito*, that I form of Religion is very unlike yours, when I consider how it unmans the Soul, filling it with absurd Reveries, and slavish Fears: how it extinguishes the gentle Passions, inspiring a Spirit of Malice, and Rage, and Persecution: When I behold bitter Resentments and unholy Wrath in those very Men, who preach up Meekness and Charity to others. *CRI.* It is very possible, that Gentlemen of your Sect may think Religion a Subject beneath their Attention: but yet it seems that whoever sets up for opposing any Doctrine, should know what it is he disputes against. Know then, that Religion is the virtuous Mean between Incredulity and Superstition. We do not therefore contend for superstitious Follies, or for the Rage of Bigots. What we plead for is, Religion against Profaneness, Law against Confusion, Virtue against Vice, the Hope of a Christian against the Despondency of an Atheist. I will not justify bitter Resentments and unholy Wrath

DIAL. Wrath in any Man, much less in a Christian, and least of all in a Clergyman. But if Sallies of Humane Passion should sometimes appear even in the best, it will not surprise any one who reflects on the Sarcasms and ill Manners with which they are treated by the Minute Philosophers. For, as *Cicero* somewhere observes, *Habet quendam aculeum Contumelia, quem pati prudentes ac viri boni difficillimè possunt.* But although you might sometimes observe particular Persons, professing themselves Christians, run into faulty Extremes of any Kind, through Passion and Infirmary, while Infidels of a more calm and dispassionate Temper shall perhaps behave better. Yet these natural Tendencies on either side prove nothing, either in favour of Infidel Principles, or against Christian. If a Believer doth Evil, it is owing to the Man, not to his Belief. And if an Infidel doth Good, it is owing to the Man, and not to his Infidelity.

VII. *LYS.* To cut this Matter short, I shall borrow an Allusion to Physic, which one of you made use of against our Sect. It will not be denied, that the Clergy pass for Physicians of the Soul, and that Religion is a sort of Medicine which they

they deal in and administer. If then DIAL.
 Souls in great numbers are diseased and V.
 lost, how can we think the Physician 
 skilful, or his Physic good? It is a common
 Complaint, that Vice increases, and Men
 grow daily more and more wicked. If a
 Shepherd's Flock be diseased or unsound,
 who is to blame but the Shepherd, for
 neglecting, or not knowing how to cure
 them? A Fig therefore for such Shepherds,
 such Physic, and such Physicians, who
 like other Mountebanks, with great Gra-
 vity and elaborate Harangues put off their
 Pills to the People, who are never the
 better for them. *EUPH.* Nothing seems
 more reasonable than this Remark, That
 Men should judge of a Physician and his
 Physic, by its Effect on the Sick. But
 pray, *Lysicles*, would you judge of a Phy-
 sician, by those Sick who take his Physic
 and follow his Prescriptions, or by those
 who do not? *LYS.* Doubtless by those
 who do. *EUPH.* What shall we say then,
 if great numbers refuse to take the Physic,
 or instead of it take Poison of a direct
 contrary Nature prescribed by others, who
 make it their Business to discredit the Phy-
 sician and his Medicines, to hinder Men
 from using them, and to destroy their
 Effect by Drugs of their own? Shall the

DIAL. Physician be blamed for the Miscarriage of
 V. those People? *LYS.* By no means. *EUPH.*

By a parity of Reason should it not follow, that the Tendency of religious Doctrines ought to be judged of by the Effects which they produce, not upon all who hear them, but upon those only who receive or believe them? *LYS.* It seems so. *EUPH.* Therefore to proceed fairly, shall we not judge of the Effects of Religion by the Religious, of Faith by Believers, of Christianity by Christians?

VIII. *LYS.* But I doubt these sincere Believers are very few. *EUPH.* But will it not suffice to justify our Principles, if in proportion to the Numbers which receive them, and the degree of Faith with which they are received, they produce good Effects. Perhaps the Number of Believers are not so few as you imagine: and if they were, whose Fault is that so much as of those who make it their professed Endeavour to lessen that Number? And who are those but the Minute Philosophers? *LYS.* I tell you it is owing to the Clergy themselves, to the Wickedness and Corruption of Clergymen. *EUPH.* And who denies but there may be Minute Philosophers even among the Clergy? *CRI.* In so numerous
 a Body

D I A L.

V.



a Body it is to be presumed there are Men of all sorts. But notwithstanding the cruel Reproaches cast upon that Order by their Enemies, an equal Observer of Men and Things will, if I mistake not, be inclined to think those Reproaches owing as much to other Faults, as those of the Clergy: especially if he considers the declamatory manner of those who censure them.

EUPH. My Knowledge of the World is too narrow for me to pretend to judge of the Virtue, and Merit, and liberal Attainments of Men in the several Professions. Besides, I should not care for the odious Work of Comparison: But I may venture to say, the Clergy of this Country where I live are by no means a Disgrace to it: on the contrary, the People seem much the better for their Example and Doctrine. But supposing the Clergy to be (what all Men certainly are) Sinners, and faulty; supposing you might spy out here and there among them even great Crimes and Vices, what can you conclude against the Profession it self from its unworthy Professors, any more than from the Pride, Pedantry, and bad Lines of some Philosophers against Philosophy, or of Lawyers against Law?

IX. It

DIAL. IX. It is certainly right to judge of
 V. Principles from their Effects, but then
 we must know them to be Effects of those
 Principles. It is the very Method I have
 observed, with respect to Religion and the
 Minute Philosophy. And I can honestly
 aver, that I never knew any Man or Fa-
 mily grow worse in proportion as they
 grew religious: But I have often ob-
 served, that Minute Philosophy is the
 worst thing which can get into a Family,
 the readiest way to impoverish, divide,
 and disgrace it. *ALC.* By the same Me-
 thod of tracing Causes from their Effects,
 I have made it my Observation, That the
 Love of Truth, Virtue, and the Happi-
 ness of Mankind are specious Pretexts,
 but not the inward Principles that set Di-
 vines at work: Else why should they af-
 fect to abuse Humane Reason, to disparage
 Natural Religion, to traduce the Philoso-
 phers, as they universally do? *CRI.* Not so
 universally perhaps as you imagine. A
 Christian, indeed, is for confining Reason
 within its due Bounds: and so is every
 reasonable Man. If we are forbid med-
 dling with unprofitable Questions, vain
 Philosophy, and Science falsely so called,
 it cannot be thence inferred, that all In-
 quiries into profitable Questions, useful
 Phi-

Philosophy, and true Science, are unlawful. A Minute Philosopher may indeed impute, and perhaps a weak Brother may imagine those Inferences, but Men of Sense will never make them. God is the common Father of Lights: and all Knowledge really such, whether natural or revealed, is derived from the same Source of Light and Truth. To amass together Authorities upon so plain a Point would be needless. It must be owned some Mens attributing too much to Humane Reason, hath, as is natural, made others attribute too little to it. But thus much is generally acknowledged, that there is a natural Religion, which may be discovered and proved by the Light of Reason, to those who are capable of such Proofs. But it must be withal acknowledged, that Precepts and Oracles from Heaven are incomparably better suited to popular Improvement, and the Good of Society, than the Reasonings of Philosophers: and accordingly we do not find, that natural or rational Religion, as such, ever became the popular national Religion of any Country.

X. *ALC.* It cannot be denied, that in all Heathen Countries there have been received

DIAL. ceived under the colour of Religion, a
 V. world of Fables and superstitious Rites.

But I question whether they were so absurd and of so bad Influence, as is vulgarly represented, since their respective Legislators and Magistrates must, without doubt, have thought them useful. *CRI.* It were needless to inquire into all the Rites and Notions of the Gentile World. This hath been largely done when it was thought necessary. And whoever thinks it worth while, may be easily satisfied about them. But as to the Tendency and Usefulness of the Heathen Religion in general, I beg leave to mention a Remark of St. *Augustine's**, who observes that the Heathens in their Religion had no Assemblies for preaching, wherein the People were to be instructed what Duties or Virtues the Gods required, no Place or Means to be taught what *Perfius* † exhorts them to learn.

*Disciteque ô miseri, & causas cognoscite rerum,
 Quid sumus, & quidnam victuri gignimur.—*

ALC. This is the true Spirit of the Party, never to allow a Grain of Use or Goodness to any thing out of their own Pale: But we have had learned Men who have

* De Civitate Dei l. 2.

† Sat. 3.

done

done Justice to the Religion of the *Gentiles*. DIAL. V.
CRI. We do not deny but there was something useful in the old Religions of *Rome* and *Greece*, and some other Pagan Countries. * On the contrary, we freely own they produced some good Effects on the People: But then these good Effects were owing to the Truths contained in those false Religions: the truer therefore, the more useful. I believe you will find it a hard Matter to produce any useful Truth, any moral Precept, any salutary Principle or Notion in any Gentile System, either of Religion or Philosophy, which is not comprehended in the Christian, and either enforced by stronger Motives, or supported by better Authority, or carried to a higher Point of Perfection.

XI. Consequently you would have us think our selves a finer People than the ancient *Greeks* or *Romans*. *CRI.* If by finer you mean better, perhaps we are: and if we are not, it is not owing to the Christian Religion, but to the want of it. *ALC.* You say perhaps we are. I do not pique my self on my Reading: But should be very ignorant to be capable of being imposed on in so plain a Point. What! compare *Cicero* or *Brutus* to an *English* Patriot,

DIAL. Patriot, or *Seneca* to one of our Parsons!

V. Then that invincible Constancy and Vigour of Mind, that disinterested and noble Virtue, that adorable publick Spirit you so much admire, are things in them so well known, and so different from our Manners, that I know not how to excuse your *perhaps*. *Euphranor*, indeed, who passeth his Life in this obscure Corner, may possibly mistake the Characters of our Times: but you who know the World, how could you be guilty of such a Mistake? *CRI*. O *Alciphron*! I would by no means detract from the noble Virtue of ancient Heroes: But I observe those great Men were not the Minute Philosophers of their Times: and that the best Principles upon which they acted are common to them with Christians, of whom it would be no difficult Matter to assign, if not in our own Times, yet within the compass of our own History, many Instances, in every Kind of Worth and Virtue, publick or private, equal to the most celebrated of the Ancients. Though perhaps their Story might not have been so well told, set off with such fine Lights and Colourings of Style, or so vulgarly known and considered by every School-Boy. But though it should be granted, that here and there a *Greek* or
Roman

Roman Genius, bred up under strict Laws and severe Discipline, animated to public Virtue by Statues, Crowns, Triumphal Arches, and such Rewards and Monuments of great Actions, might attain to a Character and Fame beyond other Men; yet this will prove only, that they had more Spirit, and lived under a civil Polity more wisely ordered in certain Points than ours: Which Advantages of Nature and Civil Institution will be no Argument for their Religion, or against ours. On the contrary, it seems an invincible Proof of the Power and Excellency of the Christian Religion, that, without the help of those Civil Institutions and Incentives to Glory, it should be able to inspire a Phlegmatic People with the noblest Sentiments, and soften the rugged Manners of Northern Boors into Gentleness and Humanity: and that these good Qualities should become National, and rise and fall in proportion to the Purity of our Religion, as it approaches to, or recedes from the Plan laid down in the Gospel.

XII. To make a right Judgment of the Effects of the Christian Religion, let us take a Survey of the prevailing Notions and Manners of this very Country where
we

DIAL. we live, and compare them with those of
 V. our Heathen Predecessors. *ALC.* I have
 heard much of the glorious Light of the
 Gospel, and should be glad to see some
 Effects of it in my own dear Country,
 which, by the bye, is one of the most
 corrupt and profligate upon Earth, not-
 withstanding the boasted Purity of our
 Religion. But it would look mean and
 diffident, to affect a Comparison with the
 barbarous Heathen, from whence we
 drew our Original: If you would do hon-
 our to your Religion, dare to make it
 with the most renowned Heathens of An-
 tiquity. *CRI.* It is a common Prejudice,
 to despise the present, and over-rate re-
 mote Times and Things. Something of
 this seems to enter into the Judgments Men
 make of the *Greeks* and *Romans*. For though
 it must be allowed, those Nations produ-
 ced some noble Spirits and great Paterns
 of Virtue: yet upon the whole, it seems
 to me they were much inferior in point of
 real Virtue and good Morals, even to
 this corrupt and profligate Nation, as you
 are now pleased to call it in dishonour to
 our Religion; however you may think fit
 to characterize it, when you would do
 honour to the Minute Philosophy. This,
 I think, will be plain to any one, who
 shall

ihall turn off his Eyes from a few shining D I A L.
 Characters, to view the general Manners V.
 and Customs of those People. Their in- }
 solent Treatment of Captives, even of
 the highest Rank and softer Sex, their
 unnatural exposing of their own Chil-
 dren, their bloody Gladiatorian Spec-
 tacles, compared with the common No-
 tions of *Englishmen*, are to me a plain
 Proof, that our Minds are much softened
 by Christianity. Could any thing be
 more unjust, than the condemning a
 young Lady to the most infamous Pu-
 nishment and Death for the Guilt of her
 Father, or a whole Family of Slaves,
 perhaps some hundreds for a Crime com-
 mitted by one? Or more abominable
 than their Bacchanals and unbridled Lusts
 of every kind? which, notwithstanding
 all that has been done by Minute Phi-
 losophers to debauch the Nation, and
 their successful Attempts on some part
 of it, have not yet been matched among
 us, at least not in every Circumstance
 of Impudence and Effrontery. While
 the *Romans* were poor, they were tem-
 perate; but, as they grew rich, they
 became luxurious to a Degree that is
 hardly believed or conceived by us. It
 cannot be denied, the old *Roman* Spirit

DIAL. was a great one. But it is as certain, there
 V. have been numberless Examples of the
 } most resolute and clear Courage in *Brit-*
tons, and in general from a Religious
 Cause. Upon the whole, it seems an In-
 stance of the greatest Blindness and Ingrat-
 itude, that we do not see and own the ex-
 ceeding great Benefits of Christianity,
 which, to omit higher Considerations,
 hath so visibly softened, polished, and
 embellished our Manners.

XIII. *ALC.* O *Crito*, we are alarmed
 at Cruelty in a foreign Shape, but over-
 look it in a familiar one. Else how is it
 possible that you should not see the In-
 humanity of that barbarous Custom of
 Duelling, a Thing avowed and tolerated
 and even reputable among us? Or that
 seeing this, you should suppose our *Eng-*
lishmen of a more gentle Disposition than
 the old *Romans*, who were altogether
 Strangers to it? *CRI.* I will by no means
 make an Apology for every *Goth* that
 walks the Streets, with a determined Pur-
 pose to murder any Man who shall but
 spit in his Face, or give him the Lye.
 Nor do I think the Christian Religion in
 the least answerable, for a Practice so
 directly opposite to its Precepts, and which
 obtains

obtains only among the idle Part of the DIAL. Nation, your Men of Fashion; who, in- V.stead of Law, Reason, or Religion, are governed by Fashion. Be pleased to consider that what may be, and truly is, a most scandalous Reproach to a Christian Country, may be none at all to the Christian Religion: For the Pagan encouraged Men in several Vices, but the Christian in none. *ALC.* Give me leave to observe, that what you now say is foreign to the Purpose. For the Question, at present, is not concerning the respective Tendencies of the Pagan and the Christian Religions, but concerning our Manners, as actually compared with those of ancient Heathens, who I aver had no such barbarous Custom as Duelling. *CRI.* And I aver that, bad as this is, they had a worse: and that was Poisoning. By which we have reason to think there were many more Lives destroyed, than by this *Gothic* Crime of Duelling: Inasmuch as it extended to all Ages, Sexes, and Characters, and as its Effects were more secret and unavoidable: and as it had more Temptations, Interest as well as Passion, to recommend it to wicked Men. And for the Fact, not to waste Time, I refer you to the *Roman*

DIAL. Authors themselves. *LYS.* It is very true :

V. Duelling is not so general a Nufance as
 Poisoning, nor of so base a Nature. This
 Crime, if it be a Crime, is in a fair way
 to keep its Ground in spite of the Law
 and the Gospel. The Clergy never preach
 against it, because themselves never suffer
 by it : and the Man of Honour must not
 appear against the means of vindicating
 Honour. *CRI.* Though it be remark-
 ed by some of your Sect, that the Clergy
 are not used to preach against Duelling,
 yet I neither think the Remark it self just,
 nor the Reason assigned for it. In effect,
 one half of their Sermons, all that is said
 of Charity, Brotherly Love, Forbearance,
 Meekness, and Forgiving Injuries is di-
 rectly against this wicked Custom ; by
 which the Clergy themselves are so far
 from never suffering, that perhaps they
 will be found, all Things considered, to
 suffer oftner than other Men. *LYS.* How
 do you make this appear ? *CRI.* An Ob-
 server of Mankind may remark two kinds
 of Bully, the Fighting and the Tame,
 both public Nufances : the former (who
 is the more dangerous Animal, but
 by much the less common of the two)
 employs himself wholly and solely against
 the Laity, while the tame Species exert
 their

their Talents upon the Clergy. The DIAL.
 Qualities constituent of this tame Bully V.
 are natural Rudeness joined with a delicate Sense of Danger. For, you must know, the Force of inbred Insolence and ill Manners is not diminished, though it acquire a new Determination, from the fashionable Custom of calling Men to account for their Behaviour. Hence you may often see one of these tame Bullies ready to burst with Pride and ill Humour, which he dares not vent, till a Parson has come in the way to his Relief. And the Man of Raillery, who would as soon bite off his Tongue, as break a Jest on the Profession of Arms, in the Presence of a military Man, shall instantly brighten up, and assume a familiar Air with Religion and the Church before Ecclesiastics. *Dorcon*, who passes for a Poltron and stupid in all other Company, and really is so, when he is got among Clergymen, affects a quite opposite Character. And many *Dorcons* there are, which owe their Wit and Courage to this Passive Order.

XIV. *ALC.* But to return to the Point in hand, can you deny, the old *Romans* were as famous for Justice and Integrity,

DIAL. as Men in these Days for the contrary
 V. Qualities? *CRI.* The Character of the
Romans is not to be taken from the Sentiments of *Tully*, or *Cato's* Actions, or a shining Passage here and there in their History, but from the prevailing Tenor of their Lives and Notions. Now if they and our modern *Britons* are weighed in this same equal Balance, you will, if I mistake not, appear to have been prejudiced in favour of the old *Romans* against your own Country: probably because it professeth Christianity. Whatever Instances of Fraud or Injustice may be seen in Christians carry their own Censure with them, in the Care that is taken to conceal them, and the Shame that attends their Discovery. There is, even at this Day, a sort of Modesty in all our publick Councils and Deliberations. And I believe, the boldest of our Minute Philosophers would hardly undertake in a popular Assembly, to propose any Thing parallel to the Rape of the *Sabines*, the most unjust Usage of *Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus*, or the ungrateful Treatment of *Camillus*, which, as a learned Father observes, were Instances of Iniquity agreed to by the public Body of the *Romans*. And if *Rome* in her early Days were

were capable of such flagrant Injustice, DIAL. it is most certain she did not mend her V. Manners, as she grew great in Wealth and Empire, having produced Monsters in every Kind of Wickedness, as far exceeding other Men, as they surpassed them in Power. I freely acknowledge, the Christian Religion hath not had the same Influence upon the Nation, that it would in case it had been always professed in its Purity, and cordially believed by all Men. But I will venture to say, that if you take the *Roman* History from one End to the other, and impartially compare it with our own, you will neither find them so good, nor your Countrymen so bad as you imagine. On the contrary, an indifferent Eye may, I verily think, perceive a Vein of Charity and Justice, the Effect of Christian Principles, run through the latter; which, though not equally discernible in all Parts, yet discloseth it self sufficiently to make a wide Difference upon the whole, in spite of the general Appetites and Passions of Humane Nature, as well as of the particular Hardness and Roughness of the Block, out of which we were hewn. And it is observable (what the *Roman* Authors themselves often suggest) that,

DIAL. even their Virtues and magnanimous
 V. Actions rose and fell with a Sense of
 Providence and a future State, and a
 Philosophy the nearest to the Christian
 Religion.

XV. *Crito* having spoke thus, paused. But *Alciphron* addressing himself to *Euphranon* and me, said, It is natural for Men, according to their several Educations and Prejudices, to form contrary Judgments upon the same Things, which they view in very different Lights. *Crito*, for instance, imagines that none but Salutary Effects proceed from Religion: on the other hand, if you appeal to the general Experience and Observation of other Men, you shall find it grown into a Proverb that Religion is the Root of Evil.


Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum.

And this is not only among *Epicureans* or other ancient Heathens, but among Moderns speaking of the Christian Religion. Now methinks it is unreasonable to oppose against the general concurring Opinion of the World, the Observation of a particular Person, or particular Set of Zealots, whose Prejudice sticks close to them, and
 ever

ever mixeth with their Judgment ; and DIAL. who read, collect, and observe with an Eye V. not to discover the Truth, but to defend their Prejudice. *CRI.* Though I cannot think with *Alciphron*, yet I must own, I admire his Address and Dexterity in Argument. Popular and general Opinion is by him represented, on certain Occasions, to be a sure Mark of Error. But when it serves his Ends that it should seem otherwise, he can as easily make it a Character of Truth. But it will by no means follow, that a profane Proverb used by the Friends and admired Authors of a Minute Philosopher, must therefore be a received Opinion, much less a Truth grounded on the Experience and Observation of Mankind. Sadness may spring from Guilt or Superstition, and Rage from Bigotry : But Darkness might as well be supposed the natural Effect of Sunshine, as sullen and furious Passions to proceed from the glad Tidings and divine Precepts of the Gospel. What is the Sum and Substance, Scope and End of Christ's Religion, but the Love of God and Man ? To which all other Points and Duties are relative and subordinate, as Parts or Means, as Signs, Principles, Motives, or Effects. Now I would fain know, how it is possible

DIAL. sible for Evil or Wickedness of any kind
 V. to spring from such a Source. I will not
 pretend, there are no evil Qualities in
 Christians, nor good in Minute Philoso-
 phers. But this I affirm, that whatever
 Evil is in us, our Principles certainly lead
 to Good: and whatever Good there may
 be in you, it is most certain your Princi-
 ples lead to Evil.

XVI. *ALC.* It must be owned there is
 a fair Outside, and many plausible Things
 may be said, for the Christian Religion tak-
 en simply as it lies in the Gospel. But it
 is the Observation of one of our great
 Writers, that the first Christian Preachers
 very cunningly began with the fairest Face
 and the best moral Doctrines in the World.
 It was all Love, Charity, Meekness, Pa-
 tience and so forth. But when by this
 means they had drawn over the World
 and got Power, they soon changed their
 Appearance, and shewed Cruelty, Ambiti-
 on, Avarice, and every bad Quality. *CRI.*
 That is to say, some Men very cunning-
 ly preached and underwent a world of
 Hardships, and laid down their Lives to
 propagate the best Principles and the best
 Morals, to the end that others some Cen-
 turies after might reap the Benefit of bad
 4 ones.

ones. Whoever may be cunning, there is DIAL.
 not much Cunning in the Maker of this V.
 Observation. *ALC.* And yet ever since 
 this Religion hath appeared in the World,
 we have had eternal Feuds, Factions, Mas-
 sacres and Wars, the very Reverse of that
 Hymn with which it is introduced in the
 Gospel: *Glory be to God on high, on Earth
 Peace, Good-will towards Men.* *CRI.* This
 I will not deny. I will even own, that the
 Gospel and the Christian Religion have
 been often the Pretexts for these Evils: but
 it will not thence follow they were the
 Cause. On the contrary it is plain, they
 could not be the real proper Cause of these
 Evils; because a rebellious, proud, re-
 vengeful, quarrelsome Spirit is directly op-
 posite to the whole Tenor and most ex-
 press Precepts of Christianity: a Point so
 clear that I shall not prove it. And se-
 condly, because all those Evils you men-
 tion were as frequent, nay, much more
 frequent, before the Christian Religion
 was known in the World. They are the
 common Product of the Passions and
 Vices of Mankind, which are sometimes
 covered with the Masque of Religion by
 wicked Men, having the Form of Godli-
 ness without the Power of it. This Truth
 seems so plain, that I am surpris'd how
 any

DIAL. any Man of Sense, Knowledge, and Candour can make a Doubt of it.



XVII. Take but a View of Heathen *Rome*; what a Scene is there of Faction and Fury and civil Rage? Let any Man consider the perpetual Feuds between the *Patricians* and *Plebeians*, the bloody and inhumane Factions of *Marius* and *Sylla*, *Cinna* and *Octavius*, and the vast havoc of Mankind, during the two famous *Triumvirates*. To be short, let any Man of common Candour and common Sense but cast an Eye, from one End to the other of the *Roman* Story, and behold that long Scene of Seditious, Murders, Massacres, Proscriptions and Desolations of every kind, enhanced by every cruel Circumstance of Rage, Rapine, and Revenge; and then say, whether those Evils were introduced into the World with the Christian Religion, or whether they are not less frequent now than before? *ALC.* The ancient *Romans*, it must be owned, had a high and fierce Spirit, which produced eager Contentions and very bloody Catastrophes. The *Greeks*, on the other hand, were a polite and gentle Sort of Men, softened by Arts and Philosophy. It is impossible to think of the little States
and

and Cities of *Greece*, without wishing to have lived in those Times, without admiring their Policy and envying their Happiness. *CRI.* Men are apt to consider the dark Sides of what they possess, and the bright ones of Things out of their Reach. A fine Climate, elegant Taste, polite Amusements, Love of Liberty, and a most ingenious inventive Spirit for Arts and Sciences were indisputable Prerogatives of ancient *Greece*. But as for Peace and Quietness, Gentleness and Humanity, I think we have plainly the Advantage: For those envied Cities composed of gentle *Greeks* were not without their Factions, which persecuted each other with such Treachery, Rage, and Malice, that in respect of them our factious Folk are meer Lambs. To be convinced of this Truth, you need only look into *Thucydides* *; where you will find those Cities in general involved in such bitter Factions, as for Fellow-Citizens without the Formalities of War, to murder one another, even in their Senate-houses and their Temples; no regard being had to Merit, Rank, Obligation, or Nearness of Blood. And if Humane Nature boiled up to so vehement a Pitch in the politest People, what

* *Thucyd.* l. 3.

wonder

DIAL. wonder that Savage Nations should scalp,
 V. roast, torture, and destroy each other, as
 they are known to do? It is therefore
 plain, that without Religion there would
 not be wanting Pretex^ts for Quarrels and
 Debates; all which can very easily be
 accounted for by the natural Infirmities
 and Corruption of Men. It would not
 perhaps be so easy to account for the Blind-
 ness of those, who impute the most hel-
 lish Effects to the most divine Principle, if
 they could be supposed in earnest, and to
 have considered the Point. One may daily
 see ignorant and prejudiced Men make the
 most absurd Blunders: But that Free-
 thinkers, Divers to the Bottom of Things,
 Fair Inquirers, and Openers of Eyes should
 be capable of such a gross Mistake, is
 what one would not expect.

XVIII. *ALC.* The rest of Mankind
 we could more easily give up; but as for
 the *Greeks*, Men of the most refined Ge-
 nius express an high Esteem of them: not
 only on account of those Qualities which
 you think fit to allow them, but also for
 their Virtues. *CRI.* I shall not take up-
 on me to say how far some Men may be
 prejudiced against their Country, or whe-
 ther others may not be prejudiced in
 favour

favour of it. But upon the fullest and most equal Observation that I am able to make, it is my Opinion, that, if by Virtue is meant Truth, Justice, Gratitude, there is incomparably more Virtue, now at this Day in *England*, than at any Time could be found in ancient *Greece*. Thus much will be allowed, that we know few Countries, if any, where Men of eminent Worth, and famous for deserving well of the Public, met with harder Fate, and were more ungratefully treated than in the most polite and learned of the *Grecian* States. Though *Socrates*, it must be owned, would not allow, that those Statesmen, by adorning the City, augmenting the Fleet, or extending the Commerce of *Athens*, deserved well of their Country; or could with Justice complain of the ungrateful Returns made by their Fellow-Citizens, whom, while they were in Power, they had taken no Care to make better Men, by improving and cultivating their Minds with the Principles of Virtue, which if they had done, they needed not to have feared their Ingratitude. If I were to declare my Opinion, what gave the chief Advantage to *Greeks* and *Romans*, and other Nations, which have made the greatest Figure in the World,

DIAL.
V.

DIAL. World, I should be apt to think it was a
 V. peculiar Reverence for their respective
 Laws and Institutions, which inspired
 them with Steadiness and Courage, and
 that hearty generous Love of their Coun-
 try: by which they did not meerly un-
 derstand a certain Language or Tribe of
 Men, much less a particular Spot of Earth,
 but included a certain System of Manners,
 Customs, Notions, Rites, and Laws Ci-
 vil and Religious. *ALC.* Oh! I perceive
 your Drift, you would have us reverence
 the Laws and Religious Institutions of
 our Country. But herein we beg to be
 excused, if we do not think fit to imitate
 the *Greeks*, or to be governed by any
 Authority whatsoever. *CRI.* So far from
 it. If Mahometanism were established
 by Authority, I make no doubt, those
 very Free-thinkers, who at present ap-
 plaud Turkish Maxims and Manners to
 that Degree you'd think them ready to
 turn *Turks*, would then be the first to
 exclaim against them. *ALC.* But to re-
 turn: As for Wars and Factions, I grant
 they ever were and ever will be in the
 World upon some Pretext or other, as
 long as Men are Men.

XIX. But

XIX. But there is a sort of War and DIAL.
 Warriors peculiar to Christendom, which V.
 the Heathens had no Notion of: I mean }
 Disputes in Theology and Polemical Di-
 vines, which the World hath been won-
 derfully pestered with: these Teachers
 of Peace, Meekness, Concord, and what
 not! if you take their word for it: But,
 if you cast an Eye upon their Practice,
 you find them to have been in all Ages
 the most contentious; quarrelsome, dis-
 agreeing Crew that ever appeared upon
 Earth. To observe the Skill and Sophi-
 stry, the Zeal and Eagerness, with which
 those Barbarians, the School-Divines,
 split Hairs, and contest about Chimæ-
 ra's, gives me more Indignation, as being
 more absurd and a greater Scandal to Hu-
 mane Reason, than all the ambitious In-
 trigues, Cabals, and Politics of the Court
 of *Rome*. *CRI*. If Divines are quarrel-
 some, that is not so far forth as Divine;
 but as Undivine and Unchristian. Justice
 is a good thing; and the Art of Healing
 is excellent; nevertheless in the admini-
 string of Justice or Physic Men may be
 wronged or poisoned. But as Wrong can-
 not be Justice, or the Effect of Justice, so
 Poison cannot be Medicine or the Effect of
 Medicine, so neither can Pride or Strife be

DIAL. Religion or the Effect of Religion. Having premised this, I acknowledge, you may often see hot-headed Bigots engage themselves in religious as well as civil Parties, without being of Credit or Service to either. And as for the Schoolmen in particular, I do not in the least think the Christian Religion concerned in the Defence of them, their Tenets, or their Method of handling them: but, whatever Futility there may be in their Notions, or Inelegancy in their Language, in pure Justice to Truth one must own: they neither banter, nor rail, nor declaim in their Writings, and are so far from shewing Fury or Passion, that perhaps an impartial Judge will think: the Minute Philosophers are by no means to be compared with them, for keeping close to the Point, or for Temper and good Manners. But after all, if Men are puzzled, wrangle, talk Nonsense, and quarrel about Religion: so they do about Law, Physic, Politics, and every thing else of moment. I ask whether in these Professions, or in any other, where Men have refined and abstracted, they do not run into Disputes, Chicane, Nonsense, and Contradictions, as well as in Divinity? And yet this doth not hinder but there may be many excellent Rules, and

and just Notions, and useful Truths in all those Professions. In all Disputes Humane Passions too often mix themselves, in proportion as the Subject is conceived to be more or less important. But we ought not to confound the Cause of Man with the Cause of God, or make Humane Follies an Objection to Divine Truths. It is easy to distinguish what looks like Wisdom from above, and what proceeds from the Passion and Weakness of Men. This is so clear a Point, that one would be tempted to think, the not doing it was an Effect, not of Ignorance, but, of something worse.

XX. The Conduct we object to Minute Philosophers is a natural Consequence of their Principles. Whatsoever they can reproach us with is an Effect, not of our Principles, but of Humane Passion and Frailty. *ALC.* This is admirable. So we must no longer object to Christians the absurd Contentions of Councils, the Cruelty of Inquisitions, the Ambition and Ufurpations of Churchmen. *CRI.* You may object them to Christians, but not to Christianity. If the Divine Author of our Religion, and his Disciples, have sowed a good Seed; and together with this good Seed,

DIAL. the Enemies of his Gospel (among whom
 V. are to be reckoned the Minute Philosophers
 of all Ages) have sowed bad Seeds, whence
 spring Tares and Thistles; is it not evident, these bad Weeds cannot be imputed to the good Seed, or to those who sowed it? Whatever you do or can object against Ecclesiastical Tyranny, Usurpation, or Sophistry, may, without any Blemish or Disadvantage to Religion, be acknowledged by all true Christians: provided still that you impute those wicked Effects to their true Cause, not blaming any Principles or Persons for them, but those that really produce or justify them. Certainly, as the Interests of Christianity are not to be supported by unchristian Methods, whenever these are made use of, it must be supposed there is some other latent Principle which sets them at work. If the very Court of *Rome* hath been known, from Motives of Policy, to oppose settling the Inquisition in a Kingdom, where the secular Power hath endeavoured to introduce it in spite of that Court*: We may well suppose, that elsewhere Factions of State, and Political Views of Princes, have given birth to Transactions seemingly religious, wherein at bottom neither Re-

* P. Paolo storia dell' Inquisizione, p. 42.

ligion,

ligion, nor Church, nor Churchmen, were DIAL.
 at all consider'd. As no Man of common V.
 Sense and Honesty will engage in a general Defence of Ecclesiastics, so I think no
 Man of common Candour can condemn them in general. Would you think it rea-
 sonable to blame all Statesmen, Lawyers, or Soldiers, for the Faults committed by
 those of their Profession, though in other Times, or in other Countries, and influ-
 enced by other Maxims and other Discipline? And if not, why do you measure
 with one Rule to the Clergy, and another to the Laity? Surely the best Reason that
 can be given for this is Prejudice. Should any Man rake together all the Mischiefs
 that have been committed in all Ages and Nations, by Soldiers and Lawyers, you
 would, I suppose, conclude from thence: not that the State should be deprived of
 those useful Professions, but only that their Exorbitances should be guarded against
 and punished. If you took the same equitable Course with the Clergy, there would
 indeed be less to be said against you: but then you would have much less to say.
 This plain obvious Consideration, if every one who read considered, would lessen the
 Credit of your Declaimers. *ALC.* But when all is said that can be said, it must


DIAL. move a Man's Indignation to see reasonable Creatures, under the Notion of Study and Learning, employ'd in reading and writing so many voluminous Tracts, *de lanâ caprinâ*. CRI. I shall not undertake the Vindication of Theological Writings, a general Defence being as needless as a general Charge is groundless. Only let them speak for themselves: and let no Man condemn them upon the Word of a Minute Philosopher. But we will imagine the very worst, and suppose a wrangling Pedant in Divinity disputes and ruminates and writes upon a refined Point, as useless and unintelligible as you please. Suppose this same Person bred a Layman, might he not have employ'd himself in tricking Bargains, vexatious Law-suits, Factions, Seditions, and such like Amusements, with much more Prejudice to the Publick? Suffer then curious Wits to spin Cobwebs: Where is the Hurt? ALC. The Mischief is, what Men want in Light they commonly make up in Heat: Zeal, and Ill-nature, being Weapons constantly exerted by the Partisans, as well as Champions, on either Side: And those perhaps not mean Pedants or Book-worms. You shall often see even the learned and eminent Divine lay himself out in explaining Things inexplicable,

ble, or contend for a barren Point of The-DIAL. V. ory, as if his Life, Liberty, or Fortune were at stake. *CRI.* No doubt all Points in Divinity are not of equal Moment. Some may be too fine spun, and others have more Stress laid on them than they deserve. Be the Subject what it will, you shall often observe that a Point by being controverted, singled out, examined, and nearly inspected, groweth considerable to the same Eye, that, perhaps, would have overlooked it in a large and comprehensive View. Nor is it an uncommon thing, to behold Ignorance and Zeal united in Men, who are born with a Spirit of Party, though the Church or Religion have in Truth but small Share in it. Nothing is easier than to make a *Caricatura* (as the Painters call it) of any Profession upon Earth: But at bottom, there will be found nothing so strange in all this Charge upon the Clergy, as the Partiality of those who censure them, in supposing the common Defects of Mankind peculiar to their Order, or the Effect of religious Principles. *ALC.* Other Folks may dispute or squabble as they please, and no body mind them: but it seems, these venerable Squabbles of the Clergy pass for Learning, and interest Mankind. To use the Words of

DIAL. the most ingenious Characterizer of our
 V. Times, “A Ring is made, and Readers ga-
 ther in abundance. Every one takes
 Party and encourages his own Side. This
 shall be my Champion! This Man for
 my Money! Well hit on our Side! Again
 a good Stroke! There he was even with
 him! Have at him the next Bout! Ex-
 cellent Sport! *” *CRI.* Methinks I trace
 the Man of Quality and Breeding in this
 delicate Satyr, which so politely ridicules
 those Arguments, Answers, Defences, and
 Replications which the Press groans under.
ALC. To the infinite waste of Time and
 Paper, and all the while no body is one
 whit the wiser. And who indeed can be
 the wiser for reading Books upon Subjects
 quite out of the way, incomprehensible,
 and most wretchedly written? What Man
 of Sense or Breeding would not abhor the
 Infection of prolix Pulpit Eloquence, or
 of that dry, formal, pedantic, stiff, and
 clumsy Style, which smells of the Lamp
 and the College.

XXI. They who have the Weakness
 to reverence the Universities as Seats of
 Learning, must needs think this a strange
 Reproach; but it is a very just one. For


* *Characteristics*, Vol. III. c. 2.


the most ingenious Men are now agreed, DIAL.
 that they are only Nurseries of Preju- V.
 dice, Corruption, Barbarism, and Pedantry. 

LYS. For my part, I find no Fault with Universities. All I know is, that I had the spending three hundred Pounds a Year in one of them, and think it the chearfullest time of my Life. As for their Books and Style I had not Leisure to mind them.

CRI. Whoever hath a mind to weed, will never want Work: and he that shall pick out bad Books on every Subject will soon fill his Library. I do not know what Theological Writings *Alciphron* and his Friends may be conversant in: but I will venture to say, one may find among our *English* Divines many Writers, who for Compass of Learning, Weight of Matter, Strength of Argument, and Purity of Style, are not inferior to any in our Language. It is not my Design to apologize for the Universities: whatever is amiss in them (and what is there perfect among Men?) I heartily wish amended. But I dare affirm, because I know it to be true, that any impartial Observer, although they should not come up to what in Theory he might wish or imagine, will nevertheless find them much superior to those that in Fact are to be found in other Countries,
 and

DIAL. and far beyond the mean Picture that is drawn of them by Minute Philosophers.

V.  It is natural for those to rail most at Places of Education, who have profited least by them. Weak and fond Parents will also readily impute to a wrong Cause, those Corruptions themselves have occasion'd, by allowing their Children more Money than they knew how to spend innocently. And too often a Gentleman, who has been idle at the College and kept idle Company, will judge of a whole University from his own Cabal. *ALC. Crito* mistakes the Point. I vouch the Authority, not of a Dunce, or a Rake, or absurd Parent, but of the most consummate Critic this Age has produced. This great Man characterizeth Men of the Church and Universities with the finest Touches and most masterly Pencil. What do you think he calls them? *EUPH.* What? *ALC.* Why, the black Tribe, Magicians, Formalists, Pedants, bearded Boys: and, having sufficiently derided and exploded them and their mean ungenteel Learning, he sets most admirable Models of his own for good Writing: And it must be acknowledged they are the finest things in our Language; as I could easily convince you, for I am never without something of that noble

noble Writer about me. *EUPH.* He is DIAL.
 then a noble Writer. *ALC.* I tell you he V.
 is a Nobleman. *EUPH.* But a Nobleman 
 who writes is one thing, and a noble
 Writer another. *ALC.* Both Characters
 are coincident, as you may see.

XXII. Upon which *Alciphron* pulled a
 Treatise out of his Pocket, entitled, *A*
Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author. Would
 you behold, said he, looking round up-
 on the Company, a noble Specimen of
 fine Writing: do but dip into this
 Book: which *Crito* opening read verba-
 tim as follows*.

- [promises
- ' *Where then are the Pleasures which Ambition*
 - ' *And Love affords? How's the gay World enjoy'd?*
 - ' *Or are those to be esteem'd no Pleasures,*
 - ' *Which are lost by Dulness and Inaction?*
 - ' *But Indolence is the highest Pleasure.*
 - ' *To live and not to feel! To feel no Trouble.*
 - ' *What Good then? Life it self. And is*
 - ' *This properly to live? Is Sleeping Life?*
 - ' *Is this what I should study to prolong?*
 - ' *Here the*
 - ' *Fantastic Tribe it self seems scandaliz'd.*
 - ' *A Civil War begins: The major Part*

* Part. 3. Sect. 2.

DIAL. ' *Of the capricious Dames do range themselves*

V. ' *On Reason's Side,*

~ ' *And declare against the languid Siren.*

' *Ambition blushes at the offer'd Sweet.*

' *Conceit and Vanity take superior Airs.*

' *Ev'n Luxury her self in her polite*

' *And elegant Humour reproves th' Apostate*

' *Sister.*

' *And marks her as an Alien to true Pleasure.*

' *Away thou*

' *Drowsy Phantome! Haunt me no more, for I*

' *Have learn'd, from better than thy Sisterhood,*

' *That Life and Happiness consist in Action*

' *And Employment.*

' *But here a busy Form solicits us,*

' *Active, industrious, watchful, and despising*

' *Pains and Labour. She wears the serious*

' *Countenance of Virtue, but with Features*

' *Of Anxiety and Disquiet.*

' *What is't she mutters? What looks she on with*

' *Such Admiration and Astonishment?*

' *Bags! Coffers! Heaps of shining Metal! What?*

' *For the Service of Luxury? For her?*

' *These Preparations? Art thou then her Friend,*

' *Grave Fancy! Is it for her thou toil'st?*

' *No, but for Provision against Want.*

' *But Luxury apart! tell me now,*

' *Hast thou not already a Competence?*

' *'Tis good to be secure against the Fear*

' *Of*

- ‘ *Of starving. Is there then no Death but this?* DIAL.
 ‘ *No other Passage out of Life? Are other Doors* V.
 ‘ *Secur’d if this be bar’d? Say Avarice!*
 ‘ *Thou emptiest of Phantomes, is it not vile*
 ‘ *Cowardise thou serv’st? What further have I*
 then
 ‘ *To do with thee (thou doubly vile Dependent)*
 ‘ *When once I have dismiss thy Patroness,*
 ‘ *And despised her Threats?*
 ‘ *Thus I contend with Fancy and Opinion.*

Euphranor, having heard thus far, cried out: What! will you never have done with your Poetry? another time may serve: But why should we break off our Conference to read a Play? You are mistaken, it is no Play nor Poetry, replied *Alciphron*, but a famous modern Critic moralizing in Prose. You must know this great Man hath (to use his own Words) revealed a *Grand Arcanum* to the World, having instructed Mankind in what he calls *Mirroure-writing, Self-discoursing Practice, and Author Practice*, and shew’d “That
 “ by virtue of an intimate Recess, we
 “ may discover a certain Duplicity of
 “ Soul, and divide our *Self* into two Par-
 “ ties, or (as he varies the Phrase) practi-
 “ cally form the Dual Number.” In
 con-

DIAL. consequence whereof he hath found out
 V. that a Man may argue with himself: and
 not only with himself, but also with No-
 tions, Sentiments, and Vices, which by
 a marvellous Profopopœia he converts in-
 to so many Ladies: and so converted, he
 confutes and confounds them in a Divine
 Strain. Can any thing be finer, bolder,
 or more sublime? *EUPH.* It is very won-
 drful. I thought indeed you had been read-
 ing a Piece of a Tragedy. Is this he who
 despiseth our Universities, and sets up for
 reforming the Style and Taste of the Age?
ALC. The very same. This is the ad-
 mired Critic of our Times. Nothing can
 stand the Test of his correct Judgment,
 which is equally severe to Poets and Par-
 sons. “The *British* Muses (saith this
 “great Man) lisp as in their Cradles:
 “and their stammering Tongues, which
 “nothing but Youth and Rawness can
 “excuse, have hitherto spoken in wretch-
 “ed Pun and Quibble. Our Dramatic
 “*Shakespear*, our *Fletcher*, *Johnson*, and
 “our Epique *Milton* preserve this Style.
 “And, according to him, even our later
 “Authors aiming at a false Sublime, en-
 “ertain our raw Fancy and unpractised
 “Ear, which has not yet had leisure to
 “form it self, and become truly musical.”
EUPH.

EUPH. Pray what Effect may the Lessons of this great Man, in whose Eyes our learned Professors are but bearded Boys, and our most celebrated Wits but wretched Punsters, have had upon the Public? Hath he rubbed off the College Rust, cured the Rudeness and Rawness of our Authors, and reduced them to his own Attic Standard? Do they aspire to his true Sublime, or imitate his chaste unaffected Style? *ALC.* Doubtless the Taste of the Age is much mended: in proof whereof his Writings are universally admired. When our Author published this Treatise, he foresaw the public Taste would improve apace: that Arts and Letters would grow to great Perfection: that there would be a happy Birth of Genius: of all which things he spoke, as he saith himself, in a prophetic Style. *CRI.* And yet notwithstanding the prophetic Predictions of this Critic, I do not find, any Science hath throve among us of late, so much as the Minute Philosophy. In this kind, it must be confessed, we have had many notable Productions. But whether they are such Master-pieces for good Writing, I leave to be determined by their Readers.

XXIII. In the mean time, I must beg to be excused, if I cannot believe your
great

DIAL. great Man on his bare Word; when he
 V. would have us think, that Ignorance and
 ill Taste are owing to the Christian Religion of the Clergy, it being my sincere Opinion, that whatever Learning or Knowledge we have among us, is derived from that Order. If those, who are so sagacious at discovering a Mote in other Eyes, would but purge their own, I believe they might easily see this Truth. For what but Religion could kindle and preserve a Spirit towards Learning, in such a Northern rough People? *Greece* produced Men of active and subtile Genius. The public Conventions and Æmulations of their Cities forwarded that Genius: And their natural Curiosity was amused and excited by learned Conversations, in their public Walks, and Gardens, and Porticos. Our Genius leads to Amusements of a grosser Kind: we breathe a grosser and a colder Air: and that Curiosity which was general in the *Athenians*, and the gratifying of which was their chief Recreation, is among our People of Fashion treated like Affectation, and as such banished from polite Assemblies and Places of Resort: and without doubt would in a little time be banished the Country: if it were not for the great Reservoirs of
 Learn-

Learning, where those Formalists, Pedants, DIAL
 and bearded Boys, as your profound Critic V.
 calls them, are maintained by the Liberality and Piety of our Predecessors. For
 it is as evident that Religion was the Cause of those Seminaries, as it is that they are
 the Cause or Source of all the Learning and Taste which is to be found, even in
 those very Men who are the declared Enemies of our Religion and publick Founda-
 tions. Every one, who knows any thing, knows we are indebted for our Learning
 to the *Greek* and *Latin* Tongues. This those severe Censors will readily grant.
 Perhaps they may not be so ready to grant, what all Men must see, that we are in-
 debted for those Tongues to our Religion. What else could have made foreign and
 dead Languages in such Request among us? What could have kept in being and
 handed them down to our Times, through so many dark Ages in which the World
 was wasted and disfigured by Wars and Violence? What, but a regard to the
 Holy Scriptures, and Theological Writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the
 Church? And in fact, do we not find that the Learning of those Times was
 solely in the Hands of Ecclesiastics; that they alone lighted the Lamp in Succes-
 sion

DIAL. sion one from another, and transmitted
 V. it down to After-ages ; and that ancient
 { Books were collected and preserved in
 their Colleges and Seminaries, when all
 Love and Remembrance of polite Arts
 and Studies was extinguished among the
 Laity, whose Ambition intirely turned to
 Arms ?

XXIV. *ALC.* There is, I must needs
 say, one Sort of Learning undoubtedly of
 Christian Original, and peculiar to the
 Universties ; where our Youth spend fe-
 veral Years in acquiring that mysterious
 Jargon of Scholasticism ; than which
 there could never have been contrived a
 more effectual Method, to perplex and
 confound Humane Understanding. It is
 true, Gentlemen are untaught by the
 World what they have been taught at
 the College : but then their Time is doub-
 ly lost. *CRI.* But what if this Scholastic
 Learning was not of Christian but of Ma-
 hometan Original, being derived from
 the *Arabs* ? And what if this Grievance
 of Gentlemens spending several Years in
 learning and unlearning this Jargon, be all
 Grimace and a Specimen only of the
 Truth and Candour of certain Minute
 Philosophers, who raise great Invectives
 from


from slight Occasions, and judge too often without inquiring. Surely it would be no such deplorable Loss of Time, if a young Gentleman spent a few Months upon that so much despised and decried Art of Logic, a Surfeit of which is by no means the prevailing Nufance of this Age. It is one Thing to waste one's Time in learning and unlearning the barbarous Terms, wiredrawn Distinctions, and prolix Sophistry of the Schoolmen: and another to attain some Exactness in Defining and Arguing: Things perhaps not altogether beneath the Dignity even of a Minute Philosopher. There was indeed a Time, when Logic was considered as its own Object: And that Art of Reasoning, instead of being transferred to Things turned altogether upon Words and Abstractions: which produced a sort of Leprosy in all Parts of Knowledge, corrupting and converting them into hollow verbal Disputations in a most impure Dialect. But those Times are passed: and that which had been cultivated as the principal Learning for some Ages, is now considered in another Light: and by no Means makes that Figure in the Universities, or bears that Part in the Studies of young Gentlemen educated there, which

DIAL. is pretended by those admirable Reformers of Religion and Learning, the Minute Philosophers.

XXV. But who are they that encouraged and produced the Restoration of Arts and polite Learning? What Share had the Minute Philosophers in this Affair? *Matthias Corvinus* King of *Hungary*, *Alphonfus* King of *Naples*, *Cosmus de Medicis*, *Picus* of *Mirandula*, and other Princes and great Men, famous for Learning themselves, and for encouraging it in others with a munificent Liberality, were neither Turks nor Gentiles nor Minute Philosophers. Who was it that transplanted and revived the *Greek* Language and Authors, and with them all polite Arts and Literature in the West? Was it not chiefly *Bessarion* a Cardinal, *Marcus Musurus* an Archbishop, *Theodore Gaza* a private Clergyman? Has there been a greater and more renowned Patron, and Restorer of elegant Studies in every kind, since the Days of *Augustus Cæsar*, than *Leo* the tenth Pope of *Rome*? Did any Writers approach the Purity of the *Classics* nearer than the Cardinals *Bembus* and *Sadoletus*, or than the Bishops *Jovius* and *Vida*? not to mention an endless Number
of


of ingenious Ecclesiastics, who flourished on the other Side of the *Alpes* in the Golden Age (as the *Italians* call it) of *Leo* the Tenth, and wrote, both in their own Language and the *Latin*, after the best Models of Antiquity. It is true, this first Recovery of Learning preceded the Reformation, and lighted the Way to it: But the Religious Controversies, which ensued, did wonderfully propagate and improve it in all Parts of Christendom. And surely, the Church of *England* is, at least, as well calculated for the Encouragement of Learning, as that of *Rome*. Experience confirms this Observation: and I believe the Minute Philosophers will not be so partial to *Rome* as to deny it. *ALC.* It is impossible your Account of Learning beyond the *Alpes* should be true. The noble Critic in my Hands, having complimented the *French*, to whom he allows some good Authors, asserts of other Foreigners, particularly the *Italians*, "That they may be reckoned no better than the Corrupters of true Learning and Erudition." *CRI.* With some Sorts of Critics, Dogmatical Censures and Conclusions are not always the Result of perfect Knowledge or exact Inquiry: And if they harangue upon Taste, Truth

DIAL. of Art, a just Piece, Grace of Style, Attic Elegance, and such Topics, they are
 V. to be understood only as those that would
 fain talk themselves into Reputation for
 Courage. To hear *Thrasymachus* speak
 of Resentment, Duels, and Point of Honour, one would think him ready to burst with Valour. *LYS.* Whatever Merit this Writer may have as a Demolisher, I always thought he had very little as a Builder. It is natural for careless Writers to run into Faults they never think of: But for an exact and severe Critic to shoot his Bolt at Random, is unpardonable. If he, who professes at every Turn an high Esteem for polite Writing, should yet despise those who most excel in it; one would be tempted to suspect his Taste. But if the very Man, who of all Men talks most about Art and Taste, and critical Skill, and would be thought to have most considered those Points, should often deviate from his own Rules, into the false Sublime or the *mauvaise Plaisanterie*; What reasonable Man would follow the Taste and Judgment of such a Guide, or be seduced to climb the steep Ascent, or tread in the rugged Paths of Virtue on his Recommendation?


XXVI. *ALC.* But to return, methinks DIAL.
Crito makes no Compliment to the Ge- V.
 nius of his Country, in supposing that 
Englishmen might not have wrought out
 of themselves, all Art and Science and
 good Taste; without being beholden to
 Church, or Universities, or ancient Lan-
 guages. *CRI.* What might have been is
 only Conjecture. What has been, it is not
 difficult to know. That there is a Vein in
Britain, of as rich an Ore as ever was in
 any Country, I will not deny: but it lies
 deep, and will cost Pains to come at: And
 extraordinary Pains require an extraordi-
 nary Motive. As for what lies next the
 Surface, it seems but indifferent, being
 neither so good nor in such Plenty as in
 some other Countries. It was the Com-
 parison of an ingenious *Florentine*, that
 the celebrated Poems of *Tasso* and *Ariosto*
 are like two Gardens, the one of Cucum-
 bers, the other of Melons. In the one
 you shall find few bad, but the best are
 not a very good Fruit: in the other much
 the greater Part are good for nothing, but
 those that are good are excellent. Perhaps
 the same Comparison may hold, between
 the *English* and some of their Neighbours.
ALC. But suppose we should grant that
 the Christian Religion and its Seminaries

DIAL. might have been of Use, in preserving
 V. or retrieving polite Arts and Letters:
 what then? Will you make this an Argument of its Truth? *CRI.* I will make it an Argument of Prejudice and Ingratitude in those Minute Philosophers, who object Darkeness, Ignorance, and Rudeness, as an Effect of that very Thing, which above all others hath enlightened and civilized and embellished their Country; which is as truly indebted to it for Arts and Sciences (which nothing but Religion was ever known to have planted in such a Latitude) as for that general Sense of Virtue and Humanity, and the Belief of a Providence and Future State, which all the Augmentation of Minute Philosophers hath not yet been able to abolish.

XXVII. *ALC.* It is strange you should still persist to argue, as if all the Gentlemen of our Sect were Enemies to Virtue, and downright Atheists: Though I have assured you of the contrary, and that we have among us several, who profess themselves in the Interests of Virtue and Natural Religion, and have also declared, That I my self do now argue upon that Foot. *CRI.* How can you pretend, to be in the Interest of Natural Religion

Religion, and yet be professed Enemies DIAL.
of the Christian, the only established Re- V.
ligion which includes whatever is excel- 
lent in the Natural, and which is the
only means of making those Precepts,
Duties, and Notions, so called, become
reverenced throughout the World?
Would not he be thought weak or in-
sincere, who should go about to persuade
People, that he was much in the Interests
of an Earthly Monarch; that he loved
and admired his Government; when at
the same Time he shewed himself on all
Occasions, a most bitter Enemy of those
very Persons and Methods, which above
all others contributed most to his Service,
and to make his Dignity known and re-
vered, his Laws observed, or his Domi-
nion extended? And is not this what
Minute Philosophers do, while they set
up for Advocates of God and Religion,
and yet do all they can to discredit Chris-
tians and their Worship? It must be
owned, indeed, that you argue against
Christianity, as the Cause of Evil and
Wickedness in the World: but with
such Arguments, and in such a manner
as might equally prove the same Thing
of civil Government, of Meat and Drink,
of every Faculty and Profession, of Learn-
ing,

DIALING, of Eloquence, and even of Humane Reason it self. After all, even those of your Sect who allow themselves to be called Deists, if their Notions are thoroughly examined, will, I fear, be found to include little of Religion in them. As for the Providence of God watching over the Conduct of Humane Agents and dispensing Blessings or Chastisements, the Immortality of the Soul, a final Judgment, and future State of Rewards and Punishments; how few, if any, of your Free-thinkers have made it their Endeavour to possess Mens Minds with a serious Sense of those great Points of Natural Religion! How many, on the contrary, endeavour to render the Belief of them doubtful or ridiculous! It must be owned, there may be found Men that, without any regard to these Points, make some Pretence to Religion: But who can think them in earnest? You shall sometimes see, the very Ringleaders of Vice and Profaneness write like Men, that would be thought to have Virtue and Piety at Heart. This may perhaps prove them inconsistent Writers, but can never prove them to be innocent. When a Man's declared Principles and peculiar Tenets are utterly subversive of those things; whatever such a one saith of Virtue, Piety, and

and Religion, will be understood as meer D I A L.
 Discretion and Compliance with com- V.
 mon Forms. *LYS.* To speak the Truth, 
 I, for my part, had never any liking to
 Religion of any kind, either revealed or
 unrevealed: And I dare venture to say
 the same for those Gentlemen of our
 Sect that I am acquainted with, having
 never observed them guilty of so much
 meanness, as even to mention the Name
 of God with Reverence, or speak with
 the least Regard of Piety or any sort of
 Worship. There may, perhaps, be found
 one or two formal Pretenders to Enthusi-
 asm and Devotion, in the way of Natural
 Religion, who laughed at Christians for
 publishing Hymns and Meditations, while
 they plagued the World with as bad of
 their own: But the sprightly Men
 make a Jest of all this. It seems to us
 meer Pedantry. Sometimes, indeed, in
 good Company one may hear a Word
 dropt in Commendation of Honour and
 Good-nature: But the former of
 these, by *Connoisseurs*, is always under-
 stood to mean nothing but Fashion: as
 the latter is nothing but Temper and
 Constitution, which guides a Man just
 as Appetite doth a Brute.


DIAL. XXVIII. And after all these Arguments and Notions, which beget one another without End, to take the Matter short: neither I nor my Friends for our Souls could ever comprehend, why Man might not do very well, and govern himself without any Religion at all, as well as a Brute which is thought the fillier Creature of the two. Have Brutes Instincts, Senfes, Appetites, and Passions, to steer and conduct them? So have Men, and Reason over and above to consult upon occasion. From these Premises we conclude, the Road of Humane Life is sufficiently lighted without Religion. *CRI.* Brutes having but small Power, limited to Things present or particular, are sufficiently opposed and kept in Order, by the Force or Faculties of other Animals and the Skill of Man, without Conscience or Religion: But Conscience is a necessary Balance to Humane Reason, a Faculty of such mighty Extent and Power, especially toward Mischief. Besides, other Animals are, by the Law of their Nature, determined to one certain End or Kind of Being, without Inclination or Means either to deviate or go beyond it. But Man hath in him a Will and higher Principle;
by

by virtue whereof he may pursue different or even contrary Ends; and either fall short of or exceed the Perfection natural to his Species in this World; as he is capable, either by giving up the Reins to his sensual Appetites, of degrading himself into the Condition of Brutes, or else, by well ordering and improving his Mind, of being transformed into the Similitude of Angels. Man alone of all Animals hath Understanding to know his God. What availeth this Knowledge unless it be to ennoble Man, and raise him to an Imitation and Participation of the Divinity? Or what could such Ennoblement avail if to end with this Life? Or how can these Things take effect without Religion? But the Points of Vice and Virtue, Man and Beast, Sense and Intellect, have been already at large canvassed. What! *Lyficles*, would you have us go back where we were three or four Days ago? *LYS.* By no means: I had much rather go forward, and make an End as soon as possible. But to save Trouble, give me Leave to tell you once for all, that, say what you can, you shall never persuade me so many ingenious agreeable Men are in the wrong,
and

DIAL.
V.

DIAL. and a Pack of snarling four Bigots in the
V. right.

XXIX. O *Lysicles*, I neither look for Religion among Bigots, nor Reason among Libertines; each Kind disgrace their several Pretensions; the one owning no regard even to the plainest and most important Truths, while the others exert an angry Zeal for Points of least Concern. And surely whatever there is of silly, narrow, and uncharitable in the Bigot, the same is in great Measure to be imputed to the conceited Ignorance, and petulant Profaneness of the Libertine. And it is not at all unlikely that as Libertines make Bigots, so Bigots should make Libertines, the Extreme of one Party being ever observed to produce a contrary Extreme of another. And although, while these Adversaries draw the Rope of Contention, Reason and Religion are often called upon: yet are they perhaps very little considered or concerned in the Contest. *Lysicles*, instead of answering *Crito*, turned short upon *Alciphron*. It was always my Opinion, said he, that nothing could be sillier than to think of destroying Christianity, by crying up natural Religion. Whoever thinks highly of the one, can never, with any Consistency,

cy, think meanly of the other; it being DIAL.
 very evident, that Natural Religion, with- V.
 out Revealed, never was nor never can be 
 established or received any where, but in
 the Brains of a few idle speculative Men.
 I was aware what your Concessions would
 come to. The Belief of God, Virtue,
 a Future State, and such fine Noti-
 ons are, as every one may see with half
 an Eye, the very Basis and Corner-Stone
 of the Christian Religion. Lay but this
 Foundation for them to build on, and you
 shall soon see what Superstructures our
 Men of Divinity will raise from it. The
 Truth and Importance of those Points
 once admitted, a Man need be no Con-
 jurer to prove, upon that Principle, the
 Excellency and Usefulness of the Christi-
 an Religion: And then to be sure, there
 must be Priests to teach and propagate
 this useful Religion. And if Priests, a
 regular Subordination without doubt in
 this worthy Society, and a Provision for
 their Maintenance: such as may enable
 them to perform all their Rites and Ce-
 remonies with Decency, and keep their
 sacred Character above Contempt. And
 the plain Consequence of all this is a
 Confederacy between the Prince and the
 Priesthood to subdue the People: So we
 have

DIAL. have let in at once upon us, a long Train
 V. of Ecclesiastical Evils, Priestcraft, Hierarchy, Inquisition. We have lost our Liberty and Property, and put the Nation to vast Expence, only to purchase Bridles and Saddles for their own Backs.

XXX. This being spoke with some Sharpness of Tone, and an upbraiding Air, touched *Alciphron* to the quick, who replied nothing, but shewed Confusion in his Looks. *Crito* smiling look'd at *Euphranor* and me, then casting an Eye on the two Philosophers, spoke as follows. If I may be admitted to interpose good Offices, for preventing a Rupture between old Friends and Brethren in Opinion, I would observe, that in this Charge of *Lyficles* there is something right and something wrong. It seems right to assert as he doth, that the real Belief of Natural Religion will lead a Man to approve of Revealed: But it is as wrong to assert, that Inquisitions, Tyranny, and Ruin must follow from thence. Your Free-thinkers, without Offence be it said, seem to mistake their Talent. They imagine strongly, but reason weakly; mighty at Exaggeration, and jejune in Argument!

gument! Can no Method be found, to re-DIAL.
 lieve them from the Terror of that fierce V.
 and bloody Animal, an *English* Parson? Will
 it not suffice to pare his Talons without
 chopping off his Fingers? Then they are
 such wonderful Patriots for Liberty and
 Property! When I hear these two Words
 in the Mouth of a Minute Philosopher, I
 am put in mind of the *Teste di Ferro* at
Rome. His Holiness, it seems, not hav-
 ing Power to assign Pensions on *Spanish*
 Benefices to any but Natives of *Spain*, al-
 ways keeps at *Rome* two *Spaniards*, called
Teste di Ferro, who have the Name of all
 such Pensions, but not the Profit, which
 goes to *Italians*. As we may see every
 Day, both Things and Notions placed to
 the Account of Liberty and Property,
 which in reality neither have nor are meant
 to have any Share in them. What! Is it
 impossible for a Man to be a Christian,
 but he must be a Slave? Or a Clergyman,
 but he must have the Principles of an In-
 quisitor? I am far from screening and ju-
 stifying Appetite of Domination or Ty-
 rannical Power in Ecclesiastics. Some,
 who have been guilty in that respect, have
 forely paid for it, and it is to be hoped
 they always will. But having laid the
 Fury and Folly of the ambitious Prelate,

DIAL. is it not time to look about and spy whether, on the other hand, some Evil may not possibly accrue to the State, from the overflowing Zeal of an Independent Whig? This I may affirm, without being at any pains to prove it, that the worst Tyranny this Nation ever felt was from the Hands of Patriots of that Stamp.

XXXI. *LYS.* I don't know. Tyranny is a harsh Word, and sometimes misapplied. When spirited Men of independent Maxims create a Ferment, or make a Change in the State: He that loseth is apt to consider things in one Light, and he that wins in another. In the mean time this is certainly good Policy, that we should be frugal of our Money, and reserve it for better Uses, than to expend on the Church and Religion. *CRI.* Surely the old Apologue of the Belly and Members need not be repeated to such knowing Men. It should seem as needless to observe, that all other States, which ever made any Figure in the World for Wisdom and Politeness, have thought Learning deserved Encouragement as well as the Sword: that Grants for religious Uses were as fitting as for Knights Service: and Foundations for propagating Piety, as necessary to the publick Welfare

fare and Defence, as either Civil or Mili-DIAL.
tary Establishments. In former Times, V.

when the Clergy were a Body much more numerous, wealthy, and powerful: when in their State of Cœlibacy they gave no Pledges to the Public: when they enjoy'd great Exemptions and Privileges above their Fellow-Subjects: when they owned Obedience to a foreign Potentate: the Case was evidently and widely different from what it is in our Days. And the not discerning, or not owning this Difference is no Proof either of Sagacity or Honesty in the Minute Philosophers. But I ask who are at this Expence, and what is this Expence so much complained of? *LYS.*

As if you had never heard of Church-Lands and Tithes! *CRI.* But I would fain know, how they can be charged as an Expence, either upon the Nation or private Men: Where nothing is exported the Nation loseth nothing: and it is all one to the Publick, whether Money circulates at Home through the Hands of a Vicar or a Squire. Then as for private Men, who, for want of Thought, are full of Complaint about the Payment of Tithes; can any Man justly complain of it as a Tax, that he pays what never belonged to him? The Tenant rents his

DIAL. Farm with this Condition, and pays his
 V. Landlord proportionably less, than if his
 Farm had been exempt from it: So he loseth
 nothing; it being all one to him, whether he pays his Pastor or his Landlord. The Landlord cannot complain that he has not what he hath no Right to, either by Grant, Purchase, or Inheritance. This is the Case of Tithes: and as for the Church-Lands, he surely can be no Free-thinker, nor any Thinker at all, who doth not see that no Man, whether Noble, Gentle, or Plebeian, hath any sort of Right or Claim to them, which he may not with equal Justice pretend to all the Lands in the Kingdom. *LYS.* At present indeed we have no Right, and that is our Complaint. *CRI.* You would have then what you have no Right to. *LYS.* Not so neither: what we would have is first a Right convey'd by Law, and in the next place, the Lands by virtue of such Right. *CRI.* In order to this, it might be expedient in the first place, to get an Act passed for excommunicating from all Civil Rights every Man, that is a Christian, a Scholar, and wears a black Coat, as guilty of three capital Offences against the public Weal of this Realm. *LYS.* To deal frankly, I think it would be an
 excellent

excellent good Act. It would provide at once for several deserving Men, rare Artificers in Wit, and Argument, and Ridicule! who have, too many of them, but small Fortunes, with a great Arrear of Merit towards their Country, which they have so long enlightened and adorned gratis. *EUPH.* Pray tell me, *Lyficles*, are not the Clergy legally possessed of their Lands and Emoluments? *LYS.* No body denies it. *EUPH.* Have they not been possessed of them from Time immemorial? *LYS.* This too I grant *EUPH.* They claim then by Law and ancient Prescription. *LYS.* They do. *EUPH.* Have the oldest Families of the Nobility a better Title? *LYS.* I believe not. It grieves me to see so many overgrown Estates in the Hands of ancient Families, on account of no other Merit, but what they brought with them into the World. *EUPH.* May you not then as well take their Lands too, and bestow them on the Minute Philosophers, as Persons of more Merit? *LYS.* So much the better. This enlarges our View, and opens a new Scene: It is very delightful in the Contemplation of Truth, to behold how one Theory grows out of another. *ALC.* Old *Pætus* used to say, that if the Clergy were deprived

DIAL. of their Hire, we should lose the most popular Argument against them. *LYS.*

But so long as Men live by Religion, there will never be wanting Teachers and Writers in Defence of it. *CRI.* And how can you be sure they would be wanting, though they did not live by it, since it is well known Christianity had its Defenders even when Men died by it? *LYS.* One thing I know: there is a rare Nursery of young Plants growing up, who have been carefully guarded against every Air of Prejudice, and sprinkled with the Dew of our choicest Principles: mean while, Wishes are wearisome: and to our infinite Regret nothing can be done, so long as there remains any Prejudice in favour of old Customs and Laws and National Constitutions, which, at bottom, we very well know and can demonstrate to be only Words and Notions.

XXXII. But, I can never hope, *Crito*, to make you think my Schemes reasonable. We reason each right upon his own Principles, and shall never agree till we quit our Principles, which cannot be done by reasoning. We all talk of Just, and Right, and Wrong, and Public Good and

and all those things. The Names may be DIAL.
 the same, but the Notions and Conclu- V.
 sions very different, perhaps diametrically }
 opposite: and yet each may admit of clear
 Proofs, and be inferred by the same way
 of reasoning. For Instance, the Gentle-
 men of the Club which I frequent, de-
 fine Man to be a sociable Animal: Con-
 sequently, we exclude from this Defini-
 tion all those Humane Creatures, of
 whom it may be said, we had rather have
 their Room than their Company. And
 such, though wearing the Shape of Man,
 are to be esteem'd in all account of Rea-
 son, not as Men, but only as Humane
 Creatures. Hence it plainly follows, that
 Men of Pleasure, Men of Humour, and
 Men of Wit, are alone properly and tru-
 ly to be considered as Men. Whatever
 therefore conduceth to the Emolument
 of such, is for the Good of Mankind,
 and consequently very just and lawful,
 although seeming to be attended with Loss
 or Damage to other Creatures: inasmuch
 as no real Injury can be done in Life or
 Property to those, who know not how to
 enjoy them. This we hold for clear and
 well connected Reasoning. But others
 may view things in another Light, assign
 different Definitions, draw other Infe-
 rences,

DIAL. rences, and perhaps consider, what we
 V. suppose the Top and Flower of the Crea-
 tion, only as a Wart or Excrecence of
 Humane Nature. From all which there
 must ensue a very different System of Mo-
 rals, Politics, Rights, and Notions. *CRI.*
 If you have a mind to argue, we will
 argue: if you have more mind to jest, we
 will laugh with you. *LYS.*

— *Ridentem dicere verum
 Quid vetat?*


This Partition of our Kind into Men and
 Humane Creatures, puts me in mind of
 another Notion broached by one of our
 Club, whom we used to call the *Py-
 thagorean*.

XXXIII. He made a threefold Parti-
 tion of the Humane Species, into Birds,
 Beasts, and Fishes, being of Opinion that
 the Road of Life lies upwards, in a per-
 petual Ascent through the Scale of Be-
 ing: In such sort, that the Souls of In-
 sects after Death make their second Ap-
 pearance in the Shape of perfect Animals,
 Birds, Beasts, or Fishes; which upon their
 Death are preferred into Humane Bodies,
 and in the next Stage into Beings of a
 higher and more perfect Kind. This Man
 we

we considered at first as a sort of Heretic: D I A L. V.
 because his Scheme seemed not to consist with our fundamental Tenet, the Mortality of the Soul: But he justified the Notion to be innocent, inasmuch as it included nothing of Reward or Punishment, and was not proved by any Argument, which supposed or implied either incorporeal Spirit, or Providence, being only inferred, by way of Analogy, from what he had observed in Humane Affairs, the Court, the Church, and the Army; wherein the Tendency is always upwards from lower Posts to higher. According to this System, the Fishes are those Men who swim in Pleasure, such as *petits maitres*, *bons vivans*, and honest Fellows. The Beasts are dry, drudging, covetous, rapacious Folk, and all those addicted to Care and Business like Oxen, and other dry Land Animals, which spend their Lives in Labour and Fatigue. The Birds are airy notional Men, Enthusiasts, Projectors, Philosophers, and such like: in each Species every Individual retaining a Tincture of his former State, which constitutes what is called Genius. If you ask me which Species of Humane Creatures I like best, I answer, The flying Fish: that is, a Man of animal Enjoyment,
 with

DIAL. with a Mixture of Whim. Thus you see
 V. we have our Creeds and our Systems, as
 well as graver Folks: with this Difference, that they are not strait-laced, but fit easy, to be slipped off or on, as Humour or Occasion serves. And now I can, with the greatest Æquanimity imaginable, hear my Opinions argued against, or confuted.

XXXIV. *ALC.* It were to be wished all Men were of that Mind. But you shall find a sort of Men, whom I need not name, that cannot bear with the least Temper, to have their Opinions examined or their Faults censured. They are against Reason, because Reason is against them. For our parts, we are all for Liberty of Conscience. If our Tenets are absurd, we allow them to be freely argued and inspected: and by parity of Reason we might hope to be allowed the same Privilege, with respect to the Opinions of other Men. *CRI.* O *Alciphron!* Wares that will not bear the Light are justly to be suspected. Whatever therefore moves you to make this Complaint, take my Word I never will: But as hitherto I have allowed your Reason its full Scope, so for the future I always shall. And
 though

though I cannot approve of Railing or DIAL. Declaiming, not even in my self, whenever you have shewed me the way to it: V. 

Yet this I will answer for, that you shall ever be allowed to reason as closely and as strenuously as you can. But for the Love of Truth, be candid, and do not spend your Strength and our Time, in Points of no Significancy, or foreign to the Purpose, or agreed between us. We allow that Tyranny and Slavery are bad things: but why should we apprehend them from the Clergy at this Time? Rites and Ceremonies we own are not Points of chief moment in Religion: but why should we ridicule things in their own Nature, at least, Innocent, and which bear the Stamp of supreme Authority? That Men in Divinity, as well as other Subjects, are perplexed with useles Disputes, and are like to be so as long as the World lasts, I freely acknowledge: But why must all the Humane Weakness and Mistakes of Clergymen be imputed to wicked Designs? Why indiscriminately abuse their Character and Tenets? Is this like Candour, Love of Truth, and Free-thinking? It is granted there may be found, now and then, Spleen and Ill-breeding in the Clergy: But are not

DIAL. not the same Faults incident to *English*
 V. Laymen, of a retired Education and
 Country Life? I grant there is infinite
 Futility in the Schoolmen: But I deny
 that a Volume of that doth so much
 Mischief, as a Page of Minute Philoso-
 phy. That weak or wicked Men should,
 by favour of the World, creep into
 Power and high Stations in the Church,
 is nothing wonderful: and that in such
 Stations they should behave like them-
 selves, is natural to suppose. But all the
 while it is evident, that not the Gospel
 but the World, not the Spirit but the
 Flesh, not God but the Devil, puts
 them upon their unworthy Atchieve-
 ments. We make no Difficulty to grant,
 That nothing is more infamous than
 Vice and Ignorance in a Clergyman;
 nothing more base than a Hypocrite,
 more frivolous than a Pedant, more cru-
 el than an Inquisitor. But it must be
 also granted by you, Gentlemen, that
 nothing is more ridiculous and absurd,
 than for pedantic, ignorant, and cor-
 rupt Men to cast the first Stone, at every
 Shadow of their own Defects and Vices
 in other Men.

XXXV. ALC.



XXXV. *ALC.* When I consider the detestable State of Slavery and Superstition, I feel my Heart dilate and expand it self to grasp that inestimable Blessing of Independent Liberty. This is the sacred and high Prerogative, the very Life and Health of our *English* Constitution. You must not therefore think it strange, if with a vigilant and curious Eye, we guard it against the minutest Appearance of Evil. You must even suffer us to cut round about, and very deep, and make use of the magnifying Glass, the better to view and extirpate every the least Speck, which shall discover it self in what we are careful and jealous to preserve, as the Apple of our Eye. *CRI.* As for unbounded Liberty, I leave it to Savages, among whom alone I believe it is to be found: But, for the reasonable legal Liberty of our Constitution, I most heartily and sincerely wish it may for ever subsist and flourish among us. You and all other *Englishmen* cannot be too vigilant, or too earnest, to preserve this goodly Frame, or to curb and disappoint the wicked Ambition of whoever, Layman or Ecclesiastic, shall attempt to change our free and gentle Government into a slavish

or

DIAL. or severe one. But what Pretext can
V. this afford for your Attempts against
 ~~~~~ Religion, or indeed, how can it be con-  
 sistent with them? Is not the Protestant  
 Religion a main Part of our Legal Con-  
 stitution? I remember to have heard a  
 Foreigner remark, That we of this Island  
 were very good Protestants, but no Chri-  
 stians. But whatever Minute Philoso-  
 phers may wish, or Foreigners say, it  
 is certain our Laws speak a different  
 Language. *ALC.* This puts me in mind  
 of the wise Reasoning of a certain sage  
 Magistrate, who, being pressed by the  
 Raillery and Arguments of an ingenious  
 Man, had nothing to say for his Reli-  
 gion but that, ten Millions of People  
 inhabiting the same Island might, whe-  
 ther right or wrong, if they thought  
 good, establish Laws for the worship-  
 ping of God in their Temples, and ap-  
 pealing to him in their Courts of Ju-  
 stice. And that in case ten thousand in-  
 ingenious Men should publicly deride and  
 trample on those Laws, it might be just  
 and lawful for the said ten Millions to  
 expel the said ten Thousand ingenious  
 Men out of their said Island. *EUPH.*  
 And pray, what Answer would you  
 make to this Remark of the sage Magi-  
 strate?



strate? *ALC.* The Answer is plain. By *DIAL.*  
 the Law of Nature, which is superior to all V.  
 positive Institutions, Wit and Knowledge  
 have a Right to command Folly and Ignorance. I say, ingenious Men have by natural Right a Dominion over Fools. *EUPH.*  
 What Dominion over the Laws and People of *Great Britain*, Minute Philosophers may be entitled to by Nature, I shall not dispute, but leave to be considered by the Public. *ALC.* This Doctrine, it must be owned, was never thoroughly understood before our own Times. In the last Age, *Hobbes* and his Followers, though otherwise very great Men, declared for the Religion of the Magistrate: probably because they were afraid of the Magistrate: but Times are changed, and the Magistrate may now be afraid of us. *CRI.* I allow the Magistrate may well be afraid of you in one Sense, I mean, afraid to trust you. This brings to my Thoughts a Passage on the Trial of *Leander* for a capital Offence. That Gentleman having picked out and excluded from his Jury, by peremptory Exception, all but some Men of Fashion and Pleasure, humbly moved when *Dorcon* was going to kiss the Book, that he might be required to declare upon  
 Honour,


**DIAL.** Honour, whether he believed either God or Gospel. *Dorcon*, rather than hazard his Reputation as a Man of Honour and Free-thinker, openly avow'd that he believed in neither. Upon which the Court declared him unfit to serve on a Jury. By the same reason, so many were set aside, as made it necessary to put off the Trial. We are very easy, replied *Alciphron*, about being trusted to serve on Juries, if we can be admitted to serve in lucrative Employments. **CRI.** But what if the Government should injoin, that every one, before he was sworn into Office, should make the same Declaration which *Dorcon* was required to make? **ALC.** God forbid! I hope there is no such Design on foot. **CRI.** Whatever Designs may be on foot, thus much is certain: The Christian Reformed Religion is a principal Part and Corner-stone of our free Constitution; and I verily think, the only thing that makes us deserving of Freedom, or capable of enjoying it. Freedom is either a Blessing or a Curse, as Men use it. And to me it seems, that if our Religion were once destroy'd from among us, and those Notions, which pass for Prejudices of a Christian Education, erased from the Minds of *Britons*, the best

best thing that could befall us would be DIAL. the Loss of our Freedom. Surely a Peo- V. ple wherein there is such restless Ambition, such high Spirits, such Animosity of Faction, so great Interests in Contest, such unbounded Licence of Speech and Press, amidst so much Wealth and Luxury, nothing but those *veteres aviæ*, which you pretend to extirpate, could have hitherto kept from ruin.

XXXVI. Under the Christian Religion this Nation hath been greatly improved. From a Sort of Savages, we have grown civil, polite, and learned. We have made a decent and noble Figure both at home and abroad. And, as our Religion decreaseth, I am afraid we shall be found to have declined. Why then should we persist in the dangerous Experiment? *ALC.* One would think, *Crito*, you had forgot the many Calamities occasioned by Churchmen and Religion. *CRI.* And one would think, you had forgot what was answered this very Day to that Objection. But not to repeat eternally the same Things, I shall observe in the first Place, That if we reflect on the past State of Christendom, and of our own Country in particular, with our Feuds and Factions subsisting

DIAL. fisting while we were all of the same Religion, for instance, that of the White and Red Roses, so violent and bloody and of such long Continuance; we can have no Assurance that those ill Humours, which have since shewn themselves under the Masque of Religion, would not have broke out with some other Pretext, if this had been wanting. I observe in the second Place, that it will not follow from any Observations you can make on our History, that the Evils, accidentally occasioned by Religion, bear any Proportion either to the good Effects it hath really produced, or the Evils it hath prevented. Lastly, I observe, that the best Things may, by Accident, be the Occasion of Evil; which accidental Effect is not, to speak properly and truly, produced by the good Thing it self, but by some evil Thing, which, being neither Part, Property, nor Effect of it, happens to be joined with it. But I should be ashamed to insist and enlarge on so plain a Point. Certainly whatever Evils this Nation might have formerly sustained from Superstition, no Man of common Sense will say, the Evils felt or apprehended at present are from that Quarter. Priestcraft is not the reigning Distemper at this Day.

And

And it will be owned, that a wise Man, DIAL.  
 who takes upon him to be vigilant for V.  
 the publick Weal, should touch proper   
 Things at proper Times, and not pre-  
 scribe for a Surfeit when the Distemper  
 is a Consumption. *ALC.* I think we  
 have sufficiently discussed the Subject of  
 this Day's Conference. And now, let  
*Lysicles* take it as he will, I must in re-  
 gard to my own Character, as a fair im-  
 partial Adversary, acknowledge there is  
 something in what *Crito* hath said, upon  
 the Usefulness of the Christian Religion.  
 I will even own to you that some of our  
 Sect are for allowing it a Toleration. I  
 remember, at a Meeting of several in-  
 genious Men, after much Debate we came  
 successively to divers Resolutions. The  
 first was, that no Religion ought to be  
 tolerated in the State: But this on more  
 mature Thought was judged impracti-  
 cable. The second was, that all Religi-  
 ons should be tolerated, but none counte-  
 nanced except Atheism: But it was  
 apprehended, that this might breed Con-  
 tentions among the lower Sort of People.  
 We came therefore to conclude in the  
 third Place, that some Religion or other  
 should be established for the Use of the  
 Vulgar. And after a long Dispute what  
 this

DIAL. this Religion should be, *Lysis* a brisk  
V. young Man, perceiving no Signs of Agreement, proposed that the present Religion might be tolerated, till a better was found. But allowing it to be expedient, I can never think it true, so long as there lie unanswerable Objections against it, which, if you please, I shall take the Liberty to propose at our next Meeting. To which we all agreed.

*The End of the First Volume.*











