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A N O T H E R  
D E F E N C E  
O F T H E  
U N I T Y,

W H E R E I N

St. JOHN'S Introduction to his Gospel, and his  
Account of the *Word's being made Flesh*,  
are considered.

W I T H

A few REMARKS on some very late notable  
Publications, particularly those of Dr. BEN-  
JAMIN DAWSON, and Dr. KENNICOT.

*Caleb Flenoy*

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ΑΛΛ' ἡμῖν εἰς Θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ — καὶ εἰς Κύριος  
Ἰησοῦς Χρῖστος.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for T. LONGMAN, in Pater-noster-Row.

M D C C L X V I.

DEFINITION

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The following text is extremely faint and illegible, appearing to be a list or series of entries.

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A

# PREFATORY ADDRESS

TO THE

# R E A D E R.

“ **A** Very elegant *writer* has observ-  
“ ed, that “ though the articles  
“ of religious belief, which fall  
“ within the comprehension of mankind,  
“ and seem essential to their happiness, are  
“ *few* and *simple* ; yet ingenious men have  
“ contrived to erect them into a most tre-  
“ mendous system of *metaphysical* subtilty,  
“ which will long remain a monument of  
“ the extent and weakness of human un-  
“ derstanding.—By attempting to establish  
“ too much, they have hurt the foundation  
“ of the most interesting principles of re-  
“ ligion.”——

And *again*, he says,—“ that religion con-  
“ sidered as a science, in the manner it has  
“ been usually conducted, is but little be-

iv *A prefatory Address to the Reader.*

“ neficial to mankind, neither tending to  
“ enlarge the understanding, sweeten the  
“ temper, nor mend the heart. At the  
“ same time the labours of ingenious men,  
“ in explaining obscure and difficult pas-  
“ sages of sacred writ, have been highly  
“ useful and necessary. And as it is na-  
“ tural for men to carry their speculations  
“ on a subject, that so nearly concerns their  
“ present and eternal happiness, farther than  
“ reason extends, or than is clearly and ex-  
“ pressly revealed; *even* these can be fol-  
“ lowed by no bad consequences, if they  
“ are carried on with that modesty and  
“ reverence which the subject requires.  
“ They only become pernicious when they  
“ are formed into *systems*, to which the same  
“ credit and submission is required as to  
“ holy writ itself \*”.

In many of the things advanced, in *his comparative view*, I agree with this writer. — And now refer my reader to a late very singular publication, which would prove from Scripture, the following propositions,

\* *A comparative view of the state and faculties of man*, &c. p. 177 & 183.



in support of the present established Liturgy.

“ 1st, That he who redeemed us was  
“ very God, manifested in the flesh, not  
“ the first of created beings united to an  
“ human body, nor a mere man in whom  
“ the fulness of the Godhead dwelt not.”

“ 2dly, That Jesus Christ was indeed  
“ perfect man, of a reasonable soul and  
“ human flesh subsisting; but that man in  
“ whom God himself, and no other being,  
“ in nature inferior dwelt.”

“ 3dly, That the holy ghost is of a na-  
“ ture perfectly divine; not a distinct and  
“ separate nature from the Father almighty,  
“ inferior both to him and the Son, but  
“ true and very God; or, in other words,  
“ that he, who hath sanctified, is one and  
“ the same God with him that created and  
“ redeemed us\*.”

The reason of my making this citation, is, to shew, that if such an interpretation of Scripture can be brought in defence of an *established Liturgy*, by a conforming di-

\* Dr. BENJAMIN DAWSON'S *illustrations of several texts of scripture*, &c. A. D. 1766.

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vine ; the following considerations upon the *Word*, and upon the *Word's being made flesh*, can never give the least reasonable offence to the Sons of OUR CHURCH.

Much light had before been thrown on the subject, by the late reverend and learned Mr. MOSES LOWMAN ; in his three tracts, *viz.*—“ on the appearances of the true God, “ under the old testament—on the *Sheebinah* ;—and on the texts of Scripture relating to the *Logos.*”——Which tracts were published in the year 1756.

Since then, another very learned and judicious tract favoured the public, under the title of, *a Letter writ in the year 1730.* concerning the question, “ whether the *Logos* supplied the place of a human soul “ in the person of Jesus Christ ?” which made its first open appearance, in the year 1759. and which indeed has great merit, both from the candour, perspicuity and weight of the argument.

What is now offered, I trust, is, in harmony with the design of these publications, tho' with some *peculiarity* of interpretation. And the Author, in defence of them and  
himself,

himself, would take the liberty of adopting what a man of genius has said of *arts* and *sciences*, as applicable to the religious profession. “No science, says he, ever flourished, while it was confined to a set of men who lived by it, as a profession. Such men have pursuits very different from the end and design of it. The interested views of a *trade* are far different from the enlarged and different prospects of genius and science.—When the knowledge of an art is confined in this manner, every private practitioner must attend to the general principles of his craft; or starve. If he goes out of the common path, he is an object of the jealousy and abuse of his brethren, and among the rest of mankind he can neither find judges nor patrons.”

These fine observations made upon arts and sciences, are extremely applicable to the religious profession; and hence so *few* have dared to make an open defence of the UNITY.

This publication would have had no place, had not the Author been of opinion, that it is  
in

viii *A prefatory Address to the Reader.*

in some degree, calculated to the end of restoring an almost lost idea of the Scripture doctrine of *the one God*; which loss has sadly depraved the tempers of mankind.—For, says the above writer, “the worst effects  
“ of controversial theology are those, which  
“ it produces on the temper and affections.  
“ —When the mind is kept constantly em-  
“ barrased in a thorny path, where it can  
“ find no steady light to shew the way, nor  
“ foundation to rest upon, the temper loses  
“ its native chearfulness, and contracts a  
“ gloom and severity, partly from the cha-  
“ grin of disappointment, and partly from  
“ the social and kind affections being extin-  
“ guished for want of exercise.—Which  
“ evil has been exasperated, when men have  
“ been persuaded, that their holding cer-  
“ tain opinions intitled them to the divine  
“ favour; and that those who differed from  
“ them, were devoted to destruction\*.” See the *QUICUNQUE VULT*, in its damnatory clauses; and also the *creed* of popish and other fanatics.

\* *A comparative view*, &c. p. 180, 181.

# CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

## L O G O S.

**W**HAT has occasioned so much controversy concerning the Logos, or *Word of God*, among christian divines, seems principally to have been, “an apprehended difficulty in the “*introduction* to St. John’s Gospel.”—*Commentators* are much disagreed in their interpretations. And what should be the precise sense of the LOGOS, has been the warm dispute of ages. If therefore a consistent, easy, and clear reading can be given to this, we may hope, that every difficulty or obscurity, supposed to lye upon that introduction, will remove.

Now the LOGOS or *Word of God*, in the language of the sacred books of the old testament, does denote, (as shall presently be shewn,) “the express manifestative will

B

“ of

“ of God, whenever made, or in whatever  
 “ manner.”—And thus understood, it is as  
 well conceived of when creating, as it is  
 when succouring, or when informing and  
 correcting his moral creation.—Hence when  
 St. *John* opens his history, he very perti-  
 nently says,—*In the beginning was the Word,*  
*and the Word was with God, and the Word*  
*was God. The same was in the beginning*  
*with God. All things were made by him,*  
*and without him was not any thing made that*  
*was made.*—There is no kind of difficulty  
 found in this representation; for the mani-  
 festative will of God, was not only *in the*  
*beginning*, but had been ever *with God*, and  
 must be venerated, *as God*; even because  
 it is the express manifestation of God. This  
 very same idea St. *Paul* conveys, when he  
 observes, *that the invisible things of him from*  
*the creation of the world are clearly seen, be-*  
*ing understood by the things that are made,*  
*even his eternal power and godhead.* In which  
 obvious sense, the WORD may be said to  
 be God, and also to be in the beginning  
 with him; inasmuch *as all things were made*  
*by him; and without him, was not any thing*  
*made*

*made that was made.* In other words, not any thing could come into existence, but what would manifest the will of the creator.

The Evangelist rises in his representation of the WORD. *In him was life, and the life was the light of men:* i. e. he has been made manifest, as the infinite source of *life* and *light*, to all his intelligent creation\*. He, as a governor of moral agents, made himself known to our world, by consulting the *life* of men, in all the maxims of his rule.—*But the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.*—Even the divine light of prophecy, which had, from the beginning, foretold the most desirable age of the *Messiah*, had been so egregiously perverted, that the Jewish nation had lost the benefit of that heavenly illumination. The world was become so very blind, by prejudice and vice, as to reject the divine evidence.

Nevertheless, *there was a man sent from God, whose name was JOHN.* *The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe:* tho'

\* See the Appendix.

#### 4      CONSIDERATIONS ON THE LOGOS.

*he was not that light ; which mankind either formerly had, or were encouraged to expect, and hope for ; but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. —And yet he, the Word of God, was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. So depraved, so ignorant were the pagan idolatrous nations, as not to infer his eternal power and godhead, from the visible creation. The very idea of a creator, was banished from a great part of the human family. Nay, he came to his own, and his own received him not ; but as many as did receive him, to them gave he power, i. e. a right or privilege, to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*

Old Testament Scriptures do contain a convincing record of the truth of this report, concerning the *divine Word* ; inasmuch as the Jewish nation, whom God had separated from the rest of mankind, as a peculiar people, did retain such an amazing perverseness, under all the appearances of God for them, that sundry prophets complain



plain bitterly of their notorious infidelity and flagrant impiety. Nevertheless, there were some of them that were much more sensible, ingenuous, and obedient;—and to these, it were, that *he gave the privilege of SONS.*—So St. Paul observes, *that they are not all Israel, which were of Israel.* Rom. ix. 6.—We are next told in what manner, or upon what principle they obtained a FILIATION;—*which were born, not of blood,* i. e. not because of their being the natural descendants of Abraham;—*nor of the will of the flesh,* i. e. not because they had been observant of carnal ordinances; or had been circumcised: neither were they *born of the will of man;* i. e. not by reason of the reverence they had shewn to the traditions of their elders; but they were honoured with this filiation, from the obedience which they had shewn *to the will of God.*

This appears, to me, the most natural and obvious sense of the Evangelist; and at once determines the teachings of the divine Word to the Hebrew people, as precisely intended in this description.—In like manner, *all who did receive the* HARBIN-

## 6 CONSIDERATIONS ON THE LOGOS.

GER'S testimony to the voice of prophecy, did also *become the Sons of God*.—The historian, next introduces the shechinizing of the WORD, in the person of Jesus Christ; which he thus expresses—*and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*—

Several distinct inquiries should be made, if we would, with any precision, affix the doctrinal meaning of this description. Such as establishing,

1st The true sense of the *Logos*, or Word,

2dly, Of its being made flesh, and dwelling among us.

3dly, Wherein the glory of the only begotten of the Father did consist.

4thly, What St. John meaneth, when he says, and *we beheld his glory*?

1st, It has been already affirmed, that the term, *Logos*, or Word, is used by the Evangelist, for *the manifestative will of God, however, or whenever made*. Now, there is not any thing more common, in the Hebrew Scriptures, than this phrase, *the Word, the Word of God, or the Word of the Lord*, to

express the will either of the creator, preserver, or governor of the world. Pf. xxxiii.

6. *by the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth.* cxlviii. 5. *praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded, and they were created.*

The very miracles by which *Pharaoh* was tried, performed by the instrumentality of *Moses*, are called, *the Word of the Lord*; Pf. cv. 19. *until the time that the Word of the Lord came; the Word of the Lord tried him.* And when God had wrought deliverance for Israel, he is said to send his Word. Pf. cvii. 20. *he sent his Word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.* The different appearances of nature, in the plan of providence, are ascribed to the *Word of God*. cxlviii. 18. *when the ice was cast forth from the cloud as morsels, he sendeth out his Word and melteth them.*

The phrase is common to all the *prophets*; they are wont to call the messages which they deliver, *the Word of God*.—So 1 Sam. ix. 27. SAMUEL says to Saul, *Stand still to-day,*

### 8 CONSIDERATIONS ON THE LOGOS.

day, that I may shew thee the Word of God.—  
1 Kings xii. 22. *the Word of God came to*  
SHEMAIAH. *The Word of God came to* NA-  
THAN, *saying*: And it is the usual address  
of EZEKIEL,—*the Word of the Lord came*  
*unto me.* It would be endless to cite all the  
places, where the *Word of God*, or the *Word*  
*of the Lord*, is used to denote, his *manifest-*  
*ative will.* It is almost every where to be  
found, in the sacred scriptures; and will  
fully justify this Evangelist, in making use  
of a term so very familiar to the Jews; and  
which never could be mistaken by any who  
were at all acquainted with their writings.

We accordingly find the Apostle, when  
writing to the Hebrew christians, thus be-  
ginning his epistle, by shewing them, “that  
“ it was the very same Word of God by  
“ which the worlds were made, that had  
“ spoken, at sundry times and in divers  
“ manners, to the fathers by the prophets;  
“ and in these last days, by his Son.” q. d.  
The Gospel makes a revelation of the will  
of no other being, than of him who made  
all things, and who has been instructing  
mankind from the beginning. Methinks,  
this

this may be sufficient to affix the sense of the term, *Logos*, or *Word*, *Word of God*, or *Word of the Lord*.

The next inquiry will be, in what sense the *Word* was made *flesh*?

It is an undoubted truth, that *flesh*, or the man Christ Jesus, was made by the *Logos*, or by the *Word of God*: for it was *the power of the highest*, that did create or form him, in the womb of the virgin. So Mary his mother was assured it should be, from that same divine *Word* which spake by the angel,— That the *Word* was God himself, has been shewn from ver. 1. “where St. *John* useth a gradation. First he says, the *Word* was always, before all time. Then he adds, “and *was with God*; and lastly, that he was “*God himself* \*.” But says a conforming divine; “*and God was the Word* †;” when we have these decisive readings of the *Word*, it surely would not be so very intelligible to say, *and flesh, that is, a man became the Word and*

\* *Letter writ in the year 1730.* p. 24.

† Dr. DAWSON'S illustrations, p. 59.

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*dwelt among us* \*. Could flesh or a man become God? methinks, that must be utterly inconceivable. και ο λογος σαρξ ελημετο, can never have such meaning.—God could not be made man; nor could he take upon him the human nature; tho' the man Jesus, the *Messiah*, had the WORD, that is, the wisdom and power of God, residing with him. The manifestative will of God, called, *the Word*, could no otherwise be made flesh, than as it so resided with the man Christ Jesus. He was made the *Shechinah*, or temple of God; the divine presence with him, was oracular: or, he set his tabernacle in flesh, according to 1 *Kings* viii. 27. compared with *Apoc.* xxi. 3. The residence of the *Logos* with Jesus Christ was so intimate and expressive, as to justify St. *John*, in saying, *the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us*. Deity was, by him, so fully declared, or made manifest in his paternal truth and grace, that our Lord says to *Philip*, “whosoever hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” And yet,

\* Dr. DAWSON's illustrations, p. 72, & 100.

in fair construction, *Philip* could not suppose, *that Jesus Christ was the Father* : but only, that the most expressive revelation of the Father, was made by him.

When therefore the Evangelist says, *that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us*, he would not be understood to mean, that the *Word* was converted into flesh ; or, that it became a man ; or, that the *Word* did constitute any part of the person of the man Christ Jesus ; tho' it had the most expressive and illustrious abode with him. The Deity could not possibly suffer any change, or the least shadow of change.

*Amelius*, a platonic philosopher and disciple of *Plotinus*, of whom *Eusebius* makes mention, has this interpretation of St. *John's* introduction,—“ and this, plainly, was the  
 “ Word by whom, he being himself eter-  
 “ nal, were made all things that are, as  
 “ *Heracitus* also would say : and by Jove  
 “ the same, whom the *Barbarian* affirms  
 “ to have been in the place and dignity of  
 “ a principle, and to be with God, and to  
 “ be God : by whom all things were made,  
 “ and in whom every thing that was made

“ has its life and being. Who descending  
 “ into body, and putting on flesh, took the  
 “ form of man: tho’ even then he gave  
 “ proof of the majesty of his nature \*.”

This Heathen seems to have understood St. *John* much better than many christians have done: tho’ he calls him *Barbarian*, because he was a *Jew* who wrote in Greek.

But, at the same time, one may perceive how the platonic Philosophers mistook the true sense of *the Word’s being made flesh*.—  
 “Descending into body, and putting on flesh,” don’t appear to convey St. *John’s* sense, as shall be farther shewn.

That the WORD did not become any part of the person of Christ, is evident, from his ever ascribing his supernatural discernment, his all-penetrating knowledge, his astonishing wisdom and power, to the Father! he never once appropriates any divine property or perfection to himself †. For tho’ he once says, *I and the Father are one*;—yet,

\* Dr. LARDNER’S pagan testimonies, vol. III. p. 96, 97.

† See Matth. xix. 17. John v. 19, 30.—viii. 28.



he intended not to assert an essential or personal oneness; but only, that *he did the works of his Father, and did receive the doctrine, which he taught, from him.* This will undeniably appear, to be his meaning, when *John x. 30.* is diligently compared with verses, 37th and 38th.

The *Logos, or Word*, was so far from being the soul of Christ, as some have imagined, that he expressly denies he had any divine abilities, but what were his Father's: *of himself he could do nothing.*—And we might as truly say, that the *Logos or Word*, became the person of *Moses, of Elijah*, or of any of the *prophets*, as that it became the soul of the man Christ Jesus; else, we might equally say, that the person of *Moses* became the *Word*, as that the person of Christ became the *Word*.

That his name was called, *EMANUEL*, i. e. *God with us*, will be of very easy conception, on account of that most express and significant abode which the *Word of God* had with him \*. So confident was he of

\* Hence his name is called, the *Word of God*.  
Apoc. xix. 13.

this expressive presence of the Father with him, that he says to *Philip*, *Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.* John xiv. 10.—And when he asserts the infallibility of the judgment which he gave of men and things, Chap. viii. 16. he assigns this reason for it,—*I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.* And at ver. xxix. *he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him.* Nay, he thus comforts himself, when taking a prophetic prospect of his being forsaken of all the disciples, *John* xvi. 32. *Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every one to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.* Thus we can conceive of the *Word's* being made *flesh*, as it abode so illustriously in, or with the person of the man *Christ Jesus*.

In this disquisition, we are 3dly to inquire, in what it was that the glory did consist? for *St. John* says, *and we beheld his glory,*

as the *glory of the ONLY BEGOTTEN of the Father, full of grace and truth.*—

Now the *glory* of any being or thing, is the perfection or the excellence of its nature and properties, discoverable by some manifestation made of that excellence.—But the residence of the *Logos* or Word with the man Christ Jesus, revealing the truth and grace of God to mankind, was, what rendered him so distinguishingly and so peculiarly illustrious, as to be called, the *ONLY BEGOTTEN of the Father.*—Now, to be *begotten of God*, in the sense of this writer, is, to be prevailed upon by his teachings, to express a cordial devotedness, to all his will. Thus, in his *introduction*, he speaks of men having the privilege of *Sons*, who were born of God, by their doing of his will.—i. e. by ingenuously receiving the instructions that were given them, from the *Logos* or Word of God.

Whereas Jesus Christ is *the only begotten of the Father*, as he was distinguished from all mankind by prophecy and by his formation ; by his sinless, and most perfect obedience and unreserved devotedness to all his Father's will ; also by miracle ! for we are to keep in mind, that

that when St. *John* wrote his Gospel, the most complete testimony had been actually and extensively given to his divine character and mission. For, verily, he had been greatly distinguished by *signs, wonders, and divers miracles!* “God having anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for GOD WAS WITH HIM.” as St. *Peter* bore an express record, *Acts* x. 38.—But besides all this testimony, those divine gifts which he had promised, had been abundantly bestowed on his apostles, as the writer to the Hebrew Christians remarks,—“God had also born THEM witnesses, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the holy ghost.” Chap. ii. 4. which were in proof of their Lord’s being exalted to the right hand of power, and of his having a name actually given him above every name.

Thus is it made manifest that Jesus is the ONLY BEGOTTEN of *the Father* \*. And be-

\* See *Letter writ in the year 1730.* p. 29.—the only begotten, equivalent to well-beloved.

cause of his exaltation to sovereignty and dominion, St. *Peter* speaks thus of him,—“ who  
 “ is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand  
 “ of God, angels, authorities and powers be-  
 “ ing made subject to him.” 1st Epistle iii.  
 22. And for the reason of his having this su-  
 premacy given him, St. *Paul* represents it  
 as a CREATION, wherein this image, this  
 representative of the invisible God, this first-  
 born, this most excellent of every creature,  
 has the subjection of all things made to him,  
 “ that are in heaven and earth, visible and  
 “ invisible; whether thrones, or dominions,  
 “ or principalities, or powers, all things are  
 “ created by and for him—and he is the  
 “ head of the body the church, the *first-*  
 “ *born* from the dead, that in all things he  
 “ might have the pre-eminence.” Col. i. 15.  
 —19.

*All things* thus said to be *created* by him  
 and for him, I should understand, of all  
 dynasties, or orders of power being put un-  
 der his sceptre. Mr. LOCKE has shewn,  
 that κτισαυτι, is not always used by St. *Paul*-  
 to express *creation*, i. e. the making out of  
 nothing; for he uses the word for the bringing

D

of

of *Jew* and *Gentile* into one society, or family, Eph. i. 15. and for the whole *new creation* under Jesus Christ, Chap. iii. 9. or he speaks of the work of redemption by Christ, as a *new creation*. See his NOTES on the texts above. And as justly and reasonably may we understand St. *Paul*, in his epistle to the *Colossians*, as having only in view the putting of the several dynasties or orders of dignified beings, in heaven and earth, under the sceptre of the man Christ Jesus, the *Shechinah* of God.

*After all*, should any be of opinion, that *Col. i. 16.* and *Heb. i. 2, 3.* must be understood of the first creation of the heavens and of the earth: there will be no difficulty in ascribing such creation to that *Logos* or Word, which tabernacled with the man Christ Jesus. And so understood, it will correspond with the idea of this Evangelist, who mentions, in his introduction, the creative power of the Word: and says, *that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* Is not such interpretation much more reconcilable with our powers of conception? and is it not that  
in

in which we can have far more complacency, than in the strange opinion of Jesus Christ, who was truly man, *made of a woman, made under the law*, γενομενον εν γυναικι & γενομενον υπο νομου, being represented, as *the creator of the world*.

The Gospel is a revelation or manifestation of truth, which has consulted the powers of the human mind, in the easy and familiar representation; and has nothing in its doctrines that would perplex and confound. There is not any thing intricate or mysterious in this last revelation. *Men shall not teach every one his neighbour, and every one his brother, saying, KNOW THE LORD: but all shall know him, from the least to the greatest.*—

It is then sufficient, that, in forming our ideas of the exaltation of Christ, we consider him, as placed by the LOGOS, or by the expressive will of God, above all dynasties or orders of power, in heaven and in earth.

These are very expressive representations of his being the *only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*—The revelation which he has made of the truth and grace

of God, is, that which gives the contents of Gospel history. The which, whoever will consult, with an honest mind, and a suitable degree of attention, will be constrained to own, that there is a *plenitude* in the revelation. Nor need we scruple to affirm, that there is also an excellence, a perfection, a glory to be ascribed to this display of the will of God. We must make such grateful acknowledgment; since all other methods of conveying divine instruction, are found to fall far short of the gospel demonstration, given us, of the *paternal* truth and grace of God. For which reason, this historian adds, *that no man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

4thly, It will not be of difficult conception, in what sense St. *John* affirms, *and we beheld his glory.* The learned and venerable Author of *the Letter writ in the year 1730.* says, “it was not *the Word*, which St. *John* and others beheld, but Jesus, in whom the Word dwelled. Him they beheld. And his greatness was conspicu-  
ous;



“ous : so that he appeared, and they knew  
 “him to be, the *only begotten of the Father*,  
 “or the Messiah\*.”

The glory which they beheld, did consist in those demonstrations of the divine presence with him, which gave the lustre of his Spirit, of his doctrinal teachings, and of all his exemplary behaviour. Wisdom, benevolence, and power shone throughout his public ministrations ! and what wonder they should, when he was to open the doctrine of immortal life to mankind, and assure them of his having actually made void the dominion of death !—That he, in fact, was the well-beloved of the Father, approved of the Governor of the universe, they were ascertained, by a voice from heaven, once and again which they had heard, expressly declaring *him to be so*. And this historian was one of the three witnesses of his *transfiguration* ! Besides this, his resurrection and ascension were made known, not only to them, but to great numbers of the disciples :—and we can add to these very convincing evidences, the ability which they themselves

\* Page 29,

had of working miracles in the name of the exalted Jesus; which were enough to give Spirit to this declaration,—and WE SAW HIS GLORY!—St. *Peter* makes use of a like sort of Speech, when he says, “we have not followed cunningly devised fables, whilst we made known to you, the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty, when there came such a voice from the excellent glory, *this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*”——

The glory which the residence of the *Logos* had conferred on the man Christ Jesus, might be farther learnt from the express declaration of this great prophet himself; for he said of his friend *Lazarus*, “this sickness is not unto death; i. e. not unto an irrecoverable death, but for the glory of God; that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.” *John xi. 4.* And when he takes a view of the tendency which his own sufferings had, to convince the world of *sin*, of *righteousness*, and of *judgement*; he says,—“now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God

“ be glorified in him, God shall glorify him  
 “ in himself, and shall straightway glorify  
 “ him.” *John* xiii. 31, 32. To this purpose, in his prayer, he greatly refresheth his own Spirit, with the moral impressions that would be made on mankind, by his teachings. Chap. xvii. 10. “ All mine are thine, and thine  
 “ are mine, and I am glorified in them.” And again, this historian so understood the miraculous power, which wrought by his master, as manifesting his glory. See chap. ii. 11. *This beginning of miracles did Jesus—and manifested forth his glory.*—Very opposite then is the *exordium* of St. *John's* first epistle, “ that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we  
 “ have seen with our eyes, which we have  
 “ *critically* looked upon, and our hands have  
 “ handled the Word of life.”—

From the above view taken of the INTRODUCTION to St. *John's* Gospel, and the description which he has given of the LOGOS or Word, shechinized in the man Christ Jesus; several useful *observations* may be made, or sundry important conclusions drawn from the premises. Such as follow :

Obs. I.

Obf. I. St. *John's* account of the LOGOS or Word, will, by no means, allow us to conceive of it as any part of the *person* of Jesus Christ; but only as residing *in* or *with* him; and becoming divinely oracular throughout his public ministrations. Which, at once, removes all obscurity, and secures us from the unpleasing perplexity of vulgar interpretations. We can now conceive of the same divine being, who gave existence to the universal system, as manifesting his will, by creation, by preservation, and by that government which he exercises over his rational and moral offspring; as, also in the finishing of his plan, becoming shechinized or as dwelling in the man Christ Jesus; and thereby making himself most graciously familiar with mankind!—

There is therefore no manner of occasion for the childish and absurd invention of a *trinity in unity*; or, an *hypostatical* union of a duplicity of natures, in the person of Christ. Nor are we led to speak of him, sometimes as God, at other times as man. Opinions which confound, but do not convey any one  
rational,

rational, just, and instructive idea of the Logos, or *Word of God*.

But when we affix this sense to the term, as expressive, or as manifestative of the will of God, whether under the idea of creator, preserver, or governor, and redeemer, we are then able to conceive of it, as *in the beginning, as with God, and even as God*; because the will of the Deity imports, supreme authority; and is every where to be so revered, even as *God*.

In giving, what I understand to be, the meaning of St. JOHN in his introduction, the phrase, in our translation runs, and *the Word was God*, και Θεος ω ο λογος. a writer above-mentioned reads, “*and God was the Word*, “ observing, that Arians and Socinians read, “ *the Word was a God.\**” — But inasmuch as the same writer, had before said, “ By the Word (John i. 1.) I apprehend the Evangelist means, *the Gospel* †;” it does not so much illustrate this text, as it darkens the phrase; since it is not so intelligible how *God is the Gospel*. The reading seems much more easy and natural as it stands, *the Word was God*,

\* Illustrations, p. 59.

† Ibid, p. 58.

of God himself; considered and understood to be, *the manifestative will of God*. Which interpretation, perfectly accords with all ancient usages of the term, LOGOS, or *Word*; and enables us to harmonize the last with all former manifestations of God; and at the same time renders us capable of discerning the divinity of the Gospel dispensation clearly demonstrated.

It is certainly of the last importance, that we preserve an idea of the LOGOS or Word, as distinct from the person of Jesus Christ; otherwise, we cannot understand him when he is absolutely disclaiming all divine perfections; and when he is ascribing all that wisdom and power, which did attest his mission, to communications of divine ability from the Father. Here, it will be proper for us to notice some very extraordinary representations of our Lord's formation and birth, given us in a *Sermon and notes* lately published, by a very learned and distinguished son of the church of England; who, in treating on Christ's *being born of a virgin*, has thus unwarily expressed himself, — “ This  
“ God visible amongst men, introduced into  
“ the

“ the world thus, shall yet be truly man,  
 “ he shall be born as an infant, and as an  
 “ infant shall he be brought up.”

Again, “ this divinity (i. e. that of the  
 Messiah) is marked by his being God; his  
 “ residence upon earth, by his being God  
 “ with us; and his humanity, by his being  
 “ born of a woman, and fed with the  
 “ usual food of infants during his infant  
 “ state\*.”

More extraordinary yet, if possible, — “ It  
 “ seems to have been a just mark of dig-  
 “ nity, that the AUTHOR OF NATURE should  
 “ be distinguished by not being born after  
 “ the ordinary course of nature: and hav-  
 “ ing ever been as no other being was, *the*  
 “ *Son of God*, he became what no other  
 “ ever was, *the Son of a virgin* †.”

With great submission, I would ask, whe-  
 the Dr. KENNICOT has not here, in the  
 most expressive language, very unwarily  
 countenanced the popish doctrine, of the

\* Dr. KENNICOTT'S Sermon at Oxford, May  
 19, 1765, p. 26, 27.

† Ibid. Notes, p. 62.

Virgin Mary's being the *mother of God*? for if the author of nature could be born of a woman, assuredly, there will be some pretence for the homage paid her, by the papal world. And, methinks, the dispute about the *immaculate conception*, as maintained by the *Franciscans*, would be in their favour; and not on the side of the *Dominicans*.

The Dr. will allow me, however, to put these questions, — “ If the author of nature  
 “ was born of a virgin, what possible oc-  
 “ casion could there be, for his having the  
 “ *Spirit* poured out upon him at his bap-  
 “ tism? and what that spirit was, which  
 “ was then poured out upon him?” for if the God of nature, did become the Son of a virgin, then that Son of a virgin, could not be any other than the God of nature.

“ Thus ingenious men are found supporting that tremendous system of *metaphysical subtlety* which remains a monument of the extent and weakness of the human understanding, and by establishing too much, do hurt the foundation of the most interesting principles of religion.”

But,



But, thanks be to God, so far from the least countenance being given in sacred scripture to such representation of the Messiah, as that of the God of nature's being born of a Virgin, he is always spoken of, in prophecy, as a *man*; and most commonly speaks of himself as *the Son of man*; unless he has occasion to mention the divine mission which he had to reveal the Father to mankind; and then, he sometimes calls himself *the Son of God*. Yet, whenever he uses that exalted stile, it is not to be imagined, he would be understood to mean, *he was that God whose Son he was*.—If therefore we would preserve any rational or intelligible ideas of Jesus Christ, we must contemplate the LOGOS, or Word, which dwelt with him, as absolutely distinct from his person.—*In a word*, the supreme universal power, authority and dignity, by which the LOGOS did express itself, whilst dwelling with the man Christ Jesus, was, what determined the character of the true *Messiah*. Or, in the words of a learned divine, “ he was thus the true  
“ *Shechinah*; the true glory of God as really  
“ dwelt in him, as when the *Word of the*  
*Shechinah*

“ *Shechinah* gave forth the command for the  
 “ creation of the world, or when it pub-  
 “ lished the law at mount Sinai, or when it  
 “ enter’d the tabernacle and temple, and the  
 “ whole worship of the Hebrew church,  
 “ and all proper divine honours were given  
 “ unto it.\*” Yet, assuredly, no reasonable  
 man can say, that either the *angel*, the *ta-  
 bernacle*, the *temple*, or the *prophet*, was  
 other, or more than the *Shechinah*, or in-  
 strument of conveyance, by which a mani-  
 festation was made of the Word, or will of  
 God. — For will any say, that because the  
 Word of the *Shechinah* said to Moses, *I will  
 make thee a God to Pharaoh*; or, *thou shalt be  
 to him instead of God*. (Exod. iv. 16. vii. 1.)  
 that therefore *Moses* became the same with  
 the *divine Word*, which wrought such won-  
 ders by him? This would be very unac-  
 countable. The Jewish multitudes were ex-  
 tremely ignorant and depraved; but yet,  
 when they saw the miracles which our Lord  
 wrought among them, they gave glory to  
 God. They did not ascribe the power to  
 Jesus of Nazareth, but to *the God of nature*,

\* LOWMAN'S Three tracts, p. 247.

who thus bore testimony to his being the *Messiah*. They distinguished between the person of Jesus Christ, and that Word of God which dwelt with him; between the Being who sent, and his messenger.

Obj. II. The sense in which we have understood the LOGOS, or Word of God, will quite annihilate the idea of his pre-existence, whom we call CHRIST.

It should seem, that it has been owing to men's not keeping their conceptions of the *Word*, and of the person of Christ distinct, that they have so unnaturally fancied a pre-existence of the man Christ Jesus. At the same time, no one may call in question a pre-existence of the *divine Word*, which dwelt with him. And it has been shewn, with great evidence and masterly address, that the LOGOS did not supply the place of any human soul in the person of Jesus Christ; which may be seen, *in the Letter writ in the year 1730*. — Allow me to add, that, the *two or three* texts in the New Testament, supposed to countenance this, will be found to have no such meaning, if our interpretation

tation of the LOGOS, be just and defensible. — Besides St. *John's* introduction, the texts which have most puzzled the minds of some christians are, *John* vi. 62.—viii. 58.—xvii. 5. As to the *first* passage, methinks, the solution may be thus given,—“What? and  
 “if ye shall see the Son of man, after he  
 “has given his flesh to the tortures and  
 “death of a cross, re-assume his former  
 “exalted character of the *well-beloved of the*  
 “*Father*? You will then understand the  
 “spiritual and life-giving design of my mis-  
 “sion.”—And is not this agreeable to the drift of his reasoning? let any one read the context.—The next difficult passage, is, *before Abraham was, I am.* The Jews asked him, *whether he was greater than their father Abraham?* If this be an answer to that question, it is given in the affirmative; and is the same as if he had said, *yes, I am greater.*—Should it yet be said, the words would intimate, a *prior* existence to that of *Abraham*?—The answer may be, such an interpretation is not at all necessary, for he could not personally be before him, in point of time, any otherwise than as he  
 is

is spoken of in prophecy, *as the seed of the woman*.—And concerning whom Abraham had the pleasure of expecting such a descendant, in *whom all nations should be blessed*.—Else we may understand our Lord, as speaking in the person of the *Logos*, or of the divine Word, which dwelt with him.—This had been sometimes the manner of *angels* and of *prophets*, by whom the *Word of the Shechinah* spake. And how otherwise must we understand him, when he says, *I am that living bread which cometh down from heaven*.—Now, by the most reasonable and fair construction, our Lord could intend no other by that *living bread* than the DOCTRINE he delivered, which was so expressive of the will of the Father. Which very doctrine, was *that living bread, of which men might eat, and live for ever*. He must, consequently, be understood as personating the LOGOS or Word of God, when he says, *I am the living bread, which came down from heaven*. And in no other sense can he be understood, when he says, *I am the light of the world*. John viii. 12.

This personating of the *Logos*, or of the manifestative will of the Father, is very familiar to him; nevertheless St. *John* observes, ver. 27. that the captious Jews, did *not understand that he spake to them of the Father*, when he was personally affirming these things of his doctrine.

May we not also understand our Lord, as personating the LOGOS, when he says, *I am the resurrection and the life!—and he that believeth in me shall not perish, but shall have eternal life?*—It cannot reasonably be understood as intending any thing less than the energy of the divine WORD, operating under the Gospel dispensation, and giving the last efficacy to the administration of this one Lord. It will be extremely difficult to conceive of Jesus Christ being any otherwise *the resurrection and the life*, but as the Father who has life in himself; essentially and underived; so has he GIVEN to the Son to have life in himself. And as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickneth them: even so the Son quickneth whom he will. comp. *John* v. 21. and 26. And his authority to execute judgment, is also given him; because

because *he is the Son of man*: he therefore could have no such authority, if the Father had not given it to him, ver. 27.

It is not to be wondered at, he should so frequently speak in the *person* of the Father, when he could expressly declare, *I am come in my Father's name.*—*The works which I do are in my Father's name.*

But, that no one should mistake him, as if he made any claims to real divinity, he says, *ye shall know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself:—I have not spoken of myself, but the Father who sent me, hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. Whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.*—These passages are sufficient to shew, that when the blessed Jesus says; *before Abraham was I am*; he may be well understood, as personating the divine Word which spake by him. And this sense is not at all improbable, when we advert to the language he uses in the antecedent context, see ver. 47. *He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God.*—

As to the *third* difficult text, where he prays, *that the Father would glorify him, with the glory which he had with him before the world was*—It has been understood, by those who have denied the *pre-existence* of Jesus Christ, to intend, the glory which God had originally designed him, in reward of his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. Which is a very rational and just interpretation, and agrees well with those other scriptures, where christians are said to be *chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world*. And where Jesus Christ is said to be *a lamb slain before the foundation of the world*.

The judicious author of *the Letter writ in the year 1730*, has said more to the purpose on this subject, than any other I have ever yet seen; and from whom I have borrowed much information: he has written with a freedom, which does not, which unhappily cannot attend the pen of a church-man.—

Obs. III. If there is no divine person, but that of the FATHER, as should appear to be the teaching of Christ and of all his apostles; then the opinion of more than one person



person in the godhead, must be unscriptural. To affirm therefore, as some have done, “ that there are three persons of one substance, power and eternity in the unity of the Godhead;” must throw darkness and confusion upon the unity. For, in truth, the unity might every whit as well be proved from the pagan polytheism, as from the *Athanasian* Symbol. None need scruple to say, that these propositions are mathematically false,—viz. “ *three* are not more than *one*; and *one* is not less than *three*.” No Trinitarian is, or ever will be, able to confute the advocate for TRANSUBSTANTIATION.—

Obj. IV. We have infinite reason of admiration, gratitude, and praise, because the *Word of God*, by which the worlds were made, and have been preserved and governed, did condescend so to reside with the man Christ Jesus, as to manifest all that *truth* and *grace*, which can either guide and direct, succour and support, comfort and refresh mankind, under all the darkneses, difficulties, dangers, burdens and grievances  
of

of this present life ; and also qualify them for the blissful fruitions of a future state and world. It is very pleasing, nay, it is highly transporting to contemplate the divine advantages of Gospel instruction.

It should, indeed, be reasonable to conclude, that no age of the world has been without some teachings of the *divine Word*. The will of God, has been some way or other made manifest to mankind. Yet no antecedent teachings, of which we are informed, have been able to bear a comparison with those under the Gospel. Were not this a truth, we could not account for St. JOHN'S pouring so much contempt on the Mosaic dispensation, as he does, just after he has mentioned the *in-dwelling of the Word with the man Christ Jesus* ; see ver. 17. *the law was given by Moses ; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*. q. d. comparatively, till then, *grace and truth* had not had any clear and full exhibition. *Again*, if we can suppose that the apostles did understand the importance of the doctrine which they delivered, we must be persuaded, they had sufficient  
reason

reason for being in raptures, whenever they mention the benevolence it shews to mankind.

Obf. V. An apparent advantage it must be of to any one, in reading the Gospels, to preserve in his own mind, pure and unadulterated, an idea of the divine unity. *viz.* “ that there is but one living and true God, “ of necessary, everlasting, and unchangeable “ existence, without body, parts, or passions ; “ of wisdom, power, and goodness infinite : “ the maker, preserver, and governor of all “ things visible and invisible.” This would secure the human mind from all those wild, and unreasonable opinions, which divide, disturb, and distract the whole christian professing world. *e. g.* What heated controversies have been agitated about the metaphysical nature of Christ ? or rather, about his having *two natures* ; the one divine, the other human ! and whether he had *one* will, or *two* wills ? Such futile, such unedifying matters of debate, have filled the world with noise and clamor, and the church with sable darkness and much confusion. Whereas the manifest design of Gospel teachings, is, to give  
mankind

mankind a most perfect revelation of the *truth* and *grace* of God.

If the moral or the practical end had been kept in view, and religiously observed, by the professing world, the honours due to the divine mission of Jesus, would have been paid by a more universal obedience to his teachings. But as it is, a thousand strange opinions are propagated; nor only so, but the homage of the christian is become extremely ceremonious, idle, and superstitious.

Among other extravagancies, **POPERY** could never have found where to have set the sole of her foot, if the divine *unity* had been preserved pure and uncorrupt. That monstrous detestable superstition, was erected upon mens depraving this first-principle of all religious worship! for, when once christians had learnt to imagine, the *Godhead* divided into three persons; and one of those persons into two natures; when they could once conceive of the *divine Logos*, as the Soul of Jesus Christ, they were then prepared to embrace any fanciful opinion, that could be grafted upon these most absurd principles.

N.t

Not any thing gave the artful MAHOMET so much advantage, as christians corrupting the doctrine of the unity. This was what rendered him so very capable of spreading his imposture, when he could call himself a prophet of *the one God, who had no partners* \*! The very unguarded way, which christians had used, of speaking about *an eternal generation of the Son*, was what gave him the opportunity of ridiculing the opinion with so much Spirit †.—The *doctrine of the trinity* he thus authoritatively condemns; “ O ye, who have received the Scriptures! “ exceed not the just bounds in your religion, neither say of God any other than “ the truth. Verily Jesus Christ, the Son of “ of Mary, is the apostle of God, and his “ Word, which he conveyed into Mary, “ and a Spirit proceeding from him. Be- “ lieve therefore in God, and in his apostles; “ and say not, *There are three Gods*; forbear “ this, it will be better for you ‡.” And

\* See *Ockley's* history of the Saracens, vol. II. p. 38, 279.

† See *Sale's* Koran, vol. I. p. 23. vol. II. p. 10, 184, 315.

‡ Vol. I. p. 126.

again,—“ Christ, the Son of Mary, is no  
 “ more than an apostle; other apostles have  
 “ preceded him, and his mother was a wo-  
 “ man of veracity: they both ate food.”—The  
*note* upon it is this,—“ never pretending to  
 “ partake of the divine nature, or to be *the*  
 “ *mother of God* \*.”

How unfortunate is it that the very learned Dr. KENNICOT, should readvance a notion, condemned, with so much evidence, in the KORAN: and that has been the blackest disgrace ever brought on the christian name, in regard to absurd and unreasonable opinion.

We are thus enabled to collect the genuine *original* of that deformity which now sits on the face of the christian profession. Would we then contribute all we can, to restore the lost simplicity and purity of the Gospel-profession? it must be by contemplating the man Christ Jesus as the temple of the divine Word, and by so reverencing his instructions, as to be daily trained, by them, unto virtue and glory.

Obs. VI. Some reasonable conjectures may hence be formed, about the more immediate

\* Vol. I. p. 146.

design of St. JOHN, in writing his supplemental Gospel. The very learned and judicious Dr. LARDNER, thinks, that the time of its being written; and published, might be in the year 68. He sees no reason to think it was designedly composed in opposition to any christian heresies; tho' many learned men have thought the *introduction* was so intended.—But with this ecclesiastical historian,—“ it appears agreeable to the main  
 “ design of his Gospel; for he therein shews,  
 “ that Jesus came, and acted by the autho-  
 “ rity of God, the creator of the world, the  
 “ God, and supreme Lawgiver of the Jewish  
 “ people. The eternal word, reason, wif-  
 “ dom, power of God, which is God him-  
 “ self, by which the world had been made,  
 “ by which he dwelled among the Jews in  
 “ the tabernacle and in the temple; *this*  
 “ *same Word* dwelled, and resided in Jesus,  
 “ in the fullest manner \*.”

He observes, “ that there is little or no-  
 “ thing in his Gospel, which is not *new* and  
 “ *additional*, except the account of our Sa-  
 “ viour's prosecution, death, and resurrection,

\* Supplement to credibility, vol. I. p. 437.

“ where all the four Evangelists coincide in  
 “ many particulars : tho’ even here also St.  
 “ *John* has divers things peculiar to himself\*.”

Undoubtedly, St. JOHN’S Gospel is supplemental. And therefore the obvious design of it certainly was, to record some things omitted by the other Evangelists : but inasmuch as his record, is, chiefly of those discourses, which do relate to our Lord’s divine mission and character, we may reasonably conclude, that this historian had a more immediate design to provide the christian church with the fullest evidence, “ that Jesus Christ both  
 “ taught and performed miracles, only by  
 “ the wisdom and power of God, or by the  
 “ *Logos* residing with him.” Nor does it seem improbable, but he likewise foresaw, by a prophetic spirit, the danger christians would more generally be in, of perverting the first principle of all religion, by ascribing a real and proper divinity to the person of Jesus Christ.

Of all the Evangelists, St. JOHN has been the most copious, in shewing, the nature of our Lord’s divine mission, and his true and proper

\* Supplement to credibility, vol. I. p. 449.



humanity. He narrates his explicit acknowledgments of dependence: his ascribing all his divine abilities to the Father: and he lays before our eyes, the respect which Jesus had to the joy set before him. And had christians more religiously, used their reason and understanding, in consulting this Evangelical record, they would not easily have been persuaded of Jesus Christ possessing any divine perfections of his own; who so frequently employed himself in acts of *supplication* and *homage* to his Father. There would certainly have been something, in his *prayers*, that we could not so well reconcile with the idea of his being a divine person in the Godhead, of equal power and glory with the Father.—

It is indisputably evident, that notwithstanding the presence of the Word of God constantly operating by him, to all the purposes of attesting and rendring efficacious his heavenly mission; yet, he was conscious, that this divine presence with him, did not constitute any part of his own personality: and therefore it was that he so properly and

be-

becomingly employed himself in acts of homage and devotion.—Many remarkable instances whereof, are recorded by this Evangelist. And one prayer, at large, he has given us, wherein there is expressed, a most pleasing and exalted idea both of his piety and philanthropy. That devotional piece is truly matchless!

After all, some may be apt to retort upon us, by saying, “that so far from St. *John's* Gospel having had the happy effect of preserving the christian world from a disposition to deprave the doctrine of the *unity*, that it has more generally been the authenticated plea for such depravity. The heterogeneous opinions, do pretend to shelter themselves under the representations given, by this historian, of the teachings, mission, and character of Jesus.”

The answer to this, seems very obvious;—the Deity, in demonstrating his eternal power and Godhead, by the visible creation, and by his universal providence, did, and does certainly design to teach men to form just and adorable ideas of him. But this did not,  
nor

nor does it hinder them from forming the most idle and vain imaginations; or from deifying those very works of his hands, the *sun*, the *moon*, and the hosts of heaven!— But will any hence say, that the visible manifestation of God, is not adapted to demonstrate his being and perfections!

The case is analogous, or it has a great similitude; for St. JOHN'S *introduction* to his Gospel, and the whole of his history, has a manifest tendency to shew, that the very same being who created the world, and who has preserved and informed mankind in all ages, by certain teachings and interpositions of his *Word*, in this or in the other manner shechinized, has, under the Gospel dispensation, made his truth and his grace manifest, by that same Word dwelling with the man Christ Jesus.—But instead of attending to this design of his Gospel, men have fancied to themselves, some of the most absurd and mystical meanings in this plain, intelligible, and excellent historian. Will it then follow, that St. JOHN has not expressed himself with clearness and precision, when he has written upon the great subject  
of

of our Lord's divine mission? I should be of opinion that there is no manner of ground for such a dishonourable conclusion.

The venerable ecclesiastical historian, mentioned under this observation, will allow me, to think, that tho' St. *John* did not form his *introduction*, with a design to oppose some heresies, that had obtained when he wrote his Gospel; yet, he was guided, by a divine inspiration, to introduce his history in the manner he has done, in order, to prevent as much as possible, the christian world from depraving and corrupting the doctrine of the UNITY.

P. S. The reader will perceive, that some late publications have led the Author to offer his thoughts on a subject, which he apprehends has not been well understood; except by a very, very few christian writers. He is humbly of opinion, that Dr. DAWSON has had courage to deliver many very important truths, *in his illustrations*. At the same time, he is afraid, his manner of proving the *liturgy of his church*, to be upon the principles of the unity; is too paradoxical, to admit of an easy reception.

As

As to Dr. KENNICOT's propositions, he is persuaded, that the DR. has very widely and most strangely mistaken his subject.—The Author of these considerations, however, has no design to offend either the one or the other of these writers; but presumes upon the liberty of expressing freely his own thoughts in those things wherein he differs from them; and of offering to the public such a train of ideas which he has formed of the LOGOS, or *Word's being made flesh*.

The Author will not enter into any altercation or debate, should any chuse to criticise, censure or condemn this his defence of the unity.—It is enough for him, that he is able to inscribe it to the honour and glory of the one God the Father, and also to that of the one Lord.—And were it the last act of his life, he should have a sincere pleasure in this attempt to restore the almost lost idea, of the DIVINE UNITY.

## A P P E N D I X.

**S**T. JOHN, in the introduction to his Gospel, having spoken of the WORD as creating, makes mention of it as informing the world concerning the will of the Governor; or, as enlivening and refreshing the Soul of man; which he thus expresses, *in him was life, and the life was the light of men.* This is a most affecting representation! and is the same as if he had said, obedience to the will of God is a life-giving, it is an immortalizing principle. See *Deut.* xxx. 15. *Psal.* xvi. 11. *Prov.* xii. 28. *Eccles.* vii. 12. *Ezekiel* xviii. 19.—xxi. 22.—xxxiii. 13, 15, 16. compare *Matth.* xix. 17. *John* v. 26.—vi. 57, 58.—and many more authorities might be produced from the sacred text. This is not affirmed of the animal, or bodily life; but of the spiritual or moral. Obedience to God ever gave *life* and *light* to the mind of man; and yet ignorance, idolatry and vice did so far prevail, *that the light*, is said to have *shone in darknes*. Nay, there was a SECT famous among

among the Jews, “ who would have the  
“ actions and expectations of men terminate  
“ with this present life.”—But surely, such  
could not be said *to wait for the adoption, to  
wit, the redemption of the body.* Which a  
late learned and studious *Divine* observes,  
“ does not signify the resurrection of these  
“ frail bodies ; but the deliverance which  
“ good men will have, at the coming of  
“ Christ, from a state of mortality and  
“ weakness \*.”

I cannot but be of opinion, that all good  
men have ever had such deliverance, upon  
their finishing of this bodily life : and so I  
understand our Lord, when he says, *that as  
the Father hath life in himself, so has he given  
to the Son to have life in himself.*—The be-  
ing who annually renews the face of na-  
ture, and gives fresh life to the world of  
plants and vegetables, was never unwilling  
to exert himself in behalf of reasonable be-  
ings : but good men have found resources  
in his power and wisdom, for restoring life,  
and furnishing them with such bodies as  
are adapted to a more durable and perfect

\* The Reverend Mr. *John Alexander's* paraphrase,  
&c. p. 36.

state of existence. This seems to be a very reasonable opinion. And is it not thus that the blessed Jesus says, *my Father worketh hitherto, and I work?*

The ingenious Author above-mentioned, (tho' a *soul sleeper*) considers the resurrection-body, "as not formed by any process of nature, but by an immediate act of divine power, rises spiritual and immortal; the body that is sown, no more than the seed that is sown, being the body that shall be produced, but altogether different in its frame and properties \*."—And *again*, he observes,—"the apostle speaks of no act of the divine power, to collect the scattered particles of matter, which composed the bodies of men, and restore them to their original place and office.—But it is reasonable to suppose, that the same being whose wisdom and power are never limited in their operations, is able to furnish mankind with bodies of such materials and of such a consistence, as shall be perfectly adapted to the state in which they shall appear and act †."

\* The Reverend Mr. *John Alexander's* paraphrase, &c. p. 87.

† *Ibid.* p. 85.

These



These citations serve to shew, that the resurrection-body, has no sort of dependence on this frail body, nor any connexion with it. And that it is also an instantaneous production of divine power.

The common opinion he explodes, *viz.* that of the re-union of the soul to its former body, which is attended with two difficulties. “ *First*, that the heavenly happiness is nei-  
 “ ther completed at once, nor gradually in-  
 “ creases, but is given at first in some low  
 “ degrees, and afterwards arrives, in an in-  
 “ stant, at its height and perfection, when  
 “ the body is raised. And *secondly*, that it  
 “ must always be a considerable difficulty  
 “ with thinking minds to conceive, why  
 “ the honour and reward of a future state,  
 “ should be represented as depending more  
 “ upon the revival of the body long since  
 “ mouldered away, than upon the presence  
 “ of God and of Christ, the society of an-  
 “ gels and blessed spirits, and the exercise  
 “ and improvement of all divine and social  
 “ virtues. All which enjoyments, upon these  
 “ principles, are prior to a resurrection of the  
 “ flesh, and for any thing we know, capable  
 “ of rising in infinite progression without it.”

“ These

These, undoubtedly, are great absurdities. But, they have no place at all; if we suppose a resurrection body *immediately given*, by an act of divine power. And why we may not conclude upon it, I do not understand. Pray what reason can be assigned for the suspension of this act of divine power, which is never limited in its operation? especially, when the soul is conceived of as having no more concern for ever with this frail body? or, what are we to understand by that resurrection body, which, by an immediate act of divine power, rises spiritual and immortal? where is the soul in the intermediate state? could it not act without the frail bodily organs? how came we to know it could not, when an apostle did not? see 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3. *whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell.*—But I would farther ask, how is it that St. *Paul* was caught up into the third heaven, and saw things unutterable? how was it, that St. *John* had his revelations and visions of the heavenly world? and how was it, that St. *Stephen* saw Jesus standing ready to receive his departing spirit, if the dissolution of this body, is that which renders the mind unconscious? Nay, how is God, *not*  
the

*the God of the dead, but of the living*, if all the pious dead do not live to him? and how is Jesus Christ *Lord both of the dead and of the living*, if the dead do not feel the benefit of his Lordship? does he exercise it over unconscious beings!

The idea of an infinite number of *Adam's* descendants, being all blotted out of life, except the few transient inhabitants of this globe, is very shocking! much more pleasing is the supposition, that the same being, whose wisdom and power are never limited in their operations, does daily furnish the pious dead with bodies perfectly well adapted to a better state and world.—It surely is not reasonable to imagine, that christians can triumph over death and the grave, upon the scheme of the soul sleeper.—But, by the immediate bestowment of a resurrection body, the dominion of death is actually made void; and that same Word *in which was life, and the life was the light of men* from the beginning, remains to be so, as it tabernacles with the man Christ Jesus; it thus does constitute him, *the resurrection and the life*.

This, methinks, must be the true stating of the case; since *dying* to a good man, is no more

more than quitting his momentary mortal connexions. *Moreover*, the present bodily organization is very unsuitable to more sublime, spiritual and blissful scenes. *Meats are for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them.* The destruction cannot extend farther. But because the mind has attained to a genuine spirituality, it cannot be found naked or unprovided with a proper vehicle; it will have an house from heaven; and so it is that *mortality shall be swallowed up of life.*—Thus understood, *the life-giving WORD was ever and will ever be the light of men.* And this is the sense of *St. Paul*, when he represents the Gospel as a *new* creation, and the Mosaic ritual as old things that are passed away; yet he says, *all things are of God.* 2 Cor. v. 17, 18. “q. d. whatever concerns religion owes its birth and progress entirely to the supreme mind. He is the prime intelligent active cause, and the LIFE of the whole dispensation. For even under the Gospel dispensation, no other beings have any share, in the execution of the scheme, but as subordinate agents\*.”

\* Consult *Alexander's* paraphrase, p. 67. notes.

T H E E N D.







