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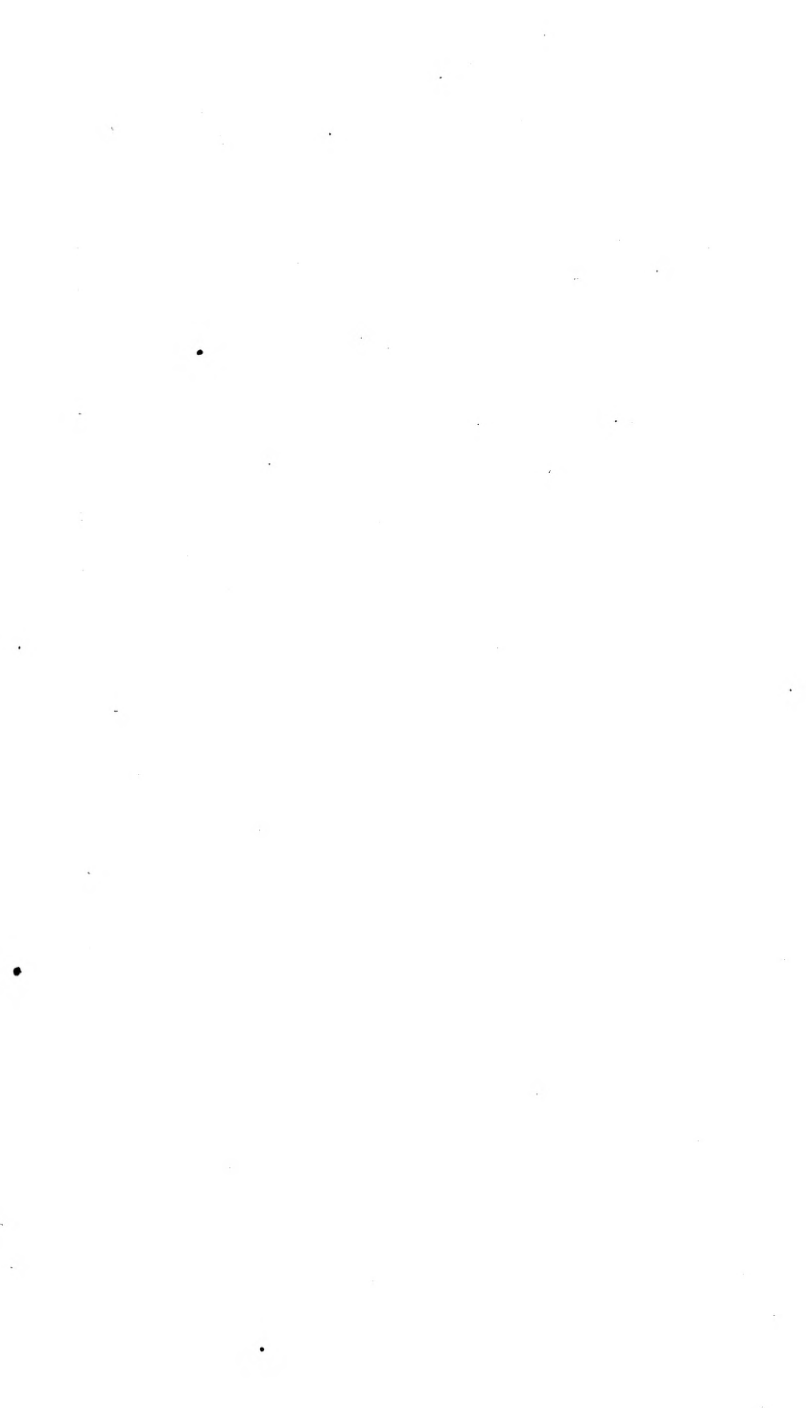
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M. DCC. XXIII.







A  
CONFERENCE  
WITH A  
THEIST.

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*Of the Authenticalness of the Scripture.*

CREDENTIUS.

PHILOLOGUS.



*D*hilologus having given *Credentius* a very handsome Entertainment: When Dinner was done, and those of the Family withdrawn, they were both again left alone; whereby they had a convenient Opportunity of prosecuting their former Dispute.

*Phil.* Well, says *Philologus*, I find; by your Thoughtfulness, that your Mind is upon our religious Debate still; and, I confess, it has been no unpleasing Satisfaction to me, to hear you say so much for your Religion as you do. Indeed the Types and Predictions of Christ have always, till now, lain very hard upon my Belief; and to be plain with you, I took them to be only the idle Fancies or Mistakes of Men, who did not understand the Places of Scripture from whence

they were cited ; but since you have shewn that this has all along been the national Way of Interpretation of these Places among the *Jews*, and that it is agreeable to the usual Method of Prophecy to begin with a secular Subject, and on a sudden, by the Effort of the Holy Spirit, to run off to a divine one, I confess I am not so peremptory in my Opinion as I was before.

I must needs own, upon more serious Thoughts, that there is nothing in the Lives of Christ and his Apostles, that deserves that Contempt and Ridicule, which some witty Men throw upon them ; and that the Rules which they lay down for Men to follow, would be much for the Good and Satisfaction of Mankind, if they were generally observed. But still I much doubt of the Authority of those Books, wherein these Things are related ; and whether some have not contrived these fine Schemes of Morality, with a divine Stamp upon them, to make them pass upon Men the better. For my Part, if I were sure these Books were of GOD Almighty's inditing, I should be very scrupulous how I offended against the least Point in them : But if they be only moral Rules, laid down by well-meaning Men under the Umbrage of divine Authority, then I think there is Scope for a prudent Latitude for me to pick and chuse amongst them as likes me best. But when you pretend to so much Certainty of the Scriptures being indited by GOD Almighty, you are not so much as sure by what human Hand they were first wrote. I will not stand to insist now upon some lesser Pieces of the New Testament ; but I see that even the Ground-Work of all your Religion, the Books of *Moses*, as they are called, cannot be said by whom they were wrote. Father *Simon*, an exact Inspector into these Matters, will have these, as other the most ancient Pieces of the Bible, to be written by some *Jewish* Scribes, who anciently wrote the Memoirs of that Nation ; and were made into one Piece, with Additions and Amendments by some more modern Compiler. And *Spinoza* suspects them to be forged totally in latter Times. But however, be the Matter as it will, *Moses* could never be the Author  
of

of them, unless he can be said to write after he was dead. Says the Writer of these Books, *Behold the Word which Moses spake before all the Congregation of Israel!* Which shews that Book to be written by one who lived after the Children of *Israel* had passed *Jordan*. *Moses* is spoken of as a Third Person, and that with a high Strain of Commendation, which no Body can be thought to speak of himself, *Numb. xii. 3.* *Moses was the meekest Man upon the Earth.* *There arose not a Prophet in Israel like unto Moses, Deut. xxxiv. 10.* The Writer of that Book remarks, *That the Canaanite was then in the Land, Gen. xii. 6.* Which Remark would be frivolous, unless it was written after the *Canaanite* was expelled, by the Prevalency of the *Israelites* Power. The Author of these Books gives several Names to Cities and Places, which were not known till after *Moses's* Time. As *Gen. xiv. 14.* that *Abraham pursued the Kings to Dan*; which Compellation was owing to the Tribe of that Name, and not given till Their Settlement in that Place, which was not till long after *Moses*. He speaks of *Hebron*, which was so called from the Son of *Caleb*. Nay, he speaks positively of Matters of Fact, which happened not till many Years after *Moses* was dead. As *Gen. xxxvi. 21.* *And these are the Kings which reigned in the Land of Edom, before there reigned any King over the Children of Israel:* Which plainly shews this Book to be written by one, who lived after the *Israelitish* Monarchy was begun. And *Deut. ii. 12.* it is related, *That the Sons of Esau dwelt in Seir, after they had driven out and destroyed the ancient Inhabitants called Horims, as the Children of Israel did unto the Land of their Possession.* So that the Writer of this must needs live after that Conquest, which *Moses* did not. And lastly, the Writer of the *Pentateuch*, *Deut. cap. ult.* gives an Account of *Moses's* Death and Burial, which does manifestly evince that it was not *Moses* himself. All which, and more, is clearly made out, beyond all Contradiction, by *Pererius* in his Book of the *Præ-Adamites*, by *Mr. Hobbs* in his *Leviathan*, and *Spinosa* in his *Traëctatus Theologo-Politicus*; and therefore you ought in Modesty to give up this Cause to us Unbelievers:

*Cred.* It would be very pleasant, indeed, if you could persuade us to this; but the Arguments of your Authors must be much stronger, before we can part with our Religion upon such easy Terms.

Moses allowed to be the Author of the Pentateuch by all Antiquity.

But I wonder, *Philologus*, that you should exclude a Person from being Author of a Work, which he has stood in Possession of for so many Ages; and that upon a few fond Criticisms, advanced at first, without any just Ground, by *Aben Ezra*, a Jew, and from him retailed by following Infidels and Opiniators. I profess, these Men are the boldest Criticks I ever met with; and by the same Rules, which they go by, they may dispute what Authors they please out of the World. But how came these Gentlemen, above all the rest of the World, for such a Number of Ages before them, to find out this Secret? All these Observations are obvious enough to any one, who reads *Moses's* Writings; and yet we find none of the Ancients thought they had sufficient Grounds to question their being written by *Moses* upon this Account. None of all these could be so stupid, as not to take Notice of the Account of *Moses's* Death at the End of *Deuteronomy*; and yet they were so wise, as not to make the Construction of it, which these bold Writers do. They knew very well, that such Criticisms were too shallow, to bear down the universal Consent of the *World* in this Matter. For I dare say, no Book was ever attributed to any one with more universal Consent, than this is to *Moses*. *Josephus*, *Justin Martyr*, *Eusebius*, and *St. Cyril*, quote many Heathen Writers that give a great Character of *Moses*, upon Account of his being the Author of these Books: As *Manetho*, *Philochorus* of *Athens*, *Eupolemus*, *Apollonius Molo*, *Castor*, and *Diodorus Siculus*. Nay, the Testimony of *Juvenal* is a sufficient Confutation of this Opinion.

*Tradidit arcano quodcumque volumine Moses.*

*Pliny* and *Tacitus* likewise allow *Moses* to be the Writer of those Laws, which go under his Name. *Numenius* the Philosopher, when he calls *Plato* *Atticising-Moses*, to be

be sure looked upon *Moses* as Writer of the *Pentateuch*: and so did *Longinus*, when he gave an Instance out of him for his sublime Way of Writing. But the Translation of the *Septuagint* is yet older than these Authorities, and there also is *Moses* deemed the Author of those Books.

Consider yet farther, That *Julian*, and *Porphiry*, and *Celsus*, had all the Malice both against *Moses*, as well as against the *Jewish* and *Christian* Religion, that could ever be harboured in human Minds; they endeavour upon all Occasions to expose his Laws, and his historical Relations; but they never had the Forehead to assert, that *Moses* was not the Author of them. They knew very well, that upon the same Grounds, by which they pretended to that, they must give up their *Homer* and *Herodotus*, *Virgil* and *Livy*, who have no other Claim to their Writings, but only universal Consent; and therefore they were so wise, as to leave these hardy Arguments, for the Infidels and Criticks of our Time.

Next let us consider Father *Simon's* Suppositions in this Matter; which, I confess, are as extravagant and ill-grounded, as any of those of the more openly incredulous use to be. He tells us, That the Books of the *Pentateuch*, as other Parts of the Old Testament, were written by the publick Scribes of the *Jews*, upon loose Leaves rolled up together round a Stick, and afterwards compiled into the Form of Books by *Esdra*s, or some other modern Writer. Which loose Leaves, he tells us, occasioned the Transpositions of Passages, and the Repetitions frequently to be met withal, in Scripture. Here is a very fine Hypothesis of the Father's advancing indeed! But as ill a Ground-work of the Authority of the Scriptures, as any Infidel could be supposed to have laid. This learned Man may probably have shewn his Wit in this curious Project; but, I dare say, he would have shewn his Religion more by keeping in the old Road. But to examine a little the Particulars of this strange Hypothesis. Here are several bold Suppositions, which the Father ought well to have proved, namely, That there were such inspired Scribes in all Ages, that they used to write their Books upon such

*Father Simon's Supposition examined.*

*loose Leaves*; and, That there was such a Compiler, who added these together, and put in and left out at his Discretion.

To begin with the first of these wild Supposes. How does he prove, that there were such inspired Scribes, in all Ages among the *Jews*, up to the *Mosaical Times*? Why, the Father says, *That in all well-regulated Kingdoms, and particularly in the Eastern Nations, they had always certain Persons, whose Province it was to see that the most considerable Occurrences of State should be preserved in Writing*; and therefore concludes there must be such among the *Jews*: *Hist. Crit. Lib. 1. cap. 2.* And he farther urges, *That there were such Scribes among the Ægyptians, and therefore Moses being bred up in the Learning of the Ægyptians, and being a perfect Lawgiver, he must be supposed likewise to ordain them among the Jews.* And are not these strong Reasons to build such an extravagant Opinion upon? But how does it follow, that because in all well-regulated Kingdoms there were such Scribes, therefore the *Jews* must have such? There are in all Governments a great many Things which would do well to be, which notwithstanding are not. It is a very odd Way of arguing, in this corrupt State of Nature, to say a Thing is so, because it ought. Is this a good Consequence, That no infidel or heterodoxical Book, which endeavours to undermine Religion, is read in *England* or *France*, because no such ought to be publickly read in a *Christian Commonwealth*? Can no *Religious* be an *Infidel*, because every one, who pretends to be a good *Catholick*, ought to be a good *Christian*? But grant that publick Scribes are and ought to be in every well-established *Commonwealth*; yet how does it follow from hence, that there were *inspired Scribes* among the *Jews*? There might be *Scribes* in *Ægypt* and *Persia*, and among the *Jews* too, whose Business it was to write *Annals*; but this is no Argument, that the ordinary Scribes among the *Jews* were inspired to write Canonical Scripture. But the *Scribes* were an Order of Men never heard of, in such early Times as those of *Moses*. Their Office began long after the Law was received and settled in the

No settled Scribes to write Scripture among the Jews.

*Jewish*

*Jewish* Nation; it being their Business to write Transcripts of it, and Glosses upon it, and to explain the hard Passages of it to the ordinary People.

2. But then again there is no Certainty that these Books were written originally on loose Leaves, and so carelessly huddled together, as this Critick imagines. That the ancient Way of Writing was upon Rolls, is plain enough; but that they were so loosely put together, there is no Proof of. But, methinks, Father *Simon* ought very well to have considered the most ancient Way of Writing, and to have been sure it did agree with his Hypothesis, before he had ventured to have broached such an unheard of and bold Opinion. Why might not we as well suppose, that the Leaves of these *Jewish* Books were tacked together, as well as those of the Books of other Nations? And if his Argument of Conveniency be any Proof of a Matter of Fact, it is very probable they were so. For what a troublesome Thing would it be to read a Book, the Leaves of which were so loosely rolled up? Nay, who would not think of the easy Invention of stitching the Leaves together, to avoid such Distraction? And this really was the Way of ordering the Volumes, or written Books among the Ancients. The Leaves of the *Papyrus*, or the Parchment, were tacked one to the other (like the Rolls in use amongst us) and so rolled round a Stick, till they arrived to a suitable Bigness; which Roll they called a *Volume*. *Tibullus*, *Ovid*, *Pliny*, *Martial*, and others, that speak any Thing of the Fashion of the ancient Books, describe them in the foregoing Manner, which is perfectly inconsistent with this Notion of Father *Simon*. If it be said, that this Fashion might obtain among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, because they made use of the *Papyrus* and *Parchment*; but it was otherways among the *Jews*, who, as the rest of the ancients People of the World, might write on *Palm* Leaves, as *Varro* and *Pliny* relate. To this, I say, that it is a Mistake in *Varro* to think, that the Use of Paper made of the *Egyptian Papyrus* was so modern in *Europe*, as he supposes; for he contends, that *Alexander* learned the Use of it first, in his Conquest of

*Jewish*  
*Scripture*  
*not wrote*  
*upon loose*  
*Leaves.*

## A CONFERENCE

the *Eastern Empire*, when he was building *Alexandria*. And this *Pliny* has sufficiently evinced \*. “ I find (says he) great Authorities against the Opinion of *Varro*, as to the Antiquity of Paper. *Cassius Hemina*, an antient Writer of Annals, in his Fourth Book relates, that *Cneius Terentius* the Scribe, as he was ploughing over again his Field, which was upon the Mount *Faniculus*, he found a Chest, in which *Numa* King of *Rome* had lain, and in the same Chest were his Books found; *P. Cornelius*, *F. Cethegus*, *M. Bebius*, *Q. F. Pamphilus* being Consuls, to whose Time from the Kingdom of *Numa* are reckoned *DXXXV*. Years, Which Books were written upon Paper; and which, yet, to the greater Wonder, had continued buried so many Years. Wherefore, in so remarkable a Matter, I will set down the very Words of *Hemina*. Some wondered how these Books could continue so long, and he gave the Reason thus: *There was a square Stone which lay about the middle of the Chest, bound all about with Wax-Candle, and upon this the Books were laid, which was thought the Cause why they did not rot. The Books were done over with Oil of Cedar, which was esteemed the Reason why the Worm was not in them.* In these Books were written some Precepts of the *Pythagorick* Philosophy; and were burnt by *Q. Petilius* the *Prætor*, because they were Books of Philosophy.” And there he likewise tells a Story of *Mutianus*, who was thrice Consul, and President of *Lycia* in *Pliny’s* Time, who averred he had then lately read a Letter of *Sarpedon* sent from the Siege of *Troy*, which was written upon Paper. And long before this, it is probable, that the Use of the *Papyrus*, and the Way of making up Books, as the *Greeks* and *Romans* did, might be in Use among the *Eastern Nations*, who were nigh to, or did converse with the *Egyptians*. And if the Books in the *Jewish* Nation were of the same Form with those of others, as it is probable in the latter Time of that Commonwealth they were, the Supposition of Father *Simon’s* loose Leaves is at an End.

\* *Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 13. cap. 13.*



It is plain, that some very like Form of making up Books was in Use in the *Davidical* Time, from an Expression in the 40th *Psalms*, which bears *David's* Name. *In the Volume of the Book it is written.* The Word is singular, *Bimgillath*, and denotes only one Roll, which would probably have been expressed plurally, if there had been so many loose Pieces as the Father pretends. And if any Argument may be drawn from the Usage of the *Jews* at this Time, and for many Ages backwards, they joyn the Sheets of Parchment, upon which their Law is written, together, and so roll them upon the Sticks. But as for Father *Simon's* Fashion, I defy him to produce any Age or Nation where it was in Use; unless it be in the Story of *Sybil*, and her Leaves, which is the exact Emblem of this Father's Notion. But as for the *Mosaical* Times, I question whether the Way of Writing upon Paper or Leaves either were in Use. It is most probable, that the Way of Writing, then most in Use, was engraving the Letters upon Wood, Stone, or Lead. The first Writing we have an Account of in Scripture is the Tables of the Law, which were of Stone, and probably they were adapted to the common Usage of that Time; for most of the *Aegyptian* Hieroglyphicks were upon Stone likewise. But there is a Passage in *Job*, which discovers the usual Way of Writing in that early Age. *Oh that my Words were written! Oh that they were printed in a Book! That they were graven with an Iron Pen and Lead, or in a Rock for ever.* The latter Verse seems only to be explanatory of the former; the former speaks of Writing in general, the latter of the particular Ways of Writing then in Use, *viz.* upon Lead or Stones. Now if this be true, as it is certainly very probable, that the Writing upon Tables was the usual Way of Writing in the *Mosaical* Times, then there is an End of the Story of the Memoirs, written upon loose Leaves by the Scribes of that Time, which came to be so confounded afterwards; and the Father must be content to look out for another Hypothesis. But it is not worth while to stand to confute this extravagant Whimsy, of the Confusion of the loose Leaves, which is ground-

ed upon no Authority, and is contrary to all good Sense. For if such a Confusion had happened, it would easily have been rectified by those who came afterwards to compile those Memoirs into an History. But after all, those Repetitions and Relations of Matters of Fact out of their exact Time, are better accounted for, by the Simplicity and unartificial Way of Writing in those early Ages, than by this strange Hypothesis. Let any one be judge, whether it be not easier to imagine, that *Moses* resumed the Relation of the Creation of Man in the latter End of the second Chapter of *Genesis*, than that the Leaves of a former loose Copy were so jumbled together, that all the Relation in the former Part of that Chapter happened to come between.

No Compilers to alter original Scripture.

3. But when did these bold Compilers live, that ventured upon Epitomising these ancient Memoirs, and leaving out and putting in according to their Discretion? This is as hard a Matter to make out, as the Business of the Rolls. There is a positive Command, in the Law, against any Attempt of this Nature. *You shall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it*, Deut. iv. 2. Nay, any Man that should have had the Boldness to have adventured upon this, would, without all Doubt, have incurred the capital Punishment inflicted upon false Prophets. But if *Ezra*, or *Nehemiah*, or any one else, had a Mind to alter the old original Law he had found in the *Jewish Archives*, how was it possible he could effect it? Do you think that the Law had continued so many Ages, and that there were no Transcripts of it? Or, if the People were ignorant what was written in the old Law, the Priests, whose Business it was to study it, could not be imposed upon after the same Manner. Nay, there is no Doubt to be made, but they would have improved all Opportunities, to have detected such a Crime in *Ezra*, or *Nehemiah*, as Father *Simon*, and the Infidels, are willing to suppose of them. We read, *Neb.* xiii. 35. how severely some of the Priests, for their Faults, were used upon this Reformation of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*; and therefore, to be sure, these angry Priests would

would never have spared them, if they had made any the smallest Alterations, in the Law of *Moses*. It is possible, that *Esdra*s might add a Word or two, by way of Explication or marginal Note to the Text, which may since have crept into the Copy; but that he should leave out, or transpose, or add any thing material, is as impossible, as for me to impose upon the Christian World a second Part of St. *Matthew*'s Gospel, or to stifle the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*.

*Phil.* " But if *Esdra*s could not so easily alter the old  
 " Law of *Moses*, as Father *Simon* pretends, he might make  
 " them a new one. It was an easy Matter to impose what  
 " Canon of Scripture he pleased then upon the poor igno-  
 " rant *Jews*, who were worn out by a long Captivity;  
 " who could not be supposed to know much of the An-  
 " tiquity of their Nation before, and to be sure much  
 " less of it afterwards. It was but for him, or some o-  
 " ther cunning Scribe, to write a Book under *Moses* or  
 " *Joshua*'s Name, and none of the *Jews* were such Cri-  
 " ticks to discover the Fraud. "

*Cred.* Let the *Jews* be as ignorant as you can suppose, it is a Thing impossible for any Person to put a Cheat of this Nature upon them.

1. For how can it be supposed, that a whole Nation should take up such a Number of troublesome Ceremonies, only upon a Scribe's pretending he found such old Injunctions written by an ancient Legislator of theirs, several Hundred Years before? Would not it be a wise Project for a Man to think to impose upon a whole Nation with this Pretence? What People would be so mad, to make their Children undergo such a painful Rite as *Circumcision*; to take upon them every Year the Trouble of eating the *Paschal Lamb* in one Place, though at ever so great Distance from it; to endure the Fatigue of so many Purifications for legal Uncleannesses; and what is more, to part with the tenth Part of their Incomes, to those who were to keep up these difficult Injunctions? Certainly, the most stupid Nation in the World would more narrowly examine into these Matters, than this comes

to ; and would never part so with their Liberty and Money too, upon the pretended Authority of some old Records, which an antiquarian Scribe had brought to Light.

2. But the Substance of the *Jewish* Law was so far from being invented about *Esdra's* Time, that it was woven into the Practice of the *Jews* in that Age, and for many Ages before. Their *Circumcision, Sabbaths, Feasts, Purifications, &c.* were in Use long before *Esdra* was ; and therefore you must allow them before *Esdra*, to have some written Laws, which obliged to these Ceremonies ; and why they should not be those, which go under *Moses's* Name, I think there is no Reason.

*Phil.* I am apt to think that *Esdra* did not forge the whole Body of the *Jewish* Worship, but that he found them in the Possession of some of their Feasts and Ceremonies ; and therefore he might write the *Pentateuch*, for a *Rationale* on those uncouth Customs. As if you or I should feign a History of the celebrated *St. George* of *England*, and give a fabulous Account of the Origin of *Hocktide*, or of eating Mince-Pies at *Christmas*.

*Cred.* But do you in good Earnest think, that the *Jews* had no more to say for their Religion before *Esdra's* Time, than the *English* have for such vulgar Customs ? Their Religion was so intermixed with their State, that it must be the Interest of their Government to keep the Accounts of both exact ; and therefore it is idle to suppose, that their Religion should have as uncertain an Original, as our ludicrous and vulgar Customs. Nay, it is plain, that the *Jews* read the History of the Law, long before *Esdra* was born. Many of the ancient *Psalms*, which were as old as *David's* Time, allude to several Particulars of the *Mosaical* Laws ; some are Hymns made purposely upon the Excellency of them ; and others, as the 78th and 126th, are but short Epitomes of the History of the *Pentateuch*. In the Books of *Solomon*, and all the Prophets, there are several Passages which do plainly demonstrate, that the *Pentateuch* was then extant when those Books were written, because they refer so often to the

Matter

Matter contained in them, and so constantly exhort to the Observation of the Laws there prescribed.

*Phil.* “ And perhaps *Esdra*s forged these Books too, when his Hand was in ; as he might do all the rest of the Canon of Scripture.

*Cred.* But there is all the Reason and moral Certainty in the World, against such a *Perhaps*. A Man must have a very good Will for Forgery indeed, to forge so many Volumes as these are. If *Esdra*s had had the Luck to come off successfully in counterfeiting the *Pentateuch*, methinks he might have congratulated his good Fortune, and sat down content with that ; but he was mad to put himself upon other Hazards, which could do him but little Service. For when he had made the People believe, that his contrived *Pentateuch* was *Moses*'s, why should he go to forge the *Psalms* and *Prophets*, which signified very little to the Cheat you suppose him to be carrying on ? Nay, how is it possible, that one Man should be able to counterfeit so many different Pieces ? What a tedious Toil would it be, to feign such a long Series of History ? What wonderful Care and Labour would it require, to make the Parts of it but tolerably to hang together, so as not to be discover'd even by a heedless Reader ? And the Labour will be greater yet, when we consider that all the other Books must be written too by the same Man. But the Difficulty will still increase, when we consider how many different Stiles this one Man must imitate ; the noble and sublime Way of Expression remarkable in *Job*, *Isaiah*, and several of the *Psalms* ; the Gravity and Majesty of *Moses*'s Writings, and the flowing Plainness of the other Historiographers ; the Mournfulness of *Jeremiah*, the Rusticity of *Amos*, the Density and Closeness of *Solomon*, and the enigmatical Visions of *Ezekiel* and *Daniel*. Certainly no Man ever had such a Task as this, which the Infidels put upon *Esdra*s. The same Man might as well be said to have written all the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets and Historians, as so many of the Canonical Books : For the Stile of those is not more different from each other, or the Composition more difficult.

And now, by your Leave, I will endeavour to encourage a little with your *Gigantick Arguments*, by which you Infidels are wont to defy the living God, and the revealed Books of his Servant *Moses*.

The first Argument is drawn from an Expression in the Preface of the Book of *Deuteronomy*, *The Words which Moses spake unto all Israel beyond Jordan in the Wilderness*; which discovers, as is pretended, that the Book was written by one who liv'd in the Land of *Canaan*, which is within *Jordan*. This is a Part of the *Mystery of the twelve*, as *Aben Ezra* calls it; by which piece of *Cant*, he means twelve Places of Scripture, which he, or some Infidels of his Time, had pick'd out, to make the World believe, that the inspired Books were not written by those whose Names they bear. But what if, after all, the Words are not to be translated *beyond Jordan*? And it is plain, our *English* Translation has render'd them *on this Side Jordan*. The Original is *Begneber Jardan*, which the *Lexicographers* say is, *on this Side*; and they give this Mark of Distinction, that when *Gneber* is joined with the Prefix *Mem*, it signifies *beyond*, but when joined with *Beth* (as in this Place) it signifies *on this Side*. In some Places it signifies *over against*, as *Exod.* xxv. 27. *Ezek.* i. 9. In other Places it signifies *on the Side of*, as *Exod.* xxviii. 26. *Isa.* vii. 10. *Fer.* xlvi. 28. And the *Septuagint*, though in most Places they translate *Begneber*, by *πέραν*, yet sometimes they render *Gneber*, *Side*; as *1 Kings* iv. 24. *He had Peace* (ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς μεσῶν) *on every Side*. But there is a Passage two Chapters after this, *Deut.* iii. 8. which it is impossible to make Sense of, after *Aben Ezra's* Translation of the Word: *We took at that Time out of the Hand of the two Kings of the Amorites, the Land which was on this Side Jordan*. For *Moses* to say, where he was, the Land *beyond Jordan*, he must mean the Land of *Canaan*, where the Kings of the *Amorites* had nothing to do, and where *Moses* never took any Thing. But after all, suppose, we should grant that *Begneber* signifies in this Place *beyond*, which we have proved it does not, yet this Supposition of these Infidels will not from hence follow. It would be no very great Impropriety

ety of Speaking, for *Moses* in his Circumstances, being on the *East-side* of *Jordan*, to call that *beyond Jordan*. The *Romans* call'd the *Gauls*, though they were in *Gallia* themselves, *Transalpini*, and the present *Italians*, when in *England*, would, without Solecism, call all on this Side the *Alps Tramontani*. If I, being in *Holland*, was to write our History of *England*, I should never stick to say, The King such a Time went *beyond Sea*, though I, when I wrote it, was on the other Side of the Sea myself. For the History being chiefly designed to be read in *England*, I would purposely adapt every Thing to the common Way of Speaking there. Now *Moses* being assured by God, of the Settlement of the *Israelites* in *Canaan*, which was within the River *Jordan*, and his Books being designed for standing Memoirs, to be read by that Nation after their Settlement; what Incongruity would it be for *Moses* to call that Place *beyond Jordan*, which the *Jews*, who were to read his History, would ever after their entring into *Canaan* call so? Certainly never any Author's Work was pretended to be criticis'd away after this simple Rate; and I durst undertake, if such Arguments were to be allowed, to dispute the Authority of an hundred Books in the World, which are nevertheless unquestionable.

As to the second Argument you urge, That *Moses* is in these Books spoken of as a third Person, and sometimes has Commendation given him; I do not conceive, that this does prove *Moses* not to be the Author of these Books. For there are several Histories in the World, the Authors of which are in no Wise questioned, that are written by Persons, who all along mention themselves in the third Person; which is the more proper Way, when the Matter is historical, and the Writer is principally concerned in it; for then a Man may speak more freely of his own Actions, and not seem to talk so much of himself, as he would do when he speaks directly in the first Person. And if this was any Argument against the Genuineness of the Books of *Moses*, we may as well question the Histories of *Cesar*, *Xenophon*, or *Josephus*. Nay, these very Authors, I have mentioned, speak altogether as much, or  
more

more, in their own Commendation, than *Moses* does. How often does *Xenophon*, in his History of the Expedition of *Cyrus*, relate his great Skill in managing the Army, his Fame and Interest among the Soldiery, his Contempt of Money, and the like? And how often does *Cæsar*, in his *Commentaries*, make Fetches to blazon his Fortitude and Clemency? *Josephus*, in his History of the *Jewish Wars*, declares of himself that he was *the wisest of all the Jews*; That he was *admired by the Roman Chiefs for his great Virtues*; That *Titus wondred at his Fortitude under Affliction*, &c. Which is as much as what *Moses* says of himself, That he *was the meekest Man upon the Earth*. But there is a great deal more to be said, for *Moses's* speaking thus of himself, than the Infidels are pleased to take Notice of. *Moses*, in this Chapter, was sufficiently provoked by the Accusation of his Brother and Sister, as if he valued himself too much upon the Frequency of his Revelations, especially when they thought this was over-balanced by the Blot he had contracted in marrying an *Ethiopian Woman*. *Hath the Lord*, say they, *spoken only by Moses, hath He not also spoken by us?* This was a very fit Time, upon this heinous Accusation, for *Moses* to remark to his Reader, that this Imputation was groundless; that he was so far from being proud, that, notwithstanding all these great Favours God had vouchsafed him, he was a very meek Man. *Now the Man Moses was very meek, above all the Men who were upon the Face of the Earth*. Even in this very Place, in which he is forced to vindicate his Integrity, by a Sort of *Elogium* of himself, you may observe it to be done with a decent Sort of a Modesty, in the Expression, *the Man Moses*. I am sure some others, who find fault with this Plainness, for all their affected Modesty, would have set out their Perfections with a greater Air of Ostentation, if they had half the Pretence to them which *Moses* had; only, perhaps, they would have taken Care to have disguised them with a little artificial Humility. Nay, to speak my Mind freely, this Passage is so far from being an Argument to me against the Genuineness of these Books, that it wonderfully convinces me of the Truth of



of them, by the plain natural Simplicity it carries with it. It would indeed have been somewhat suspicious, if it had been worded after the modern Way of Speech, so as if *Moses* should seem to be willing to force a Complement from his Reader, by mincing the Matter, and pretending that his Honour or Virtue were not so great as might seem to some, and that he might have given Occasion for some Men's Misunderstanding, or the like: But when plain Simplicity, he here records his Virtues, as he does in other Places his Failures; this is to me a demonstrative Note of unaffected Antiquity, and also affords a Cast of the real Goodness and Simplicity of that ancient Prophet.

Your next Argument is drawn from the Observation, which the Author of the *Pentateuch* makes, of the *Canaanite's being in the Land*. But why doth it necessarily from hence follow, That the Writer of this must needs live after the *Canaanite* was expelled by the *Israelite*? *Aben Ezra*, who first advanced this Notion, will not be positive, that this Consequence must be drawn from it. He says, *That it is probable the Meaning of the Words are, That the Canaanites took the Country from some former Possessors; but if this be not so, then there is a Mystery in the Matter, which he that understands, let him hold his Peace*. And it were to be wished, that *Spinoza* had been as modest as his Master. But if any one seriously considers the Circumstances of the History, from which these Words are taken, there is no Ground for that second irreligious Sense, which *Aben Ezra* silyly hints at. In that Chapter, where these Words are found, is related the Command *Abraham* had from God, to leave his own Country, for a Land which God should shew him; which Injunction *Abraham* readily obeyed, and went into the Land of *Canaan*. Now it is but reasonable, that the Relator of this Affair, should tell the Reader what People inhabited this new Country. This is expected from every Historian, who speaks of Places not generally known: As *Cesar* does, when he writes of his Expedition into *Gaul* or *Britain*. Now why might not *Moses* say, *The Canaanite was in that Land*, as well as *Cesar* say, *Such a Province was inhabited by the *Ædii**,

and another by the *Bellovaci*? Nay, there seems to be a farther Remark in this Passage, for the Satisfaction of the Reader, which is this. It is known, that about *Moses's* Time, and before, Nations frequently changed their Seats, going from one Country to another, and very few were of long standing in the Places where they lived: Therefore it was a material Remark of *Moses* to say, That the *Canaanite* was the Inhabitant of that Country, even in *Abraham's* Time. This, considering the State of those early Times, seems to be the plain Sense of the Words, and much more natural, than that which the Infidels would put upon them. For, supposing *Esdra's*, or some other late Writer, had written this Book, what a wise Piece of Work was it to inform the Reader, that the *Canaanites* formerly lived in the Land of the *Israelites*, which every Child of their Nation must be supposed to know? Neither *Esdra's*, nor any other Man of Sense, could have made such an idle Remark as this; to observe that the *Israelites* did not live in the Land of *Canaan*, before their Progenitor *Abraham* came into it.

As for your next Objection, That some Names are mentioned in this History which are of a more modern Imposition than *Moses's* Time: I answer, this may be fairly accounted for, by supposing that some ancient Transcriber changed the old and forgotten Names, for the new ones, which were better known; and it is possible this might be done, at the Review of the Scriptures in *Esdra's* Time. But as for the Instances you have mentioned, they, in all Probability, might be the ancient Names in *Moses's* Time. *Gen. xiv. 14.* *Abraham* is said to pursue his Enemies unto *Dan*; which might not be the Name of the City called from the Tribe, but some other Place. *St. Jerome*, and others write, That *Dan* is a River in *Palestine*, which joining with *Jor*, makes up the famous River *Jordan*: So that probably the *Dan* here mentioned, may be that Rivulet. And as for the Name *Hebron*, it is not said in *Joshua*, that the new Name *Hebron* was then given, but the Name of *Hebron* was before *Kirjah-arba*, which might be a considerable while before, for what any one can ascertain.

Neither is your Objection from *Deut. ii. 12.* so considerable, as your Authors would make it: Our Translation has it thus: *The Horims also dwelt in Seir before Time, but the Children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their Stead, as Israel did unto the Land of his Possession, &c.* 1. You may note, that these three whole Verses together, *viz. 10, 11, 12.* are all put in by Way of *Parentthesis*, and it is possible may be the Explanation of some later Writer than *Moses*. 2. However, it was not at all improper for *Moses* to say, That the *Israelites* had driven out their Enemies, and possessed their Place; for though in *Moses's* Time, this was not absolutely true of the *Canaanites*, yet this was true of *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*, and *Og* the King of *Baslan*; and the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad* had their Settlements in the conquered Countries in *Moses's* Time. Wherefore the *Arabick* Version is not, *As Israel did unto the Land of his Possession, &c.* but, *As Israel hath done in certain Possessions which God hath given him.*

And so as for your last Objection, concerning the Relation of the Death and Burial of *Moses*, at the End of *Deuteronomy*, we need not say with *Philo* and *Josephus*, that he wrote this Prophetically; it is sufficient to say, as the Generality of the *Jews* do, That it was added by *Josbua*, who continued the Series of his History; or by *Esdras* and the great Synagogue, upon the Review of the Canon of Scripture, after the Captivity.

*Phil.* All this is pretty plausible; but you cannot say so much, I believe, for the other reputed Authors of the Books of the *Old Testament* \*; for to begin with the Book of *Josbua*; that History could never be written by that Person. For it shews itself to be written by another Man; who speaks of *Josbua* as a distinct Person, and that sometimes with great Commendation, which he cannot be supposed to do, without great Indecency, himself; as *Josb. vi. 27.* *The Lord was with Joshua, and his Fame was noised throughout all the Country:* And *Chap. xi. 15.* *He left no-*

\* Tract. Theol. Pol. p. 159, &c.

thing undone of all the Lord commanded Moses. Besides, he quotes the Book of *Jasher*, or the *Just*, as an ancients Book than this of *Joshua*, and out of which this seems to be collected. Nay, the very Relation of his dying Speech and Burial, shews it could not be written by *Joshua*. But there are two Places which put it out of all Exception, that this Book was written some Ages after *Joshua's* Time, Chap. xvi. 10. It is said, *They drave not out the Canaanites, that dwelt in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwelt among the Ephraimites unto this Day.* And Chap. x. 14. *There was no Day like that before it, or after it, that the Lord hearkned unto the Voice of a Man.* Now no Writer can with any Propriety use these Expressions, but one who lived a considerable Time after these Things hapned. To say nothing of the Book of *Judges*, where the Kings of *Israel* are mentioned, *Judges* xvii. 6. xviii. 1. From a Passage, *1 Sam.* i. 1. it is evident, That the Books of *Samuel* were written in late Times, nay so long after *Samuel*, that his Times were counted by this Writer Ancient. *Before Time, in Israel, when a Man went to enquire of God, thus he spake; Come, and let us go to the Seer; for he that is now called a Prophet, was in foretime called a Seer\**. Nay, it is plain, that this Book is a Collection out of diverse older Writers, and those oddly huddled together; because there are two Accounts given of *David's* becoming known to *Saul*, one by quieting his evil Spirit, and the other by killing the *Philistine*, *Vid. Cha.* xvi. and xvii. The Books of the *Kings* and *Chronicles* were compiled in latter Times, out of other Memoirs, *1 Kings* xiv. 19, and 29. out of the Book of *Gad*, *1 Chron.* xxix. 29. and *Iddo*, *2 Chron.* ix. 29. and xii. 15. And as for *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, those Books could be wrote by neither of those Persons whose Names they bear, because *Neh.* xii. 9, 10 there is a Catalogue of the Priests down to *Jaddus*. who lived in the Time of *Alexander the Great*, and met him in his Expedition, *Job* is a Book wrote by no Body knows who; and it is uncertain, whether it be an History, or an Allegory: It seems to be a

\* *Id.* p. 172.

gentile Composition by the Affectation of the heathen Poetry, where there is a Council of the Gods called, and *Momus*, which is here called *Satan*, carps at the Divine Decrees. But however, it plainly appears to be the Work of a studious Man, at Ease in his Closet, and not of a sick Man languishing in Ashes. The *Psalms* are a late Composition, for many of them relate to the Captivity; and *Philo* writes, That the 84th *Psalms* was composed when *Jehoiakin* was detained in Prison at *Babylon*; and the 89th was wrote when he obtained his Liberty. The *Proverbs of Solomon*, perhaps, are not older; however, not more ancient than King *Josiah*, as appears from *Prov. xxv. 1. These are the Proverbs of Solomon, which the Men of Hezekiah, King of Judah, copied out.* And so for the Book of *Isaiah*, he is said, 2 *Chron. xxvi. 22.* to have wrote the Acts of *Uzziah*, but there is nothing of these in his Prophecy. The Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, in its historical Parts, is taken out of some older Chronological Book, without any Order of Time, the same History being rehearsed diverse Ways. For in *Chap. xxxvii.* the Cause of *Jeremiah's* Imprisonment is said to be the Suspicion of his flying to the *Chaldeans*; and in *Chap. xxviii.* his Prophecying against *Zedekiah*. After *Chap. xxi.* there are fifteen whole Chapters clapt in by Way of Parenthesis, which are Prophecies in *Jehoiakin's* Reign, the Predecessor of *Zedekiah*, and the Thread of the Story re-assum'd, *Chap. xxxviii.* which plainly evinces, this Book to be a Collection out of diverse Historians. To say nothing of the Falsity of his Prophecy, when he fore-tells, That *Zedekiah* should die in Peace, *Fer. xxxiv. 5.* when the poor King was taken Prisoner by the *Chaldeans*, and his Eyes put out by the unmerciful Conquerors, and died in that miserable Captivity. The Book of *Ezekiel* seems to be the Fragment of some greater Work, as appears from the very first Words of this Prophecy: *Now it came to pass in the thirtieth Year, in the fourth Month, in the fifth Day of the Month,* without naming the Year, or the King's Reign, as supposing those sufficiently known by what had gone before. Neither is it probable, that, what we have now, are the Set of Prophecies uttered by

*Hosea*, they being so very few ; whereas he is said to have prophesied fourscore and four Years. We have nothing of the Prophecies of *Jonah*, but that to the *Ninevites* ; whereas, 2 *Kings* xiv. 25. he is recorded to have prophesied to the *Jews*. The Book of *Daniel* seems to be composed long after the Return from *Babylon*, when the Sect of the *Pharisees* was up, because, in the last Chapter, the Resurrection of the Dead is so plainly described, which their Opposers, the *Sadducees*, did deny. In short, all the historical Books of Scripture \*, and many of the others, do plainly appear to be the Work of one Historian, who was carrying on the same Design : For he begins to give an Account of the first Origin of the *Hebrew Nation* ; how *Moses* gave them his Laws, how he made Predictions of the promised Land, of their choosing a King, and their Calamities when they neglected the Law ; which is shewn all along in the Series of the History, 'till it ends in the final Downfall of that State. But as for other Matters, which make nothing to the Confirmation of that Law, this Compiler passes them over in Silence, or refers his Reader to other Writers. And for all you have said to the contrary, I suspect *Esdra*s to be the Man. For *Neb.* viii. 9. it is said, *That he caused the Law of God to be read, and explained, and they gave the Sense, and they understood the Scripture.* Which was probably this new Gloss of *Esdra*s, which goes now under *Moses*'s Name, and was a Comment upon *Moses*'s old Laws. And when this was done, I presume he set himself to write a History of his Nation, from the first Creation of Mankind, to the Dissolution of the *Jewish* Common-wealth, giving different Names to the Books.

*Cred.* You have amassed here together, *Philologus*, a great many Sophisms of a very confident Writer, who shews, throughout his Atheistical Book, a great deal more Forehead than Argument, which is the general Character of most Men of that Strain. But to consider a little the Particulars of this furious Attack,

\* Tract. Theol. Pol. p. 162.

It is no Part of the Christian Religion to believe that *Joshua* wrote his Book; but because generally in the Jewish Church it has gone under his Name, there is no Reason to quit this Opinion, especially when there are no Arguments to the contrary, which are satisfactory. In the Time of the Writer of the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*, he seems to be reputed the Writer of this Book, by an Expression there, *Eccl. xlvi. 1. Jesus the Son of Naue was valiant in the Wars, and Successor of Moses in the Prophecies, i. e. in the Language of the Jews, the next Writer of inspired Scripture after Moses.* This Book is quoted by the Writer of the Book of *Kings*, *1 Kings xvi. 34. In his Days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: He laid the Foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the Gates thereof in his youngest Son Segub, according to the Word of the Lord, which he spake to Joshua the Son of Nun.* Which manifestly refers to the saying of *Joshua*, *Josh. vi. 26. Cursed be the Man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this City Jericho: He shall lay the Foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest Son he shall set up the Gates of it.* And the vigorous old Age of *Caleb*, mentioned *Josh. xiv. 10.* is alluded to by the Son of *Sirach*, *Eccl. xlvi. And the Lord gave Strength unto Caleb, which remained with him to his old Age.* Besides, there is a remarkable Note of the Antiquity of this Book, that it calls the Months by the Names of *First, Second, &c.* which the Books of *Esther, Haggai, Daniel, &c.* do not generally, but call the Months by the *Babylonish Names.*

As to your Argument, That he could not be the Author of it, because he is spoken of in the third Person, and that there are some Things said therein, which respect his Praise: this is no more (as I have said before) than what is usual in other Writers; and you may as well take away *Cesar's* or *Josephus's* Book from him upon this Account, as this from *Joshua*. And so for the Account which is given in this History, of his Death and Burial, it is probable that *Samuel*; or the next Successor to him in the Prophecies, supplied those Passages, before he began the History of the *Judges*.

It is true that *Joshua* quotes the Book of *Jasher*; but it does not appear, that this was an ancient History out of which this was compiled: It was probably, as *Grotius* conjectures, an *Ἐπιπικιον* or Song of Victory, upon the Conquests of the *Gibeonites*, and so written before *Joshua* composed his History.

Neither do the Expressions [*unto this Day*] and the like, prove this History to be written several Ages after the Transactions in *Joshua's* Time; for the passing over of several Years is sufficient; and *Joshua* writing his History in his old Age, he might speak of the Actions of his younger Time, as Things done a considerable Time ago.

Samuel  
Author of  
Judges, and  
the Begin-  
ning of Sa-  
muel.

Nor can I think, that the Books of *Judges* and *Samuel* are so modern as you would pretend. That the whole Books, which bear *Samuel's* Name, were written by *Samuel*, nobody will contend, though it is probable, that the former Part of the first Book was wrote by that Prophet, who likewise lays the fairest Claim to the Book of *Judges*, and to that of *Ruth*. That the Book of *Judges* is very ancient is manifest, because it is alluded to in a *Psalms* of *David*, which he made upon the removing the Ark. *When thou wentest forth before the People, when thou didst march through the Wilderness, the Earth shook, the Heavens also dropped at the Presence of God.* Which Words are an exact Imitation of *Judges* v. 4. *Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the Field of Edom, the Earth trembled, the Heavens dropped, the Clouds also dropped Water.* And immediately after the *Psalmist* says, *That the Mountain Sinai, was moved at the Presence of the God of Israel;* which Words are likewise copied from the Words which follow in that Chapter of *Judges*: *The Mountains melted from before the Lord, even that Sinai from before the Lord God of Israel.* And it is evident likewise, that this Book of *Judges* was written earlier than most other of the historical Books, because the History of it is referred to *2 Sam.* xi. 21. *Who smote Abimelech the Son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a Woman cast a Piece of a Millstone upon him from the Wall, that he died in Thebez?* Which History is recorded, *Judg.* ix. 53. Neither it is any Objection against the  
Book



Book of *Judges*, that the Kings of *Israel* are alluded to, by some Expressions, as, *In those Days there was no King in Israel*. For if this Book was written by *Samuel*, as is most probable, he might very properly make this Remark, as living some Time after the Monarchy was settled; or however, this might be only a Note of Explanation added by *Esdras*, upon the revising the sacred Books.

Nor do the Books of *Samuel* want their evident Marks of Antiquity: They are referred to, *Psal.* cxiii. 7. where a Passage of *Hannah's* Song is transcribed. *He raiseth up the Poor out of the Dust, and lifteth up the Needy out of the Dung-hill, that he may set him with Princes, even the Princes of his People*. Which Passage in *1 Sam.* ii. 8. is thus, *He raiseth the Poor out of the Dust, and lifteth up the Beggar from the Dung-hill, to set them among Princes, and to make them inherit the Throne of Glory*. The History of these Books likewise is referred to, *1 Kings* xx. 27. *So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being Priest unto the Lord, that he might fulfil the Word of the Lord, which he spake concerning the House of Eli in Shilo*. Vid. *1 Sam.* ii. 31, 35. As to the particular Authors of the greatest Part of these Books, it is not absolutely certain who they were; the Generality of the *Jews* do with Probability assert, That the first 24 Chapters were written by *Samuel* himself, and the rest by the Prophets *Nathan* and *Gad*. Nor is it any Objection against the Antiquity of these Books, that we find explained in them what the Word *Seer* signified in ancient Time, whereas this may be only one of *Esdras's* explanatory Notes, and coming in by Parenthesis, looks later than the Original Text. And as for the Objection which *Spinosa* so triumphs in, of the two different Relations how *David* became known to King *Saul*; I confess, I cannot see any Thing like what he pretends, *viz.* the jumbling together the diverse Relations of two Authors. In the sixteenth Chapter *David* is recommended to *Saul*, to play before him, which he did, and cured his Melancholy, for which he had a Kindness for *David*: And in the seventeenth Chapter he comes to him to profer his Service to fight *Goliath*. And it is not much, that *Saul* did not know *David* again;

*The other  
Parts by  
Nathan and  
Gad.*

for it was no great Wonder that a King, in the great Hurry of a Camp, did not exactly remember a young Musician he had formerly seen, and that too in the Depth of Melancholy, when hardly any Thing made Impression upon his Mind, but only his own black Thoughts. But the former Chapter says, *Saul* had made him his Armour-bearer; and that might be only some Office about the King's Person, like our Pages or Querries, of which there might be many in Number, and little Duty required, so that he might live at home in his Father's House still, and enjoy that Dignity. But after all, it is possible, that this Part of the Chapter may be related proleptically out of its Place, and this Time of *David's* being sent for to cure *Saul's* Melancholy, might be after his killing *Goliath*; it being usual for the *Hebrew Writers* to do so, they not tying themselves up to the Exactness of the *Greek* and *Roman* Histories. But however, it is plain, that these are not the Relations of two different Writers; for in the seventeenth Chapter, when *David* is described, he is said to be the Son of that *Ephrathite* by the demonstrative Pronoun *הוא*, to shew the same *Jesse* was meant, who was spoke of in the former Chapter.

*Kings and  
Chronicles  
a Compila-  
tion after  
the Capti-  
vity.*

But then, what Objection is it against the Truth of the Books of the *Kings* and *Chronicles*, that they were collected out of more ancient Memoirs? and suppose too, if you please, *Esdra*s to be the Collector. The Books at first were written by Men of a Prophetick Spirit, and they were not the less the Word of God, by being put into another Form, especially by one who was a Prophet himself, as *Esdra*s was. Nay, so very scrupulous seems this Compiler to be, that he takes the very Words of the ancient Prophets, out of whose Memoirs he composed these Books, as is evident from 2 *Chron.* v. 9. where the Introduction of the Ark into the Oracle is described, and it is said, *There it is unto this Day*. Now either the Books of the *Chronicles* were written before the Captivity, under the first Temple, when the Ark was there, or else *Esdra*s, the supposed Compiler, made Use of the very Words of the ancients Prophet, out of whom he transcribed this

Work

Work. Either of which Suppositions gives sufficient Authority to these Books; for if the Author lived before the Captivity, he was an Eye-witness of many of the Matters of Fact he relates; and if he lived after, we see he is so just to his Original Authors, as not to vary a Tittle from their Words. All that *Esdras*, or whoever else the Compiler was, added of his own, were some genealogical Observations at the Beginning of the *Chronicles*, and some other Passages of little Moment, which relate to the Times after the Captivity.

The Book of *Ezra*, all but the six first Chapters, was composed by him: For *Ezra* speaks expressly in his own Person, as *Chap. vii. ver. 27. Blessed be the Lord God of our Fathers, which has put such a Thing into the King's Heart, to beautify the House of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem, and hath extended his Mercy unto me, before the King and his Counsellors, and before all the King's mighty Princes: And I was strengthened as the Hand of the Lord my God was upon me, and I gather'd together out of Israel chief Men to go up with me.* And that we may be certain, from the Inscription of the Book, that *Ezra* wrote this, you may see that *Artaxerxes's* Decree, which he so magnifies God for, is directed to *Ezra*, where the Words [*Thou Ezra, &c.*] are used. Now why should any one, who speaks so expressly in his own Person, be denied the being Author of a Book, to whom by all Antiquity it has been attributed? Indeed, the first six Chapters seem to be written by another Person, who came over from *Babylon*, in the first Return, upon the Decree of *Cyrus*, which *Ezra* did not; for he came over with those *Jews* who returned upon *Artaxerxes's* Edict, and wrote the History of that, which he added to the six first Chapters of this Book, and gives the History of the first Return; so that both these added together, make the compleat History of the *Jewish* Restoration, the former Part of which *Ezra* saved himself the Trouble of writing anew, it being done ready to his Hand by some one else, and which he approved of.

Nehemiah  
Author of  
that Book.

That *Nehemiah* was the Author of the Book that goes under his Name, there is little Reason to doubt, since it carries his Name, and the *Jewish* Church has all along attributed it to him. The Son of *Sirach* mentions his building the Walls of *Jerusalem*, recited in that History. And among the Elect was *Nehemias*, whose Renown was great, who raised up for us the Walls that were fallen, and set up the Gates and the Bars, and raised up our Ruines again, Eccl. xlix. 13. And it is plain, that the Book of *Nehemiah* was not only received into the *Jewish* Canon, but went under *Nehemiah's* Name, when the Books of the *Macca-bees* were written, as is plain from 2 *Mac.* ii. 13. The same Things were also reported in the Writings and Commentaries of *Nehemias*, and how he, founding a Library, gathered together the Acts of the Kings and the Prophets, and of David, and the Epistles of the Kings concerning the holy Gifts. Nor is *Spinosa's* Argument any Ways considerable, whereby he would prove that *Nehemiah* could not write this, because *Jaddnah*, or *Jaddus's* Name is mentioned, who lived so long afterwards; for it is obvious to any one who looks upon that Passage, that it is in all Probability a Supplement added, after the first Writing of that Book, by some one who had a Mind to make the Genealogy of the Priests compleat to his Time; for if *Nehemiah* had been a counterfeit Piece, no Forger could be so silly, as to make *Nehemiah* speak of so many Generations of Priests after his Time.

*Job.*

The Author of the Book of *Job* is indeed uncertain; but being received into the *Jewish* Canon, must be supposed to be written by an inspired Writer. The Author of it, whosoever he be, is very ancient; and lived, as is most probable, before the Promulgation of the *Jewish* Law: for there are not any Traces to be found of the *Mosaical* Precepts in the whole Book; and we may find some Things contrary to them, as particularly *Job's* offering Sacrifice himself after the patriarchal Manner, which was allowed only to the Priests under the *Judaical* Law. Neither has the Conjecture of *Grotius* much Solidity, who would have it written by a *Jew*, upon

upon Account that the Place where *Job* lived is called the *East*, as the *Jews* used to call *Arabia*. For any other Person, who lived *Westward* in Situation, might call *Job's* Country the *East*; or the Inhabitants of that Place themselves might call it the *East*, in respect of the *Western* Division of *Asia*. It is not improbable, which some conjecture, that it was written by *Moses*, during his Abode in *Egypt*, or in his Flight into the Land of *Midian*, before he had promulged the *Judaical* Law: And his Design might be to hearten up the *Jews* under the Severities of the *Egyptian* Bondage, by shewing the gracious Designs of God's Providence, and that he oftentimes lays his sharpest Afflictions upon his best Servants. That the whole Story is an allegorical Fable, must in no Ways be allowed; for the Testimonies of *Ezekiel* and St. *James*, who mention *Job* as a real Person, prove the contrary of this Opinion: Nay, from hence it appears, that the Book of *Job* was generally read among the *Jews* in *Ezekiel's* Time, which was before the Composing of *Esdra's* Canon.

But as for *Spinosa's* Arguments, to prove this Book a gentile Composition, they are vain and frivolous, and wholly answerable to the paradoxical Humour of that Unbeliever. What a pretty Fancy it is to think, that the Author of *Job* imitated the poetical Fables of the Convention of the Gods, and the Story of *Momus*? But any Thing may be said to make the Scripture look ridiculous. Let us turn to the fourth Book of *Homer's* *Iliads*, and see how he describes the Congress of his heathen Deities.

Οἱ δὲ θεοὶ παρ' Ἰουλι καθήμενοι ἠροῶντο  
 χρυσέῳ ἐν δαπέδῳ, μετὰ δὲ σφισι πίννιαι Ἥβη  
 νέκταρ ἕωνιχόν, τῷ δ' χρυσοῖς δαπέδοι  
 Διὸς ἄλλης —————

The Gods were all set in Counsels round Jupiter, upon the golden Pavement, where Hebe filled them Nectar in golden Cups, in which they drank round to one another.

Now

Now a witty Atheist might make Sport enough with such a jolly Meeting of the Gods as this; and one would think that *Homer* had only a Mind to expose them by such an odd Description. But when the Author of the Book of *Job* says, *That there was a Day, when the Sons of God came to present themselves, before the Lord.* What is there in this, that is not agreeable to the Dignity and Majesty of the divine Nature? This Writer does not say these Angels are called to counsel, as *Homer's* Gods were, but to Duty and Service. And not only the *Jewish* Writers speak of Angels *standing before the Throne of God*, but the *Pagan* Theologers say the same in their Hymns, (*Vid. Orph. Hymn.*) and allow demi-urgic Powers, and other subordinate Dæmons, that are assistant to the supreme Deity. And so as for the Story of *Momus*, that ill-natured sour God, who would do no good himself, and was used to carp at whatever was done by any one else; his Story is so little famous even amongst the *Greek* and *Latin* Mythologers and Poets, that it is not supposable, that an *Eastern* Writer should take a Hint from so obscure, and so little known a Character as this. As for that little Witticism of your Author, *That the Stile of Job savours more of a Man at Ease in his Closet, than of an afflicted Man lying languishing in the Ashes*; I answer, That no Body supposes that these were the very Words which *Job* used in his Misery. We all own, that these Things are fitted out in a poetical Dress, and are not represented such as really they were; but in such artificial Characters, as it pleased the holy Spirit of God to recommend Patience under Afflictions to Mankind, and to vindicate the Justice of Providence in the Instances of afflicted Piety.

*The  
Psalms.*

The *Psalms* are no late Composition, but most of them were written before the Captivity. Indeed we ought not, as some do, to attribute them all to *David*, when their several Titles do allot them to other Authors, although a great Share of them are owing to that inspired Prince. It is certain, that in the ancientest Times, both after and before the Deluge, holy Men were wont to sing the Praises of God, for singular Mercies received, in Hymns; the

the Care of composing which, Persons of good Parts, and of a prophetick Spirit, were pleased to take upon themselves, as is plain in the Instances of *Moses* and *Miriam*, *Deborah*, *David*, *Solomon*, &c. These Hymns were wont, not only to be learned by pious People, as Helps to their Devotion, but were delivered to the *Levites*, to be laid up in the Archives of the Temple, as *Josephus* writes, *Ant. lib. 3. cap. 1.* and out of these the *Levites* made their Choice, to sing upon set Occasions in the Temple. Of these there were a vast Number gathered together, composed by the Prophets, of so many preceding Ages in the Temple of *Jerusalem*, before the Burning of it by the *Chaldeans*; for *Solomon* himself is recorded, to have composed above a thousand. Of these Hymns a great many were carried, by some devout Men, into the Captivity, and brought back again with them upon their Restoration; which, together with some others composed at *Babylon*, were, by *Esdra*s, and the great Synagogue, formed into this Book of *Psalms*, which we now have.

But though the whole Book of *Psalms*, in the Form they are now in, be not older than *Esdra*s, yet many of them were known by the ancient Prophets, who lived before. For a Part of the first *Psal*m is, in a Manner transcribed by *Jeremiah*, *Jer. xvii. 7.* *Blessed is the Man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose Hope the Lord is; for he shall be as a Tree planted by the Waters, and that spreadeth out her Roots by the River; and shall not see when Heat cometh, but her Leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the Year of Drought, neither shall cease from yielding Fruit.* The Words in the xcviith *Psal*m *His right Hand and holy Arm hath gotten him the Victory, and all the Ends of the Earth have seen the Salvation of our God,* are cited *Isa. lii. 10.* *The Lord hath made bare his holy Arm in the Eye of all the Nations, and all the Ends of the Earth shall see the Salvation of our God.* That of *Jeremiah*, *Lam. v. 19.* *Thou, Lord, remainest for ever, and thy Throne from Generation to Generation,* is taken out of *Psal*m *ci.* That of *Isaiah* *l. 9.* *They all shall wax old as a Garment,* is taken out of the

ci. *Pſalm* likewise. So that the *Pſalms* are so far from being modern Compositions, that they are some of the oldest, and most unquestionable Parts of Scripture.

Solomon  
Author of  
the Pro-  
verbs.

There is little Doubt to be made, but that the Main of the Book of *Proverbs* was written by King *Solomon*, whose Name it bears in the Title. The first twenty four Chapters seem to be the original Collection, made by *Solomon* himself, and were the Beginning of a greater Work, which was destroyed with the Temple at the Captivity. And the following Chapters are a Collection made by others, as appears by the Beginning of the twenty fifth Chapter. *The Proverbs of Solomon, which the Men of Hezekiah, King of Judah, copied out.* By the Men of *Hezekiah* are meant some Persons, which the King employed for this Purpose: They were probably *Eliakim*, the Son of *Hilkiah*, and *Shebnah* the Scribe, and *Joaſh*, the Son of *Aſaph* the Recorder, who were Secretaries to *Hezekiah*, and who might possibly likewise have the Assistance of the Prophet *Isaiah*. This Collection holds to the thirtieth Chapter, which has the Title of *Agur*, but who this *Agur* was is uncertain; he does not seem to be *Solomon*, from the mean Character he gives himself: *Surely I am more brutish than any Man, and have not the Understanding of a Man; I neither learned Wisdom, nor have the Knowledge of the Holy.* Prov. xxx. 2. Which is no Ways agreeable to the great Wisdom God gave *Solomon*, 1 Kings iv. 29. nor, indeed, to that Character which *Solomon*, in *Ecclesiastes*, gives of himself: *I have gotten more Wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem; yea, my Heart hath great Experience of Wisdom and Knowledge,* Eccl. i. 16. The last Chapter, which bears the Name of *Lemuel*, must likewise be written by King *Solomon*, who either was so called by his Mother, in his Childhood, *Lemuel*; or that Prince on purpose took this disguised Name. This Chapter seems to be made up of some wise Instructions, which his Mother *Bathsheba* had taught him, when he was a Child.

But, I confess, I do not understand *Spinosa's* Logick, when he argues, That the Collection of the *Proverbs* is



not older than *Jofiah's* Time; because the Men of *Hezekiah* collected some of them. Why, do not all the World know that *Jofiah* was the Great Grandson of *Hezekiah*, and flourished nigh an hundred Years after him? So that if all the Collection of the *Proverbs* were owing to the Men of *Hezekiah*, they were an hundred Years older than *Jofiah*.

Neither is there any material Argument against *Solomon's* being Author of the Book of *Ecclesiastes*. *Grotius*, indeed, would have it to be written by *Zerubbabel*, because of some *Syriack* and *Chaldee* Words which are found therein; but it is possible that these Words might have crept into the *Hebrew* Tongue, in *Solomon's* Time; or, at least, *Solomon*, by his Conversation with so many strange Women, might have learned them. But the great Character of Wisdom which this Author lays Claim to; his building Houses and planting Vineyards, his making Gardens and Fish-pools, his gathering so much Silver and Gold, which he speaks of, *Chap. i.* is the peculiar Character of *Solomon*, and which such a poor Prince, as *Zerubbabel*, could not pretend to. Neither is it any Objection against the Divinity of this Book, That there are some Expressions, that look like the Epicurean Notion of Providence; for the Author disputes the Arguments on both Sides academically, and determines at last on the true Side, as appears by the Close of the Book, *Let us hear the Conclusion of the whole Matter; Fear God, and keep his Commandments; for this is the whole Duty of Man. For God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

The Synagogue of the *Jews*, and the Church of Christ, *Canticles*, have all along attributed the *Canticles* to the same King *Solomon*, and the Title of this Song speaks the same. And though some Hereticks of old, and some Anabaptists of late, have looked upon it only as an ordinary Love-Song, yet the Pious in all Ages have esteemed it an allegorical Dialogue, between God and his Church.

There is no Reason but to think, that the Book of *Isaiab*, *Isaiab* was written by that Prophet; for the beginning of

the Book bears his Name. *The Prophecy of Ifaiah the Son of Amos, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerufalem, in the Days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah.* Nor can it with any Probability or Truth be faid, That the Prophecies were utter'd by *Ifaiah*, and the Book written by another Hand: For the Prophet is exprefly commanded by God, to write his Prophecy himfelf. *Go now, write it before them in a Table, note it in a Book, that it may be for Time to come, even for ever and ever.* Befides, *Ifaiah* oftentimes in this Prophecy, fpeaks in the firft Perfon, which a Compiler could not with Propriety do. *In the Year that Uzziah died, I faw alfo the Lord fitting upon a Throne, Ifa. vi. 1. Moreover the Lord faid unto me, Chap. viii. 1.* It is obfervable, that this Prophet was of royal Extraction; his Father was *Amos*, not one of the twelve Prophets, but the Brother of King *Azariah*, which noble Education gave his Stile a Turn, above the reft of the Prophets. He was fawn afunder by a wooden Saw, as the *Jews* relate, under the tyrannical Reign of King *Manaffes*, to which moft probably the Author of the *Hebrews* alludes, *Heb. xi. 37. They were fawn afunder.*

That this Prophecy is older than many other Parts of Scripture, is evident, becaufe almoft two Chapters of it, *viz. Chap. xxxvii. and xxxviii.* are well nigh, *verbatim*, tranfcribed in the fecond Book of the *Kings*, Chap. 19, &c. and fome Exprefions are imitated by *Jeremiah*. *Every Head fhall be bald, and every Beard, and upon all the Hands fhall be Cuttings, and upon the Loins Sackcloth. There fhall be Lamentation generally upon all the Houfe-tops of Moab, and in the Streets thereof, for I have broken Moab like a Veffel, wherein is no Pleafure, faith the Lord.* Which is an exact Imitation of *Ifa. xv. 2. Moab fhall howl over Nebo and Medeba; on all their Heads fhall be Baldnefs, and every Beard cut off. In their Streets they fhall gird themfelves with Sackcloth; on the Tops of their Houfes, and in their Houfes, and in their Streets, every one fhall howl, weeping abundantly.* And fo again, *Jer. l. 2. Bel is confounded, her Idols are broken in Pieces, her Images are broken in Pieces.* Which feems to be copied  
from

from *Isaiah* xlvi. 1. *Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth.* And these Words, *Isaiah* xxiv. 18. *He that fleeth from the Noise of the Fear, shall fall into the Pit, and he that cometh out of the Midst of the Pit, shall be taken in the Snare,* are found without any Variation, *Fer.* xlvi. 4. which is sufficient to shew, that in *Jeremy's* Time the Prophecy of *Isaiah* was extant.

But as for *Spinosa's* Objection, that it is suspicious that this is not *Isaiah's* Book, because here are none of the Acts of *Uzziah* in this Prophecy, whose Acts, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 22. he is said to have written; this Objection is sufficiently answered, by saying, *The Acts of Uzziah* were another Book of the Prophet's Writing, which by the Title seems to be a perfect historical Book of the Reign of that King, and to be nothing like this Book of Prophecies we are now upon.

That *Jeremiah* wrote his Prophecy himself, may be *Jeremiah's* known from the Inscription of his Book. *The Words of Jeremiah, the Son of Hilkiab, of the Priests which were in Anenoth, in the Land of Benjamin.* And afterwards, in several Places, he speaks in his own proper Person. *And the Word of the Lord came to me.* And afterwards; *And the Lord sent his Hand, and touched my Mouth.* And that he wrote his Prophecy himself, is plain from *Fer.* xxix. 1. *Now these are the Words of the Letter which Jeremiah the Prophet sent from Jerusalem, unto the Residue of the Elders which were carried away Captives.* And from Chap. xxx. 2. *Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write all the Words which I have spoken unto thee in a Book.* And again in Chap. li. ver. 60. *And Jeremiah wrote in a Book all the Evil which should come upon Babylon.* And moreover, he expressly tells who was his Amanuensis, who wrote the Words from his Mouth. *The Word which Jeremiah the Prophet spake unto Baruch, the Son of Neriah, when he had written these Words in a Book at the Mouth of Jeremiah,* *Fer.* xlv. 1. Certainly no Testimony can be more positive than this, That this Prophet wrote this Prophecy himself. The Prophecies indeed do lie somewhat obscure in the Book, but however they may be reduced

to these following Heads : The first contains the Prophecies to the Time of King *Jehoiakim*; the second under King *Jehoiakim*, full of new and grievous Comminations, after King *Jehoiakim* had ordered the first Book of Prophecies to be cut and burned : Then are subjoined those Prophecies which *Jeremiah* predicted after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, 'till the Time he and *Baruch* were carried into *Egypt*, which Prophecies do terminate at the last Clause in the list, Chapter ; Thus far the Words of *Jeremiah*. It is observable, That the Prophecies which were predicted in King *Jehoiakim*'s Reign, are placed last, after others, which in Order of Time should have come before, and those in the Reign of *Zedekiah* are inserted in the Midst of others. But, however, this might easily come to pass, by the Negligence of Transcribers, without any Derogation to the Authority of the Book, or being forced to own *Spinosa*'s Supposition, That this Book is only an Extract out of diverse others. For what though the Parts of this Book be some-what confused, how does that make it to be a Collection out of other Books ! Why may not the Parts of one Book be disorder'd, as well as Pieces out of diverse be confusedly put together ? But you say, there are Contradictions in it, and the Cause of *Jeremiah*'s Imprisonment related diverse Ways, which the same Author would not have done. The same Argument will hold likewise against a Compiler, who, to be sure, read what he transcribed, and therefore would never have set down two contradictory Stories in two Chapters, which follow one another. But after all, here is no Contradiction in this Matter ; and nothing but a blind or perverse Malice could make one. In the xxxviii Chapter it is recorded, That *Jeremiah* was taken up upon Suspicion of Flying to the *Chaldeans* as he was going into the Country, into the Land of *Benjamin*, and cast into the Prison of *Jonathan*, where because he continued prophecy'ing of the certain Destruction of *Jerusalem*, he is order'd to be thrown into the Dungeon of *Malchiah*. But this Critick is a little mistaken, when he makes the xxxviii Chapter to be a Continuation of the xxix. For in the first *Jeremy* speaks

to *Pashur* and *Zephaniah*; in the last to *Sephtiah*, *Gedaliah*, *Jucal* and *Pashur*. And so he is when he finds a Falſity in the Prediction of *Jeremy*, that *Zedekiah* ſhould die in Peace. All that *Jeremy* prophesied came exactly to paſs: *Thou ſhalt not*, ſays the Prophet, *escape out of his Hand, but ſhalt ſurely be taken*, &c. Yet bear the Word of the Lord, O *Zedekiah King of Judah*, thus ſaith the Lord of thee, *Thou ſhalt not die by the Sword, but thou ſhalt die in Peace*. Now to die in Peace here, is in Oppoſition to dying by the Sword, or dying a violent Death, which *Zedekiah* did not: For, I hope, that all blind Men do not die violent Deaths; and in this Senſe, *Zedekiah*, though he had loſt his Eyes, yet being ſuffer'd to die a natural Death, he might properly be ſaid to *die in Peace*.

That the Prophecy of *Ezekiel* was written by the Prophet of that Name, the *Jews* do univerſally agree; beſides, *Ezekiel*. his Name is prefix'd to the Book; and he ſpeaks always in the firſt Perſon, *The Lord ſaid unto me, Son of Man*, &c. He was the Son of *Buzi*, a Prieſt, of the Race of the High-Prieſts, and Cotemporary with *Jeremiah*; he was carried away into *Chaldea* with *Zedekiah*, and began to prophecy by the River *Chobar*, five Years after his Captivity, continues that Office twenty Years, and was afterwards killed by a Prince of the *Jewiſh Blood*, for his warning him againſt Idolatry, as they tell us. That *Ezekiel's* Prophecy is a Fragment of a greater Work, is but a Fancy of *Spinofa*; for the ſeemingly abrupt Beginning of his Book, does not prove any ſuch Thing: For tho' he begins, *Now it came to paſs, in the thirtieth Year, in the fourth Month, on the fifth Day of the Month*, without mentioning any King's Reign, yet this may be underſtood, as *R. Kimchi* interprets it, of the *Jubilee*; or, as *Jonathan* paraphraſes, ſince the Time when *Hilkiah* found the Law. But let this *Epocha* of Time be what it will, it was ſome very remarkable one, which the *Jews* at that Time reckoned from. It ſhould ſeem that the *Jews* being captivated, thought it either not fit, or ſafe, to reckon by the Reigns of their own Kings, and they were not yet enough reconciled to the Conquerors, to reckon by their

Reigns; and therefore they took some other Mark of Time to date their Computations by, which might be liable to less Exception.

Daniel.

That the ancient *Jews* looked upon *Daniel* as the Author of his Book, and to be an inspired Prophet, is evident from this Passage of *Josephus*. *Whatsoever Books Daniel left written by him, the same are read at this Day with us, and we do believe from them, that Daniel had a Communication with God.* And as for those Arguments which some modern *Jews* make use of, to prove he was not properly a Prophet, they are fond and silly; for let God communicate Himself to him how He will, yet still he is a Prophet, because he predicts future Things, and those in so plain and exprefs a Manner, as few of the other Prophets are herein comparable to him. And this *Josephus* was conscious of, and affirms the like: For he not only calls him *One of the greatest of the Prophets*, but prefers him before the rest. *For, says he, he does not only predict future Things, but limits the Time in which they are to happen. And when other Prophets predict evil Things, and for this Reason raised the Hatred of the common People against them, Daniel was the Fore-teller to them of good Things.* But *Spinosa* says, That this Book was written after the *Maccabees* Time, either to prove the Resurrection against the *Sadducees*, or else to shew how *Daniel's* Prophecies were fulfilled, to confirm the People in their Religion, and to teach them not to despair in Calamities. I answer, This is all confident Assertion, without any Ground of Truth, or Shadow of Proof; and I may as well say *Demosthenes's* Orations were written by *Julius Caesar*, and his Speeches against *Philip* were made to hearten up the *Casarians* against *Pompey's* Army.

Twelve  
Prophets.

I shall not have Time to run over the Characters and Authorities of the rest of the Prophets; it is enough to shew, that all these were very early received into the *Jewish* Canon of Scripture: And to do this, I need only appeal to a remarkable Passage in the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*; where, after Praises bestowed on *Ezekiel*, and other Prophets and Worthies of *Israel*, there are these Words: *And*  
of

of the twelve Prophets let the Memorial be blessed, let their Bones flourish again out of their Place; for they comforted Jacob, and delivered them by assured Hope, *Ecclus. iv. 10.* So that it is plain, in this Author's Time, the *Old Testament* was in the same Order it is now, and that all these twelve Prophets were received into the Canon. As for the particular Objection against *Hosea*, that you urge; as if his Book was not genuine, because it is not big enough to contain the Prophecies of so long a Life. To this we need but say, Why it is necessary that *Hosea* should write all his Prophecies? Or, why should all his Prophecies come to our Hands?

But your last Stroke which you make at the *Old Testament* is the fiercest of all, *viz.* "That all the historical Books of Scripture, and most of the others, seem to be written by the same Hand, and with the same Design, *viz.* To shew the Fate of the *Jewish Nation*, in keeping or obeying *Moses's* Laws, &c. never mentioning any Thing else." To which I return you this, I hope, satisfactory Answer.

1. All these Books do not seem to be written by one Hand; for the Style, Composition, particular Affections and Opinions, do seem as different, as those in any diverse Writers. Does not every Man find a plain Difference in his Palate, when he reads a Chapter of *Nehemiah*, from what he does, when he reads one in the *Pentateuch*, although it be in our *English* Translation? Do *Ezekiel*, or *Daniel*, read any Thing like the Books of *Kings*, or *Samuel*? If they had all been composed by one Hand, there would not have been any Thing, that looked like a Contrariety; for the same Author would have been so wary in his Expressions of the same Thing, as he would not have given the least Ground for such Cavils.

2. Neither is there any Reason, to think this one Hand to be *Esdra*. He is said indeed to *explain the Law*, and *give the Sense of the Scriptures*, *Neh. viii. 9.* But I think there is a great deal of Difference between expounding Scriptures, and making them. But if *Esdra*, or any other Hand had been to make this Law, or to write this History; there is no Reason to think they would write it,

as these were written. Had a cunning *Jewish* Priest been to make a new Law, for the People of the *Jews*, as I observed before; he would never have invented such a troublesome one as this, so various in its Particulars, so nice in its Observations, so severe in its Sanctions, almost in every Thing so very rigid, and so very difficult, that a Man could never reasonably expect, that a whole Nation should bow their Necks to such a Yoke. He would not have made the Office of the Priesthood such a burthensome Exercise; as to attend upon the daily Sacrifice, when a little monthly, or annual Service might have done as well. If he had invented all the History, he would have omitted the Faults, to be sure, of the great Men of the *Jewish* Nation; he would never have told, how basely the first Founders of the *Jewish* Tribes betray'd their Brethren; what perfidious Homicides two of them were, and another incestuous. In short, the whole Series of History would have been quite otherways contrived, if it had been only a *Jew's* Invention

3. But it is a very false Assertion to say, That nothing is mentioned in these Books, but what relates to one Design, namely, to shew the Fate of the *Jewish* Nation, upon their Obedience or Disobedience to *Moses's* Law. I grant, that this is a true Deduction from the *Jewish* History; but it is wonderfully unlikely, that all these Books were written purely for that End; for one might have made that Truth out, without an hundredth Part of the Trouble which these Books cost Writing. But how many Things in Scripture are recorded, which have no Relation to the *Jewish* Nation, and which make as much for the *Gentiles* as the *Jews*? What does it relate to the *Jews* more than the rest of the World, that the History of the Creation or Deluge should be given in Scripture? What does it signify to the *Jewish* Affairs, to have the Account recorded of the Leaders of the first Colonies after the Flood? What does it signify to the Affairs of that Nation, that the early Inventors of some useful Arts are related, who were not *Jews*, but lived long before the *Jewish* Nation had a Name, as *Jubal*, *Tubal Cain*, &c.



&c. Therefore I am amazed at *Spinoza's* confident Assertion, That nothing is mention'd in Scripture-History, but what relates to the *Jewish* Affairs. For the History of the first two thousand Years of the World, relates no more to the *Jews* than it does to the *English*. If a *Jew* had contrived it purely for the Sake of his own Nation, why did he not make the *Jewish* Religion two thousand Years older than the Scriptural-History does? It was altogether as easy to have made it as old as *Adam*, as well as to have settled its Beginning in *Abraham's* Time: He would in all Probability have made *Seth* the first circumcised, and all the ceremonial Law of the *Jews*, as old as the first Sacrifice. This any *Jew*, that was disposed to counterfeit, would have done; for it is unaccountable, why such a forging *Jew* should give the *Gentiles* Religion two thousand Years Antiquity beyond the *Jewish*; as it is plain the Writer of the *Mosaical* Books does. Therefore I say, it is a plain Proof, that these Histories were not written only to support the Religion of the *Jews*, and for the Honour of that Nation; but to relate plain Matter of Fact, and Truths useful to all Ages, without any such Regard. So much Trouble are we put to, seriously to set ourselves to answer all the silly Objections, and false Assertions of these Infidel Writers.

*Phil.* But pray, good Sir, upon Supposition that these Books are not Counterfeits, but written by those whose Names they bear, How do we know that they were inspired Books, and written by the supernatural Influence of God's Spirit? Some of these Men might be called Prophets, because in an illiterate Age they were able to write and read; as among some People, any one who is somewhat a better Proficient in Learning, than themselves, is reckoned a Conjuror. Now this might be all the ordinary People's Fancy and Opinion; but how do you prove, that these Books were indited by the Holy Ghost? Or, how are we sure, that the *Jews* did not take into their Canon, instead of inspired Authors, some ordinary secular Historians?

*Cred.* All who understand the Nature of the *Jewish* Common-wealth and Religion, know how impossible it

was for any one to arrive to the Character of a Prophet, without being really one. None could pretend to that Character without the Credentials of Miracles; and no one dared to do it, without sufficient Authority, by Reason of the severe Punishment, which was entailed upon false Prophets: So that the Power of Miracles was as much a Mark of a Prophet, in that Church, as Letters of Orders are Proof of any one's being of the Ministry in this. The Sermons, or Speeches of such prophetick Men, were always looked upon as the *Oracles of GOD*, and as dictated by the divine Spirit. You ludicrously buffoon the Matter, when you make as if their Learning gave them that great Character; for it was not their literate Education they were revered for, but their Revelation: For there were several Men of Letters among the *Jews*, as the *Scribes*, who yet never pretended to prophecy, tho' perhaps they might be more elegant Writers than the Prophets. It was very well known among the *Jews*, at the Time of Forming their Canon, what Books among them were written by inspired Men, and what by ordinary Authors; and there is no Doubt but that *Esdra*s himself, being a Prophet, was especially directed by the Holy Spirit of God, in the Choice of his Collection; though it were sufficient if he used only human Caution himself, with the Assistance of the Synagogue in which he presided, and which were convened for this very Purpose. For it is not to be supposed, but that those holy and learned Men, who lived so nigh to the Time of the Prophets, must needs know, what Authors were inspired, and what were not.

*Phil.* But still I have great Reason to doubt of the Authority of the Books of the *New Testament*: Indeed these Books bear specious Names, as being written by the Apostles of Jesus Christ; but it is very much to be questioned, whether they were written by those Authors. There have been formerly so many spurious Books, which have pretended to the like great Authority, that one may very well question whether these are not of the same Rank. What a World of Gospels were handed about in the primitive Church? Some were for the Gospel according to the

the *Egyptians*, others for that according to the *Hebrews*, and others for that according to the Twelve Apostles; some read a Gospel according to St. *Peter*, some according to St. *Paul*, and others according to St. *Matthias*, the Gospel of St. *Andrew*, St. *Bartholomew*, St. *Thomas*, St. *Philip*, of *Thaddeus*, *Barnabas* and *Nicodemus*, and the Travels of *Paul* and *Thecla*, besides other Books which pretended to a like Character; the Acts of *Andrew*, *Philip* and *Thomas*, with a Number more of the same Kind. Now how shall any one tell, among all these, that our four Evangelists are the true ones? Why may not these be spurious as well as the rest? And why may not the Epistles of St. *Paul*, and the other Apostles, be as well forged, as other Things in their Names formerly were?

*Cred.* The same Reasons that prove those other Gospels, and pretended Apostolical Writings, to be spurious, prove these to be genuine. For the Church of God in early Times having examined those, and finding them to be contrary to the received Faith, and not to have been delivered down by sufficient Authority, have thought fit to reject them; whilst they have all along embraced These with the greatest Veneration. Those Pieces have been received indeed by some particular Men and Sects of Christians, but never by the universal Church, whilst these have been looked upon, as canonical Scripture, by the Church in all Ages. Those were like some particular upstart Opinions, which have prevailed among some Men for a while; whilst these, like the common Dictates of Reason, have been entertained every where, and by All. So that we may, with as much Ground, question the universal Principles of Reason, for the Sake of a Number of paradoxical Opinions, as to doubt of the genuine Gospels, upon Account of those counterfeit ones.

The first of these is, the Gospel according to St. *Mat-* S. Matthew  
*thew*, which (according to the Testimony of the most ancient in the Christian Church, *viz.* *Papias*; *Irenaus*, &c.) that Apostle wrote in *Hebrew*. There are Authorities brought out of this Gospel by *Clemens Romanus*, by *Barnabas*, in his Epistle, by *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*, by *Ju-*  
*stin*

*Justin Martyr*, and *Irenaus*; nay, this Gospel was owned by the Heretick *Cerinthus*, who lived in the Apostolick Times, and who rejected all the rest, because they contradicted his Heresy. It was very early translated out of *Hebrew*, or *Syriack*, into *Greek*, in the Apostolick Times; and *St. Jerom* certifies, That in his Time he saw a *Hebrew Copy* of it in the Library of *Casarea*.

*St. Mark.* The Gospel according to *St. Mark*, was written by a Disciple of *St. Peter*, who was a different Person from that *Mark* mentioned in the Epistles of *St. Paul*. *Irenaus* says, He composed this Gospel out of the Sermons of *St. Peter*, and others, and that *St. Peter* approved it, wherefore some have called it the Gospel of *St. Peter*, as *Tertullian* writes. And *Justin Martyr* quoted several Passages out of this Gospel, as canonical Scripture.

*St. Luke.* The Gospel of *St. Luke* was written by a Disciple of *St. Paul*, of that Name, a Physician by Profession, of the City of *Antioch*, and one who was well versed in the *Greek* Tongue. He was no immediate Disciple of Christ, whatsoever some pretend, because he says, what he wrote he learn'd from others. It is plain from his Preface, That there were several other Gospels extant in his Time, and probably some of those spurious ones before mentioned; which made him, as *Eusebius* says, undertake the Evangelick History, to rescue it out of bad Hands, having been informed of the particular Circumstances of those Transactions by Eye-Witnesses, and particularly being aided by the Assistance of his Tutor *St. Paul*. Therefore it is supposed, that *St. Paul* means this History, when he says, *According to my Gospel*; and for this Reason he gives *St. Luke* this Elogium, *whose Praise is in the Gospel*. This Gospel is quoted by *Clemens Romanus*, and the Epistle of *Bar-nabas* has something out of it. *Irenaus* owns it, and so do the Hereticks *Cerdo* and *Marcion*, who admit of none else.

*Acts of the Apostles.* The same *St. Luke* wrote the Acts of the Apostles, as appears from his Preface to *Theophilus*; and the Antiquity of this Book is sufficiently proved, because it was rejected by the Heretick *Cerinthus*, who lived in the Apostles Time.

That St. *John's* Gospel was written by the Apostle of *Gospel of s. John.* that Name, is the joint Voice of Antiquity. It is quoted by *Justin Martyr*, who lived the next Age after St. *John*, as authentick Scripture; and Authorities out of the same are made Use of by *Irenæus*. And *Clemens* of *Alexandria* writes, That it was a Tradition he had received from his Predecessors, that St. *John*, last of all, wrote his Gospel. Nay, the Copies of that Gospel were so common, as to be viewed by the Heathen in that Age; for *Amelius* the *Platonick* Philosopher, cites the first Words of the Gospel of St. *John*, whom he calls, *That Barbarian*, and he lived not above threescore or fourscore Years after St. *John*. The first of the Epistles is unanimously, *Three Epistles and the Revelations.* by all Antiquity, allowed for canonical Scripture, and ascribed to St. *John* the Apostle; and the two last were never disputed, whether they were divine Writings or no; but whether they were written by St. *John* the Apostle. Whether the *Apocalypse* was written by this Apostle, or by another St. *John*, has been a Question among some; but the general Consent of Christians has carried it for the Apostle. *Vid. Just. Martyr Dial. cum Tryph. Tertul. adv. Marc. Lib. 3. Clem. Alex. apud Euseb. Lib. 3. Orig. in Mat.*

No Book was ever received with more general Consent by the Church than the Epistles of St. *Paul*; they were *Epistles of St. Paul.* read in the Churches very early in the Apostolick Times, as appears by that of St. *Peter*, in his second Epistle, where he mentions St. *Paul's* Epistles, and says, *In which are some Things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their Destruction.* *Clemens Romanus* takes many Expressions out of these; the Epistles to the *Galatians*, and *Philippians*, are quoted by *Polycarp*, the Scholar of St. *John*; and some Places out of those, and others, are cited by *Athenagoras*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Tertullian*. Only some have doubted whether or no St. *Paul* wrote the Epistle to the *Hebrews*; but the best Judges of Antiquity, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Eusebius* and *Jerom*, attribute it to St. *Paul*. However, this Epistle was taken so anciently for Scripture, that *Clement* of

of *Rome*, who was cotemporary with *St. Paul*, cites some Passages, *Verbatim*, out of it. And *St. Jerom* writes, That this Epistle was always attributed to *St. Paul*, in the *Eastern Church*, though it was for some Time excepted against in the *Latin*.

*Epistle of St. James.* The Epistle of *St. James* is quoted by as ancient Authors, as *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Cyprian*, and *Tertullian*; and though, as *Eusebius* relates, it was for some Time doubted by some, yet it is plain, that upon better weighing the Matter, at last all received it.

*Epistles of St. Peter.* The First of *St. Peter* was always universally received, as of undubitable Authority: The Second (as *Origen*, *Eusebius*, and *St. Jerom* write) was some Time doubted, *i. e.* whether it was *St. Peter's*; but the same Writers who relate this, themselves adjudge it to him, and it is mentioned in the Catalogues of canonical Books, *viz.* of *Clement of Alexandria*, of *St. Athanasius*, and *Nazianzen*.

*Epistle of St. Jude.* The Epistle of *St. Jude* is quoted, as canonical Scripture, by *Tertullian*, and *St. Cyprian*, and is in all the Catalogues of the sacred Books, from *Clemens Alexandrinus's* Time. Indeed it was some Time doubted, like the second of *St. Peter*, by some Churches, but upon mature Consideration, it was universally received. It seems to be written upon the same Occasion, as the second of *St. Peter*, *viz.* to warn the Faithful against the Pretences of the *Gnosticks*, or such other early Hereticks.

*Phil.* Indeed, I am sufficiently satisfied, that these Books were very anciently received in the Church, and that in the Times of these early Writers they were look'd upon as canonical Scripture, and as written by those whose Names they bear; but how can you prove to me, That the Trick was not plaid some Time before their Time, and that these present Gospels only had better Luck, to be more generally received than the spurious ones?

*Cred.* It is to me an undeniable Argument, that these Gospels are true and genuine, because the Ancients rejected the spurious ones. If they had used no Manner of Caution in receiving canonical Scripture, there might be  
some

some Question, whether these were so or no; but when they were so critical in their Examination, to distinguish the True from the False, to be sure they had as good Reasons to embrace the true ones, as to reject the false. For it is plain they would not be imposed upon by any sham Histories, since their Judgment and Diligence were so great, that they threw aside any Impostures as soon as they were offered. As to the exact particular Times, and other Circumstances, when and how these Writings came from the Apostolick Hands to the Church, the Want of particular History for those Times will not suffer us to know; but there did not want indubitable Authority for the following Ages to be ascertained, that they were written by those very Apostles to whom they were ascribed: Tho' the general Tradition only is a sufficient Argument to any reasonable Man, that they were so. For what Reason have I to question, whether such an Author wrote such a Book, which all the World, where his Book was read, said he did? Is it not a Madness for me, to deny that *Cesar* wrote the Book of Commentaries, or *Livy* that famous *Roman* History, because it is possible, some Body might forge it in their Names; or because I cannot bring any positive Proof, who first received the original Papers from their Hands? These Books have the same Proofs of their Genuineness, as all the other Books in the World have; that is, they have been universally owned to be written by those Apostles; and what can any one desire more? For your supposed Possibilities will lie against all the Books in the World besides. But yet farther, there is more to be said in Favour of these Books, than of any other. When the World received a Book from the Hands of *Cesar* or *Livy*, they contented themselves with the Transcripts of it; they did not make a Repository for the original Manuscript, for Posterity to satisfy themselves of its Authority, or to compare their Copies by. But this was the Case of most of the Apostolick Writings, as all Antiquity does justify. The Original Papers were recited in the Churches in *Tertullian's* Time, as appears by that remarkable Passage in his Book, *Of Pre-*  
*scriptions*

scriptions against the Hereticks. Age jam, &c. You that have a Mind to exercise your Curiosity, in the Matter of your Salvation, run through the Apostolick Churches, where the Sees of the Apostles do still remain, and there you shall find, that their very authentick Letters are recited. At Ephesus the Original Gospel of St. John, written by that Apostle's own Hand, remained even to the Time of the Emperor Honorius. Nay, so over-scrupulous were many Christians, even in Ignatius's Time, that they would hardly admit any Thing for Scripture, but what they had seen in these Archives, or Repositories; which Niceneſs that holy Martyr blames them for; Ἡκετα τινῶν λεγόντων ἐὰν ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαῖοις ἕωω, ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ πιστεύω, καὶ λέγοντός μου αὐτοῖς ὅτι γέγραπται, ἀπεκρίθησάν μοι ὅτι πέποιται, &c. I have heard some say, That I do not believe a Gospel, unless I find it in the Archives, and when I answer it is written, they say, it lies before them. But my Archives are Jesus Christ, (Ἰησοῦς Χριστός not Ἀδελφά ) those incorruptible Archives, his Cross and Resurrection, and Faith by Him, in which I would be justified in your Prayer. Now when such extraordinary Caution was used in receiving these Writings, and such wonderful Care taken in preserving the Originals, more than ever was known in other Books; it should seem, that the Providence of God did herein particularly concern itself; to give thereby the fullest Assurance to the Faith of Christians, and to silence the Cavils of Unbelievers.

*Phil.* But still there is some Ground for Doubts; for though many Christians received these Books, yet others rejected many of them; and this spoils your Argument of universal Reception.

*Cred.* They were universally received by the Catholick Church, and those who rejected them were only some Hereticks, who therefore disowned them, because they contradicted some mad Opinions of theirs. Hence St. Matthew was rejected by the Manichees, because he brought so many Passages of the Old Testament to prove Christ the Messiah, which did perfectly contradict their Heresy, they denying the God of the Jews to be the God of the Christians. The Alogi would not allow of St. John, who makes Christ  
the



the *Logos*; and for such Reasons *Cerintbus*, *Carpocrates*, and *Marcion*, excepted against St. *Luke's* Gospel; and others against St. *Paul's* Epistles. So that upon the whole; there is very little Weight to be laid upon the prejudiced Exceptions of these crazed Hereticks, in Opposition to the Testimonies of the whole Christian World, when no one would lay any Stresseven on their unbiaſſed Judgments in any Thing else.

*Phil.* Although we should grant, that these Books were written by the apostolick Authors they are ascribed to; yet still the most material Part of the Question lies behind, that is, Whether these Writings be inspired by God Almighty, or no? But it does not at all appear, that the Apostles wrote as inspired Prophets, but only as ordinary Doctors; and if so, then I see no Reason why St. *Paul's* Epistles should be more accounted to be inspired Scripture, than *Balzac's* Letters. And indeed, I am the more confirmed in this Thought, when I observe the Stile of the Apostles \* to be quite different from that of the Prophets; for they usher in their Discourses with a *Thus saith the Lord*; but these speak only according to their own human Opinion. Nay, St. *Paul* talks frequently as a Man wavering in Opinion, and perplexed in Doubt, and puts it to the Choice of his Reader, whether he should be assented to, or no, which is far from the Character of an infallible inspired Author †, *Therefore we conclude* (says he) *that a Man is justified by Faith*, &c. Rom. iii. 28. *For I reckon that the Sufferings*, &c. Rom. viii. 18. *I speak this by Permission, and not of Commandment*, 1 Cor. vii. 6. *I give my Judgment, as one that has obtained Mercy*, ver. ult. All which Expressions are nothing like the Speech of one, directed by the infallible Spirit of God. Neither would the Apostles have written so barbarous *Greek*, had they been inspired by God, it being unreasonable to ascribe all those Solecisms to the Holy Ghost. Besides, the Apostles use Arguments to persuade, like other ordinary Men, which is nothing like

\* Tract Theol. Pol. p. 198.

† Idem, p. 199.

the old Prophets, whose Province it was to foretell, and to command in God's Name, and not to dispute. Nay, they submit their Arguments \*, some Times, to the Reader's Judgment. *I speak as to wise Men, judge ye what I say*, 1 Cor. x. 15. Besides, St. Paul is so far from speaking after the peremptory Way of the Prophets, that, instead of commanding in God's Name, he is forced to use Intreaties: *For Love's Sake, I rather beseech thee*, Philem. 8. And there is yet a farther Proof, that the Apostles wrote and taught only as ordinary Doctors; because St. Paul is unwilling *to build upon another Man's Foundation*, Rom. xv. 20. From whence we plainly see †, that each Apostle had a distinct Method of teaching from the rest, like the Teachers of Tongues and mathematical Sciences, who had rather begin with their Scholars perfectly untaught, than to have them come to them, initiated in another Master's Method. Which different Method of the Apostles was the Occasion of several strange and contradictory Opinions, which vexed the Church, for many Years, after the apostolick Times \*\*. Neither would they have differed from one another, in the Points of *Justification*, and the Observation of *Jewish* Rites; if they had had the prophetick Spirit of God to have directed them. Or, if they had been infallibly inspired, they would have been more exact in their Numbers, and not have said about a certain Time, or about such a Number; which plainly shews that they could not exactly tell the Sum, which an inspired Man must needs have done. And, lastly, whereas St. Paul mentions the *Spirit of God being in him*, 1 Cor. vii. 40. he only means his own Mind, which was of an honest, sincere, or spiritual Intention; it being his Opinion, That a Widow should not marry a second Husband, declaring, *That she is happier if she abide after my Judgment; and I think also that I have the Spirit of God*. That is, I design to live a single Life, and my Reason, which God gave me, tells me, I am the happier for it, and my Resolution is

\* Tract. Theol. p. 196. p. 206.

† Id. p. 206, 207.

\*\* M. N. Sent. p. 256.

honest and religious; therefore it is my Judgment it will be happier for her too.

*Cred.* *Spinoza* has helped you here, *Philologus*, to a great deal of notable Prevarication, and has shewn the World that he has studied Scripture, purposely to pervert the Meaning of it. But to set you right in this Matter, I will run through the Particulars of this Objection, which it will be an easy Matter to refute.

I. And first you are mistaken in supposing that there is a material Difference between the Writings of the *Old Testament* and the *New*, as to Point of Inspiration, only because the Apostles do not begin with, *Thus saith the Lord*. For why should the Apostles be tied exactly, to this Phrase? Indeed this, and other Expressions like it, were Forms of Speech in Use among the Prophets, in ancient Times; but, there not having been any Prophets for several Ages, before the Coming of Christ, this Form of Expression was grown out of Date; and therefore the Apostles might very well be allowed, to usher in their new inspired Writings, with such other Sort of Forms, as to the Holy Ghost and them should seem most fit. There was no absolute Necessity that they should tell their Readers expressly, That what they said was the Word of God, when all that were acquainted with their Character, knew they were inspired Men; and when the constant Miracles they did, shewed they had the Assistance of the Holy Ghost, a thousand Times better than their saying so would. But though they do not begin with, *Thus saith the Lord*, or, *The Word of the Lord*; yet they say that which is tantamount to it. They begin with such an one, *An Apostle of Jesus Christ*, which carried with it all the Character of the greatest Prophet; as all, whom they wrote to, well understood. For an Apostle was one of those immediate Messengers of *Jesus Christ*, sent by him to preach the Gospel to the World, being endowed with the Power of Miracles, and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, who was to lead them into all Truth, and to inspire into their Minds, upon all Occasions, what was fitting for them to say, *Matt. x. 19*. Every Christian

*Old Testa-  
ment not  
more inspi-  
red than the  
New.*

of that Age knew, That the Words of an Apostle, when he taught Religion, were the Words of God, and that he spoke only as the Spirit gave him Utterance; and therefore for him to urge any Thing more to assert his Inspiration, was superfluous:

*Apostles not  
doubting  
in their  
Doctrines.*

2. Neither do the Apostles at any Time talk like doubting Men, fluctuating in their Opinion, as if they were not sure of what they said; and the Arguments which you have brought to prove the same, are very far from doing it. When St. Paul says, *That he reckons, that the Sufferings of this present Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us*; his saying *he reckons*, is no Mark of his Doubt there, but is only a *Meiosis*, or diminishing Form of Speech, which in Reality signifies as much as if he should say, He was sure of it. For what Man ever doubted, whether such immortal Joys, as the Christians expect in Heaven, will not over and above compensate for the slight temporary Afflictions of this World? Should the Apostle have made a Doubt of this, as *Spinoza* pretends; the whole Gospel, and all his preaching had been a Jest. But this is such an usual Way of speaking among all Writers, to use a low Expression, which means more than it generally signifies, especially when the Matter, as in this Place, is out of all Doubt; that, methinks, *Spinoza* should be ashamed to use such a silly Criticism, to support his Infidelity, And so when St. Paul says, he speaks *κατὰ ἐπιτρέψιν* by *Permission*, as we translate, (but rather as Dr. *Hammond* explains it) *according to Counsel*, it is no Argument of the Apostle's not being inspired. But supposing that by *Permission* he meant, that he spake this of his own Head; this does not prove that the other Parts of the *New Testament* are not inspired, because in this Case about Marriage, or abstaining from the conjugal Bed he did so. For this is a particular Case, in which the Apostle might very well interpose his own human Judgment, which to distinguish from the divine Direction, he tells the *Corinthians* it was his private Opinion. So that at the same Time, wherein he owns this Advice to be his private Sentiment, he does implicitly declare all the rest to be the Command of God.

But

But it is most probable that *συγγνώμην* does not here signify *Permission*, but *Counsel*, and is opposed to *Επιταγή*, *Command*; and is as much as if he should say, I do not preach this as a *Command* of God, which it is a Sin to neglect, but only as a *Counsel*, which it is better at this Exigence to comply with. And when the same Apostle says, *He gives his Judgment as one that has obtained Mercy*, he does not mean, that his was the private Judgment of an ordinary Person, as *Spinosa* pretends; but his Meaning is, That he gives his Judgment as an Apostle, which apostolick Ministry it was the great *Mercy* or *Favour* of God to bestow upon him.

3. But you have a notable Argument against the Inspiration of the *New Testament*, Because the *Greek*, forsooth, is not so exact as you would have it. But, I pray, Why must the Holy Ghost be obliged to make the Apostles speak *Greek*, just as they did at *Athens*? For perhaps in all *Greece*, the *Greek* Tongue was spoke exactly no where else. The Holy Spirit of God did not think fit to condescend to such a Nicety as this, to have Regard, in a divine Revelation, to the spruce Phrases of a few fine-spoken Citizens. It was the Design of the Holy Ghost to make them infallible Divines, and not *Grammarians* or *Rhetors*; and if so be their Doctrine was true, he could not think himself obliged to take Care of the Fineness of their *Greek*. But if the *Greek* of the *New Testament* had been as smooth and pure, as that of *Xenophon* or *Isocrates*, you Unbelievers would have cavill'd at it more for the Openness of its Stile, or its being too like human Eloquence, or some-what else; which would have been a more material Objection, than its not being written in exact *Greek*. Therefore the Wisdom of the Holy Ghost is eminently displayed, in making the Apostles speak such *Greek*, as their Countrymen spake all over *Asia* and *Greece*; which served the Purpose of preaching the Gospel better among them, and all other ordinary People, than if they had spoken with all the Refinedness of the Town of *Athens*. Nay, I should think, that, to all reasonable Men, it should seem much more proper, That the Apostles should rather

*Want of Exactness in the Greek, no Argument against the Apostles Inspiration.*

write, like *Hellenistical Jews*, than *Greeks* bred at the University of *Athens*.

Nor their  
reasoning.

4. O! But their Reasoning is a great Objection against their Inspiration. I find that the Holy Writings must be attack'd by you all Manner of Ways; sometimes you are displeas'd with them for positively commanding, and now for reasoning. How can God Almighty please Men of your Persuasion? But why may not inspired Men make Use of Reason and Arguments? Their Inspiration does not take away their rational Faculty; and, I hope, an Argument is never the worse for being inspired. Indeed, the Precepts of an inspired Teacher are to be obeyed, whether he gives a Reason for them or no; but when God is pleas'd likewise to inspire him with proper Arguments, to prove the Reasonableness of those Precepts, this is a double Obligation to comply with them, as being satisfi'd, that they ought not only in Duty, but in Reason to be obeyed. Nay, we ought to be so far from questioning the Truth of the divine Revelation for this, that we ought rather to admire the wonderful Goodness of the great Author of it; that he is pleas'd so far to condescend to our Capacities, as to make them Judges of the Fitness of his Injunctions. But you say, The inspired Prophets did not reason, and therefore, since the Apostles reason, it is to be presumed, that they do not speak by Inspiration as the former did. This indeed, is one of *Spinoza's* Assertions, than which, nothing can be more false or confident to assert. For in the very first Chapter of the first Book of Prophecies in the Bible, God by his Prophet *Isaiab*, tells the *Jews*, That he will condescend to reason with them; *Come, let us reason together, says the Lord, Isa. i. 18.* And, indeed, there is a Vein of reasoning conspicuous in God's Injunctions, or Declarations of his Will, throughout all the Books of the Bible. For even when he only proposes Rewards or Threats, this is in some Measure an Appeal to Reason; for no one can think it reasonable to incur a Punishment, when he might obtain a Reward. Does not God reason with *Cain*, when he asks him, *Why he was wroth, and his Countenance fallen?*

If

*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the Door, Gen. iv. 7.* Is not that Reasoning, when God says, *Abram's Name shall be called Abraham, for a Father of many Nations I have made thee?* Is it not a Reason which God gives in the second Commandment, why Men should not worship Images, *God is a jealous God?* Is it not a Reason why the seventh Day is to be kept holy, because, *In six Days the Lord created the Heaven and the Earth, &c.* Were not the *Israelites* to be kind to Strangers, for this Reason, *because they were Strangers in the Land of Egypt, Exo. xxii. 21.* And does not God give the Reason why his Favours were so remarkably shewn to the *Jews*, *Not because ye were more in Number than other People (for ye were the fewest of all People) but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the Oath which he had sworn unto your Fathers, &c. Deut. vii. 7.* And is not all that Reasoning in the first Chapter of *Isaiab.* *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, I have nourished and brought up Children, but they have rebelled against me. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib, but Israel doth not know, my People doth not consider, Isa. i. 2 and 3.* It were endless to give any more Instances, since every Page almost of the *Old Testament*, is full of them. And now, Would any one think, that ever such a Pretender to Thinking, as your Friend *Spinosa*, should be guilty of such a stupid Piece of Confidence, as this Assertion betrays?

5. But your Author is much concerned That *St. Paul*, Not that St. Paul uses Intreaties. if he was divinely inspired, should condescend to use Intreaties to *Philemon*. But why might not an inspired Apostle, or Prophet use Intreaties? *St. Paul's* Inspiration did not make him proud; and he was as willing to do all good Offices to the meanest Christian, notwithstanding the greatness of his Revelations and apostolical Mission, as if he had been but an ordinary Believer. This is no Argument at all against the Inspiration of this Apostle; but on the other Hand, it is a demonstrative Proof of the Divinity of that blessed Religion, which could inspire a Person of the apostolick Dignity with that Humility, as to write so pressing a Letter, as this, in behalf of a poor converted Slave. But you and your Author should have considered, before you made this an Objection against

the Apostles; whether none of the Prophets had used Intreaties. For as for this Intreaty of *St. Paul* to *Philemon*, it is only upon Account of a secular Matter, that he would be reconciled to his Servant *Onesimus*: But the Prophet *Jeremy* beseeches *Zedekiah* to comply with a divine Revelation: *Obey, I beseech thee, the Voice of the Lord*, Jer. xxxviii. 20.

Preaching  
of the Apo-  
stles not af-  
ter human  
art.

6. As for your Notion, that the Apostles preached the Gospel, after the Methods of human Art, because *St. Paul* says, he was unwilling to build upon anothers Foundation; that is only a sportive Conjecture of your Fancy without any Foundation of Reason for it. For the Apostle, in that Place, gives the Reason for his so doing, *viz.* That it would be more advantageous for the spreading of the Gospel, to preach it in Places that had not yet heard of it; as is plain by the very following Words, *As it is written, to whom he was not spoken of they shall see: And they that have not heard shall understand.* Rom. xv. 21.

Different  
Method of  
the Apo-  
stles, not  
the Cause  
of Heresies.

7. Neither was your supposed different Method of the Apostles teaching, the Cause of the Heresies of the first Ages. For the Apostles Glory in their preaching, of but *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*, Eph. iv. 5. and take it for a fundamental Maxim, that *Christ is not divided*, 1 Cor. i. 13. And they earnestly contended for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints, Jude 3. There was never any Scheme of Morality, and religious Worship so uniformly taught by so many Men, as the Gospel was; for the Doctrines of all the Christian Nations, throughout the whole World, never differed in any material Point for many Ages. As for the unorthodox Opinions of the Hereticks of those Times, they were owing to *Simon Magus*, and such like wicked Instruments, whom the Devil raised up to disturb the Progress of the Gospel. which he plainly foresaw was like to ruin his Kingdom. These mad Opinions of the *Eones* were never heard of in the Preaching of the Apostles; but look rather to be taken out of *Hesiod's Theogonia*, than out of the Apostles Sermons, or Writings. Compare but the plain and useful Doctrines, contained in the apostolick Epistles with that idle fanciful Stuff, which *Irenaeus*



in his first Book against the Hereticks has collected out of their Books; and you will never imagine, that those wild Opinions did proceed from such sober Men as these.

8. Neither is the seeming Contradiction between St. Paul and St. James, concerning Justification by Faith, an Argument, That the Apostles wrote only as private Doctors, and not as inspired Men. For this is only a verbal Contradiction, and the Meaning of those two Apostles is not different. For by *Works* St. Paul means one Thing, and St. James another. By *Works*, St. Paul means the Works of the ceremonial Law, and St. James means moral Actions.

*Seeming  
Contradictions, no  
objections  
against  
their Inspi-  
ration.*

The Case was this: St. Paul disputing against the *Jews*, proved that a Man could not be justified or saved by keeping the ceremonial Law, which, as it was impossible to be fully observed, so neither had it any Tendency to make a Man better, or to pardon his Sins: And therefore concludes, That Men could be saved or justified only by the Gospel, or by Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*. Hence some *Libertines* afterwards took Advantage from this Doctrine; That since Men were justified by Faith and not Works, therefore they concluded, it was no Matter to take Care about good Works; and if they had but Faith in Christ, they might be saved without them. This wicked Doctrine St. James undertakes to confute, and proves, That a *Man is justified by Works, and not by Faith only*, James ii. 24. He does not contradict St. Paul, nor say, that the ceremonial Law is requisite to Salvation, or that Men are not justified by Faith in Jesus Christ; but he contradicts that false Explication these *Libertines* had put upon his Words, and shews, That good Works, or moral Actions are requisite together with Faith, to justify every Man.

9. But you say, the Apostle's Writings cannot be inspired, because they do not exactly express the Time when such a Thing happened. But why should an inspired Author be obliged to relate all the little Punctilio's of an Action, more than an ordinary Historian? Does *Livy* or *Thucydides* use to say, such a Battle was fought just so many *Stadia* from such a Place, or began upon just such a Minute of the Day? Nay, would they not be looked upon as im-

*Not want  
of exactness  
in Time or  
Number.*

pertinent, if they had done so? Then why might not St Luke as well say, That *Jefus began to be about thirty Years old*; as to be obliged to say, how many Months and Days he was more? *Luke* iii. 23. Why might not the same Author say, the Number of the Believers *was about five thousand*, as properly as to tell the exact Number? To have been so precisely exact in every Relation, would have been unworthy of the Wisdom of the divine Spirit, and would have served to no other End, but to gratify Men's idle Curiosities. It is true, that the Holy Ghost, who dictated this, knew the exact Time and Number; but it is not necessary, that he should reveal all that he knew to the Apostles, especially the Knowledge of those Things, which did in no Manner tend to the Business, they were concerned in.

Nor St.  
Paul's think-  
ing, &c.

10. As to what you say in the last Place, concerning St. Paul's thinking he has the Spirit of God, viz. That this Spirit of God was only an honest Intention of living in Celibacy; I think this is a very mistaken Interpretation. I know *Grotius* interprets it much after this Rate, *Non intelligit Revelationem, sed sincerum affectum Deo & piis serviendi*. But to him I will oppose the Interpretation of one, whose Sect are not wont to be over-great Friends to Inspiration; 'tis of *Slichtingius* the Socinian. *Autoritatem Paulus hic Sententiae suae conciliat, sed eadem modestia, &c.* Paul here gives Authority to his Opinion, but with his wonted Modesty. He does not say absolutely he has the Spirit of God, but that he thinks he has; whilst he indubitably proves it, and shows that he does not arrogate only to himself the Spirit, but allows that others do likewise partake of it with him; and does as much as say, If others have the Spirit of God, why should not much more I, an Apostle of Christ, think I have it? And therefore my Opinion is not to be despised, or to be esteemed like that of any other ordinary Man, but as the Judgment of him who has the Spirit of God, by whom God inspires into Men Wisdom and right Senses of Things, neither is any other who has not the Spirit of God to be opposed to me. *Slichtingius* in 1 Cor. vii. v. ult. Nor is here any Ground to think, that St. Paul has Regard to his own Celibacy, for he gives only his Judgment, and speaks nothing of his Example; so that the Spirit of God here is

an inspiring Spirit, which influences his Judgment, and not an assisting Spirit which directs his Actions.

*Phil.* But, if it be so plain as you would have it, That these Books are inspired; why are not your Divines agreed about the Point? For some of them will have every Word and Syllable inspired in Scripture, and some will allow only the Sense to be inspired, and others neither Words nor Sense; but that the Holy Ghost left them to themselves to fall sometimes into little Mistakes, keeping only such a Vigilancy over them, as not to suffer them to mistake in material Points. Now till your spiritual Guides are agreed in this Matter, I must be of Opinion they are not inspired at all.

*Cred.* It is no Argument against the Truth of the Inspiration of the apostolick Writings, that some Divines differ about the Manner of it. For there are many natural Truths which all Men are agreed in the Reality of, and yet Philosophers differ extremely, in assigning the physical Causes of them. And there are several Matters of Fact, which are universally allow'd, as to the Substance of them; and yet there are some slight Disagreements, as to some particular Circumstances belonging to them. These Things are and will be, as long as the Infirmities of human Nature continue, which abounds with Passions and Prejudices, and Variety of Opinions, and oftentimes a Love of Novelty, and a Desire of saying something new upon common Subjects, though frequently with less Certainty than what is commonly asserted. But however, this does not destroy those general Truths in which they all agree, but rather is a greater Support of them; for as the Disagreement shews the Uncertainty of such Opinions, so the universal Consent shews, that the Substance of the Thing they differ about is true. Now unless you could shew, that Christians were at Difference, whether the Scriptures were at all inspired or no; it is no Argument against this Doctrine, That there are different Opinions about the Manner or Extent of it. Now to set you right, as far as I am able, in this Matter, I will shew you

*Different  
Explicati-  
ons no Ar-  
gument a-  
gainst In-  
spiration.*

1. That the Holy Scriptures are inspired by the Holy Ghost.

2. How

2. How far such Inspiration extends.

1. That the Holy Scriptures are inspired by the Holy Ghost.

Now the Method I shall make Use of, to shew that the Scriptures are inspired, shall be to prove it from the three general Heads, which Divines are wont to argue from, in Points of this Nature, *viz.* 1. From Reason. 2. From Scripture. And 3. Ancient Authority.

*Inspiration of Scripture proved from Reason.*

1. I look upon it as evident from Reason, that the Books of Holy Scripture, and particularly of the *New Testament* are inspired, for the sake of these Arguments which I take to be very conclusive.

*As much need of Inspiration in Writing as in Preaching.*

1. If the Preaching of the Apostles were inspired, as *Spinosa* himself grants (if any Thing can be argued from the Concessions of so loose a Writer) and no Christian ever denied; there is certainly the same or greater Reasons that their Writings are so too. For if the Holy Ghost inspired them to speak to a small Number of their Auditors in their Sermons, he cannot be supposed to be wanting to them in this Assistance, when they wrote their Books which were to be read by the whole World. For all the possible Reasons that can be assigned, why the Holy Ghost did inspire them in their Preaching, will hold as to their Writings. Was the Inspiration afforded them, to suggest to them new divine Truths and Doctrines? This was as requisite for the particular Churches, and for future Ages for the Use of whom these Books were written. Were they inspired in their Sermons, to keep them from Error? Then it was altogether as needful, that the same Direction should be afforded to their Writings, which might be as liable to Mistakes. Nay, Inspiration, to hinder their Mistakes in their Writings, was vastly more requisite, than to have it in their Preaching. If *St. Paul*, or *St. Peter*, had been guilty of erroneous Doctrine in the Preaching one of their Sermons, it might possibly have passed over unregarded; or the Error, though imbibed at first by those Auditors, might in Time have vanished when they were dead: But should they have been suffered, for want of Inspiration, to have written down Errors in their Books; they would then have

have traduced them to all Posterity, and put them out of a Possibility of being ever laid asleep.

*Vox audita perit Litera Scripta manet.*

2. Unless the Writings of the Apostles were inspired, The Apostolick Honour & Proof of their Inspiration. there is no Account to be given, why so great Deference and Authority has been given to them by Christians, of all Ages. For otherwise, Why should Christians always appeal to these as to Oracles, to decide all Manner of Differences in Religion? Why should they, in all Times, look upon every Sentence thereof to be a divine Axiom, beyond which there could be no Appeal, and no Dispute? The old Hereticks, that denied the most considerable Articles of the Christian Faith, yet never questioned the Divinity of Scripture, and though they denied the Authority of some Parts, yet they owned the Inspiration of the rest; they argue from Scripture just as the Orthodox do; and triumph over them, when they think they have it on their Side. Now, unless these Books were inspired, how is it possible that Men, of such different Interests, should have that Opinion of them, and that Veneration for them? You cannot say, that it is the Antiquity of these Writings which hath given them that Authority, because they had the same Deference paid them by those that lived in the same Age wherein they were written: For *Clement* and *Ignatius* confirm their Doctrines by the apostolick Writings, as well as modern Divines. If you say it is because they were the Apostles; I answer, that the greatest Share of that illustrious Character arose from their Inspiration, which all Christians did ever believe, to be not only in their Sermons but in their Books likewise.

3. But farther, since it has pleased God Almighty to reveal the Christian Religion to the World, it is but reasonable, that he should contrive the best Ways for preserving it incorrupt, and such as it came from his Hands. But unless the Scriptures be inspired, this Design is not answered: For if the Books of the *New Testament* were written only by fallible Men, who had not the Assistance of the Holy Ghost in their Writing, then they may possibly contain some Errors, which may corrupt the Faith, Because Inspiration the best Way to preserve Christianity. which

which is not consistent with that Care of the true Religion of the Gospel, which God in his own Nature is inclined, and in his holy Word has declared, to have. If the Scriptures are not inspired, How shall any Differences, which arise in the Church, be decided? Traditions are on both Sides perhaps pretended, and the Errors which continually creep into them, make them a very uncertain Guide; and the Infallibility of Popes and Councils, which may likewise be pretended, suppose still an inspired Scripture for them to interpret; so that if these Books be not inspired, there is no certain Way to decide any Difference in Christianity; and upon this Account, if once Controversies arise among Christians, they must necessarily wrangle them out unto the World's End, without any Possibility of Reconciliation. Which is a Thing, that to be sure the Wisdom, and Goodness, of God would, in some Measure, take Care to prevent. Nay, I appeal to you, *Philologues*, upon Supposition that you owned the Christian Religion to be a divine Institution, taught by God; whether you do not think, That God Almighty would take Care that these Writings, which he fore-knew all Posterity would appeal to as the Touch-stone of true Christianity, should not be liable to any Error; and that his holy Spirit would have assisted those Compositions with such an infallible Veracity, as to be of sufficient Authority to silence all Differences when they should arise: I say, you cannot but acknowledge, That, when God had founded such an Institution, he would have taken this Care to preserve it.

*Proof of Inspiration from Scripture.*

2. Nor are there wanting most evident Proofs from the Scripture itself, that those Books are divinely inspired. One might be assured of this, if one considered only those Promises, which our blessed Lord made to his Disciples. *And when they bring you unto the Synagogues, and unto Magistrates and Powers, take ye no Thought how or what Thing ye shall answer; for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same Hour what ye shall say,* Luke xii. 11. Now if the Holy Ghost took such Care, about what they spake in such publick Places, he would have as vigilant an Inspection

of

of what they wrote to all the World. Christ promises them *another Comforter, who is to abide with them for ever,* John iv. 16. And therefore that Comforter cannot be supposed to desert them, in such an important Concern, as writing the Books of the *New Testament.* But the *Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all Things, and bring all Things to your Remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you,* John xiv. 26. Now when could the Apostles have such Need of an infallible Teacher and Remembrancer, as when they were writing the Life and Doctrines of Jesus Christ, and giving Rules of Instruction for the Good of Christian Souls, to all succeeding Ages? So that, if God did not assist the Apostles in this Work, our Saviour did not make good his Promise; which no Christian must allow. But there are positive Texts of Scripture, which declare the Books of the *New Testament* to be inspired. St. Paul says expressly, *1 Cor. ii. 16. We have the Mind of Christ;* that is, he was inspired both in his writing and preaching. *The good Thing which was committed unto thee* (says St. Paul to Timothy) *by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.* From which it is plain, that he spake by the Assistance of the Holy Ghost, when he instructed Timothy, *1 Tim. i. 14. Ye seek a Proof of Christ speaking in me,* says the same Apostle to the *Corinthians, Chap. xiii. 3.* And he says, *those that despise the Apostles, despise not Man but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit,* *1 Thes. iv. 8.* Now there could be no Force in this Argument, if St. Paul did not think that this Advice, which he then gave to the *Thessalonians,* was dictated by the Spirit of God. So again, *1 Cor. xiv. 37. If any Man think himself to be a Prophet, or Spiritual, let him acknowledge that the Things which I write unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord:* That is, the Contents of that Epistle are as much inspired, by the Holy Spirit of God, as the Revelations of any spiritual Man whatsoever. St. Peter likewise allows St. Paul's Epistles, to be wrote by the *Wisdom given by God:* *In which,* says he, *are some Things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do*  
also

also the other Scriptures, 2 Pet. iii. 15. Where you may observe, that the Apostle, not only allows St. Paul to write by a Wisdom afforded by Inspiration, but equals his Writings with the other Scriptures, viz. Those of the Old Testament which the Jews did most undoubtedly own to be inspired. And so much for the Scripture-Proofs, which are sufficient to satisfy every Christian that these Books are divinely inspired; and to satisfy any other reasonable Man, that the Apostles at least pretended to such Inspiration.

From ancient Authority.

3. The next Thing I promised you, was to bring some ancient Authorities in Favour of the Inspiration of Scripture, in which I shall be very short. Clement of Rome, who lived in the Apostles Time, says, that St. Paul's Epistles were most certainly inspired; for speaking of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, he uses these Words ἐπ' ἀληθείας πνευματικῶς ἐπέσειλε, which he most assuredly sent by the Assistance of the Holy Ghost, Clem. Ep. Edit. Colom. p. 110. Theophilus Antiochenus, who was Bishop of Antioch, Ann. Chr. 170. calls the Evangelists πνευμαφόρους the Bearers of the Spirit, and says both the Prophets and the Apostles did ἐν τῷ πνεύματι λαλοῦντες, speak by the same Spirit. Theoph. ad Autol. Lib. 3. Irenæus says, Scriptura perfecta sunt verbo Dei & Spiritu ejus dicta. The Scriptures are perfect as being spoke by the Word and Spirit of God, Adv. Hæres. Lib. 2. Unus & idem Spiritus qui in Prophetis quidem præconavit, &c. ipse & in Apostolis annunciavit, Id. Lib. 3. The same Spirit which preached in the Prophets did evangelise in the Apostles. Justin Martyr says, That the Scriptures which the Christians build their Faith upon, are not idle Fables, but were μετὰ πνεύματι & θεῷ full of the Divine Spirit, Dial. cum Tryph. Ed. Par. 226. Clemens Alexandrinus calls St. Paul θεοσπίστη & πειροσθη. The divine Apostle, Strom. 1. He says, That the Christians, by reading the Scriptures, are θεοδιδασκταί that they have, ἱερά βιβλία, sacred Books, and that they are παρὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ θεοῦ πατρὸς θεοῦ instituted by the Son of God, Strom. 1. Edit. Com. p. 137. And Strom. V. p. 24. he asserts Προφήτας εἶναι τοὺς Ἀποστόλους, &c. That the Apostles were Prophets,



phets, one Holy Spirit working in them all. And he elsewhere calls them *μαθηταί τῆς πνεύματος*, Disciples of the Spirit, Strom. 1. Tertullian says, That it is the *Majestas Spiritus Sancti*, the Majesty of the Holy Ghost, which speaks in one of St. Paul's Epistles. *De Resur. Carn.* c. 24. And Origen says, that these holy Books are not the Commentaries of Men, but are written by the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Philoc. Cap. 1. To run down lower among Christian Writers, and to cite all their Authorities for the Inspiration of the apostolick Writings, would be infinite. But what has been brought hitherto has been sufficient to shew, That the first Christians, even in the earliest Time of the Gospel, did own, that the Books of the *New Testament* were divinely inspired. And when those Men, who lived in, or so very nigh, the Time of the Apostles, did universally acknowledge that these Books were inspired, We of this Age can have no Manner of Reason to doubt of it: If they that had the Opportunity of examining the Originals of these Books, and conversed with those that were acquainted with the Apostles and their Character, and must needs know whether the Apostles gave these out for inspired Books or no; if these early Christians owned them to be such: We, tho' we have not the Advantages of making the same Trials, have no Reason to deny, but that they had that Inspiration, which the Church has in all Ages attributed to them.

I must now discharge my last Part of my Promise and shew, what, in my Opinion; is the Extent of this divine Inspiration, and how far the Apostles were inspired by the Holy Ghost.

*How far the Scriptures were inspired.*

Now I do not think, that every particular Expression, Word, and Letter were dictated by the Holy Ghost; so that the Apostles were nothing but the bare Amanuenses to the Holy Ghost, and that they had no more Share in the Composition, than my Servant has, when I dictate a Letter for him to write. For this does not seem consistent with the Nature of the divine Operations, which do not usually put such a Force upon human Nature, they acting in such a Way, as is agreeable to their rational Fac-

*The Apostles generally made use of their own Words and Reason.*

culties. But if the Holy Ghost should have dictated to the Apostles after that Rate, they had been only pure Organs to the Holy Ghost, and perfect Machines for him to work upon, without any Manner of Exercise of their own Faculties. Therefore it is most probable, that God Almighty dealt with them, more like rational Creatures; which was by letting their Minds have some Share in this divine Work. It is more agreeable to Reason, to think, that he suggested those divine Thoughts first to their Minds, and ordinarily left them to weigh them in their Thoughts, as they did other Truths, and to put them into what Expressions their Fancies were naturally inclined to use; still presiding over them, and keeping them, from expressing any Thing contrary to the divine Mind, or to the Dignity of the sacred Subject. And it is farther evident, that the Apostles (as the Prophets heretofore) had some Share in the Expression at least; for otherwise there is no Account to be given of the different Styles of these Persons, which varied according to their Tempers and Education. For if the Holy Ghost had been the sole Author of every Expression; the Style of every Book in Scripture had been uniformly alike; or however there would not have been that Difference found, as now there is, and which may be ascribed to natural Causes. If the Holy Ghost had dictated every Word; why should *Isaiah*, who was bred in a Court, be more florid and magnificent than *Amos*, who had his Education among the Herd? Why should *St. Luke*, who had a polite Education, write his Books in better *Greek*, and more agreeable to the *Greek* and *Latin* Histories, than *St. John*? Why should *St. Paul*, who was brought up among the *Rabbins*, discover more of *Jewish* Learning and *Rabbinical* Reasoning, than the other Apostles? Why should *St. John*, above all the others, discover in his Writings so much Sweetness of Nature, and so much Love and Tenderness, if it was not in some Measure owing to his natural Temper? These are undeniable Arguments, that the Apostles had some Share in their Divine Compositions, and that they varied their Expressions, and in some Measure modelled

modelled their Thoughts, according to these Qualifications.

But then we must own, that the chiefest Part of the Sense was inspired by God. He suggested to their Mind those divine Truths, which they revealed to the World, either when they were writing, or if they had learned them before, by refreshing their Memories, and taking Care, that they added or omitted nothing that was material. It is an impossible, as well as a very needless Thing, for us to discover, how far the divine Spirit interested himself in inspiring the Apostles, and to tell exactly what in their Compositions was owing to Reason, and what to Inspiration. It is sufficient to say, that the Holy Ghost afforded all the Assistance, which was necessary to make theirs to be infallible Writings. Therefore we may be sure, that the Assistance was more or less, according as the Subject, which they wrote of, required. When they wrote historically of *Matters of Fact*, which they themselves had seen, or which had been reported to them by credible Witnessess, there was no Reason, that the Substance of this History should be revealed to them again; it was then sufficient only; to have their Memories refreshed, as our Saviour had promised them, and that the Holy Ghost should so far inspect them, as that they might not be guilty of any Error in the Relation. Where any *new Divine Truths* are delivered by them, which were not taught them by Christ when he was upon Earth; there it is necessary to assert, that the whole of those were immediately inspired into their Minds by the Holy Ghost; because such Truths could not be the Result of their human Understanding or Reasoning, nor yet the Treasure of their Memory; and therefore these could come into their Minds no other Way, but by Inspiration. And as for other Things which may be found in their Books, such as *Reasoning and Arguing* from revealed Truths, that which is most rational to think in this Point is this: That the Holy Ghost suffer'd them to make Use of their reasoning Faculties, as far as the Arguments were suitable and solid, at the same Time quickening their Invention, and

*Chief of  
the Sense  
inspired.*

clearing their Judgment, and hindering them from writing any thing, which might be illogical or impertinent.

*Sometimes  
the Words*

But then I farther add, that the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost sometimes proceeded so far, as to inspire the very Words and Ways of Expression. I observed to you before, that it was very probable that the Word *All* was inserted in the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, by the particular Direction of the Holy Ghost, in the Relation of the Institution of the Lord's-Supper, *Drink ye all of this*, Mat. xxvi. 27. And so *Mark* xiv. 23. *And they all drank of it*. Now it is not reasonable to think, that these two Evangelists inserted the Word *All* by Chance; for it is not a very usual Way of Speaking, and we see it is omitted in the Relation of the Delivery of the Bread; and therefore must be intended by the Holy Ghost for some farther End; which is, to shew that all the Communicants have a Right to the Cup, which he foresaw in future Ages would be by some sacrilegiously denied them. And so it is not to be doubted, but that the Holy Ghost did particularly direct them, in some seeming accidental Expressions, which he ordered them to use; That Christians might have thereby evident Proofs from God's Word, for several principal Articles of the Christian Faith; such as the Doctrines of the Divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit, of Justification and Satisfaction, &c. Many good Arguments for which are drawn from some particular Expressions in Scripture; which would have been wanting, for the Support of these Christian Truths, if the Holy Ghost had given the sacred Writers Leave, to have expressed those Passages otherways.

### *Of the Style of Scripture.*

*Ph.l.* WE have said enough upon the Authors, and of the Inspiration of these Books; and now, if you please, we will discourse a little about the Style of them. If the Composing of them was any Ways owing to the Holy Ghost, methinks they should have been written in a much finer Language than we find they

they are. The common Reason of Mankind expects, that a divine Composition should have in it the Height of Eloquence; and therefore, the very *Heathens* used to say, that the most admired Pieces of Eloquence, whether in Verse or Prose, were *divinely written*, and the Authors of them *inspired*; which Expressions, though they are metaphorically to be understood, yet they shew the Sense of Mankind, what Eloquence is reasonably to be expected in Books, which should be divinely inspired. But alas! how mean are the Scriptural Compositions to those of the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*, and other truly elegant Writers. Here is nothing to be found of that charming Numerousness of Words, that Propriety and Copiousness of Expression, that Nobleness of Thought and Argument, and that Exactness of Method which render those ancient Pieces so truly admirable, and much more deserving the Name of *Divine* than those you afford it to. In a Word, that contemptible Meanness of the Scripture Style, has been always to me a great Argument against its Divinity; for if so many admirable Beauties are to be discovered in the Style of *Cicero*, which were all owing to Art and Nature, one might reasonably expect to find the same in a Composition of the Holy Ghost, who to be sure understood the Art of Eloquence altogether as well. Nay, one finds in these Books so many uncouth and odd Expressions, as is enough to turn the Stomach of us nice People, who are used to Style and Elegance.

*Cred.* And now, for once, should we grant all your Supposition true, namely, That the Scripture Style was as contemptible and void of all Eloquence as some would make it; what would this argue against the Authority, or the Usefulness of these Books? What though the Arguments be not dressed up so neatly, as in your prophane Authors, they may be altogether as strong and conclusive; and, if the Logick be but good, what Matter for the Rhetorick? As for fine Words, they prove nothing at all; they only flath a false Fire in the Fancy, and raise a Jingle in the Ears, but they make no Body either wiser or better.

*Eloquence  
in Scripture  
needless.*

Nay, in such grave and momentous Matters, as are generally the Subject of the Holy Scriptures, it would be highly improper to make use of fine Rhetorical Flourishes. It would be a Jest for a Physitian, to Write a Recipe for a Sick Man, in a just *Ciceronian* Style; and to throw all the Names of his Drugs and their Quantities, into Artificial Periods. And who would be so simple, as to expect a Conveyance of an Estate to begin with one of *Tully's* Exordiums? Now if we do not expect Eloquence in these common Concerns of Life, what more Reason have we to expect it in Matters relating to our Salvation?

When we are ready to excuse the Physician and the Lawyer, if they do but their Work substantially; why should we expect that God Almighty, in saving our Souls, should likewise tickle our Ears? What a strange Levity is there in this Expectation? This does plainly shew, that some Men are more concerned for their Bodies and Estates, than they are for their immortal Souls; when they are so capricious and humorsome, in one more than in the other.

Nay, this fine Eloquence, which you so much admire, is generally made use of, when Men design to dazzle People's Minds which they cannot convince; being otherways content with an easy and plain Argumentation.

*Fur es ait Pedio. Pedius quid? Crimina raris  
Librat in Antihetis ———*

*Pedius is Taxed with Theft, but when Pedius can't deny it what does he say? Why he puzzles the Matter with Rhetorick.* But God Almighty, in Inditing the Scriptures, had no Design to put Fallacies upon Men's Reasonings, and to gain over their Affections by Arts, which would not directly persuade their Understandings. He was to deliver the Terms of Mens Salvation, and the Rules of their Duty; which required no Rhetorick to express, and the more plainly and familiarly they were delivered, it was to the better Purpose. These Holy Writings were designed for the Benefit and Use of all Mankind, the greatest Part of which are illiterate and perfectly ignorant of the Beauties of Rhetorick; so

so that, if these Books had had the greatest Perfection of that Art bestowed upon them, it had been perfectly lost to above three Quarters of Mankind, who would have been apt to have despised them for those Sublimes of Expression, which some few oratorical Ears only might have admired them for.

Nay farther those Elegancies, which you would have the Scriptures to have abounded with, would but have puzzled common People's Understandings, and served them only to gape at, instead of being instructed by them. Suppose that the Scriptures had been written after the Plan of *Plato's* Dialogues, and in every Page had been pregnant with his towering Thoughts and rapturous Expressions; had they talked of *Monads* and *Diads*, of the Flights, Descents, and Moultings of the Soul, of the concentrical Union with the Deity, and the like; what a World of Edification common People would have gotten by this? Nay what impartial Man will not allow, that those Thoughts of *Plato*, if they have any Meaning in them, are not better expressed in Scripture, in the History of the Creation and of the Fall of *Adam*, and the Reparation thereof made by our Saviour in the Gospel? These are plain sensible Truths to be understood by every one, whilst the other are dressed up in such philosophical Cant, that the most laborious Students, in that Sort of Philosophy, can hardly tell what to make of it.

And the Case would be much the same, if the Scriptures were written according to the ordinary Rules of prophane Oratory; for the common People would have been very little affected with such Rhetorical Figures; and those plain Relations and familiar Instances, so frequent in the Bible, are a thousand Times better fitted for their Capacities.

To what has been said upon this Head, there are two Things more, which render the Art of Eloquence perfectly useless in Scripture, and those are these.

*First*, The Authority of God Almighty, by the Direction of whose Holy Spirit these Writings were indited. For what needs there any Art of Persuasion, when he who is infallible Truth does dictate to us? When we are persuaded, that it is God who speaks to us, all the Oratory

and Logick in the World cannot make us more certain of the Things, nor more firmly to assent to them, than his bare Assertion. Nay, if he should give no Reason for it, his bare saying so, who cannot deceive us, is of more Weight than a thousand Arguments.

And *Secondly*, the Motives which God has propounded in Scripture, for the obeying his Commands, are much more effectual to persuade Men than the exactest Eloquence; and those are future Rewards and Punishments. *Knowing therefore the Terror of the Lord we persuade Men*, says the Apostle. For certainly the Flames of Hell are more apt to deter Men from a sinful Course than the most moving Oration: And the Joys of Heaven will sooner incline a Man to Goodness, than the finest Charms of Rhetorick. If Men's Affections are not to be roused up by these powerful Motives, the Strains of Oratory, to be sure, will make but a very faint Impression upon them.

Greek and Latin Authors not the Standard of Eloquence.

2. Neither are the Compositions of those prophane *Greek* and *Latin* Authors, which you do so much admire, the only Standard of true Eloquence; as if no Composition could be said to be elegant, but what comes up to their Rules and Method of speaking. For Eloquence, like Words, is a pure placitory Thing, and does depend upon the Opinions and Customs of Men; so that what is eloquent, in one Age or Nation, may be barbarous in another. For Eloquence is only a Way of speaking, which Fashion has brought into Repute; and as every Nation is Mistress of its own Words to use them, or disuse them at her Pleasure, so she is of the Composition of those Words, and may mold them into what Contexture she pleases; so that That Way of Expression which is most in Use, among Men of the best Figure in such a Country, is the National Eloquence. Though one of *Demosthenes's* Orations be very elegant *Greek*, yet if any one should make a literal Translation of it into the sacred Tongue, it would be barbarous *Hebrew*; because those *Greek* Idiotisms and peculiar Ways of Expression, and Argumentation too, were never in Use in that Nation.

There-



Therefore it is a great Mistake, to account the *Greek* and *Latin* Eloquence to be the only true Standard of Eloquence; for they are only the Standards of the Eloquence of those Nations, or perhaps of some other Nations, which have learned their Rhetorick from them; but they are far from being the Standards of the *Eastern* Eloquence, to which they bear very little or no Analogy. Indeed in most of our *European* Languages, the Eloquence is pretty conformable to that of the *Greeks* and *Romans*; because of late Years learned Men have made that their Pattern, and many of these Languages were derived from the *Latin* Tongue. But it is unreasonable to expect this, in Writers, many of whom lived long before these *Greek* and *Latin* Authors, whom we prescribe for the Pattern of our Eloquence, were born. It is sufficient that *Moses* or *Isaiab* wrote, according to the most fashionable and esteem'd Eloquence of their own Times; but it is very unreasonable to expect, that the Holy Ghost should have inspired them with an Eloquence which was perfectly unknown in the Countries wherein they lived, and which the *Greeks* themselves had not in any Perfection, till about the Time of *Plato* and *Demosthenes*. There were about that Age in *Greece*, great and wonderful Genius's, and who expressed their noble Thoughts with extraordinary Art and Accuracy; from these Men's Books the Rhetoricians (as for Instance *Aristotle*) drew up the Laws of Eloquence, and framed their Rules of Rhetorick from the Beauties they observed in the Writings of these Men; and to these Laws all succeeding Writers of that Nation tied themselves up, for ever after.

As for the *Latins*, they fell into the same Road with them, by going to School at *Athens*, or by having *Greek* Tutors from thence; so that *Cicero's* Eloquence is very nigh of the same Mold with *Demosthenes's*, and whatever new Beauties he was Master of, he himself drew them out of his own Orations into new Rules, or *Quintilian* or other Rhetors after him did the like. Now our Infidels argue very sillily, when they say, how poorly the Scriptures come up to the Rules of Eloquence in Respect

of *Tully* or *Demosthenes*; when those very Rules of Rhetorick were made out of *Tully's*, and *Demosthenes's* Books. And what Wonder is it, that a Thing does best correspond with itself? For nothing can be so like, as the same. If I was to draw up Rules of Rhetorick out of *Isaiab* or *St. Paul*, and Men would agree those should be the Standard of Eloquence; though a thousand Men should imitate those Styles, not one would be able to come perfectly up to them.

So that before you condemn the Scripture for want of Eloquence; you should not only compare them with the Writings of *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*, and the rhetorical Rules drawn from their Books, which the Sacred Writers never conversed with; but you should compare them with the Ways of Speaking in the *Eastern* Nations, and the reputable Eloquence there; and then, if you find that they are defective in a decent Way of expressing their Thoughts and Sayings, and do not come up to what was esteemed very elegant in those Countries and Ages, then we shall be willing to own the Charge. But when Men expect that these Books should be written like those of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, or (as many do) with the fine Air of a *French* Essayer, and are for exposing every Expression that does not hit in with those nice Rules they are fond of; what can betray their Ignorance or Folly more? As if *Moses* could not be an inspired Writer, unless the Holy Ghost molded his Words into the Style of *Cicero*, or had written like *Montaigne* or *Rablais*, which in those Ages had been unintelligible Barbarity.

3. And after all, I cannot allow you, that the *Greek* and *Latin* Eloquence is the sole and true Standard of Eloquence; for That is so far from being superiour to the Scriptural, that it is in many Points inferiour. I do not contend, that there is as much Art in *Moses's* History, as in the Style of *Livy*; or that *St. Peter* or *St. Paul's* Sermons are so curious Compositions, as *Tully's* Orations: But I say, that these sacred Compositions are not only more eloquent for the Times and Places they were designed for;

*Scriptures avoid the Vices of Eloquence, which Greek and Latin Authors are subject to.*

for, but that they are free from some Vices in Eloquence, which the *Greek* and *Latin* Writings were subject to. As for Instance, the *Hebrew* Eloquence is void of that extraordinary Verbosity and Crouding in of Words to no Purpose, which the Generality of *Pagan* Authors are guilty of. If one was to strip *Demosthenes* or *Isocrates's* Orations of their ἀνα's, αἰ's, ἰων's, & ἰμι's, of their μεν's, νυ's & πα's &c. of an Abundance of their insignificant Epithets and Circumlocutions; of a Number of their long compound Verbs and Nouns, which carry no more Sense with them than their Simples; and a great many other Parts of a Period, which serve to no other Purpose but to make it roll roundly; one might, ordinarily speaking, reduce three Lines of *Greek* into one of Sense.

And as for the *Latin* Eloquence, which is usually more dense and compress; yet even in that there is such an affected *Copia Verborum*, with a Neglect of new Matter, so much Curiousness in ranging Words, and bringing in senseless Particles, that when they are brought to the justest Rules of Criticism, it is a great Question, whether all this be not rather idle Pedantry, than true Eloquence. And this was the Opinion of *Iamblicus* the Philosopher. *Barbarous Languages* (says he, meaning the Oriental) *have a great deal of συντομία graceful Brevity, and have less of Ambiguity and Redundancy of Words.* And indeed, if we consider impartially those artful Compositions of the best Orators, even of *Tully* himself; we cannot but own them guilty oftentimes of a jejune Operoseness, which our serious Reason cannot allow to be true Eloquence, and which frequently too has nothing extraordinary, but an agreeable Chiming that tickles the Ears. Let us examine, for Instance, the first Period in *Tully's* Orations, the Exordium of his famous Oration, *Pro Pub. Quintio*; which, though one of his first, is looked upon to be one of his most celebrated Compositions. It begins thus: *Quæ duæ res in Civitate plurimum possunt, ea contra nos ambæ faciunt, in hoc Tempore, summa Gratia & Eloquentia; quarum alteram, C. Aquili, vereor, alteram metuo: Eloquentia Q. Hortensii ne me dicendo impediatur nonnihil commoveor,*  
*Gratia-*

*Gratia-Sexti Nevii, ne P. Quintio noceat, id vero non mediocriter pertimesco.* Now what an Abundance of nice and useles Art is here? Our Orator, I am sure, in this Place does *librare in Antithetis*, as *Persius* speaks, to a Nau-seousness; he ranges each Word as precisely in its Place, as if he was planting an Orchard, and setting Trees by the Rule, with whole Rows of opposite Words to answer one another. Here is *Amba* set against *Dua*, *possunt* against *faciunt*, *Eloquentia* against *Gratia*, *Hortensius* against *Nevius*, and *metuo* against *vereor*; with a *noceat* to answer to the *impediat*, and *pertimesco* to *commoveor*. Now, to think seriously, was it worth our Orator's While to make all this rhetorical Stir, and to spend so much Time, as this cost him, to varnish over this one Period; which no wise Man would like the better, and the silliest would not be the more convinced by? For my Part, I must freely give my Opinion, that such a laborious Curiousness in Style, as this is, has no more in it of true Eloquence, than the writing Anagrams and Acrosticks.

And I must needs think worse of them, when the Orators follow those yet nicer Punctilio's of Rhetorick; sticking Figures about their Orations, as the Ladies do Patches on their Faces; measuring out their Periods to such precise Lengths, and molding them according to *Demetrius Phalerens's* Rule, into three Members; or making them to begin with *Anapasts*, and end with *Dichorees*. Nay, I am almost confident, *Philologus*, that you your self, upon the most mature Consideration, must allow, that the unaffected Gravity of the Scripture Style is much less liable to Censure, than such an elaborate Curiosity.

4. But next, I would have you to take Notice, that the seeming Uncouthness of some Expressions in Scripture does arise from the literal Translation, which most of you read it in, without having Recourse to the Original; which if you did, it would give quite another Turn and Appearance to those Thoughts, which may look odd or mean to you now. The Translation of the Bible does appear with less Advantage than the Versions of other Books; because in those the Translators take a greater

Seeming  
Uncouth-  
ness from  
the literal  
Translation.

greater Liberty to accommodate the Idiotisms of the Language in which their Author wrote, to those of that into which they translate him; but the Translators of the Bible translate the very Hebraisms they find in the Original. For That being a divine Composition, the Translator ought not to make so bold with it, by limiting the Sense of it, as he might do with another Book; therefore he is obliged to leave those hebraical Phrases in the Text still, to the End that the Reader may pass his Judgment of them, as well as the Translator.

Now when we read the Translation of any other Author, which is literally done as this is; it looks altogether as uncouth as the *English* of our ordinary Translation of the Bible. What poor sorry Stuff does it look like, to read a Page of the common *Latin* Translation of *Homer* or *Pindar*, without the *Greek*? These two noble Poets, under this Disguise, do not appear half so good Writers as the Author of *Chevy-Chase*. Or suppose, that one should pretend to shew an *English* Gentleman or Lady, who did not understand *Latin*, the Beauties of *Horace's* Odes, by this verbal Translation of the two first Verses:

*Mecenas atavis edite Regibus,  
O & presidium & dulce decus meum, &c.*

*Mecenas* who art put forth from great Grandfather Kings, O and my Safeguard, and my sweet Grace, &c. This would look as wretchedly, to such a Gentleman or Lady of good Sense, as any Part of the *English* Bible does to your witty Infidels. But the Translation of the Bible from the Original, is altogether as verbal as this. Now would it be Justice, that *Horace* should be exposed for the Sake of such a strict Version, by one who did not understand the Elegancies of the original *Latinities*? The Expression *being put forth*, to signify a genealogical Descent, is strangely uncouth in *English*; and yet *Eduus* is commonly used to signify this in *Latin*, being a Metaphor taken from the putting forth of Branches out of the Stem of a Tree. Though the *Latins* say, *& presidium, & decus*, the *English* do not express

press a double Copulative by two *Ands*. Neither do the *English* say, in the Abstract *Guard* or *Safeguard*, but *Guardian* or *Tutelar*. We do not call any one our *Grace* or *Ornament*: But to say *sweet Grace* is yet more uncouth; though *dulce decus* among the *Romans* was an usual flattering Phrase, to express a Dearness to those they loved, which we never use.

And the Case would be the same, if our *English* Idiotisms were translated into any other Language. Our common Expressions, *to set a Copy*, *to make a Trade*, *to look to ones Hits*, *to fetch a Turn*, *to be brought a-Bed*, *Jack-a-Nokes* for a Fool, *a Canary-Bird* for a Knave, *Will with a Wisp*, *Jack-a-Lantern*, &c. would seem very odd, if literally translated into any other Language; and so would an hundred *French* or *Italian* Expressions in ours. Therefore I must conclude, it is a very ridiculous and ignorant Pride, in a great many Gentlemen of your Way, to make Sport with the Scripture for a few *Hebrew* Idioms, that do not exactly correspond with our modern Phrases. There are a great many Expressions in Scripture, which are Allusions to ancient Customs, which are now grown obsolete, and of which there are no Traces left in History, which may make them, for that Reason, seem to us flat and jejune; though in the Time when they were written, they carried with them a great Deal of Spirit and Brightness. Now to laugh at the Scripture, for these Idiotisms and Allusions, does shew as much Wit, as to laugh at the Images of the Old *Greeks* and *Romans*, because they are not dressed in our modern Fashions; or to make Sport with our Grandfather's Pictures, because they are not drawn in long Wiggs and Cravats. For 'tis altogether as ridiculous to think, that the ancient *Hebrews* should speak like us, any more than that they should go habited, as we do.

Besides, in every Language there are certain peculiar Graces, in the Contexture of the Words, in the Cadence of the Periods; many other *Schemata Leneas*, a beautiful ranging of Particles, a graceful Analogy and Relation between several Words, which are all lost in the Translation, and

and which Men must be well versed in the Original, to have a Taste of. Now to undervalue the Style of the Scriptures, without having searched into these, is as wise and modest an Undertaking, as to pretend to criticise upon *Virgil's* Style from our *English* Translations.

There are several Beauties in the Original Scriptures, which are vanished in our Versions, by the ill Translation of *Hebrew* Words, which have a various Signification; and our Interpreters sometimes light upon the wrong, so that by this means oftentimes a very noble Allusion becomes flat and unaffecting.

Sometimes the Speeches of mean and unlearned People are *Verbatim* inserted, the Sacred Writers not giving themselves the Liberty of making for them Rhetorical *Epopœia's*; and therefore in those Cases it is unreasonable to expect all the Elegances of a castigated Style. In short, the whole *Eastern* way of Speaking and Writing is so widely different from our *European* Eloquence; that to expect a Translation of the Scriptures, which were written in those Nations, to read like our modern Books, is as foolish a Thought, as to fancy, that Nature ought to have made their Camels like our Horses. I shall conclude this Head with the Opinion of *Iamblicus*. Οὐ γὰρ πάντως τὴν αὐτὴν διασωζέει δίδυμιαν μεθ' ἑαυτὴν εὐνομένη ἀνόματα, &c. Words do not retain the same Meaning, when they are translated into another Language; for there are certain Idioms, in every Language, which are impossible to be expressed in another; or if they are translated, they will lose their original Force. For barbarous Languages have a great Deal of Emphasis, a great Deal of graceful Brevity, and have less of Ambiguity and Redundancy of Words.

5. And last of all, I will not allow you, that the Scriptures are destitute of true and genuine Eloquence, but I contend that the Style of them is so far from being contemptible, that in many Places it is most admirable. I do not pretend, to prove the Style of all the Scripture to be truly eloquent from *Aristotle's* Rhetorick, or *Quintilian's* Institutions; or to prove the sacred Writers to come up to the Laws laid down in those Books: For, as I observed before, those

those are only the Laws of the *Greek* and *Latin* Eloquence, and drawn out of their Orators. But if we consider the Nature of Eloquence in general, and, as *Aristotle* \* defines it to be, a *Faculty of Persuasion*, the holy Writings lay as fair a Claim to it, as any of the prophane Compositions, There are but four principal Qualifications, to make any Book or Oration persuasive in the highest Degree; And those are, That the Subject of it be Truth, or at least verisimilar; That the Arguments to prove this be fit and proper; That the Subject be so treated, that the Passions of the Hearers or Readers be engaged for it; and Lastly, That the Eloquence be suited to the Capacities of those, who are to be persuaded by it. If any Composition does answer in all these Particulars, let it be written in *Gothick* or in *Welch*, it is, notwithstanding, true and genuine Eloquence.

subject of  
the Scrip-  
ture Veri-  
similar.

You cannot but allow, That the subject Matter of the holy Scriptures, if not true, is at least *Verisimilar*. It does not, like *Philolostratus's* History, treat of Witches and Dragons, and other unheard of Animals, with the wonderful Operations of magical Plants; it is not lyable to the Exceptions against *Homer* and *Virgil*, for making Men turn into Hogs, and Ships into Goddeses. Indeed there are in it the Relations of several Miracles; but then those Miracles are attributed to the one supreme God, who is the Governour of Nature, and not to subordinate Demons (as the *Pagans* do in their Theology) who have no Power over it. Besides, these Miracles are not done, like the pretended *Heathen* ones, to gratify Lust or Revenge, or some other wicked or capricious Design; but for the justest and wisest Ends, for the Salvation of Men's Souls, and the establishing among them true Religion. Now, though such miraculous Relations be strange, they are not incredible; because there is assigned to do them the greatest Power, and for doing them the greatest Reason.

\* *Arist. Rhet. Lib. 1. Cap. 2.*



And you must needs likewise grant, that the Arguments, The Arguments con-  
clusive. which the Holy Scriptures make Use of, are very conclusive. What better Arguments can be urged, than those in the *Old Testament* against Idolatry? by shewing the *Unity* of God, from his Creation of the Universe, and making all Things but his eternal Self; by shewing that he is a *Jealous* God, whose Honour is engaged to admit no Partnership in the divine Worship; by engaging the *Jews* to this, from his delivering them out of *Egypt*, by an Argument drawn both from his own *Omnipotence*, and their *Gratitude*; by shewing the *Cruelty* and *Diabolical* Worship of Idolatry, which required them to *give their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils*? Where can we find any more strenuous Proof of the Sottishness of Worshipping Images, than when they are exposed in Scripture, for having *Eyes and seeing not, and Ears and hearing not*, that is, being out of a Capacity of relieving their Votaries, and when the same Carpenter, that hew'd the Log, is so foolish as to fall down and worship it? To which if you add the repeated Promises of God for their Continuance in the true Religion, and his Threats for their forsaking it, which are every where urged in the *Old Testament*; I desie the Wit of Man to find out, more proper and conclusive Arguments against Idolatry, than are to be found there. Now, if it was one of the most principal Designs of the Books of the *Old Testament* to persuade Men against Idolatry, and the best Arguments against Idolatry be to be found there, then those Books are not destitute of true Eloquence. And so, if you consider the Books of the *New Testament*; if they clearly make out what they pretend to; That true Religion does not consist in external Ceremony, but in honouring God and doing good to our Neighbour, and living virtuously and soberly; That Men ought to mortify their unruly Affections, and to despise the Pleasures of this World; That nothing we can do or suffer for Christ's Sake is comparable to his Love to us, and to the immortal Glories which he has purchased for us; if, I say, they do this, as you Unbelievers must allow this Reasoning upon the Christian

Principles to be just, then these Books are as eloquent and persuasive, as any in the World. Unless you think that Eloquence consists only in a curious Choice of Words, in Neatness of Method, in tuneful Periods and lame *Probabilities* or *Maybe's* instead of Proof, which is the true Character of most of the prophane Compositions; and this must not be allowed to the Holy Scriptures, which speak in Demonstration and Power, and make out what they pretend to, to the Confusion of those Readers, that are oftentimes unwilling to be persuaded by them; which I think is too partial a Judgment, for any wise Man to make.

*They move  
the Passions.*

Or if moving the Passions be any Sign of true Eloquence, what Book in the World is better framed to do it than the Scriptures? What do the little Warmths, that may be raised in the Fancy by an artful Composure and a Vehemence in Style, signify, to those strong Impulses and Movements, which the Holy Scriptures make upon good Men's Souls; when they represent the frightful Justice of an angry God to stubborn Offenders, and his Bowels of Compassion and unspeakable Kindness, to true Penitents and God's faithful Servants? What are those ordinary Methods to move the Passions, which the prophane Orators used, to compare with the Scripture Motives of Heaven and Hell? These press so hard upon all the Faculties of the Soul, that there is no withstanding them when attended to; they create so much Uneasiness in wicked Men, whenever they think, that they use all the Art they can to keep them out of their Minds, for Fear of being over-persuaded by them, and having their Conscience upbraid them, for doing those Things, which will lose them such Advantage and bring them into such Misery. Think you that *Cicero*, with all his Eloquence, could have made such a hardened Sinner as *Felix* tremble, as *St. Paul* did; or, like *St. Peter*, have persuaded by one Speech three thousand Persons, to have embraced a despised Religion, to part with all they had for the Use of the Poor, and to expose themselves, for the Sake of this, to Contumely, and Hatred, and Persecution? When you  
have

have thought of this a little, you will be constrained to own, that there is a Force in the divine Eloquence, which the best human Compositions can never pretend to.

And lastly, if it be any Mark of true Eloquence, to speak agreeably to the Capacities of the Generality of the Hearers or Readers; then the Holy Scriptures have observed this Point, better than most Books. Grandeur of Style may be proper in a Panegyrick upon a Prince, in an Oration to a learned Assembly, in an heroick Poem or a Tragedy; but what is composed for the Use of the Ignorant, as well as the Learned, ought to be written in the most plain and familiar Way that is possible; for, in such a Case, a majestick Eloquence would be more ridiculous, than the most unpolished *Plebian* Style. Therefore to talk great and noble Truths, in plain and familiar Language, is the Height of the Art of Eloquence: For *Fastus*, and *Tumor*, in Style, are common enough to every one, who hath any Thing of a Spirit, or any Thing of a Subject; and therefore the Scripture Eloquence can never be enough admired, for handling such noble Subjects, in such a familiar Way, as is adapted to the Understandings of the meanest. And all considering Men must own, that our Saviour's plain Allusions to a Way, a Vine, to Corn, Sheep, &c. being directed to ordinary People, are far more eloquent, than if he had spoken in the rapturous Flights of *Plato's* Dialogues. For by this last Method, the End of Eloquence is lost; for no one can be persuaded by what he does not understand.

Thus, I think, I have sufficiently proved, that the Holy Scriptures are not wanting in true Eloquence; tho' they may not come up in all Particulars to that Eloquence, which was in Fashion at *Athens* and *Rome*, and may not agree with the nice Rules of their Rhetors. But if it will be any Satisfaction to you, I will shew you farther in a Word or two, that most of those admired Beauties, in the *Pagan* Eloquence, are not wanting in the Scriptural; and that oftentimes the Scripture comes up even to their Magnificence of Style, and Cadence of Period. It would

*Their Eloquence suited to the Capacities they speak to.*

*Scriptures not void of Rhetorical Figures.*

*Anaphora.*

be too long a Piece of Work for my Purpose, to run through the whole System of Rhetorick, to shew the Eloquence of the Scripture as to all these Particulars; though I doubt not, but one might pick out of Scripture, Examples for every Figure, as good, perhaps, as are alledged out of *Tully* himself. But for a Specimen of this, I will instance in two or three; and you at your Leisure, if you think it worth your While, may take Notice of more. It is looked upon to be a very florid and beautiful Figure in Rhetorick, when all the Members of a Period begin with the same Word; as in that of *Cicero*, *Orat.* in *Cat.* 1. *Nihil te Nocturnum presidium Palatii? Nihil Urbis vigilia? Nihil timor Populi? Nihil Consensio bonorum omnium? Nihil hic munitissimus habendi Senatus locus? Nihil horum Ora vultusque moverunt?* “Are you *nothing* moved by the “nightly Guard of the Palace? *Nothing* by the Watches “about the City? *Nothing* by the Fear of the People? “*Nothing* by the joint Opinion of all good Men? *No-* “*thing* by the Senate’s being held with a Guard? *No-* “*thing* by the Faces and Looks of those here present.” Now this is all very fine; but I know not whether the same Figure is not as handsomely dressed out in the xvth *Psalm*, *Lord*, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy Holy Hill? He that walketh uprightly, &c. He that backbiteth not with his Tongue, &c. He that honoureth them that fear the Lord, He that sweareth to his Hurt and changeth not; He that putteth not out his Money to Usury, nor taketh Reward against the Innocent; He that doth these Things shall never be moved.

*Anadiplosis.*

That of *Virgil* is much admired.

— *Sequitur pulcherrimus Astur,*  
*Astur Equo fidens.* —

— Next follows fairest *Astur*,  
*Astur* relying on his Hoise. —

But this Redoubling of the principal Word comes in as curiously, in that of the *Psalmist*, *Our Feet shall stand within thy*  
*thy*

*thy Gates, O Jerusalem: Jerusalem, which is built as a City that is compact together, Psalm cxxii. 2.*

They magnify the Beauty of that regular Gradation *Climax.* from one Thing to another in Cicero. *In urbe Luxuries creatur, ex Luxuria existat Avaritia necesse est, ex Avaritia erumpat Audacia, inde omnia scelera & maleficia nascuntur.* “ *In the City grows Luxury, from Luxury arises Avarice, from Avarice springs Boldness, and that is the Parent of all Wickedness and Villanies.*” Now is not that *Climax* of St. Paul altogether as good? *Knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, and Hope maketh not ashamed, Rom. v. 3.* Or that of St. Peter? *Add to your Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance, and to Temperance Patience, &c. 2 Peter i. 5.*

That *Growing of the Sentence* in Tully is remarkable, *Facinus* *Auresti.* *est vincire Civem Romanum, scelus verberare, prope Parricidium necare, quid dicam in Crucem tollere?* “ *It is a Crime to bind a Roman Citizen, it is a Villany to scourge him, it is the Act of a Parricide to kill him, but what shall I say to crucify him?*” But the Beginning of St. John’s first Epistle is a nobler Amplification, where the Increase is more graceful, and the Tumor of the Sentence less. *That which was from the Beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have look’d upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life.* Here is an exact Gradation throughout all the Degrees of Certainty. He begins with the Being of Christ and his Eternity, which incarnate Word was *heard* by him, having the Evidence of a yet more faithful Sense was *seen*, and not only transitorily so, but *look’d upon*, and had the farther Testimony of a Sense which is of all the most infallible, *which our Hands have handled.* The Rhetoricians would have made a mighty Work with this Sentence, had they found it in Tully, which they are wont to overlook and despise in an Apostle.

The old Orators take a great Pride in ranging finely *Antithesis.* their *Antitheta*; but I question, whether or no, the Scriptural Writers do not manage theirs as gracefully. *He that*

*killeth an Ox, as if he slew a Man, he that sacrificeth a Lamb as if he cut of a Dog's Neck: He that offereth an Oblation, as if he offered Swine's Blood, &c. Isa. lxvi, 3. Instead of a sweet Smell there shall be Stench, and instead of a Girdle a Rent, and instead of well-set hair Baldness, and instead of a Stomacher a Girdle of Sack-cloth, and Burning instead of Beauty.*

Exclamation.

There is a very beautiful warmth in proper Exclamations, as in *Tullies, O Tempora! O Mores! O frustra mei suscepti Labores!* But there is not one, that ever I read in all *Tully's Works*, comparable to that of *St. Paul*, upon the Divine Dispensation in the Call of the *Gentiles* and the Rejection of the *Jews*. *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!* Here is such a noble Vehemence, as fires one's Thoughts, and on a sudden transports one's Soul with Astonishment and Divine Love.

Hypotyposis

But the most charming Figure among the Orators and Poets, and which they love to be luxuriant in, is the Hypotyposis or lively Description. Now there are many of these in the Holy Scripture, which will equal the best among the *Pagan Writers*. As for Instance, that of the *Egyptians Drowning, Exod. xv.* in the Song of *Moses* and *Miriam*: The Description of the Leviathan, *Job xli.* The going out of God, *Psalms xviii.* The Storms at Sea, *Psalms cvii.* The Intrigues of an Adulterous Woman, *Prov. vii.* The Pride of the *Jewish Ladies, Isa. iv.* The Folly of the Idol-maker, *Isa. xliv.* And lastly, the incomparable Description of the Plague of Locusts in the second Chapter of *Joel*, which he represents like the ravaging of a Countrey, and storming of a City by an Army. The Invention and Expression of it are most admirable, and it deserves to be esteemed as one of the most curious Descriptions of Antiquity. And if the Passage be not too long, I will repeat it to you. *A great People and a strong, there hath not been ever the like, neither shall there be any more after it, even to the Years of many Generations. A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth; the Land is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them*

a desolate Wilderness, and nothing shall escape them. The Appearance of them is as the Appearance of Horses, and as Horsemen, so shall they run. Like the Noise of Chariots in the Tops of Mountains shall they leap, like the Noise of a Flame of Fire, that devoureth the Stubble, as a strong People set in Battle Array. Before their Face People shall be much pained, all Faces shall gather Blackness. They shall run like mighty Men, they shall climb the Wall like Men of War, and they shall march every one on his Ways, and they shall not break their Ranks. Neither shall one thrust another, they shall walk every one in his Path, and when they fall upon the Sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the City, they shall run upon the Wall, they shall climb up upon the Houses: They shall enter in at the Windows like a Thief, &c. This Description is the more remarkable, because the Analogy is carried on from one End to the other, so very decently and without any Force; and if one was only to describe the Outrages of an Army without the Metaphor, it could hardly be done better, than by the Regularness of their March, Eating up the Provision, Burning the Country, the Horror of the People, the Scaling the Walls, Running about thro' the conquered City, Breaking into Houses, &c.

Nay, I will contend farther, that in some whole Books, and in many Passages of Scripture, there is as much Magnificence and Sublimity of Expression, and sometimes the Compositions are as much according to the Rhetorical Laws, as in those of the most celebrated Heathens. And St. *Austin* in his Treatise *de Doctrina Christi* has proved such an artificial Composure in that Passage of St. *Paul*, Rom. viii. 38. *For I am persuaded that neither Death nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* But whether or no the Apostle did designedly divide his Sentence into those Rhetorical Members, as that Father would have him; it is plain, that the Eloquence, in this Chapter, is very noble from the 33. Verse to the End. *Who shall lay any Thing to*

the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, &c. Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword? (As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as Sheep for the Slaughter) nay in all these Things we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us. The like majestic Eloquence we find displayed, 1 Cor. iv. 9. in speaking of the Hardships of the Apostles. God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were Men appointed to Death. For we are made a Spectacle unto the World, and to Angels, and to Men. We are fools for Christs sake, but ye are wise in Christ: We are weak, but ye are strong: Ye are honorable, but we are despised: Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain Dwelling-place, and labour working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless, being persecuted we suffer it, being defamed we intreat: We are made as the Filth of the World, and are the Off-scouring of Things unto this day. The Eloquence of this Period is so noble and affecting, and it is so artificially composed, that I will be bound to equal it with any one in the Oration of Cicero or Demosthenes; even according to Aristotle's and Quintilian's Rules. Nor is this Apostle's Vindication of himself, 2 Cor xi. 21. any thing inferior: Whereinsoever any is bold, I speak foolishly, I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the Seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they the Ministers of Christ? I speak as a Fool, I am more; in Labours more abundant, in Stripes above measure, in Prisons more frequent, in Deaths oft. Of the Jews five Times received I forty Stripes save one, Thrice was I beaten with Rods, Once was I stoned, Thrice I suffered Ship-wreck, A Night and a Day I have been in the Deep. In Journeyings often, in Perils of Waters, in Perils of Robbers, in Perils by my own Countrymen, in Perils by the Heathen, in Perils in the City, in Perils in the Wilderness, in Perils in the Sea, in Perils among false Brethren. In Weariness and Painfulness, in Watchings often, in Hunger and Thirst, in Fastings often, in Cold and Nakedness; besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the Care of



of all the Churches. Hitherto the Division and Cadence of every Period has been very Rhetorical, and agreeable to the exactest Rules of Art, and Nicety of Ear; and the Matter all along truly sublime; but at the next Verse the Apostle's Eloquence is yet more surprising. *Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the Things which concern Infirmities.* Here the Heroicalness of the Apostle's Religion inspires his Style with a new Degree of Sublimity, and gives it such a Turn of Grandure and Nobleness of Thought, as is imitable by Pagan Eloquence. Those Infirmities, which they would have palliated and shadowed off, by little Extenuations, for Fear of touching upon their Reputation and affected Fame, he values himself upon, as the Glory of his Religion, and the brave Conquest of the Flesh by the Grace of God under the Christian Dispensation, which the Heathen Morality knew nothing of.

I have not Time to compare the Descriptions of Things which occur in the sacred Books, with those of the Pagans in their Books, in which they endeavour to shew the Master-piece of their Eloquence; and yet I doubt not but I could shew, in many Particulars, that the Scripture ones are the superior. As for Instance, in the Description of the Morning; do the Heathens better describe it by the *Rosy-fingered Morn*, by *Aurora's leaving Tithon's Bed*, than the Scripture's, *the Day-spring from on high hath visited us*, and comparing the Sun, at that Time, to a *Bridegroom's coming out of his Chamber*, and *rejoycing like an Athletick to run a Race*? The Description of *Virgil* is very just upon that occasion:

*Obstupui steteruntque coma, & vox faucibus hæsit, &c.*

But it is not comparable to that of *Job* iv. 13. *In Thoughts from the Visions of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth on Men. Fear came upon me and Trembling, which made all my Bones to shake. Then a Spirit passed by before my face, the Hair of my Flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the Form thereof; an Image before my eyes, Silence, and I heard a Voice.* In short, *Philologus*, if you will but accustom your self to reading the Holy Scriptures, and come to them

them without Prejudice and a Mind to cavil, you will find that the Style of these Books is in all Places agreeable, and in some most admirable; and if God gives you Grace to have your Mind affected with a true Spirit of Holiness, you will experience the most comfortable and ravishing Delights, in reading this above all other Books in the World.

*Phil.* This may be so, for ought I know; but I am sure, I have just Exceptions against the Method, the Scriptural Books are written in. If the Holy Ghost had any Hand in these Compositions, one might well expect that they should be written with the utmost Exactness; so that there should not appear the least Carelessness, or Confusion, in any of these Books. We may observe even in the human Compositions of Pagan Authors, in how curious an Order all things are ranged, and how decently every Argument and Relation falls into its Place; which agreeable Harmony, and Symmetry of Parts surpriseth the Reader with a wonderful Delight. But how strangely defective in this, all the Authors in the Bible are, every Reader cannot but experience. In the historical parts one Story is jumbled together with another, what happened last in Time is often told first, several material Parts of the History are omitted, and other impertinent, and useles ones, are recorded; and we frequently find, that one Relation is brought in upon the Back of another, with which it has no Manner of Correspondence. And so in the exhortatory and argumentative Parts of Scripture, the Arguments lye so confusedly interwoven with one another, that sometimes it is almost impossible to understand the Force of them; there are such long and unnatural Digressions, and unlookt for Reassumptions of the former Arguments, that the most rambling Thinker hardly ever gives up his Thoughts to so wide a Range.

*Cred.* But all this, *Philologus*, is great Misrepresentation and Mistake; which will be very evident, if you will be pleased to go along with me, in these following Considerations.

*Method an  
Art invented  
by the  
Heathens.*

I. You should consider, that this curious Method, which you so much admire in the Pagan Authors, is but

an artificial Way of Writing, which came into Fashion only in *Greece* and *Rome*; and that in latter Ages too, and long after the Time, in which many of these Books were written. Method was a sort of Art or Science, which was invented and cultivated first at *Athens*, and the Rules of it laid down by Philosophers, for Authors to observe in their Writings; and which all, who were educated in the Discipline of the *Greek* Schools, tied themselves up to. But it is unreasonable to expect, that the Jewish Writers should bind themselves to these artificial Rules, which they were perfectly Strangers to, and which were never taught them in their Way of Education. Should a Jewish Writer have divided his Books into those nice Partitions, which the Pagan Authors are wont to do, he would have been universally condemned by the People of his Country for affectatious Pedantry. Those Eastern Nations, who were us'd to a free Way of Discourse, and whose Notions were not cramped up by methodical Limitations, would never have endured a Writer, who should bind himself up to such distinct Heads of Discourse, as is our *European* Custom to do; and a Book, written after that Rate, would to them have been as ridiculous, as an *Oration* would be to us, whose Arguments should all run in exact *Barbara* and *Celarent*, or which should be made up of the starched Exordiums, Ratios, and Confirmations of a School Boy's Theme.

2. But besides this, I would desire you to consider with your self, if Method be not too nice a Thing to stand upon, in a Matter of so high an Importance as the Holy Scriptures. <sup>Method</sup> Is Method a Thing at all looked upon, in a <sup>self's</sup> Physicians Bill? Does any Man in the least value it, in a Lawyers Conveyance? and therefore, what Reason have we, to expect so much of it in the sacred Writings? These Books are of so vast and so important a Concern, that if the Holy Ghost had condescended, to have limited himself to those nice Rules, which many human Compositions are adapted to, you Unbelievers would have been more ready to have censured his stooping to such Punctilios, than now you are to find Fault with that Freedom of Thought, and Inaccuracy

Inaccuracy of Method, which is to be discerned frequently in these Authors.

Neglect of  
Metho.  
more an-  
swerable to  
Inspiration

3. This Want of artificial Method, is more agreeable to the Nature of Inspiration. Inspiration is the Language of another *World*; it is something of the Reasoning of Spirits, which is, without all Doubt, vastly different from our human Argumentation. We, to make Things lie plainly before our gross Understandings, must sort them out into distinct Partitions, to consider them by little and little; that at last, by gradual Advances, we may come to a tolerable Knowledge of them. But there is no Cause to think, that pure Spirits do reason after this Rate. Their Understandings are more quick and perceptive, and they see farther round about them, than ours do; and they have no Need of those little methodical Distinctions, which are wont oftentimes to be a great Help to our more imperfect Intellects. Now, though I do not assert, that the Language of the Holy Scriptures is an exact Copy of the Reasoning of the spiritual World; yet, they being the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, it is but reasonable to expect, that they should retain some small Relish, of the Ratiocination of the superiour Communities, as well as a *Book*, which is translated out of one Language into another, continues to have some Marks to shew of the Tongue it was first composed in. Hence it comes to pass, that, though the Holy Ghost does vouchsafe to speak in the Language of Men; yet, in his divine Compositions, there are some Traces to be found of the *Celestial Lingua*, and of that bold and unlimited Ratiocination, which is peculiar to the heavenly Inhabitants, whose noble and flaming Thoughts are never clogged with the cold, and jejune Laws of our human Method. And this was a Truth, which the Heathens themselves were not insensible of; for, in all their Pretences to Inspiration, they continually neglect the Laws of Method, as being too human, to have any Thing to do, in a divine Composition. And, upon this Account, whenever the Poets bring in *Sibyl*, or *Cassandra*, or *Tiresias*, or any other inspired Person, they never made such an one to deliver a set methodical

methodical Speech; but to say something noble and sublime, which did disdain any of our ordinary artificial Fetters. Now, if the greatest Masters and Criticks in your philological Learning, did think it most proper, that this should be the Tenour of an inspired Composition, that is, to neglect all methodical Rules; why should you find Fault with the Holy Scriptures, for the very same Thing, which you admire in *Sophocles* and *Virgil*?

4. But after all, the Holy Scriptures are not destitute of that Method, which is requisite for the due Understanding of a Book, and the agreeable Reading of it. Indeed some Writers Thoughts lie so horridly perplexed, and confounded in their Books, that there is hardly any taking their Meaning, or reading them with any tolerable Pleasure. But this is not the Case of the sacred Pen-men. Their Books are written, in a very proper and regular Method, and though not in all the Formalities of the *Greek* and *Latin* Plan, yet in such a Way, as is easy to be understood, and not unpleasant to be read, but even beautiful to those, who are accustomed to the Oriental Compositions. Can any one expect any History to be more methodical, than that of *Moses*? Does not he very orderly give an universal History of the World to this Time, beginning at the first Creation of all Things, and the Formation of human Kind, proceeding to give an Account of their Increase and Depravation, and their almost total Destruction by an universal Deluge? Does not he, after that, upon their spreading again, relate their Relapse into Idolatry, and thereupon God's electing out a peculiar People to serve him the only true God, according to his particular Appointment; recording the first Original, and various Success of their primary Progenitors, the Afflictions and Wandrings of that chosen Nation, and the Polity which they were to observe, when they should be settled in the promised Land? It is impossible, that any *Greek* or *Latin* Historian should be more methodical, than this Writer. And so the other Historians of the *Old Testament*, who write the Transactions of the *Jewish* Nation from their Conquest of the Land *Canaan*, to the *Babylonian*

*Method not wholly wanting in Scripture.*

*bylonian* Captivity, do most methodically observe the Order of Time, and what is yet more, do set down the Number of the Years of Princes Reigns, and so exactly reckon from other remarkable Epocha's of Time, that the prophane Histories are no Way comparable to them; thereby affording us a better Foundation for Chronology, than any is to be found among the *Greek* and *Latin* Historians. Do not the Evangelists most methodically begin with Christ's Incarnation, and end with his Crucifixion and Resurrection, and all along declare his Preaching, and miraculous Actions? Nay, is not there a methodical Design running throughout the whole Tenor of all these Histories; wherein one uniform Thread of Providence is discovered, and all the ancient Types, and remarkable Transactions do fall in with, or make Way for, the Kingdom of the *Messias*? And so for the argumentative and exhortatory Parts of Scripture, there is Method enough to make them intelligible; and, though the Partitions and Transitions are not so formally distinct, as in some other Books, yet they are plain enough to be discerned, by any careful Reader. Neither is it so proper, that epistolary (and such like) Discourses, should be so exactly methodical; for, as to this Point, perhaps *Tully's* Epistles are as liable to Exceptions, as those of *St. Paul*.

*Particular* 5. Neither are there wanting some particular Reasons, *Reasons of* why the Books of the Holy Scriptures do, sometimes, *the Want of* seem more immethodical, than some other Books. For *Method.* these Books are mostly written in a Language, in which many Words have a different Signification; which, if taken in one Sense, in which they are sometimes used, will make two Sentences all of a Piece, and mutually to depend upon each other; but, if taken in another Sense, in which they are sometimes used, will make the Sentence, where they are found, seem perfectly to stand by itself, as if it was brought in heedlessly, without any Manner of Design.

Another Reason, why the Scripture does, sometimes, look immethodical, is this; That, oftentimes, in an historical or prophetic Relation, there is, on a sudden, a predictive

dictive Excursion made of the *Messias*, which may look, at first Sight, like a careless Ramble of Thought; but is really a very wise Forecast of the divine Providence, which does upon all Occasions, take Care to give Men a stedfast Hope of that wonderful Mercy, which in Fulness of Time God Almighty did design to afford to Mankind.

At other Times, the Method is neglected, not out of Heedlessness, but out of just and wise Designs; and the Holy Ghost takes Occasion, to confirm some important Truth by his Authority, which does not lie directly, in the regular Tenor of Discourse, but he takes Occasion to remark it by the Bye; which Occasion not being laid hold of, such a Revelation would have been wanting to God's Church, or would have required a distinct Discourse to have revealed it; and, by that Means, would have made the Scriptures too prolix, and unserviceable to the Generality of Men.

And lastly, a great Deal of the Immethodicalness of Scripture, will be taken away, by reading it in the Original; for, oftentimes, the Stops are not rightly made, in our Translations, which sometimes divide those Sentences which ought to be conjoined, and unite those which ought to be separated; which Neglect frequently so disturbs the Sense, as to make it look very wild and glaring to those, who do not observe the Propriety and Connexion in the Original. In short, I desire, that you would make those Allowances to the Holy Scriptures, which you do to other Books, for their Antiquity, the Greatness of their Subject, and other particular Exigences and Circumstances; and that you would come to the reading them with a serious and devout Mind; and then, I am confident, you will never much matter their Want of Method.

*Phil.* You have gotten over this Matter pretty well, but still the *Obscurity* of Scripture is, with me, a great Argument against the Divinity of it. For who can think, that the Holy Ghost should ever write after that cloudy Rate, as methinks most of these Authors do? The Want of Perspicuity is the most intolerable Fault, which any

Author

Author can be guilty of, For this destroys all the End and Design of Writing, which is to be understood; but he that writes obscurely, whilst he pretends to inform another of his Mind, leaves it unintelligible to him still. Now, if God Almighty should act after this Rate, he would put a Banter upon Mankind, as giving out, that he had revealed his Will to them by a *Written Word*, when at the same Time he had wrapped it up, in the darkeſt and moſt inacceſſible Clouds. Had God been pleaſed, to have made ſuch a Revelation, he would undoubtedly have done it with all imaginable Plainneſs, and made it as clear, as that immortal Light he dwells in; nay, out of his immense Goodneſs to human Nature, he would have taken the greateſt Care, that nothing ſhould be obſcurely expreſſed in a Book, of ſuch momentous Concern, as upon the right Underſtanding of which, Men's everlaſting Salvation does depend. But how can you reconcile this, with the profound Darkneſs of the Scriptural Books, whereof hardly one ſingle Text is clearly intelligible! For the Truth of, which, we need only appeal to the Collection of Criticks, where every Verſe in the Bible has, it may be, half a Score Meanings put upon it. Now there can but one of all theſe Senſes be the Meaning of the Holy Ghoſt, which is the Direction to Mankind; and, among theſe Interpretations, all which ſometimes bid equally fair for it, who can tell which That is? So that upon the whole, here is a Revelation of God's Will to Mankind, to direct themſelves by it; but, by the Obſcurity of it, Mankind cannot underſtand it, or be able to diſtinguiſh God Almighty's Meaning, from the different Meanings, it may be, of *Origen* or *Jerom*, *Erasmus* or *Grotius*.

*Cred.* But I pray hold a little, Sir; for you take a great many Things for granted, and paſs over a great many more unconfidered, which you ought not in Juſtice to do.

*Hiſtory and  
practical  
Duties  
plain in  
Scripture.*

1. You are too haſty, when you ſuppoſe the whole Body of the Scriptures, to be univerſally obſcure. For ſome Things therein are written as intelligibly, as in any *Book* whatſoever



whatsoever. Most of the Historical Parts of Scripture are written in a plain simple Style, which the ordinarieſt People do much eaſier underſtand, than they would do a Translation of *Thucydides* or *Saluſt*. Indeed it happens, oftentimes, that Commentators upon theſe Books differ, upon the Interpretation of a Word, the End or Deſign of of an Action, or upon an old Cuſtom, or the like; whilſt the whole Subſtance, and Tenor of the Hiſtory remains entire, and in which all the moſt differing Commentators do agree. But if this were any Objection againſt Scripture, it would as well hold againſt any old *Greek* or *Latin* Books, upon which Commentators do as often diſagree, as they do upon Texts in the Bible. And yet no Body ever ſaid, that *Homer*, or *Virgil*, or the forementioned Hiſtorians, were unintelligible Authors; becauſe the Notes, that are written upon theſe Books, are very different from each other. And, as for the doctrinal Parts of Scripture, they are far from being obſcure in thoſe Points, which it is neceſſary for Men to know, in order to their Salvation. The Doctrines of the Incarnation of Jeſus Chriſt, and his ſuffering for the Sins of the World; The Doctrines of future Rewards and Punishments; The Neceſſity of Repentance and a good Life, in order to Salvation; The common Doctrines of Morality, and thoſe other improved ones of Peaceableneſs, Humility, Self-denial, Forgiveneſs of Injuries, &c. are ſo plainly delivered, and over and over again repeated, that Words cannot make any Thing more intelligible, and more expreſs. Now theſe are the main Things, which every Chriſtian ought to be moſt ſollicitous about; and therefore it is no great Matter, if other Doctrines, of leſs Conſequence, be not manifeſted in ſo clear a Light. If a Man underſtood but only *theſe* Things in Scripture, and was not able to tell the Meaning of any Thing elſe, he would underſtand enough to work out his Salvation by; which is a Mercy, as great as moſt Chriſtians can reaſonably deſire, and which answers the principal End, of God's revealing his Will to the World.

2. And, tho' ſome other Parts of the Scriptures be ſome-  
VOL. II. H thing

Some sublime Things in Scripture cannot be plain.

thing more obscure, yet there is a very good Reason to be alledged for it: Because the Sublimity of the Subject, treated of in it, will not allow of a greater Clearness. No one can reasonably expect that a *Book of Algebra*, or close *Metaphysics*, should read as glibly as a plain *Historical Relation*, or a smooth Copy of *Verses*; because every one knows, that these abstruser Parts of Learning do require deeper *Thoughts*, and closer *Application of Mind*, than other Subjects of Literature; and that they are not comprehended, by the first transient View of the Understanding. Now we do not say, That, upon this Account, algebraical and metaphysical Writers are obscure; for they may write with all the Clearness imaginable upon so sublime Subjects, and yet may not be understood by every unskilful, or cursory Reader. And this is frequently the Case in the *Holy Scriptures*, several Passages of which relate to the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and the *Eternal Generation of the Son of God*; others speak of the *Nature of Angels*, whose Beings and Operations are above the Ken of our Understandings; others are *Prophecies of future Events*, whose Nature it is to be dark and obscure; and lastly some others are *Descriptions of the other World*, which it is impossible, in this imperfect State, that we can have exact Notices of. Now all such Passages, though they do look obscure, yet this is not the Fault of the Writer in expressing them; but it is owing to the sublime Nature of these *noble and transcendent Existences*, and to the *Shallowmess of our weak Understandings*, which cannot comprehend them better.

Obscure Passages may be hereafter plainer.

3. There are many other Places of Scripture, which now look obscure, but in Process of Time, and, after some great *Revelations of God's Providence*, will be perfectly understood, and will clear up into a Meridian Light. There are several Passages in the *Old Testament*, which are predictive of the *Messias*, and which Men could hardly tell what to make of, before the Coming of *Christ*; but his Life and Sufferings have given Demonstration, of the Propheticalness of them; this has afforded such a Light to the Understanding of them, that all their former Obscurity is now vanished and gone. And there is as little

Doubt

Doubt to be made, but that there are many Texts, both in the *Old and New Testament*, which are now veiled with Obscurity, but will hereafter be as clear as the Day : All those Passages, which relate to the *future Estate of the Church*, to the *Reign of Antichrist*, to the *Conversion of the Jews*, &c. will then be dismantled of all their present Darkness, when these wonderful Events shall come to pass ; and it is not to be doubted, but there are several other great Revolutions in the *Church*, and *Providential Dispensations*, which shall hereafter happen, that shall give Light to many other Places of Scripture, which at present we cannot understand, or else we put a wrong Meaning upon.

4. It is no Fault in the Scriptural Writers, that some Passages of their Books are obscure ; because we are not sufficiently versed in the *History*, *Customs*, and the *Language* of the *Jews*, relating to the Time when these Books were written. Many of these Passages would be better made out, if we understood the *Hebrew Language* as well as the *English* ; but the *Hebrew Tongue* having been a dead Language, for many Hundreds of Years, and the *Old Testament* being the only ancient Book which is written in it, it is no Wonder, that we cannot attain to such a Knowledge of the exact Signification of Words, as when we have a Multitude of Books to read in the same Tongue. In the last Case, an Expression cannot well happen to be obscure, upon Account of the not understanding the true Signification of the Words ; because those Words, if they have a dubious Signification in one Book, are plainly expressed in another ; a Word that is hard to be understood in *Homer*, is very easy when compared with the same Word in a Verse of *Hesiod*, where the Context does more plainly determine the Sense ; which Word would never have been understood, if there had not been some other *Greek* Author extant, who had used the same. So that the Obscurity of some Places in Scriptures, which you unjustly charge upon the Confusedness of those Writers Thoughts, does many Times arise, from Want of Books in the same Language to interpret them by. Other Passages in Scripture are obscure, because they

*Obscurity arises from Want of Exactness in the Jewish Language and Customs.*

refer to some old obsolete Customs among the *Jews*, that we know nothing of, and therefore it is no Wonder, that the Sense in those Places is obscure, when the Metaphors, which are brought to illustrate it, cannot possibly be understood. Suppose (for Instance) that the Art of Gunnery were perfectly lost, and nothing remaining in History of the Use of Guns; and suppose that one was to read an *English* Book, in which a Man is said *to make a false Fire*, that is to be balked in an Enterprize, or to attempt a Matter unsuccessfully; I say it would be almost impossible, or at least very difficult to find out that this was the Meaning of That Expression, if there had been no Traces left of the Use of Guns, in the Age wherein such a Book was written. Other Places are obscure, because they allude to some remarkable Matters of Fact, which were well known in the Writers Age, but are not recorded in the *Jewish* History, which we now read; and therefore, upon this Account, we may very reasonably pardon the Obscurity of them, unless you think the Scriptural Writers were obliged to write Comments upon themselves, and to explain as they go on, all their own Metaphors and Allusions. Now, whereas these Circumstances are, more or less, incident to all ancient Writers whatsoever; and you do not usually charge the Obscurity, which arises from them, as a Fault upon them; I cannot see, with what Face of Justice you can pass this Censure upon the sacred Pen-men, many of which are the ancientest Writers in the World; who besides wrote in a Tongue in which there is so little extant, and that too in Ages, of which there are remaining so very few Memoirs.

Reasonableness of some Places being obscure.

5. But after all, the Obscurity of some Places in the Scriptures, is so far from being a Fault, that it is a peculiar Excellency in them, and an Instance of the Wisdom and Goodness of God, in ordering them to be composed after that Manner. It is highly requisite, that the prophetic Parts of Scripture should be somewhat obscure, and should be plainly intelligible only after the Completion; least, if they were before-hand understood, they might either seem to bear hard upon the Freedom of Man's Will,

or

or put God Almighty upon new Measures in his providential Dispensations; or lest the happy Predictions should elate Men with too much Joy and Presumption, and the calamitous ones depress them with a too desponding a Fear; neither of which are very reconcilable with the divine Methods in governing the World. It is not without manifest Wisdom designed, that some Passages of Scripture should be very difficult and obscure, to raise in Men a sacred Awe and Veneration for these Books, which would be more generally wanting in Men, if they were written with the bright Perspicuity of our common Authors. By this there is such a Sort of devotional Respect raised within us, as there is by the Gloominess of an ancient Church, which is not to be effected by the pleasant Lightfomness of other Buildings. By this Obscurity, likewise, God Almighty teaches us Humility, and puts us in mind of the Shallowness of our finite Understandings; shewing us, That it is owing to his good Will and Pleasure, That we have any Knowledge at all of divine Truths; That he reveals to us just as much as he pleases, and, at his Will, veils over the rest with Darkness. By the same Difficulties he gives us an Opportunity, of exercising our Diligence in these sacred Matters; for otherwise Men would be more lazy in the Business of their Salvation, nor would the divine Truths be so strongly imprinted upon their Minds, as when some of them, with so much Difficulty and Study, are to be found out in the Scriptures.

*Phil.* But methinks, *Credentius*, it is no light Objection against the Scriptural Books, that they are pregnant with so many impertinent Passages, as render them nauseous to every one, who has any true Taste of the Excellency of Style. It always shews the Prudence of a Writer, when he avoids every Thing that is trivial in an Argument or a Relation, and lets no Thought pass, but what is just and proper to the Business: But the Scriptural Writers give themselves up to an extravagant Loosness; they generally dwell long upon Matters very insignificant, and lightly slip over the most important. One can hardly have Patience with the Writer of the *Pentateuch*, when he makes such

a tedious dialoguing between *Abraham* and his Servants, *Joseph* and his Brethren, and the like; and passes over so many greater Occurrences of those early Times, which were much more proper to be recorded. Besides, the other Parts of the Bible are full of so many trivial Histories, Questions, Answers, and Remarks, that one may very well conclude; That it is so far from being a Collection of necessary and important Truths indited by God Almighty, that an impartial Reader cannot guess it to be the Work of wise and prudent Men. For *Herodotus* and *Thucydides*, *Salust* and *Livy*, who were assisted only by their own natural Parts, do never fall into such gross Faults and Absurdities. And who can think that God Almighty should act according to the Rules of such an adorable Wisdom in the Composition of the Body of every Plant, and Animal, as to make nothing superfluous in their whole Contexture; and yet, in the Book, which was indited for the Salvation of Mens Souls, he should suffer so great a Part of it to be trivial and foreign to the Purpose?

*The meanest Parts of Scripture are necessary to the Perfection of the whole.*

*Cred.* 1. And who can think, That you should be able to pass a just Judgment upon every Passage in Scripture, so as truly to pronounce that only such Things are written with Prudence and Design, and others impertinently? It requires a considerable Skill in Anatomy, to be able to give an account of the true Use of every Muscle in the Body, and whilst you are not, it may be, very exact in that Art, it will not become you dogmatically to assert that any one of those Muscles has no Use, because you do not understand it. I do not believe, that you have laid out more Time upon the Study of *Theology* than *Anatomy*; and therefore you should not pronounce any Book or Passage of Scripture, trivial or useless, before you have sufficiently examined it. Every Part of Scripture is not trivial, that does not immediately conduce to the Salvation of Mens Souls; any more than any Part of the Body can be said to be useless, which does not contribute to our vital Subsistence. A Man's Body may live and perform the most principal Operations of Life without Hair or Nails, without ten Fingers and two Eyes, but yet it will not be so perfect

perfect and beautiful as with them, nor so agreeable to the consummate Art and Wisdom of our *Divine Creator*. And so there is no doubt, but that Men *might be saved* without the Book of *Ruth*, or the History of *Isaac* and *Rebecca*, or *Joseph's* Captivity; but then it does not from hence follow, that therefore these *Relations* are perfectly uselefs and trivial. They would be freed from this Exception, if they were only to be looked upon as some remarkable *Memoirs* of the *Jewish History*, and as giving some Account of the Lives of very considerable Personages of that Nation. But when we consider together the whole Scheme of *God's providential Dispensation*, in sending the *Messias* into the World, and the *Methods*, he was pleas'd to take, in preparing the Way for it; how he first separated one Man's Family from his idolatrous Relations and Countrymen, and made his Off-spring to be the Standard of *true religious Worship* for many Ages, and from whose Loins the design'd *Saviour of the World* was to come; I say when we consider this, it is but reasonable to suppose, that some particular Account should be given of the Origin of this extraordinary Family, by which all the World has received such a wonderful Benefit in the Birth of *Jesus Christ*. Neither would the harmonious Correspondence of *God's Providence* have been so remarkably display'd, if the wonderful *Successes* and *Blessings* upon that *Family* and *House*, from which *Christ* descended, had not been recorded. So that, what you Wits are wont to make sport with, as a few simple and homely Family Stories, is in reality the noblest and most useful History in the World; and which the celebrated *Relations* of your *Themistocles's* *Cesar's*, and *Cleopatra's* are but poor Stuff, in comparison of. For what can be so noble, and so worthy of *Historical Relation*, as the Origin and Success of that Family, from whence arose the greatest *Person* that ever the World saw, and the greatest *Benefactor* that Mankind ever had?

*The Relation of the Family Affairs of the Patriarchs not trivial.*

2. You should consider further, that the *Holy Scriptures* are written in a plain and simple Style, accommodated to the Use of the Vulgar, and many Things in it written according to their way of speaking; so that what You Gentlemen, who have studied for the exact and elaborate Style,

*The Scriptural Writers do not intend to the intricate Exactness of Style.*

may call trivial, God Almighty approves of as wisely contrived for the Capacities of ordinary People, who may be best edified thereby. There is no doubt to be made, but if the Holy Ghost had designed to write the Bible for the pleasure of a Court, or to suit the Ears of curious Scholars, he would have composed some Parts of it in a more exact and castigated Style; but when he designed by it the universal Good of Mankind, he has thought it more advisable to consult the *Edification of poor Mens Souls*, than to avoid the Censure of some of You Criticks.

Exact writing of History a Grecian Art.

3. You should take notice further, That *that* exact Way of writing *History*, which you so much admire in the ancient *Heathens*, and undervalue the *Bible* for not coming up to, was a *Qualification* which Men of an *Eastern Education* must needs be Strangers to. *Writing of History* was an Art or Exercise, which the *Grecians* plaid Prizes and Trials of Skill for, at their *Olympick*, and other Games; and upon this account arrived to the nicest *Perfection* in. Here they learned to make their *feigned Speeches* and *Ethopæia's*, their *elaborate Descriptions*, their *curious Epiphonemata* and *Turns of Reflexion* upon the Matters they relate, and to throw out every Thing from the Relation, but what was fine and pompous, and had an Air of Majesty and Grandeur in it. Now I very much question, whether or no History was at all better'd by this gaudy Trimming, and whether the dry writing of Annals, and Matters of Fact, in their pure natural Simplicity, does not best conduce towards the End of History, *viz.* To inform Men of the Truth of Matters of Fact; which is better discovered in a plain and naked Representation, than under so much Paint and Varnish, as your celebrated Heathen Historians deliver it in. But be this as it will, the *Jewish* Historians are not at all to blame, for not being perfect in all the Niceties of the *Greek* Schools, where your admired Rules of History were only taught; or however *Moses*, and those other ancient Writers of the *Hebrew* Memoirs, may very well be excused for not pursuing those Methods in writing History, which were invented (long after their Time) by *Herodotus* and *Thucydides*.

4. You



4. You should also observe, That what you call impertinent and trivial in the Relation, is sometimes inserted there by the wisest Forecast and Design, to be either a Type, or a Prophecy, of something remarkable under the Gospel. Thus many Things about *Abraham* and *Sarah*, the Sacrifice of *Isaac*, the Captivity and Exaltation of *Joseph*, &c. are so particularly related, because God designed these Occurrences to be Shadows of many Things which happened afterwards in the Church of Christ; of his *In-carnation*, his *dying for the Sins of the World*, and his *Resurrection* and *Ascension*; which are, in a wonderful Similitude, prefigured in those ancient Matters of Fact. So that, if the Historian had forborn the Relation of these Circumstances, Christianity had wanted some considerable Evidences of its Truth; and the wise Scheme of God's Providence, in the Salvation of the World, had not been so amply display'd.

5. Other times, you may take that for an impertinent Relation, or trivial Digression, which is only a prophetic Exursion, in order to predict something of the Kingdom of Christ. You may fondly think, that the inspired Writer ought to go on with the secular Matter in the same Tract he began with; whilst the Holy Ghost does prudently turn him off to a new Series of Thought, and puts him upon predicting the glad Tidings of the Gospel. Now this is so far from being *impertinent* and *trivial*, that it is the most important Subject that inspired Writers can employ their Thoughts upon, and nothing can be so proper, and agreeable, to the great Design of *writing the revealed Word*.

6. And, if there be any other Particulars which are not so conformable to the general Design of the *History*, or *Argument* in Scripture, they are added either for *Confutation* of some *Heresy*, which the *Holy Ghost* did foresee in future Times would arise; or for the *Confirmation* of some *Truth*, which there would not be occasion, in another Place of Scripture, to justify; or to give an Account of some *Customs* in former Ages, which would be *advantageous* for the *Church of God*, in future Times, to know.

*Phil.*

*Phil.* This is pretty plausible, I confess. But how can you justify the *Scriptural Writers* from that *Crambe Repetita*, those nauseous *Repetitions* of the same Thing, which they are every where guilty of? If one was to take to Pieces the whole Book of *Psalms*, and strip it of its *Tautological Expressions*, one might reduce it, for ought I know, to a few Lines. All the *Major* and *Minor Prophets* run just in the same Note, only denouncing temporal Judgments against the sinful *Jews*; and not one of them advances one Step further. The *Sermons of Christ* are but the same Thing over and over, and all of them reduceable to two Words, *Faith* and *Repentance*. And so, as for the *Apostolick Epistles*, they are but just the same Lecture coldly repeated, only now and then a Word intermixed for the *Abolition* of the *Jewish Ceremonies*, after Christianity had set up for it self first at *Antioch*.

*Cred.* 1. But I should think, *Philologus*, that this sorry Kind of Reasoning or Banter, or what you please to call it, should be full as nauseous to the nice Gentlemen of your Way, as the Scripture Repetitions. Now supposing we should allow your Charge, *That Repetitions are more frequent in the Bible than in any other Book*. And is not there very good Reason for this? Were the *Holy Scriptures* all written by one Man, or at one Time? And what Fault or Undecency is it, that two *Prophets* or *Apostles* should say the same Things, any more than that the same History should be written by *Appian* and *Curtius*, or the same Arguments made Use of by *Aristotle* and *Cicero*? The Bible is not properly one Book, but a Collection of inspired Authors, in which it is to be expected that the same Things should be over again repeated, as we do in a Collection or Body of the *Greek* or *Roman* Historians.

2. But what, if several Things be reiterated, and that too by the same Authors? They are chiefly practical Duties, which can never be too sufficiently inculcated. Repentance and a good Life are Things which can never be talked to us too often; for, as to these Matters, Men do not want Information, but *Memento's* and *Admonitions*; and therefore, upon this Account, you do very ill to

*Repetitions owing to the different Authors who wrote the Scriptures.*

*Practical Duties ought to be repeated to Men's Minds.*

find

find Fault with the sacred Writings, when you should rather admire the Goodness of Almighty God, in condescending so graciously to our Infirmities, that, in every Page almost of his Holy Word, he affords us Instructions and Exhortations, to these great and momentous *Duties*, which we are so unhappily liable to fail in.

3. Other *Repetitions* there are in Scripture, which the *Holy Ghost* has with very great Wisdom made, thereby to suit his Exhortations to the several Interests, Capacities and Inclinations of Men. Some Places of Scripture are adapted to work upon Mens *Fears*, and others upon their Love; some exhort Men to the Obedience of God's Laws, by Arguments drawn from his *Justice*, by representing him a *jealous* and a *terrible God*; others perswade the same from his *Goodness* and *Mercy*, bespeaking him to be the *Lord, kind and merciful, and long-suffering, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort*. In some Men *Piety* and *Devotion* is raised, by contemplating the *Power* and *Wisdom* of God, in his *Creation* and *Providence*, as they are painted with the most noble Strains of Eloquence in the Book of *Job* and the *Psalms*; others are more moved by the Representation of his Love to Mankind, in sending his Son, which St. *John* so much dwells upon. Some Places exhort Men to be good from the *Reward*, others from the *Beauty of Vertue*; some exhibit the Danger, some the Turpitude, and others the Folly of Sin. One Text commends Sobriety from its temporal, another from its eternal Recompence; one represents Pride as contemptible to Men, others as hateful to God; and though there are many Texts which exhort to Charity, yet they do it upon distinct Grounds, some urging our Gratitude to a gracious God, some the Love of a suffering Saviour, some pleading our own Wants, and natural Tendernefs and Compassion, others our indispenfible Duty, and others our Interest. Now you may call this *nauseous Repetition*, or what other ill Name you please, but, in Reality, the Wisdom of God is as beautifully display'd in this, as in the other Parts of his Providence. The Creation itself is not more wisely and more curiously adorned,

by

*Some Things diversly urg'd to suit with Men's Inclinations.*

by all the wonderful Variety of Plants and Animals, than the Scriptures are delightfully furnished, with all possible Variety of Arguments for a good Life, and the Love of God.

Heathen  
Authors as  
much sub-  
ject to Re-  
petitions.

4. But since you talk of *nauseous Repetition*, I pray, good Sir, how will you be able to clear your beloved Heathen Moralists from this Imputation. *Seneca* is most eminently notorious for this Fault: He tumbles and tosses about one single Thought for a Page or two together; he feeds his Reader with nothing but whipt Cream, with a very little Sense frothed out into a Multitude of Words. So that if he does not repeat the same Words, he repeats the same Sense over and over with a Vengeance. And if you would but strip your divine *Plato* too of all his unintelligible Rant; and turn all his rhetorical Flights into common Sense, you will find but a very little Room taken up by it. It may be, I grant, that *Cicero* and *Plutarch*, and some others of them, write more closely, and argue more justly; yet, even they, have as much of the *Crambe Repetita* as their Neighbours. Whilst you may observe, in the Holy Scripture, a great Variety of Arguments for a good Life, some drawn from a temporal, others from an eternal Reward; from the Fear, from the Love of God, from the Hopes of Heaven, from the Fears of Hell, from the Gratitude to our Saviour, from the Sense of our Consciences, and the Dignity of our Christian Calling; you can see nothing like this Variety in these Moralists, they go backwards and forwards with their *Honestum* and *Decorum*, and so on to the End oftentimes of a long Treatise.

Scripture  
indicated  
from this  
Imputation.

5. As to what you reflect upon the Writings of the Prophets and Apostles, and the Sermons of our blessed Lord himself; the Calumny is perfectly groundless. For there is no such nauseous Repetition in the prophetic Writings, as you pretend. Indeed there are, in all of them, many of the same general Arguments against Sin, drawn from the Anger and Vengeance of God, who was provoked by the Sin of the Jews, which is no more than could be expected; for the Prophets were the Preachers

chers of those Times, who were set up by God to warn Men against their Sins; and therefore all those Prophets, in their respective Ages, make Use of the most proper and most popular Arguments, to dehort them from their wicked Courses. But these Arguments are urged in as different a Manner as can be, unless you would have each Prophet to invent new Heads of Divinity, to preach upon. When Judgments are denounced, they are sometimes

*The Pro-  
phets.*

against the *People*, sometimes against the *Priests*, and other-times against the *Kings*: At one time against *Judah* or *Israel*, another time against *Edom* or *Aegypt*. One Prophecy reprehends them for their *Pride*, another for their *Idolatry*, and another for the *Profanation of the Sabbath*. Sometimes they are threatned with *War*, sometimes with *Pestilence*, other times with *Scarcity*, and sometimes with *Want of Prophets*, or the *Famine of the Word*, Amos viii.

II. One Prophecy gives them the joyful News of a *Restoration from their Captivity*, another of their *Redemption by the Messias*, and others do foretell the *Person*, the *Sufferings*, the *Kingdom* and *Exaltation of Christ*. One is weeping over the old *Jerusalem*, another is ravished with the Thoughts of the new. In some Places the *Jews* are upbraided for their Folly in trusting in an Arm of Flesh, and in others for their Sottishness in worshipping Images. Now, methinks, it should carry with it an Air of too much Confidence to assert, that the Prophets do all say the same Thing, over and over, when there is such a wonderful Variety of fresh Matter in them, as is hardly to be parallel'd elsewhere.

*Christ and  
his Apostles.*

But 'tis a Jest of an Argument, when you object against our Saviour's Sermons, that he preached nothing but Faith and Repentance. And what if he did not? There would have been fresh Matter enough, in those two great Heads of the Gospel, to have spoken upon; for all the Gospel Graces are reduced to these. Now would it not be a poor Objection, rais'd against *Aristotle*, to say there is nothing but *Substance* and *Accident* in all his Books; when 'tis known that the Philosopher himself would have willingly owned the Charge, he himself ha-

ving

ving divided every thing in Nature into these grand Branches? But our Saviour (as likewise his Apostles) did not dwell altogether upon these Graces in general, he runs thro' all the particular Duties of *Morality*, and exactly states them, according to the Measures of the best, and most exalted *Reason*. And give me leave further to say, that in the short Compass of our Saviour's Sermon upon the Mount, there is couched more good Matter, and more solid Truth, than in all your Greek and Latin Philosophers put together. And you will find proportionably the like, in the Epistles of the Apostles; if you will vouchsafe to read them as carefully, as you should.

*Phil.* But still, *Credentius*, I want that desirable Thing call'd *good Reasoning* in all Parts of the Scripture. When I read a Piece of *Cicero's* Morality, I cannot but be in love with the Duties he recommends; he makes them to be so agreeable to my Reason, so conformable to my Nature, or my State and Condition in the World, that methinks I am charmed into the Practice of them, whether I will or no. He shews me so much beautiful *Order* and *Harmony*, and Agreeableness with the Laws of Nature in every Virtue; such an ugly Unproportionableness in Vice, such an Incongruity with and Disturbance to Nature; as makes, in the Eyes of every rational Man, the one to look lovely and delightful, and the other monstrous and abominable. But the scriptural Writers are not Masters of this noble *Qualification*, they honestly enough tell Men what they should do, but give them no Reason for it; and, when Men have their Passions and their Interests on their side, they think they have Reason enough against it. But, however, though Men should be really convinced of their Duty by this, yet bare Authority can never have that Influence upon Mens Lives, as a rational Persuasion.

*Cred.* I think, *Philologus*, I shall never be able to wean you from this *Heathen Rationality*, as if no *Morality* was to be taught, out of the Mode of the ancient Philosophers. Indeed the Scriptural Writers do not make use of the exact philosophick Phraseology, they are Strangers to their Cant of *Summum Bonum*, *Honestum*, *Turpe*, &c. But when they

they teach *Moral Duties*, they argue altogether as justly, and upon more solid Principles, than the other. Are not the Arguments, which *Moses* uses, to engage the Jews to a Compliance with the *Laws* which God enjoyned them, drawn from the Obligation they owed him from his Creation of them, from his delivering them from Bondage, and making them his chosen People; from the Prosperity which their Obedience would procure, and the certain Calamities which their Disobedience would entail upon them; are not these as cogent Arguments to persuade a Nation to comply with those wholsom *Laws*, as to have talked to them of the *Bravery of Vertue*, and the *Deformity of Vice*? Are not the Arguments, which the *Prophets* use, more rationally adapted to make the People leave their Sins, when they denounce such terrible Judgments against them, and tax them with such vile Ingratitude, such brutish stupid Idolatry, and such other rousing *Motives to Repentance*; than if, in the *philosophical* Way, they had read them only some cold flat Lectures of the *happy Life*, and the *Beatitude of the philosophical Vertue*? Are not our Saviour's Parables all noble Reasonings, which by a peculiar Excellency, in a short Similitude, do better oftentimes state all the particular Cases of a moral Duty, than they were done in whole Treatises, which the *Philosophers* had written on them before? All the *philosophick Disquisitions* in the world, are not comparable to that one *Reason* of our Saviour, *What shall it profit a Man to gain the whole World and lose his own Soul?* That single Precept of our blessed Lord, *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, that shall ye do unto them*, is such a noble Instance of the truest and most exalted Reasoning, as no *Philosophy* but the Christian can boast of, and the Heathens in latter Ages were forced to mend theirs by. What can be more genuine *Reasoning*, than those Reflexions our Saviour made upon the *pharisaical Doctrines*, and the Improvements he gave to *Morality*? What can be more rational than *St. Paul's* State of the Case, about the *Observation of Jewish Ceremonies*, that of *Justification by Works*; and the Case of the *Idolothyta*, and the *incestuous Person*? Nay, dip where you will

*Scriptures  
make use  
of rational  
arguments.*

will in the Bible, and see if you do not every where find such powerful Arguments against a wicked Life, and such mighty Encouragements to Holiness, that nothing but an obdurate Heart, an inveterate Prejudice, and poison'd Principles, can stand Proof against. In short, there is as much, and much better *Reasoning* in the *Scriptures* than in other Books; which is visible enough to all who will make Allowances for the Eastern Way of *Expression* and *Argumentation*; and I don't find, that the *Greek* and *Latin* Books exceed them in any Thing, but in *Declamatory Sentences*, and a spruce Set of *philosophick Phrases*.

Though  
they have  
not that  
Need of it  
as other  
Books.

But though the *Holy Scriptures* were as destitute of *Reasoning*, as you pretend, yet the *Authority* of God Almighty, which they are grounded upon, is instead of a thousand *Arguments* and *Reasonings*. For all Reasoning whatsoever upon *Moral Duties* does center here; and whatsoever I conclude by Reason morally to oblige, comes but at last to this, that God has ordered it so. For Instance, my Reason traces it out, that *Justice* is a Duty, because Man, who is naturally ordained for Society and cannot live without it, and because the World is so contrived, that if this were laid aside, it would be all Tumult and Confusion; therefore I conclude, That God, in framing the World, designed that Men should practice this Vertue of Justice, without which there would be no tolerable living in the World. Now after all this Trouble of thinking and laying my Thoughts together, I gain only to know thus much, That God has order'd me to be *just in my Dealings*, which by God's Word I learn at one View, and which I think is none of the least Advantages. And therefore, if the Scripture had not, in any Place, otherwise than commanded us our Duty, it was sufficient to give us a full Persuasion of it; and that by a shorter and better Method, as grounding it immediately upon the *Authority* of God, which all *rational Deductions* must come up to at last, though by a long round-about Course.

*Phil.* I have one Thing more to except against upon this Head, and that is, *That I mightily stumble at the many Contradictions which are found in Scripture.* It is intolerable



lerable in a meer human Writer to make a Slip of this Nature ; because it argues not only a supine Incogitancy, but a Want of Truth. Then how can we bear with these Faults in those *Books*, which you pretend were written by the Assistance of the *Holy Ghost* ?

*Cred.* But by your Leave, Sir, I think you run away with Matters a little too fast, without that due Consideration of them that they deserve ; which I fancy you will be convinced of, if you will give your self Time more deliberately to think of them than I believe you have hitherto done.

1. For you should consider that though there possibly were some little Contradictions in Scripture, yet these are not in any material Points, that do at all affect the Main of Religion ; and therefore you should from thence take Notice, that it is no very wise Undertaking to make Use of such an Argument against Christianity, which if granted, would do it no Manner of Diskindness. Indeed, if you could prove that one Part of the Scripture said, *that Jesus Christ was born of a Virgin*, and another after the ordinary Manner of Generation ; if one Evangelist should say, *that he arose from the Dead*, and another, *that he lies buried in such a Place* ; this would be an Objection, which the Infidels might make some Use of ; because it would overthrow the very Foundation of Christianity, when it should be shewn that the History of the principal Articles of it were uncertain. But for such little Sort of verbal Contradictions, as you hint at, some small interfering in Chronology and Account of Time ; this should methinks break no Squares in any Writing whatsoever ; for there were never two Authors who have recorded the same Matters of Fact, but have differed from one another in many Points of this Nature. And it shews, that you are very hard put to it in your piqueering against Scripture, to find Fault with it, for such Things, which neither you, nor any Body else, would blame in another Book.

*No Contradiction in a material Point in Scripture.*

*Some slight Contradictions, Proof of the Genuineness of Scripture.*

2. You should take Notice that these little seeming Contradictions are so far from invalidating the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, that they do in a great Measure

contribute to support it. If the Scriptures had been written by a Cabal of Men, who had designed to have imposed upon the World, they would most undoubtedly have used all Circumspection and Caution, that nothing like a Contradiction should have appeared in their divers Relations; nay they would have contrived them to have been as like to one another, as two Tallies are. For nothing is wont to be so exact as a studied Cheat. And therefore it is a great Argument of the *Veracity* of these Writers, that they agree with one another so uniformly in all principal Points, and neglect an Exactness in some little *Punctillio's*, which nothing but a Confederacy could have made them agree upon.

*All seeming Contradictions satisfactorily solved.*

3. And even these small Difficulties, which you call *Contradictions*, are very satisfactorily solved by *Christian* Writers, if you will but give yourself the Pains to consult them; either by shewing the different Acceptation of the Words or Expressions in the seemingly interfering Places, by settling the *Chronological Accounts*, by comparing them with other Parts of Scripture, that have an Analogy with them, or by other *good Rules of Interpretation and Criticism*; which are wont to be unexceptionable in the Explication of all other Authors.

*There could not but be such seeming Contradictions arising from ancient Customs.*

4. And it is but reasonable to suppose that there should be some of these seeming *Contradictions*, if we consider the different Customs and Ways of speaking, which were in use in those former Ages, and which are now forgot; which might determine the Expressions of Scripture to a certain Sense, which for our Ignorance of them we cannot now so conveniently put upon them. So that some Expressions, which are now seemingly repugnant, might be more easily reconciled, if we were conscious of those *Usages*, to which one of them might probably *metaphorically* allude.

*Hebrew Tongue.*

Besides, we know the *Hebrew Tongue* is a very narrow Language, and one Word has sometimes a great many Significations, which, being put into *Greek*, as in the *New Testament*, is supposed to retain all those Significations still; so that when two Places are seemingly contradictory, they may frequently be made to agree, by giving the same

Word

Word one of its Significations in the first Place, and another of them in its second. This docs commonly enough happen in the *Greek* and *Latin*, and particularly in our own Language; and if we should be so peevishly critical, as some Men are upon the Bible, there is hardly one Book whatsoever wrote, but some such verbal Contradictions may be picked up out of it.

Add to this, that Accounts of Time are so difficult to be stated, the supernumerary Months of Kings Reigns do often puzzle the general *Computations*, the numeral Figures are so liable to be mistaken, and the *Jewish* Years do not exactly quadrate with the *Grecian*, either as to their Length or their Beginning; that it is no Wonder that in the Middle of these Difficulties, there are to be found many seeming Repugnancies in the Chronology of Scripture. But this is no more than is oftentimes to be found in *modern Histories*, and yet we do not pretend to take away the Credit of them upon this Account.

*Phil.* I must confess *Credentius*, you have given some not very improbable Solutions, to the Objections we are used to raise against the Writings of the Bible, and I cannot but own that those Books are not liable to all those Absurdities, which are sometimes charged upon them. But though you have pretty tolerably rubb'd off these Imputations against Scripture, yet still there is something sticks behind, and lies very hard upon my Mind, and that is the very great Multitude of Objections these Books are subject to. When an Abundance of Imputations and hard Things are laid to a Man's Charge, though by the Dexterity of his Wit, or Luckiness of his Circumstances, he may chance to hit them all off tolerably well; yet still Men will be apt to suspect something worse of him, because it is hardly supposable that so great a Number of Allegations should never be charged against one of a perfect Integrity. And in the like Manner I urge in the Case of the Holy Scriptures; that though the Objections against these Books may be wiped off with tolerable *Solutions*, which the Wit of Divines and prejudiced Christians have put their Brains to rack to think upon for this

Purpose; yet one cannot imagine why the Bible, of all the Books in the World, should be most liable to these Exceptions. When I read a Piece of *Livy* or *Florus*, every Thing lies easy upon me as I go, the *Matters of Fact*, carry Probability with them, and the *Arguments* Solidity; and I am never troubled with those cumbersome Objections, but at every Step, in reading the Bible, I am forced to stand in Need of the *Criticks* to remove for me. This is a Thing I cannot tell what to make of; though I should not be able to convict these *Writers* of downright Falsity and Imposture, yet methinks if they had plain Truth of their Side, they could never be involved in so many Difficulties and Perplexities.

*Cred.* But if this be all which sticks with you, *Philologus*, I think I shall be able to give you a satisfactory Account, why the Holy Scriptures are more liable to Exceptions than other Books; which I shall shew do not arise from the Fault of the *Authors* who compos'd them, but from the necessary *Circumstance* and *Nature* of these *Writings*, and the Passions and Prejudices of Men.

*Scripture  
has more  
Difficulties  
than other  
Books from  
the strange-  
ness of the  
Language,  
Matter,  
&c.*

1. It is but very reasonable to suppose, that a Book written so many Ages ago, since which, all the Circumstances of the World have undergone so mighty a Change; a Book written in a Language, which bears so little Analogy with those we converse in; a Book which delivers new and many unheard-of Doctrines, which the World would be a Stranger to, without they were read here; That speaks of many *mysterious Points* concerning the *Divine Nature*, and the surprizing *Dispensations* of *God's Providence*; That gives us an Account of a *Spiritual Kingdom* and another *World*, which in this imperfect State we can have no exact Notices of. Now I say, It is but reasonable to suppose, That a Book of this Nature should be more liable to *Difficulties* and *Exceptions*, than one written after the usual Way of Speaking on this Side the World, and which talks only of the ordinary Matters we usually converse about. Men cannot but now and then stick, upon framing their Minds to these lofty Ideas, and in bringing these unusual Expressions to the Level of our ordinary Languages.

2. And

2. And besides, there is another very good Reason why, sometimes, there is more Difficulty in coming to the Knowledge of some Passages of Scripture than of other Books; which is the great Number of those who have commented upon this Book, and variously interpreted Places quoted out of it. For oftentimes Annotators upon Scripture, discover too great a *Vanity*, in being desirous to find out some new *Interpretation* of a Text; and others do falsely *interpret* it, to make good a fond Opinion, or to support a Cause. Now whereas there have been such a World of *Interpreters* upon the Bible, more than upon any other Book, and the Passages of it are more diversly explained; it is but reasonable to suppose, That some Men who have not the exactest Judgments, when they have before them all those divers *Explications*, should be more puzzl'd in understanding Scripture, than some other Books. But however, the Fault of this is not to be charged upon the Holy Scriptures, but upon human Infirmary and Passion? And any other Book might be liable to the same Misfortunes, if it was placed in the same Circumstances, and had so many disagreeing Opinions, to rack and tenter the Sense of it.

3. And so likewise, there is another very good Reason why we should expect, That there should be more Objections raised against the Authority of the Scriptural Books, and the Doctrines contained in them, than are against any other in the World. Because there is no other Author in the World, that it is so many Men's Interest to sink the Credit of, as of the Bible. All the wicked Men in the World are of a Party against these Writings, it is their Interest to have them prov'd Impostures, and then they think they can sin on securely. It is no Wonder, that lewd Men have no Set of Objections against the Books of *Livy* and *Florus*, because these Books are no Check upon them, for their Drinking and Whoring; but the Gospel, which so strictly obliges to *Temperance* and *Chastity*, and denounces eternal Damnation against *Drunkenness* and *Adultery*, must needs have all the Wits of these sensual Wretches at Work against it; for their Consciences will

*From the  
Multitude  
of Interpre-  
ters.*

*From the  
Deign of  
Wicked  
Men to op-  
pose it.*

never let them be quiet, either till they leave their Sins or disbelieve the Bible; the former they are resolved not to do, and therefore they set all Hands amain to fish for Arguments to gain them the glorious Comfort of Infidelity. If the Bible had said nothing against their Sins, they would have had nothing to say against the Bible; or if the History of *Livy* or *Florus* did give a like Curb to Sensuality, they would not want something to say to invalidate the Credit of those Books; they would quickly be ready to give out, that all *that* Roman Story was contrived by some cunning *Esdras* or other, or some pious Deceiver, to support thereby the Designs of Priestcraft, and to tyrannize over Men's Minds by bugbear Tales.

And now, *Philologus*, before I have done with you upon this Head, that I may engage you to a better liking of the Holy Scriptures, and to a more pleasurable reading of those sacred Tracts; I would advise you to one or two Things, which, if you and other Persons of your Way would observe, I am sure, That the Scriptures would stand fairer in your good Opinions, than now they do.

Unbelievers would like Scripture better if they would forbear drolling upon it

*First*, I would advice you against drolling and ridiculing Scripture. You ought to avoid this Practice, only because it is an Un-gentleman-like Quality, and makes you guilty of a great deal of Rudeness in speaking contemptuously of those Writings, which all Christians, whom you live amongst, have the greatest Respect and Veneration for. Why do not you make Reflections, upon the Reputation of the Fathers, and the Wives of the Gentlemen you converse with, as well as to make Sport with their Faith and the Doctrines of their Redeemer; which to all good Men are equally dear with the other? And I wonder, any Man that pretends the least to good breeding, should be guilty of such barbarous Incivility, as to put a good Man's Soul to that Pain, which he sustains at your playing upon God's Word.

But I must further tell you, that by this Practice you put a plain Cheat upon your own Judgment, and will not suffer yourself to consider the Scripture, as it is in itself, but as you wantonly represent it; and, whilst you

continue to do so, you are no more able to judge of the Arguments and Style of Scripture, than a Man can judge of the Colours of Things, through a pair of red Spectacles. For then you do not criticise upon the Scriptures, but only upon that awkward Thing that you are pleased to dress up for it. I pray, Sir, do you think, that any Man was able to judge of the Excellency of *Virgil*, by *Virgil in Travesty*? Could any one find out the Perfections of that noble *Poet*, the Liveliness of his Descriptions, the Spirit and Propriety of his Speeches, and those constant Rules of Decency, he, above most other Writers, is observant of; by that ridiculous Figure, which that gallant Poem is moulded into, by the ingenious Burlesquer. What a wretched silly Thing does *Virgil's* Hero appear, in that antick Dress? And the bravest Character in the World, by the Means of that ludicrous Art, is turned into a mere Fool and a Monkey. And it is just the same Thing, when you pick out Passages of Scripture, and dress them up after this Rate. Do you think, that then you can pass a true Judgment upon them? No, Sir, you only consider your own awkward Representation, and fallaciously persuade your Mind, to think the Scriptures as contemptible, as you have pictured them. The only Way to give them a just consideration, is seriously to read them, and to let them speak their own Sense, without any of such artificial Mimickry; and then, I am sure, they will appear solid and reasonable enough, to all wise and well-disposed Men.

*Secondly*, I would advise you to read the Scriptures, in the original Languages they were written in; and then you will discover a Number of Beauties in the Stile of these *Books*, which are hid from you now, and which will render the reading of them much more pleasant to you. Or however you should make yourself acquainted with the *Jewish* Customs and Phrases, by studying the *Books* of learned *Hebrew Criticks*, which will render the Usages and Expressions of that Nation more familiar to your Mind; so that by this you will be *better pleased*, with the *Allusions* and *Phraseology* of these sacred *Writings*, than you were before.

*If they would study it in the Original Languages.*

If they  
would lead  
a good Life.

Thirdly, To have a true Taste of the *Scripture Style*, and to read it with the utmost Agreeableness and Pleasure, you should take Care to practice the *Gospel Virtues*. It is impossible that a sincerely good Man, of any Persuasion whatsoever, should not read the sacred *Writings* with some Satisfaction and Pleasure; for let him be never so much an Infidel to the *Christian Religion*, yet, if he have a Mind truly *virtuous* and *good*, he cannot but be affected here, with that Spirit of Piety and Love of God, with those noble Strains of *Devotion* and *Zeal* for *Virtue* and *God's Honour*, and with those excellent Rules for a *Holy Life*, which are not to be found in other *Books*. No Man can be unaffected at reading these Things in the *Holy Scriptures*, but those who by an ill Life shew they have no Value for them; and I am confident *Philologus*, by as much *Pagan Morality* as I see you to profess, you cannot but sometimes, in your Mind, afford them some Manner of Esteem. But if you would proceed further in a Course of *Christian Goodness*, if you would come to practice that Meekness and Self-denial, that Forgiveness of Injuries and loving Enemies, those frequent Returns of Devotion, that Charitableness to our Neighbour, that Contempt of the World, and the ardent Love of God which the Gospel teaches; you would think the *Holy Scriptures*, which enforce these Duties by the most powerful Arguments, to be the most delightful Book to read in the World. A pious Man's Soul will be inflamed with a sweet and most pleasing Passion, when he beholds such a lively Copy of these Virtues set forth, in the Life of the blessed *Jesus*; to read how meek he was under his Reproaches, how patient under his Sufferings, and how fervent in his Devotions; how zealous for *God's Honour*, how charitably good to the Distressed, and what a generous Lover of, and a Benefactor to the Souls of Mankind. Such a Person, when he observes what a Christian Bravery and noble Contempt of Death is to be found in the Lives and Writings of the Apostles, what admirable *Arguments* for a *good Life*, and the *Sufferings* for *Christ's Sake*; he cannot but feel his Soul warmed, and in a Manner transported, with an unexpressible



expressible Pleasure, far superior to any that is to be attained, by reading the most eloquent of the *Heathen Books*. For these only please the Fancy for a while, by an agreeable chiming of Words, and Turn of Thought; but the other give us that solid Joy, and Satisfaction, which the Reflections of a good Conscience, and the Hopes of Heaven will afford.

*Of the Truth and Excellency of the Christian Religion.*

*Cred.* **W**HAT is the Reason of all this musing, *Philologus*? What terrible Objections are we to be attack'd with next?

*Phil.* Why, truly, *Credentius*, I am studying what to say further to you; but you have beat me off from every hold, that I am at a Loss, what Branch of Infidelity to lay hold upon at last. I am now neither Pagan nor Christian, my Soul hangs in a perfect *Equilibrium*; it trembles sometimes to this, and sometimes to the other Side, and knows not where to fix. Add now but a little more Weight to turn the Scale, give me, I beseech you, but some positive Proof of the Truth of Christianity, after you have so fairly answered the Objections against it; and then, my dear *Credentius*, I am your Convert for ever. Oh! Were it as much in my Power as I am willing to be a Christian; I am thoroughly persuaded, that there is that solid Comfort and Satisfaction in a true Christian Holiness; that to enjoy it I could be willing to be deceived into your Belief. There is such a Peacefulness and Serenity of Mind in living a Life of the strictest Virtue, and such a ravishing Delight in the Assurance of everlasting Happiness; that I really would endeavour to attain this Satisfaction, tho' there were nothing in it but the pleasing Phantasm and Delusion.

*Cred.* God be thanked, that you are come to this Temper, and may the Grace of his Holy Spirit finish the Work that is begun in you. If God of his infinite Goodness may haply make me an Instrument to your  
Good.

Good, I shall think these Hours I have spent in discoursing with you upon these Subjects, the best laid out of any Time of my whole Life. But there are so many excellent Books already written upon the Subject you are now putting me upon; that I think you had better have Recourse to them for Satisfaction in this Matter; and probably you cannot be a Stranger to their Arguments already, only you want, it may be, to consider them more attentively.

*Phil.* I beseech you, my good *Credentius*, not to deny me this last Request, as you have been already successful, I pray go on, to compleat your Conquest over me. If you do not perfectly make a Convert of me now, I am in great Danger of relapsing, when my Infidel Acquaintance have sprung new Scruples in my Head. As to the reading Books in Defence of the Christian Religion, I must confess to my Shame I have hardly ever read any; since I was settled in Infidelity, I have always been afraid of such Books, for Fear of unhinging my Mind, and making me not to be such a thorough-paced Unbeliever, as I was willing to be. And since that Time my Trade has been, not to hear what has been said for Christianity, but to pick up every Thing which can be said against it.

*Cred.* I am sorry you have been driving so ungodly a Trade, and I hope in God for the future, you will better employ those excellent Parts God has blessed you with. Though by the Bye, I cannot but admire that your Gentlemen should think Infidelity so fine a Thing, as to be afraid of losing it; and that they should talk so much against the Christian Religion, when they have never given themselves the Trouble of understanding the Grounds of it. But, since you have laid this new Task upon me, I will endeavour to do you what Service I can; and will lay before you some few principal Arguments, to satisfy you of the Unreasonableness of your Unbelief of the Truth, and Excellency, of the Christian Religion.

*Argument I.*

It is no inconsiderable Argument, to prove the Unreasonableness of your Infidelity, and the Truth of that holy Religion you are wont to oppose; to consider the Silliness of that Scheme of Principles, which you go upon. Were our Christian Grounds such loose and precarious Things, as your Infidel ones are, what an Out-cry would you raise against us? But all your Contradictious Huddle of fanciful Dreams and Surmises must be deemed, forsooth, not Belief, but good Sense and Reasonings. I know it a fundamental Article of your Religion to believe nothing, (that is) nothing which you don't believe; but then you have a very long Creed of your own, made out of Mr. *Hobbs's* dogmatical *Pronunciations*, and *Spinosa's* confident Assertions. You think it too great a strain for your Belief to own, that the World was made by the Creation and Contrivance of a wise and good God; but then you can easily close with the Contradictious Hypotheses of atheistical Philosophers, that this World is nothing, but God himself tumbled and tossed in Variety of Figures, and separated into so many diverse Parts as there are different material Beings; tho' at the same time the Pains and Follies, Imperfections and Deformities of these *Things* shew, that they can be no more but poor and dependent Creatures of an all-happy, impassible, all-sufficient Being, who you have Faith to believe is passible by the meanest Part of his Creation. You cannot vouchsafe to believe the Scripture-History, That all Mankind have descended within this six thousand Years from one Original; but then you can credit their impossible Assertion, that make the World eternal; tho' 'tis plain it would have been over-stocked Millions of Years ago; and when you are urged with this Difficulty, you can believe as many Plagues and Deluges to obviate this Objection, as you please. Above all the things in the World you cannot believe a Miracle; but you can believe, that this wonderful Thing which was thus indubitably asserted, was done by some uncommon Power of Nature;

*Drawn from the foolish Scheme of Infidel Principles.*

*Groundless Objections of the Infidels against Christianity.*

Nature; that the long Day in *Joshua's* Time came to pass by the Refraction of the solar Rays; and that the Blind and Lame in the Gospel were healed (and the Dead too, I suppose, raised) by the Fancy of the Patients. You cannot believe that Christ rose from the Dead; tho' he was talked to by some, and handled by others, frequently conversed with by his Disciples, and viewed by 500 Christians, many of which laid down their Lives for this Testimony; yet you can believe a simple Jewish Forgery, that his Disciples stole away his Body from amid't the Guards; tho' 'tis plain, the Day before they had not Courage enough to stay with him at his Trial. It is too hard a thing to persuade you, that the Mosaical and the Prophetical Books were written by those ancient Persons, whom the Jewish Nation, among whom the Authors lived, have always ascribed them to; but you can believe that some few *atheistical Criticks*, who lived many thousand Years after, can assign them a *better Original*; and that *Esdra*s, after the *Captivity*, wrote all those *Books*, which the *Jews* thought were written so long before; partly to aggrandize the Office of the *Priesthood*, and the *Jewish Race*, and partly to exercise his Faculty of *Writing*.

*Their foolish Scheme of Morality.*

And as you oppose that revealed *Religion*, which we profess, by such a silly and groundless Set of *Suppositions*, which no wise Man, upon consideration, can assent to; so you shew as little Reason in drawing out that Scheme of natural *Religion*, which you pretend to advance in Opposition to the *Christians*. You raise trifling Objections against our *Saviour's Doctrines*; but what do you say to these extravagant *Paradoxes* and *Irregularities* in the *Books* and *Lives* of your *Philosophers*, that you so much depend upon? Can you find a compleat Rule of *Morals* among them, whose Lives were oftentimes an Habit of Lewdness, and whose *Books* still will make us blush? You reject the Splendor of *Christianity*, which has brought Life and Immortality to Light; and are content to take up with a miserable Uncertainty about a future State, depending only upon slight *Philosophical Conjectures*, which after all have little or no Influence upon your Party; but

as I have heard them frequently affirming, that they believed that their Horses had as great a Share of *Immortality* as themselves. What is all your *rational Morality*, you are wont sometimes to boast your selves so of, but only a little vain, uncertain and partial Reasoning? What is that Principle of Honour which you so much extol, but only an unregenerate Pride and a scorning to do like the rest of the World? With you *Virtuous*, is nothing else but reputable, and what the *Country* and the *Persons* you live among, esteem; therefore among Libertines you make no Conscience of being lewd, though you are ashamed it may be to be knavish; and when you are out of the Eyes of Men, who might censure you for it; you stick not to defame or defraud, to stab or poison, or to commit any of the most execrable Villany, or Lewdness, that can be named. For in this Case the Spur of *Reputation*, which is your only Motive, is gone; and a Man may have the Credit of being *Virtuous* in the Eye of the *World*, though he be never so wicked in the Dark. *Drunkennes* is frequently among the Gentlemen of your way reasoned into no Vice, because it is a sociable and inoffensive Pleasure; and *Whoredom* is made blameless, for being but a Compliance with natural Inclination. Nay the most *abominable* Lusts, which Christians must not name, have their *Advocates* for them among you. By the Help of your *natural Religion*, you can find *Reasons* to slight and despise your *Wives*, and advance young *Whores* over their Heads, for no other Reason but that they are younger or handsomer; you can find *Reasons* to betray and undermine your *Friends*, when Self-interest comes in the way; and to justify the most ungenerous Revenge and outrageous Cruelty, because *Honour* forsooth is reflected upon.

Now, I pray, *Philologus*, consider, if any reasonable Man, upon *serious Thought*, can take up with these Principles. Methinks it should be a most *convincing Argument* of the *Truth* of our *Religion*, that Men, who are so maliciously set against it should so weakly oppose it; and that those, who are for *pulling down Christianity*, are for *advancing a Scheme of pretended Morality*, which is made  
up

up of nothing but Passion, and Lewdness, and Inconfistency. How can you in Justice oppose that *Religion* which you have nothing, or but the silliest things, to say against? How can you pretend to regulate your Practice by those Principles, which open a Door to all the Villany in the World? Most certainly if our *Religion* was a Cheat, you would be able to find out some stronger *Objections* to attack it with; and if your Set of Principles were the true Religion, they should methinks gain some holier Professors, than most of those are, who are wont to cry them up. Come, come, *Philologus*, don't impose upon your self any longer; it is easier to believe the *Christian Creed*, than all those *philosophical Paradoxes* and *bantering Stuff*, which the Infidels advance against it; but, as for the *Doctrines* which our *Religion* teaches, they tend to make Men *good* and *sober*; whilst yours are calculated only for the Use of *Rakes*, and *Libertines*.

*Phil.* I am sorry our Party should have given so great Cause for this Censure. But what is your next Argument.

### Argument II.

*Drawn from the Harmony of the Parts of Christianity.*

*Cred.* My next Argument shall be drawn, from the extraordinary *Harmony of the Parts, of the Christian Religion*. There is hardly any Lye or Mistake, but what has one Part of it clashing and interfering with another, and it seldom or never happens, that any thing but Truth is solely of a Piece with it self. Therefore it is a considerable Proof, that Christianity is no Forgery; because, among such Variety of Parts, so much History, so many moral Doctrines and Articles of Faith, there is nothing to be found repugnant or contradictory. For, most certainly, no Man ever told a Lie so long as the whole Bible, but that he would contradict himself a hundred times over, and discover many most manifest Marks of the Imposture. But when we further consider, what a wonderful *Harmony* runs thro' the whole Scheme of Christianity, and how surprizingly agreeable

able one Part of it is with another, to such a Degree, as is impossible that the Wit or Subtilty of Man should ever contrive, this gives us perfect Demonstration of its divine Original, and does as strongly convince a considering Man, that the *Gospel* was taught by God, as he is persuaded that the World was made by him. For as it is impossible, that such a wisely contrived World could ever be made by any Thing but by an all-wise God; so it is likewise impossible, that an Institution of such admirable Beauty, and Symmetry of Parts, as the Christian, should owe its Frame to any Thing less than the same divine Wisdom. Should we grant you for once, that the Apostles might invent some few sham Stories about Jesus Christ his Birth and Resurrection, and feign some wonderful Actions done by him; yet it is as impossible for them to have contrived the whole Scheme of Christianity, as it had been for them to have made the World. Here are an Hundred Things in this wise Dispensation, that surpass all human Foresight and Capacity; and we discover many wonderful Correspondencies in it, which it is impossible that any Man before Hand could have thought of, had he been to have erected such a Scheme; unless you will suppose, that Men could combine together, who lived near two Thousand Years asunder. I will instance, in some Particulars, that you may clearly see the Force of this Argument. There is an extraordinary Correspondence in that Account, which the Christian Religion teaches, as to the Beginning and End of the World, That it should be made out of a Watery Chaos, and be destroyed by a Conflagration of Fire. This must needs be allowed to have a very rational, and philosophical Appearance, and curiously of a Piece with it self; nay it would be a beautiful Scheme of the *Mundan Revolution*, if it had been guessed at only by any single Man's Thoughts; but yet it appears more divinely harmonious, and out of the Power of Man to contrive, when this Scheme was delivered by two several Men seemingly of no philosophical Genius's; one Part of it being given by *Moses*, and the other by *St. Peter*, almost

two Thousand Years after. You cannot but allow, That there is a surprizing Correspondence between the Predictions of the Old Testament, and their Completions in the New, and That it is a very extraordinary Thing, that so many Prophecies, that were acknowledged by all the *Jewish* Antiquities, to be Predictions of the Messias, should all so very luckily correspond with the Actions of Jesus Christ, and no Body else. And you may likewise observe how curiously, by Degrees, the Gospel Light is usher'd in; how the first dawning of it breaks itself, though obscurely, to the fallen Progenitors, and more clearly yet to the Patriarchs and Founders of the *Jewish* Race; how yet a greater Degree of Light does manifest it self to the later Prophets, still more and more, till the rising of the *Sun of Righteousness* himself, and the Gospel was display'd in its Meridian Glory, in the Life and Doctrines of our blessed Lord. It is extraordinary surprizing, that the old ceremonial Law should bear such an exact Correspondence with the Gospel; that those uncouth ritual Usages should for many Ages have no tolerable Account given of them, and yet upon the Appearance of Jesus Christ, Men might perceive that his Life and Doctrines were such, that those Ceremonies did as exactly prefigure them, as if one would have invented Hieroglyphicks purposely to represent them. How excellently of a Piece is the Fall of Man by *Adam*, related in the History of the Creation, with the Redemption of him by Christ, as it is set forth in the History of the Gospel? So that these Things could not more exactly correspond, if *Moses* and the Evangelists had caballed together to draw up the Scheme, Now from whence can you say proceeds all this surprizing Harmony, of which you cannot give a like Instance in the World? You do not see any Thing like this in the Histories of *Herodotus* and *Livy*, or any other Historical Relations. But you may plainly see, that there is the same Thought and Design runs through the Old and New Testament, and that every thing seems to be managed by one general Contrivance; so that whosoever had a Hand in the Methods



of the Gospel, had the greatest Share in the old Law and Prophets too. Therefore you must grant one of these two Things, either that the Apostles invented the Mosaical Law, and all the Old Testament as well as the Christian Religion, which will be a little too bold for you to assert; or else that the all-wise God was the Author of both these Institutions, the latter of which was prefigured by the former; that it was he that made the Predictions and the Completions so admirably agree; that he occasioned all these surprizing Analogies and Similitudes for the Confirmation of our Faith, and suited every Thing in the most curious Harmony throughout the whole Dispensation of Providence, from the Fall of Man to his Redemption, from the making to the burning of the World.

Add to this the harmonious Correspondence between the exterior Parts of Christianity, how aptly all Things therein are contrived; a *Baptism* to initiate into the Community of Christ's Church, and *Excommunication* to expell out of it; the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, to commemorate, and to convey the Benefits of his Passion, and *Absolution* to restore fallen Christians: *Bishops* to overlook the Flock, *subordinate Pastors* to feed it, and *Deacons* to perform other Offices in the Church. Add farther the Doctrines of Christ's *Satisfaction* and *Intercession* for the Pardon of Men's *Sins*, and the hearing their Prayers; a future *Judgment* of Men's Actions in this World; and in the next the Recompense of *Eternal Glory* for the Good, and *Damnation* for the Bad. Such an admirable Scheme of Religion as this, is not only impossible to be invented by a few poor unlearned Fishermen, but does surpass the Capacities of the greatest Wits and Scholars in the World to put together. The Hypotheses of *Plato* and *Aristotle*, and those other famous Sages among the Heathen, are poor miserable incongruous Stuff in Respect of this noble Institution; and are as inferior to it, as the little Feats of Art to the wondrous Works of God and Nature.

*Phil.* I confess there is a great Deal of Uniformity observed in the whole Business of our Redemption; but

why might not this Scheme be wrought into this Order by Degrees, and why might not the Disciples feign the Actions of Christ to be such as the *Jews* expected those of the *Messias* to be, from the Types and Prophecies in Scripture.

*Cred.* To this I answer, *Philologus*, that this Scheme of Christianity could never grow into this beautiful Order, by the Casualty of new Additions. Such a Contrivance might make perhaps just a tolerable Appearance, but could never display such a charming Regularity, as our Religion does. That would look just like a House patched up by Degrees at different Times; where all the Art imaginable cannot hide the Deformities: whilst the whole Draught of Christianity does resemble a beautiful Structure raised at once, where every Thing is adapted with Order, Decency, and Design. As for what you object farther, that the Apostles feigned the Actions of Christ, correspondent to the prophetical Predictions; pardon me, if I say, this is a very silly Supposition. For the Apostles might as well have forged those Prophecies as the Actions of our Lord; for those Actions of Jesus Christ were altogether as well known to the *Jewish* Nation, as the Prophecies themselves. For how could they forge his Miracles, which so many Thousand *Jews* had sensible Experience of, and of which his Enemies were so convinced, that they attributed them only to a diabolical Cause? How could they feign the Manner of his Death, when he so often told his Followers, that it was the Will of God, that he should die, and shew'd by what Kind of Death he should lay down his Life for his Flock; when he was condemned to be crucified by a *Roman* Judge, and died in the Face of almost all the *Jewish* Nation, at their great Confluence to the Passover? Nay, all the Actions of Christ were so remarkable, that it was impossible, that the Apostles could frame a History about him, which was not true, at a Time especially, when so great a Part of the *Jews* knew what he did, as well as they.

*Phil.* I thank you for this Information, and I desire you would proceed to your next Argument.

*Argument III.*

*Cred.* My next Argument is drawn from the speedy Progress of Christianity, notwithstanding the many Difficulties it had to encounter with. If I had no other Argument, for the Truth of the Christian Religion, but this of the incredible Progress of it, against all Opposition; I could not but think it to be from God, who alone could procure it such an unparallel'd Success. Do you consider with your self how miraculously it looks, That 12 poor Mechanicks should disperse themselves into different Parts of the World, to preach an unheard of Religion, contrary to the Laws every where establish'd, and even to Men's natural Appetites and Inclinations; and yet that this strange Religion should so every where prevail, that within twenty or thirty Years after Christ's Ascension, it should have footing in all the principal Parts of the Roman Empire; That Churches of it should be settled, not only at *Jerusalem*, but at *Antioch*, *Smyrna*, *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, *Alexandria*, and even at *Rome* itself. A few Years after we find a greater Increase; for in *Trajan's* Time, and in *Bithynia*, one of the more obscure Parts of the Roman Empire, the Christians were grown so many, that *Pliny*, the Proconsul, was forced to write to the Emperor to know what to do with them. *Visa est mihi res digna consultatione maxime propter periclitantium multitudinem, &c.* It seems to be a Thing worthy of Consultation; especially by Reason of the great Multitude of those who are in Danger, For many of every Age and every Order, and both Sexes, are and will incur the Danger of being Criminals. For the Contagion of the Christian Superstition has not only run thro' the Cities, but infected Towns and Villages and Farms. The Temples of the Gods are almost desolate, our most solemn Rites are omitted, and the Augurs of Sacrifices are but a very few \*.

*From the great Liberty of Christianity in the World.*

\* In n Lib. 1. Testul. Adv. Jud.

Now this dreadful Complaint, by this *Heathen* Gentleman, of the mighty Increase of the Christians was not much above threescore Years, after Christ's Ascension. But in the next Age, the Apologists glory, that Christianity was spread to the remotest Corners of the World, among the *Indians, Mauritanians, Getulians, Spaniards* and *Britains*; among the *Sarmatians, the Daci, the Germans, and the Scythians*. And *Tertullian* does, in particular, brave the *Heathen*, with the incredible Success of Christianity. *Hesterni sumus & vestra omnia implevimus, Urbes, Insulas, Castella, Municipia, Conciliabula, Castra ipsa, Tribus, Decurias, Palatium, Senatum, Forum. Sola vobis relinquimus Tempia. We are but of Yesterday's Growth, and yet we are so numerous as to fill all the Places which you call yours: We fill the Cities, the Islands, the Castles, the Burrows, the Counsels, the Camps themselves; the Tribes, the Decuria, the Palace, the Senate, the Forum. We leave nothing for you, but only your Temples.* Now can any one imagine, that such a Sect as this should so prodigiously increase, unless it was assisted by the divine Power? Unless God had lent his Arm to support it, the secular Power would have crushed it to nothing; and Christianity would not have survived even one Persecution. If the Religion, they propagated, had been a *Sham* or invented Story, there would have been so many Inconsistences found out in it by acute Men, and the Vouchers of it would be so inconstant, that the first Preachers of it, instead of being revered and admired, would have been laughed at wherever they came. Or if such idle Fancies should for a While have prevailed, they would in a little Time have grown out of Fashion again, like the philosophical Dogmata, and something else have been set up in their Place; or however, this, like other wild Enthusiasts, would have kept the People a madding but a few Years, and suffered them to return to themselves at last; but it is impossible that it could ever have spread so wide, and lasted so long as Christianity has done. Or if such a Religion could, by natural Means, have chanced to find Success in one or two Cities, yet how should it come to do so all the World over? It had been pretty much, if

two or three of the Apostles had thrived upon their Imposture, considering how many Cheats daily are discovered; but that every one of them, and all that they commissioned, should put a Sham upon the Inhabitants of every Place wherever they came, is a Thing perfectly incredible, *Philologus*, and impossible: And the Unbelievers must assign a Cause how this could come to pass, or they must own with us a divine Power in it; seeing no such Thing ever did, and I dare say, never will again happen in the World.

But it is yet more incredible to think, that this came to pass without the divine Assistance, if we consider, 1. The *Wit* and *Learning* of those who did oppose the Propagation of Christianity. For these Endowments do often defend and keep up the grossest Errors, and retard the Progress of the Truth, even against the Endeavours of those of equal Qualifications; but that these wise and learned Men should suffer their Country-Religion, every where, to be run down by an idle Story, and not be able, by all their Parts and Learning, to support it against the Attacks of a few Fishermen; and that there should be nothing else in this but pure Chance, is what a prudent Man can never believe. Or if we consider, 2. The *Secular Power*, by which the other Religions, which Christianity prevailed against, were established. The Laws and Government, in favour of any Opinion, are a mighty Support to it; for these in most Parts of the World are sufficient, we find, to uphold the silliest Superstitions, against Truth and Reason. Then how can we think, that these should lose all their Efficacy, upon the preaching of the Gospel, by meer Chance; and that Men should suffer their own Country Religion to be neglected, and a foreign one embraced, and all the Power and Policy, they could employ, should not be able to hinder it. And this is yet more incredible to think, if we consider 3. The *Prejudice* Men must have against such a new Religion. If God Almighty had not assisted the Apostles Preaching, the very Biass upon Men's Minds, in favour of the respective Religions they had been educated in, would have kept them from embracing

*Growth of Christianity against Wit and Learning.*

*Secular Power.*

*Prejudice.*

Christianity; for, though you may suppose some few Men to be of free Thoughts, and more disinterested Affections, yet when you consider, what strong Prepossessions Education lays upon our Souls, you cannot but own, when whole Cities and Countries all on a sudden should throw aside their most ancient, splendid, and sacred Rites they had been bred up to, for a despised new Religion, that there must be the Finger of God interposing in such an unheard of Event, and over-ruling Men's Passions in Subordination to his most wise Purpose. Which Argument is yet more convincing, if we consider how this Prejudice was heightened, by the *Severity* of that Religion they were to embrace; when the Converts could not but know, that they left an easy and pompous Religion that was calculated to gratify Men's Pride and Luxury, and all other carnal Affections, for one that obliged them to mortify their dearest Lusts, and oftentimes to deny themselves the craving even of innocent Desires; and yet, for all this, that so many Myriads of People should quit this easy and sensual Satisfaction, for the Rigor of the ancient Christian Discipline, and the Severity of our Lord's Precepts, is a most amazing Thing to reflect upon. 4. So we cannot but own the same Power of God in the Progress of Christianity, when we look upon the *Persecutions* the first Propagators and Professors did encounter with. It is impossible, that Impostors could ever have had the Courage, to have undergone those cruel Sufferings which the Apostles and primitive Christians did, those Crucifixions, Burnings, Broilings, Divulsions of their Limbs, and other most horrid Tortures, which their Persecutors studied to invent; these would quickly have made any Falsificators to have owned their Cheat, and indeed would have put a Stop to any new Sect whatsoever, but that which God Almighty was resolved to keep up. 5. But the Progress of the Gospel appears yet more miraculous, when we consider the *Meanness of the Propagators*. It would not have been so great a Wonder, if the Apostles had been the wisest and learnedst Men in the World; for then the Strength of their

*Persecution.*

*Notwithstanding  
the Meanness  
of the Propagators.*

their

their natural Parts, and the Advantage of their Studies might have born down weaker People's Understandings, and manag'd them at their Pleasure: But it amazes one to think, that such mean illiterate Persons that never had so much as the Advantage of their own Country Learning, should confound the Philosophy of the more refined Parts of the World; that whereas the most celebrated Sects of the Philosophers had continued many Ages, and yet were confined within a very scanty Number of Disciples, notwithstanding the Greatness of their Parts, and the Depth of their Learning, These poor Men should draw all the World *Profelytes* after them, and make Men Disciples of the Christian Philosophy wherever they came. If ever there was an Intervention of the divine Power in human Affairs, it was here, when Ignorance and Simplicity had not only the Advantage of, but did triumph over all the Wit and Learning in the World.

*Phil.* But methinks, Sir, this Argument is not so very conclusive as you imagine; for *Mahometanism* and *Quakerism* spread very largely in a very little Time, and yet you will not allow the Assistance of the divine Power in these Instances; or however, if you will admit it in favour of the Quaker, you will not compliment the Turk so far. Then why might not the Sect of the Christians be as lucky as these?

*Cred.* As to the Progress of *Mahometanism*, That proceeded upon Methods, perfectly different from those of Christianity. It is no great Wonder, that *Mahomet* so widely extended his Religion, when he taught it with Sword in Hand, and had Power to make the poor conquer'd Wretches say, they would be of any Religion he had a Mind they should; but there lies the Miracle in the Propagation of Christianity, that it was carried on with all the Meekness and Peaceableness imaginable, without the least Sedition or Tumult, only by a gentle Persuasion of Men's Minds and a Conversion of their Hearts, whilst all the Force and Power, which were employ'd to support the *Mahometan* Imposture, were turned against this holy Institution. Add to this, that *Mahometanism*

*Progress of  
Mahome-  
tanism no  
Parallel.*

did first spread in an ignorant Age, and among the most stupid and barbarous Nations, among the wild *Arabs* and *Cophæ*; whilst Christianity display'd itself in the Midst of the *Roman* Empire, sent forth its Emissaries to *Athens* and *Rome*, at a Time when Learning and Arts were in their full and meridian Glory.

Not that of  
*Quaker-*  
*ism.*

But as to the spreading of *Quakerism*, there is no Manner of Comparison between this and the Propagation of the Christian Religion. 1. For the Quakers, though the Sect has been up a pretty many Years, yet are not the hundredth Part of the Number of the Christians, so few Years after Christ's Death, as *Nero's* Reign. For at that Time, even in the City of *Rome*, there were so many of them that, as *Tacitus* says, *ingens Multitudo*, a vast Multitude of them were executed, under Pretence of burning the City.

Now in so prodigious a City as *Rome* then was, there must be many Thousands of Christians to be at all taken Notice of, especially that a Part of them should be called *ingens Multitudo*; and probably there were as many of them there, as there are now *Quakers* in *England*. But if we consider the vast Numbers of the Christians, in all the other Parts of the *Roman* Empire, the Number of the *Quakers* is perfectly inconsiderable to them. 2. Neither is it such a Wonder that *Quakerism* did increase, as that Christianity should. For the *Quakers* did not pretend to teach a new Religion, but only to refine upon the ancient Christianity; for if the Ringleaders of this Sect had presumed to have run down Jesus Christ, and the Christian Religion, as the Apostles did the ceremonial Law and the *Gentile* Superstitions, their zealous Followers at *York* and *Bristol* would, with the utmost Horror, have abandoned, instead of following these new Guides. Neither is it a strange Thing for such Sects in a short Time greatly to increase; for *Arians*, *Nestorians*, *Novatians*, *Donatists* have in as little a Time been as numerous as the *Quaker*. But the apostolick Christianity is the only Instance in the World, that did so miraculously thrive, without any human Support, and against so much Prejudice and Opposition. 3. Add to this farther, That the

*Quakers*



*Quakers* never underwent any of that dreadful Persecution, which the poor primitive Christians did: One only of those Storms, which so frequently befell them, would have made this Sect have shrunk into nothing, which are now kept up only by a few warm Brains, and a politick Interest. Nay *Quakerism* has been so far from being retarded by Persecution, that it has been much advanced by the Incouragement of the Nation, and by secular Interest. I know not whether *Quakerism* be so much a Sect of Religion, as a Fraternity of Commerce; but however their dealing with one another, their advancing one another's Trade, recruiting decay'd Stocks, and the like, has made them ten to one more Profelytes than the *Light within*. Nay, it is but reasonable to believe, that worldly-minded Men do often betake themselves to that Sect, to thrive the better in their Trade; when they perceive that the Vulgar will choose to deal with them above others, out of a fond Conceit, that they sell the better Bargains. These are Advantages sufficient to increase a Party to a greater Strength, than *Quakerism* can pretend to: But Christianity received a far larger Increase, without any secular Interest to support it, and when Men could get nothing by embracing it, but Poverty and Disgrace, Persecution or Martyrdom.

*Phil.* I confess this Increase of Christianity is very strange. What have you to urge next?

#### *Argument IV.*

*Cred.* It is an undeniable Argument of the Truth of the Christian Religion, that its Prophecies are so exactly compleated. I do not design to meddle now with the antient Predictions concerning Christ, having dispatched that Matter already: \* I shall only touch upon one or two Prophecies contained in the Books of the *New Testament*, which will clearly evince the Divinity of the Christian Religion, which is taught therein. Now whosoever has the Power of Prophecy,

*From the Prophecies contained in the new Testament.*

\* Part III.

or predicting future Contingents, has the Power of God ; because none but God can predict future Contingents. So that whatsoever Lawgiver or Propagator of a new Religion, shall foretell Things that are contingent, such a Legislator or Preacher is assisted by God, who communicates to him a Power which none can have but him, and therefore does by that confirm such a one's Doctrines, by the Attestation of his divine Power ; unless you can suppose that God Almighty would lend his divine Power, for the encouraging Cheats and Impostures, which is both absurd and impossible. Therefore we have nothing else to do, to be satisfied of the Truth of the Christian Religion, and to know whether or no God Almighty has approved it ; but only to inquire whether its first Propagators did really predict any such future Contingents, which it was out of the natural Power of Mankind to foretell. Now there are several such Things foretold by Christ and his Apostles, and therefore the Religion taught by them is attested by God, and consequently true. And we say, that our Saviour's foretelling of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, is a true and proper Prophecy, which no one but by the Spirit of God could foretell. Christ does expressly say, That within a short Time *Jerusalem* should be laid wast, and not *one Stone of the Temple should be left upon another.*

Prophecy of  
the Destruction  
of  
Jerusalem

*Mat. xxiv. 2.* Now how should any one without the divine Foreknowledge, come to think of such an improbable Thing ? The *Jews* at that Time enjoy'd under the *Roman* Protection perfect Peace and Tranquillity, and they were so far from fearing the Destruction of their City, that they beheld it every Day enlarged and beautified, by the Munificence of the *Herodian* Family. No one could expect that City to be destroy'd by any other Power, whilst it was protected by the *Roman* ; neither that the *Romans* should destroy it without a Rebellion, which it was incredible to think, that such an Handful of Men, as the *Jews* were, should be so mad as to enterprize, against the prodigious Force of that mighty Empire. Or, if an observing Man could have guessed at a Defection, from a mutinous Temper remarkable in them ; yet how could he  
have

have foretold that their City would have been perfectly destroy'd by it? Every Rebellion did not end in such a fatal and miserable Desolation, and the generous Mercy of the *Roman* Conquerors was often extended, to more formidable Enemies than the *Jews* were. Or how could any one have thought, that not one Stone of the Temple should have been left upon another? Tho' the *Romans* did oftentimes demolish the Works, and pull down the Houses of their Enemies; yet, out of Piety, they were frequently wont to spare the Temples of the Gods, tho' they had nothing to recommend them but only their Sacredness. But if any one had been sure that *Jerusalem* would have been destroy'd, he might have been almost confident that the Temple had been spared, it being highly probable that the very Magnificence of so wonderful a Work, if there had been no Regard had to its Sanctity, would have kept the Victor from injuring it. 'Tis yet more remarkable in this Prediction, that this City should *be encompassed with Armies, and have a Trench cast about it, &c.* *Luke* xxi. 20. Many Cities have been destroy'd without such formal Sieges; and no Man would ever have guessed, not only in our Saviour's Time, but in the Beginning of *Titus's* Expedition, that such a City as *Jerusalem* could have had the Boldness and Folly, to have held out a Siege against the Flower of the *Roman* Forces, and those under the Command of the Emperour's Son. It is yet more strange in this Prediction, that those dreadful Mutinies, which happened during the Siege of *Jerusalem* and are related in *Josephus*, are so distinctly foretold. *Brother shall betray the Brother to Death, and the Father the Son, and Children shall rise up against their Parents, and shall cause them to be put to Death, Mark* xiii. 12. Now such Mutinies in a Siege do very rarely happen; for Factions are wont to be laid asleep in publick Dangers, and the Fear of the common Enemy does usually endear the most adverse Parties to one another; but that there should be such Seditions in a City, at a Time of so formidable a Danger, which should produce such tragical Effects as are related in the *Jewish* History, and that at that Time more Men should be destroy'd by the Tumults than by the Enemy,

and

and that this should be predicted too forty Years before; This does shew the particular Finger of God, and the infinite Knowledge of his holy Spirit which revealed it. There is yet a more remarkable Passage in this Prophecy, and that is the Advice of Christ upon the Approach of this Desolation, for him *which should be in Judea, to flee unto the Mountains*, Mat. 24. 16. Which Prediction was exactly fulfilled by the withdrawing of the Christians from *Jerusalem*, before *Titus's* Siege. For when *Cestius Gallus* sat down first before the City, he raised his Siege for some Time, there being no evident Cause of it, but only the especial Providence of God; by which Respite the Christians left *Jerusalem*, and disposed of themselves in other Places; so that when *Titus* came to besiege the City, there was not one Christian left there. *Eus. Hist. Eccles. Lib. 3.* But that, which is of all the most surprising, is the Punctualness of Time in this Prophecy. *Verily I say unto you, this Generation shall not pass away till all this be fulfilled*, Luke 21. 32. Now when this did so exactly fall out, and that Generation did not pass away before *Jerusalem* was destroyed, and all these Particulars fulfilled, what can this be less than divine Prophecy? Will you say, this was only conjectured by Christ, and hit upon by Chance? But you may as well say, *Josephus's* History was the like; for 'tis as possible for such a Book to be written by Chance, as to conjecture before-hand so many Particulars, which did really come to pass. To guess, That such a flourishing City then in the height of Peace should be destroyed; That one of the most glorious Fabricks in the World should be demolished, and that too after a long and dreadful Siege accompanied with Famine, and unheard of Seditions; That Part of the Inhabitants should escape the Calamities, and the others be over-whelm'd in the Ruin; and that all this should come to pass thirty or forty Years after the Prediction, just as it was said it should be; This is beyond the Power of Chance and Conjecture, and is owing only to the Divine Prescience. For if Christ had nothing to favour this Prediction but Chance, most certainly he would have laid the Scene farther off than one Generation, so that the ordinary

Revolution of Governments, might in time have given Incouragement to such a pretended Prophecy; but to feign a Prophecy, which was to come to pass in thirty or forty Years, and if it did not happen within that Time, he should venture the losing for ever his Credit upon it, and being branded for an Impostor; This is not to be supposed of so wise a Person, as the whole Character of Jesus Christ bespeaks him to be. So that, it being impossible for these Particulars to be guessed at, or to have chanced to fall in with a Prediction, you must needs own, that they were foretold by the divine Knowledge, and consequently that the Person, who was Partaker of it, had the Doctrines which he preach'd confirmed by God.

2. Another great Confirmation of our Saviour's Religion, is his foretelling the Increase of it, that it should be taught to all Nations, *Mat.* 28. 19. *Mark* 16. 15. This must needs be divine Prediction, because it would never have entered into the Thoughts of any Man, to have expected such a Success. If our Saviour had not fully fore-known, what a Progress the Gospel would make, to be sure he would never have set his Disciples upon preaching it to all Nations; for such a wide Dispersion would, in all Probability, have ruin'd their Institution, which by an usual Familiarity and keeping closer together, they seemingly might have better kept up. But who could expect any Success, by sending such a few Disciples, to preach over all the World? If Jesus Christ were what you please to make him, yet, I am sure, he had too much Sense, to have such a fond Conceit, that his new Religion should be preached all over the World; unless he himself was fully persuaded that it was assisted by God. To have been the Founder of such a Sect, as the *Pharisees* or *Sadducees*, within the Country of *Judea* only, would have been as much as any Man's Ambition would ordinarily have prompted him to, and more than he could reasonably expect. But for any one to talk of making Profelytes of the whole World by ordinary Means, must be Madness, and which so prudent a Person, as Jesus Christ was, could never have surmised. But when he foretold this, and put his Disciples upon the propagating

*Prophecy of  
the Increase  
of Christi-  
anity.*

it to this Extent, and when the Event did miraculously answer this Prediction, This is an undeniable Argument, that God Almighty did assist both in procuring the Success, and predicting the Event.

*Prophecy  
of Anti-  
Christ.*

3. 'Tis likewise an extraordinary Proof of the Divinity of the Gospel, That our Saviour did foretell the working of *Anti-Christ*, the coming of so many false Prophets, and the prevailing of so many pestilent Heresiés, which infested the Christian Church in the very Beginning of it. How could any one have reasonably imagined, That so many gross Heresies could, in so little a Time, have bred in the Bowels of so pure and simple an Institution, as the Christian Religion, which our Saviour first taught. To say Christ only conjectured such an Event, is the greatest *Absurdity*; it being contrary to the natural Tendency of Things, and to what usually happens in such Cases. All such Sects and Institutions, for a great While after their Beginning, do for the most Part maintain their original Simplicity; they then only begin to divide into Parties and Schisms, and to maintain unorthodox Doctrines, when they grow very numerous and aged, and have lost their Founder's Precepts, by furious Contentions with one another, and dark Traditions. Indeed our Saviour, and his Apostles, might very well have expected this in long Tract of Time; but to foretell that *Anti-Christ* should begin to work upon the first planting of the Gospel, and that those false Religions should be spread under the Notion of Christianity, whilst many of the first Propagators of the true Religion were alive to confute them, and to have all Things exactly answering to such an extravagant Prediction; This cannot be owing to human Conjecture, and a Reasoning from natural Causes, but to the divine Fore-knowledge, which foresees not what Things are likely to be, but what they shall be.

*Christ's  
Prophecy of  
his Resur-  
rection, the  
Comforter.*

4. And we have yet a farther Proof of the Truth of our Religion, from the other Prophecies found in our Saviour's Sermons, and the Apostolick Writings. For what but the Spirit of God in Christ, could foretell his *Resurrection from the Dead*, the third Day after his Suffering; That immediately after his Departure the holy Ghost, or the

*the Comforter should come*; That such dreadful Persecutions should befall the Christians; That they should be supernaturally inspired with Divine Knowledge, That upon all Occasions, the holy Ghost should put into their Minds what they should say; That the Candlestick, or Light of the Gospel, should be taken from the Asiatick Churches, and the like? Now, when we have certain Information and History, that these Things were foretold, and we are sure they did as certainly come to pass; we cannot but own the Power of God, co-operating with those excellent Persons, which did predict all these Things.

*Phil.* I cannot reflect upon this, without some Manner of Conviction, because it is not to be parallell'd in other Cases. But pray Sir, what have you to urge next? I begin now to be in Love with Arguments upon this Subject, and therefore I pray, Sir, proceed to something else.

*Argument V.*

*Cred.* Next, Sir, you have an unquestionable Argument of the Truth of Christianity, drawn from the Miracles it was confirmed by. If Christianity had been a false Religion or Imposture, God Almighty had never sent such a supernatural Power, as that of Miracles, which none can do but by his Assistance, to confirm it. So that if Christ and the Apostles and some of their first Successors, really did such Miracles as are ascribed to them; The Religion which they taught is authorised by God, and consequently true. That Christ and his Apostles did such miraculous Works, as by a Word or Look to cure the Lame and Blind, and raise the Dead, is what the Writings of Eye-Witnesses who wrote the Gospel, do to this Day testify to us; and if you will not believe them, you must give up all the Credit of History and Annals, which relate Things done in former Ages, and which cannot be written with greater Appearance of Veracity and Sincerity, than these Books are. And I have shew'd you before \*, that there could be no Juggle or Illusion in performing these Miracles, because many of them

*From the Miracles which confirmed the Christian Religion.*

\* Conference, Part III.

*Miracles in  
our Savi-  
our's and  
Apostles  
time.*

were of such a Nature, that they could not possibly admit of any Deceit. For the Lame and Blind and Leprous, when they were instantaneously cured, and Thousands of the hungry People fed by such a small Quantity of Provisions, they could not be imposed upon, in what they felt and experienced within them. When the Apostles went out to preach to all the World, and confirmed their Doctrines by the Miracles, which they pretended to do wherever they came; if this had been all Cheat and Collusion, it is impossible, that such an Imposture could have thrived every where, and that Men of all Nations should have been deceived by such Jugglings. Nay the single Gift of Tongues was such a miraculous Endowment, and carried such Conviction with it self to the Mind of every Auditor; that every one which heard the Apostles speak after that wonderful Manner, must be absolutely certain they were assisted by God. For how was it possible, that such illiterate Men as they, should learn so many Languages as they spoke upon the Feast of Pentecost; when *Jews* of all Nations almost in the World, being at that Time convened at *Jerusalem*, heard the Apostles directing their Discourse to them, in their own proper Language? Or, if all these Languages were possible to be learned in Time by human Industry, and by Men of as mean natural Parts and Education, as they; yet it is absolutely impossible, for any one to learn one Quarter of them in that Time, which the Apostles must be supposed to have acquired them in. For it was but a few Days before, when Christ gave them their Commission to preach to all the World; and therefore in so short a Time, to be sure, they could not learn all the Languages of the World, to qualify them to discharge that Command of their Master. Nay, if the first Christians had not been to the utmost degree assured, that the Apostles were endowed with a truly miraculous and divine Power, they would never so universally have closed with their Doctrines, and been proselyted in such prodigious Numbers; for it could not be the Rhetorick of the Apostles, which could persuade such Multitudes, but those divine Credentials of a miraculous Power which they carried along with them, where-

by



by they testified their Commission from God, to preach the Religion they were then setting up. This is Demonstration, to every one who believes the Gospel-Histories, or has considered the incredible Progress of the Christian Religion; which yet will appear more clearly, when you consider, That this miraculous Power did not cease with the Apostles, nor is related only in the Gospels, but lasted for some Centuries in the Christian Church, and is recorded by other Authors.

To be supernaturally and miraculously gifted, was a Qualification for Sacred Orders in the first Times after Christ, and if any of the *non-donati* had got into Orders, their very Ordination conferred such Gifts upon them. \* And we hardly find any of the first Bishops, or Presbyters, that are famous in History, or by their Writings, but who were supernaturally endow'd, if not with Miracles, yet with Prophecies or other Gifts, as we find in the Instances of *Hermes Pastors's* Visions, and the Prophecies related of *Ignatius* and *Quadratus*. *Eusebius* quotes *Apollonius*, in his Ecclesiastical History, *Lib. 5.* who asserted that *St. John* raised a Man from the Dead at *Ephesus*, and *Tertullian Prescr. C. 36.* records, that, when he was plunged into a Vessel of scalding Oyl, he was not hurt. And *Eusebius* relates from *Papias*, of *Josephus Justus*, That, when he drank Poison it did him no Harm, *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. Lib. 3. Chap. 39.* It was a very common Thing, when the Martyrs were exposed to the wild Beasts, That those savage Creatures would grow gentle on a sudden, and not in the least injure them; which *St. Ignatius* desires of the *Romans*, that they should not endeavour to obtain, by their Prayers, for him. *Ign. Ep. ad Rom.* The Epistle to the *Smyrneans*, is an undoubted Authority of a miraculous Power operating at the Martyrdom of *Poly carp*, when, the Fire being kindled about that holy Man, the Flame bent itself into an Arch over his Body, so as not to touch it, nor in the least injure it; and when

*Miracles in  
the succeeding  
Ages  
of the  
Church.*

\* *Dodwelli Diff. II. in Iren.*

the *Confector* (that is the Man who was to put an end to their Lives who were left but half dead by the Tearings of the Beasts) had thrust his Sword into this Martyr, there followed such a prodigious Flux of Blood, as perfectly put out the Fire about him. That Devils were ejected out of possessed Persons, at the Adjuration of Christians by the Name of Christ, and publickly confessed themselves to be Devils, was a Truth so notorious in the primitive Times, that the Apologists appeal to it as one of the most clear and indubitable Truths in the World. Says *Minutus Felix*, *Ipsis Testibus, eos esse Demonas de se verum confitentibus, credite. Adjurati enim per Deum verum & solum, inviti miseri, corporibus inhorrescunt & vel exiliunt statim, vel evanescent gradatim, prout Fides Patientis adjuvat, vel gratia curantis aspirat.* Believe your Gods themselves, when they confess that they are Devils. For being adjured by the true and only God, they restless and tormented are afrighted within those Bodies they possess, and do presently leap out of them, or by Degrees do vanish away, according as the Faith of the Patient assists, or the Grace of the Curer does inspire. *Tertullian* in his Apology, Cap. 23, attacks the Heathens yet bolder. *Edatur aliquis sub Tribunalibus vestris quem Demone agi constat, &c.* Let any one be produced under your Tribunals, of whom it is plainly manifest, that he is possessed by a Devil. This Spirit being commanded by any Christian to speak, shall as truly confess himself to be a Devil, as he does elsewhere falsely to be a God. And so let any one be produced of those, who are said to be inspired of a God, that by gaping with their Mouths over the Altars, conceive the Deity by the Smell of the broiling Flesh, that are eased by belching, and prophesy by painful breathing. Your celestial Goddess, which promises Rain, and your *Æsculapius* who assists you with Physick and Drugs for sick Men; unless these confess themselves Devils, not daring to lie to a Christian, we will give you Leave to pour out the Blood of that Christian. What can be more manifest than the doing this? What can be more faithful than such an Experiment? The Simplicity of this Truth lies before you, and the Evidence of it proves it self. You need not suspect Magick, or any Juggling

*in this Matter. You cannot stand out, if you will but believe your Eyes, and your Ears. But Irenæus is yet more express about the Miracles, which were yet continuing in his Time. Fraternitate sapissimè propter aliquid necessarium, ea que est in quoquo loco Ecclesia universa postulante per jejunium & supplicationem multam, reversus est Spiritus mortui, & donatus est Homo Orationibus Sanctorum. It has oftentimes come to pass in the Christian Brotherhood, that upon some necessary Account, the national Church of any Place desiring it by much Fasting and Prayer, that the Soul of the Dead has returned, and the Man has been given to the Prayers of the Saints, Iren. Lib. 2. Cap. 56. And the same Father in another Place, declares, that he himself has heard in his Time, those that had the miraculous Gift of Tongues. Multos audivimus Fratres in Ecclesia, prophetica habentes Charismata, & per Spiritum universis linguis loquentes. We our selves have heard many Brethren in the Church, who have had the Charismata, or miraculous Gifts, and have spoke with all Tongues.* Now it is not to be supposed, that Men of such Abilities and good Sense as these Writers are, could be imposed upon in Matters of this Nature, and if there had not really been Miracles in their Times usually performed in the Church, that they could ever have believed, that there were. Indeed some strange Stories might possibly pass upon the ordinary People, without Examination; but Men so philosophically bred as most of these Writers were, would never entertain any such Relations, without the nicest Examination. Do you think that a Man of *Irenæus's* Qualifications, could be imposed upon by any Men, who pretended to the Gifts of Tongues; and when he declares he had heard *many of the Brethren, who spoke with Tongues*, that he could be deceived by them all? If these had been Impostors, they would have been discovered by Men of half *Irenæus's* Sense and Learning. Or can you think that these Writers would venture to vouch these Miracles to be true, which they knew to be false? Do you imagine that they would attempt to tell a bare-faced Lie, which was so easily to be confuted, in the Face of the Heathen World? Do you

think that they had no more Regard to their Religion, than to put the whole Credit of it, upon this Issue? For if there had not been such Miracles, at that Time, continuing in the Church, the Apologists had been mad to have appealed to them, and to have dared the Heathen to have taken Notice of them, only for the Ruin of their Superstition. This had been the most ready Way, for ever, to have spoiled the Credit of that Religion they were apologising for. So that upon the most indubitable Authority, and upon the most impartial Reasoning, it does appear, That there were such Miracles done for the Support of the Christian Religion, both in the Apostles Times, and for some Ages after, which are too plain to be denied, and cannot be shifted off by any Evasions; and therefore we say, That God has by these confirmed the Christian Religion, and consequently it is the true.

*Argument VI.*

*From the  
Excellency  
of the Chri-  
stian Doc-  
trines.*

If there were no other Argument of the Divinity of the Christian Religion, but only the Excellency of the Doctrines it teaches, it was enough to convince any considering Man, that it came from God. For if the whole Body of the Christian Religion were nothing else, but the Result of natural Reasoning, why should not other Religions in the World, and other Systems of Morality be as good as this? How come the Doctrines of Jesus Christ, to excel those of all the famous Legislators, and Philosophers in the World? How comes an obscure Person in *Judea*, to draw up such an admirable Scheme of Morality, as that all, that is laid down by the *Lycurgus's* and *Numa's*, the *Plato's* and *Aristotles*, should not be comparable to? How should he, in one or two Years preaching, nay in one short Sermon, advance the ethical Doctrines to a greater Height and Perfection, than ever they were brought to, by any of the Sects of Philosophers, who had made it their Business, to study them for some Ages? Most certainly, unless God had been assisting, in contriving this new Model of the Morality of Jesus Christ,

it is impossible that it could ever have equalled, much less exceeded, that of the *Grecian* Schools, which had all the human Advantages which he wanted, on their Side. There must be some Reason to be assigned, why Christ's Morality should be better than that of any Philosopher or Legislator; now 'tis impossible to give any natural Reason for it; and therefore we must say, that this is owing to the supernatural Wisdom of God, which assisted in drawing up the Rules of our Christian Doctrine, whilst the Heathen Philosophy was only the Product of human Reasoning. This Consequence is so just, that it cannot be denied. It only remains to see, whether or no these Doctrines of Christianity are so excellent, as we pretend they be, and do so extraordinarily exceed the Doctrines of other philosophical Sects and Religions. And this I have in some measure shewed you in our *second Conference*, when I made out to you the great Defects of that natural Religion, which was taught by the old Philosophers. But that the Argument may appear clear to you now, I will run over some Particulars of the Christian Doctrine, which, when fairly considered, will make the Divinity of it to be unquestionable.

1. Take but a View of the more speculative Parts of the Christian Doctrine, and you will find nothing comparable to them in any Book of Philosophy, or any other Religion in the World. If there were nothing of the Divine Assistance in the first teaching of our Christian Doctrines, how come we, in our Religion, to have the Origin of the World delivered to us, more rationally than is to be found in any other Sect of Religion, or any of the most celebrated Philosophers? How comes our Institution so reasonably to assert, that the World was *Created* in Time by an all-wise God, when so many of the learned Heathen Sages have run into so many foolish, and paradoxical Errors about it, some attributing it to a blind Chance, and others to an eternal Fate? Why should this Religion alone teach the great Catastrophes of the World, first by a *Deluge*, and at last by a *Conflagration*? What

*Speculative Doctrines.*

Reason can be given, that this Religion affords such admirable, and demonstrative Arguments for a Divine *Providence*, when so many learned Philosophers, among the Heathens, own'd only a careless and unobserving Deity, or bound all Things up by the Laws of a rigid Fatality? How comes this Institution to assert the *Unity of the Deity*, when all other Religions, but the *Jewish*, from whence this sprang, taught the Worship of a Plurality of Gods? Is it not a strange Thing, that, in this Religion, there should be not only no Error about the *Nature of God*, but that his Omnipotence, Justice, Mercy, &c. should be more truly taught, and, as far as is possible, more justly explained, than in the Books of the most thinking Philosopher? What Reason can you give, why Christianity should exhibit such a satisfactory Account of the *Corruption of human Nature*, by its Descent from a depraved original Stock, when the greatest Part of the World either never observed this Truth, or those Philosophers who did, gave such lame and pitiful Explanations of it? Does it not seem wonderful to you, that this Religion should afford such a rational Account of the *Redemption* of a depraved and sinful World; whereby the Honour of the Divine Justice might be secured by an infinite Satisfaction, and God's Mercy likewise be extended to the forfeited Souls of offending Mankind? Most certainly, if you did not know how these noble and rational Truths were first taught, you would say, that they ow'd their Original to the wisest Philosopher in the World, who had out-done all who had gone before him. But when you consider, that those Truths were either first taught, or wisely woven into his Religion, by such an obscure Person as Jesus Christ appeared to be; and who chose for his Scholars, to teach these Truths to, only a few poor Fishermen: It is impossible that these Doctrines could be owing to the human Reasoning of these ordinary Men, but only to the Inspiration of God, who raised their Thoughts above those of the greatest Philosophers. And by the same Reason too, it is manifest, That the Mosaical Writings, and the other scriptural Books owned by the

Christians,

Christians, where many of these Truths are originally taught, were inspired by God; because the wisest human Writers, with all their Learning and Application, could never arrive to the Knowledge of the like Truths.

2. This Argument will be yet more strong, when you consider the more practical Doctrines of the Christian Religion. Does it not amaze Men of your Principles, when you consider, that such mean Men as these, should deliver such a System of practical Rules, as the World was never acquainted with before; and which should as much exceed all the Ethicks, even of the *Stoicks* themselves, as the Light of the Sun does the Twinkling of the Stars? What can you think, when you see these Men alone teaching that admirable Virtue of *Humility*, which curbs Men's bold aspiring Spirits, sweetens a haughty and turbulent Temper, and gives them an obliging Air of Modesty and Compliance; whilst the Books of your Philosophers are calculated, only to inspire Men with Pride and Arrogance, to vaunt themselves upon imaginary Virtues, and haughtily to despise the rest of the World? How come these Men to lay down such excellent Rules for the Peace and Quiet of Mankind, for bearing with one another's Faults, for forgiving Injuries, for patient suffering of Affronts, and for loving Enemies, and themselves to transcribe all this into their own Practice; when neither the Books, nor the Lives of the Philosophers, came up to this Character? How come they to be more considering, than all the rest of the World, or that our Saviour Christ should be the first Legislator or Founder of a Religion, who should go about to obviate the Inconveniencies of Polygamy, and Divorce? Where do you find the true Use of the Passions so exactly stated, as in their Writings, where neither Anger is absolutely forbid, nor Anger without a Cause is allowed? If the Christian Philosophy was not inspired into these Men, how could they possibly state this Point better than the *Aristotelians*, or the *Stoicks*? The Philosophers, and most celebrated Legislators, thought it enough to persuade Men to refrain from vicious Actions; but why

should our Saviour, and his Apostles, go so much beyond this, as to forbid all Acts of Concupiscence and unlawful Desires? Is it not very much, that amidst all the Study of Morality by the Heathen Philosophers for so long a Time, and among all the fine Things they said upon it; that none should be the Author of so useful a Precept, as that of our Saviour, *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, that shall ye do unto them?* It is true, there are a great many excellent moral Truths, scattered abroad in the Books of Philosophers, some perhaps in *Plato*, some in *Aristotle*, and others in *Epicetus* or *Plutarch*: But for a compleat System of Morality, I defy you to find it any where, but in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Nay, these Philosophers, if they were right in managing one moral Point, they were wrong in another; the *Platonists*, *Stoicks*, *Peripateticks* and *Epicureans* were all guilty of some very notorious, and some very wicked Errors; but for a true Orthodox unexceptionable Morality, without any manner of Fault, which the impartial Reason of Mankind must for ever assent to; the New Testament was the first Book, that ever taught it in the World. What can you say to this? Was this pure Chance, that these illiterate Mechanicks outdid all these Sects of Philosophers? You may as well say, that a Man by Chance might write a better Book of Geometrical Elements, than *Euclid's*; for these Philosophers studied as much for their Books of Morality, as for those they wrote in Geometry. Now that these studied elaborate Books should be far exceeded by the extemporary Preaching of such mean Men as the Apostles, this is perfect Demonstration of the miraculous Assistance of God, who must divinely inspire these Truths into their Minds, which it is impossible, that otherways they could ever have thought of. If there were no other Proof of the Divine Authority of the Christian Religion, methinks this were enough to convince any reasonable Man of it.

3. But we may urge this Argument yet homer upon you, by putting you in mind of those excellent Motives which the Founders of Christianity have prescribed, to  
excite



excite our Practice to the Doctrines they lay down. What poor mean Motives to the Practice of Morality were those, which the Heathen Philosophers advanced? They tell us, that we ought to be good and virtuous, because Virtue is so beautiful a Thing. And what one Man, among a hundred, is to be convinced by this Argument? The vulgar Part of Mankind, and even the Generality of other People, are not of such a generous Frame of Soul, as to have any great Regard to this Bravery of Virtue; neither have they Leisure or Capacity to observe that Order and Comeliness which displays it self in virtuous Actions; or, if they had, the Pleasures of Sense carry a stronger Byass with them, and turn their Minds with much greater Facility, than such speculative Notions possibly can. What does it signify only to talk of the Beautifulnes of Virtue to a young Man, who is inclined to Vanity and Luxury? The strong *Impetus* of his Passions, and the boiling of his youthful Blood, will overpower all such philosophical Restrictions, and he will never balk a sensual Satisfaction, in Compliance with a grave Thought. Now this Defect of the old Moral Principles, *Aristotle* was very sensible of, and therefore he in his *Ethicks* declares, that young Men are not proper Auditors or Students of the moral Philosophy. But those Motives, which the Christian Religion lays down, are fitted to work upon all Ages of Men; the Fears of Hell can chill the young Voluptuary's Blood in his lustful Designs, and the Hopes of Heaven do often make Men, in the Bloom of their Youth, to despise all the giddy Vanities of this World. Now unless God Almighty did assist the first Propagators of this Religion, how is it possible, that Men of their Figure should, likewise in the Motives to a virtuous Life, out-do the wisest Moralists among the Heathen? How should they understand human Nature better than those Men who laid out so much Time in studying it? Till you can give a satisfactory Reason for all this, which I am sure it is impossible for you to do, you must allow, That God afforded these ordinary Men such a Share of the divine Wisdom;

dom, as made their Morality, in all its Parts, infinitely to exceed the wisest Lectures of the *Porch* and the *Lyceum*.

*Phil.* I confess I have nothing to say against this, and I cannot bear up against the Strength of so cogent an Argument. But I pray, Sir, go on.

*Argument VII.*

*From Christianity compared with the false Religions.*

*Cred.* If the Christian Religion were such a Sham or Imposture, as your Party would have it, why should it not discover those Absurdities which all other false Religions do? If Christ and the Apostles had only put a Trick upon the World in this Institution, why should they not fall into as much Folly, and Ridiculousness, as all other Impostors? For I defy you to shew me any false Religion, that is, or has been in the World, but what hath many Things so foolish in it, that it is not only impossible to come from an All-wise God, but does discover the Weakness of those Men who first contrived it. For your Counterfeits are for the most part ordinary and illiterate Men, and those not of the strongest Heads; they generally want close Thought and Contrivance to make Matters hang together, and for this Reason they are guilty of so much Silliness, as to be discerned in their Impostures.

*Heathen Religion.*

Now this is evidently to be discovered in the old Heathen Religion, which was made up of a Parcel of idle Stories, for the most part coined at first by some silly Priests, and Poets in the Infancy of the *Grecian State*, though afterwards advanced to be the Religion of the greatest Part of the *Roman Empire*. But yet, for all this, nothing can appear more wretchedly ridiculous and absurd, than this Religion. Can any Thing be so foolish, as to load the Divine Nature with so many Crimes and Imperfections, as the Heathen Theology does? To make one God, and that the supreme God too, an Adulterer, and another a Pimp; one Goddess a Scold, and another a Whore; to stock Heaven with Strumpets, and Sodomites, and Drunkards, and Bastards; to make their Deities fighting and quarrelling, dissembling and lying; to be

be lame, and blind, and old, and wounded. Can any Thing be more foolish than the Stories in their Theogony; of their Gods not only getting Children like Men, but eating them like Cannibals; their Battels with Titans and Gyants, and their running out of Heaven for Security upon Earth? What wretched silly Stuff is the History of their Demi-Gods, or Heroes; of *Persens*, *Thefens*, *Orpheus*, and all the other contradictious Tales, you read in *Ovid's Metamorphosis*, which is nothing else but a Compendium of the Heathen Divinity?

And so likewise, if you take a View of the false Religion propagated by *Mahomet*, it is full of nonsensical Absurdities. What strange Stuff do we find in the Alchoran, about the Angel of Death, whose Head is so big, that from one Eye to another is a Journey of a thousand and seventy Days; of the Angels in the sixth Heaven, one of which has seventy thousand Heads, and as many Tongues; of the Cow which supports the Earth, which has four hundred Horns, and from one Horn to the other, is a Journey of a thousand Years; of the Angels which support the Throne of God, that have Heads so big, that a Bird cannot fly from one Ear to the other; of the Key of the Treasury of one of *Moses's* Subjects, which was so big, that it weighed down a Camel; of the Wives and different Shapes of Angels, some of which are like Men, others like Horses, Bulls, Cocks, &c. of the Devil's refusing to rise up to God Almighty, because he was of a fiery Nature, and from thence God laying upon him the Curse of being the Tempter of Men; of the true Number of Sleepers, and whether the Dog was one, and the like?

Or if you look upon the Superstition of the *Bramins*, which obtains among the *East-Indian* Idolaters, you will find the like ridiculous Fooleries. You will see them wedded to a silly Superstition, which consists only in some fanciful Abstinenes and Humours; in not daring to touch a Piece of Silver or Gold; in taking their Food only out of earthen Vessels; in strolling about all their Life long as Vagabonds, or else shutting themselves up in hollow

hollow Trees or Caves; with other ridiculous Stories of Transmigration of human Souls, upon which Opinion some will not dare to pluck up a Root out of the Earth, lest they should separate a Soul from the Body; of the Sun's being to have at last seven Eyes, which will burn up the Earth, out of the Ashes of which, two Eggs will arise, producing Male and Female for the peopling the Earth again; and lastly, of the two most deadly Sins, which are of all the most unpardonable, to kill a *Bramin*, or lie with his Wife. Which last foolish Caution, *Mahomet* likewise wove into his Imposture, pronouncing a double and treble Damnation to his Wives, who should suffer themselves to be abused, and to those who abused them.

*Traditions  
of the Tal-  
mud.*

Nay, even the *Jews* themselves, when they vary from their Revelation delivered to them in the Old Testament, are guilty of the like Follies, as is evident in all the silly Tales of their *Talmud*, viz. of their making all Christians their Slaves in the Kingdom of the *Messias*, where they shall nothing but eat, and drink, and feast upon the Flesh of the *Leviathan*, who is then to be roasted for the Circumcised.

*Popish Le-  
gends.*

Nay, as for those Christians who have presumed to mingle Impostures with the Gospel Truths, and to add Lies to that holy Religion, they too have discovered the like Folly and Ridiculousness; as is evident in the Legends of the *Dominics* and *Francis's*, and other silly Stories of the blessed Virgin. These Forgers by their Improbabilities do discover their Falshood every Step they go, and every Man of Sense, who reads their Writings, may see they carry the Mark of Imposture in their Forehead.

Now, I pray, how comes it to pass, if the Christian Religion be an Imposture, like one of these, that it does not discover the like Absurdities? Why should the Apostles, of all the Cheats in the World, have a Patent only for constant Sobriety and good Sense? As for pure natural Parts, it is a Question whether St. *Matthew*, or St. *John*, had the Superiority above *Mahomet*; and therefore if they feigned all their Story, why should not they make

as many Slips in their Judgment, and be guilty of as many Incongruities, as the other? Why should not St. *Luke*, in the Acts of the Apostles, tell as many idle Tales as the Authors of the *Talmud*, and fall into as many Inconsistencies, as a dreaming Monk in his Legend? There is no Reason to be given, why all such illiterate Impostors should not write alike. Certainly, if these Men were Cheats, they were the most lucky ones that ever were, and I dare say ever will be in the World; to make a Story that should discover not only no Inconsistencies, but which should be fraught with such wise Thought, and be so all of a Piece with itself, that a Cabal of the most judicious Philosophers could not have bettered it. If they had been Cheats, they had the same human Imperfections to have discover'd it, as well as other like Impostors; but since the most malicious Adversaries cannot charge them with any such Incongruities, and since they had not Learning enough, to contrive an uniform and unexceptionable Fiction of this Nature; it follows, by the justest Reasoning, that the Religion which they taught, is unquestionably true.

*Argument VIII.*

*Phil.* Have you any thing to add farther?

*Cred.* I have yet another Argument for the Truth of Christianity, and that is, because this Religion has the greatest Influence upon Men's Lives, of any Religion that ever was in the World. If Christianity had been an Imposture, it might have made a few People to have run gadding after it, and might have pleased them with its Discipline or Ceremonies; but that it should so strangely have better'd their Lives beyond any other Institution, is to be accounted for no other Way, but that it came from God, by whose Wisdom the Rules of this holy Religion were prescribed, and by whose Grace they take Effect.

Altho' it be too true, that Christians do not generally live so well, as by their Religion they are bound to do; yet you cannot deny, but that they live better than the Heathen World formerly did, or any other People in the Universe, where Christianity is not professed. Those Vices

*From the  
Influence of  
the Christi-  
an Religion  
upon Men's  
Lives.*

Vices which were the usual Practice of the old Heathens, are hardly heard of among us; our Consciences are shocked, at the Apprehension of some of those Crimes, which their Philosophers and Teachers were Advocates for; and we do usually practice many Virtues, which they had either no Notion of, or did generally neglect. All Men are something the better, for living under the Christian Institution; the most vicious among us, are neither so numerous, nor quite so bad, as the *Greek* and *Roman* Libertines were; but besides this, we have such Instances of Virtue and Piety, as they never were able to produce. Where, but in the Christian Religion, is any true Devotion to be found, excluded from foolish Ceremonies and fond Petitions? But here you see Persons of all Ages and Sexes, in the most devout and most rational Manner, not begging of God Riches and Honours, &c. as the Heathens did, but earnestly desiring of him Protection and Pardon, Grace and Favour, and everlasting Happiness in another World? Do you but look into one of our Churches, at our ordinary Communion, and see, with what heavenly Devotion pious Souls are there breathing out themselves to God, how heartily they are lamenting their Miscarriages, and how earnestly begging Pardon for them; with what Intension of Desire they implore the Divine Grace for their Assistance, and with what flaming Affections they praise, and adore the Goodness of God. Can you find any thing like this in the Heathen Religions, so much rational Devotion performed by those, who perhaps are the greatest Part young Men and Women? Indeed, under Heathenism, you may discover Tribes of Boys and Women, and People of all Sorts, running after the Feasts of *Flora*, *Saturn*, or *Cybele*, and praying for such foolish Things as *Juvenal* laught at them for; but where do you find them devoutly going to Church, and praying for Pardon and Grace? The Heathens might perhaps vaunt a proud Magnificence, in building stately Temples, Portico's and Ampitheatres; but where do you find them exercising any Acts of true *Charity*, cloathing the naked, and feeding the hungry, and erecting and endowing Hospitals for the Poor, as we

see daily among Christians? In what other Religion can you instance, in the greatest Persons condescending to the lowest Acts of *Humility*, of Kings and Emperors with their own Hands feeding the Poor, and Empreses administering to the Sick and Lame? In what other Institution, can you find such a generous *Contempt of the World* as in this, to undervalue Riches, and Honour, and Pleasures, under an Affluence of them all, for the Sake of Immortality? Where is there to be found such *Fastings* and *Abstinence*, as under the Christian Religion, which was so universal in the primitive Times, that it was to be discovered in their Joints and Faces; so that *Pallidi* and *Trepidi*, pale and trembling were the opprobrious Names, which, for this Reason, the Heathens gave them? Did ever any Religion afford Men such an undaunted *Courage* and *Patience* under Sufferings; for to own themselves Christians to the Face of the persecuting Judges, to mourn for the Disappointment of Martyrdom, to run with Eagerness to the Racks and Lyons, to rejoice and sing upon the Grid-irons, and in the Flames?

Now what reason can you assign, *Philologus*, why there should be more sincere good Men of the Christian Religion, than of all the rest besides in the World, and why this only should afford such heroical Instances of Virtue? You cannot say it is by Chance, because then there would not be such Instances in all Nations, and in all Ages. So that at the last you must be forced to own, that this comes to pass, partly by the Divine Principles of the Christian Religion, which shew Men their Duty the best of all others, and partly by the Divine Grace, which co-operates with their honest Endeavours, and does frequently improve them to this wonderful Perfection.

*Phil.* O my dear *Credentius*! I am ashamed that I should have considered these Truths no better; and I tremble to think what an unhappy Wretch I have been to make Sport, as I have too often done with so wise and so sacred an Institution. I begin to have my Mind now at last enlightened by those heavenly Truths, and I pray God to increase my Faith more and more. I do plainly perceive that the Christian Religion is the best System of Morality, which  
the

the World can boast of, and has a better Influence than any other, upon Men's Lives. But one Thing sticks with me still; and that is, I doubt whether Christianity, as it stands now, be the same as was preached by the Apostles, whether it is not bettered by the frequent Discourses and Sermons of Christian Philosophers and Divines; and whether or no, at the Distance of so many hundred Years, we may not be imposed upon in what the Apostles taught, and in the miraculous Power by which they confirmed their Doctrines. I pray give me some Satisfaction in this, and all my Doubts are vanished.

*Argument IX.*

*From the Proof of what the Apostles taught and said.*

*Cred.* If this be all that sticks with you, I will endeavour to remove this Difficulty, probably to your Satisfaction; and which will serve too for a farther Argument of the Truth of Christianity. As for the Distance of Time, which you are so much afraid of; it signifies very little; for we may have now as clear Proof of those Matters sixteen hundred Years after the beginning of Christianity, as we might have had but an hundred. For if Men, who lived within an hundred Years or less after the Apostles, did carefully examine these Matters, having Opportunity and Capacity to do it, and after having so done did acquiesce in the Truth of them; we at this Distance have as little Reason to doubt of them, as if we had examined them our selves. It is plain, that the main of the Christian Religion, or at least as much as the Infidels concern themselves with, has continued the same for many hundred Years last past. We find the principal Articles of Faith and Doctrine, the same in the Books of the School-Divines, and before them in the whole Body of the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers, up to the first Ecclesiastical Writers. But for the present, we will stop at *St. Irenæus*, who flourished before the Year 170, that is somewhat above an hundred Years after Christ's Ascension. Now 'tis plain, that the main Points of Christianity believed and taught in *Irenæus's* Time, were the same as are now. He speaks there of Three Persons of the Trinity, *Lib. 1. Cap. 2. Lib. 4. Cap. 25, 37.* Of the Divinity and Eternity of the



the Word, *Lib. 1. Cap. 19. Lib. 2. Cap. 18.* Of the Condemnation of all Mankind by *Adam's Sin, Lib. 3, Cap. 30.* That to redeem Mankind thus lost, it was requisite that the Word should be made Flesh, by the Merits of whose Passion all Men might be saved, *Lib. 3. Cap. 16, 20, 22.* That good Men should be eternally happy in Heaven, *Lib. 5. Cap. 31.* and wicked Men for ever punished, *Lib. 4. Cap. 47.* That Men's Bodies shall arise at the last Day, *Lib. 5. Cap. 26.* He owns all the four Evangelists, and rejects all the spurious Gospels, *Lib. 3. Cap. 11.* He throughout his Book, speaks of the Gospel Virtues like other Divines, and quotes other Books of Scripture, appealing to them as a divine Authority, after the same manner as we would do now. Therefore in *Irenæus's* Time, Christianity was just the same Thing as it is in ours. Now the Question is, whether *Irenæus* had good Grounds to believe this Religion, or whether he was not impos'd upon, and made to believe a Cheat. But the Character of *Irenæus* is so considerable, that you can by no Means suspect the latter. He was a Man of very good Sense and great Learning, (as appears by this Treatise against the Heresies, and his most judicious Epistle to Pope *Victor*) and therefore could not be imposed upon by any idle Stories, which he would take up without Examination; and his Circumstances were such, that he might very well examine all Matters relating to the Apostles. For *Irenæus* was the Scholar of *Polycarp*, who was the Disciple of St. *John*, and who conversed with other of the Apostles; as he himself records in his Book of Heresies, *Lib. 3. Cap. 3.* but is more particularly set down in his Epistle to *Florinus* the *Marcionite*, as it is inserted in the 3<sup>d</sup> Book of *Eusebius's* Ecclesiastical History. The Passage is very remarkable, and therefore I beg leave to repeat it entire to you, in his own Words. *τὸνταυτὰ δόγματα, These Opinions* (says he to *Florinus*) *the Presbyters who were before us, and who convers'd with the Apostles, did not teach. For I saw you, whilst I was yet a Lad, in the lower Asia with Polycarp, behaving your self very well in the Palace, and*

endeavouring to do what was pleasing to him. For I better remember these Things, than those which happened since. For what we learn when we are Boys, increases together with the Soul, and is united with it. So that I am able to tell the very Place, in which the blessed Polycarp was wont to sit and discourse, his Way of coming in and going out, the Character of his Life, and the Shape of his Body; what Discourses he made to the People, and the Conversation, he said, he had with St. John and with others that had seen the Lord, and how he remembred their Discourses; what they said concerning the Lord, concerning his Miracles, and concerning his Doctrine, according as Polycarp received them from those, who had been the ἑταῖροι or Eye-witnesses of the Word of Life; so he related all these Things σύμφωνα ταῖς γραφαῖς exactly agreeing with the Scriptures. These Things by the Mercy of God, I diligently heard, recording them not in Paper, but in my Heart, and by the Grace of God do always ruminare upon them. From hence it is plain, 1. That *Irenæus* was bred up under one, who had seen and conversed with the Apostles, and other *Autoptæ* who had seen Christ. 2. That he had heard this Person relating the Discourse he had frequently had with them, as particularly concerning Christ's *Miracles* and *Doctrines*. 3. That all this Discourse did exactly agree, with what is recorded in Scripture. 4. That this was no slight Enquiry, but diligently made, carefully attended to, and oftentimes with Serioufness thought upon afterwards. What can the Unbelievers say to this; They cannot question the Sincerity of *Irenæus*, and that he really was not convinc'd of the Truth of that Religion he was thus instructed into by *Polycarp*; for then why did he suffer Martyrdom for it? They cannot say he wanted Prudence to make Enquiry; for this every Passage shews, that he took the most prudent Course, which any Man in his Circumstances could possibly have taken. And do you your self be judge, whether he did not. There was, when *Irenæus* was a Lad, a great Deal of Noife to be sure, about the Religion of Jesus Christ; what excellent Doctrines it taught, what good Men it made,

and

and by what miraculous Powers it was confirmed; there were Books called the *Gospels*, which gave an Account of these Matters, 'tis true; but every one could not be sure of the Faithfulness of their Relations; or however, a prudent Man would have all the Satisfaction he possibly could, in a Matter of this Nature. Now what Method could a Man, that was the most nicely inquisitive, take, which *Irenæus* did not? The Apostles were dead, and could not be applied to themselves, and therefore the next surest Course to be fully satisfied was, to have Recourse to some one, who was alive, and who had familiarly convers'd with them. And this Method *Irenæus* took: He knew *Polycarp*, an antient Christian Bishop, at *Smyrna*, who had, in his former Time, been intimately acquainted with the Apostles, and other *Au-  
toptæ*, or Witnesses of Christ's Resurrection: Him he applied himself to, and was fully satisfied of the *Doctrines* and *Miracles* of Christ and his Apostles; and upon Comparison found, that what this good old Man reported of them, was the same which was wrote in the *Gospels*; and this, I think, was the amplest Satisfaction any Man could desire. Now from hence 'tis plain, that the *Doctrines* of Christianity could not be altered between the Apostles and *Irenæus's* Time, there being but one Remove between them; for what he learned of *Polycarp*, *Polycarp* learned of the Apostles themselves: So that, unless you think Christianity was alter'd by *Polycarp*, it is the same in *Irenæus*, as it was originally deliver'd. And 'tis as plain, that *Irenæus* received such Information about the *Miracles*, as did actually convince him of the Truth of them, and would probably have satisfied any other reasonable Man. For why should not *Irenæus* make as proper Inquiries, put as home Questions, and be as little credulous about these Matters, as any other wise Man? He had a philosophical Education, as appears by his Books, which shew a great Reading in all the different Sects; and such a Sort of Breeding does not make a Man over-lyable to believe strange Stories. He was a Man of acute Parts, as is plain, by his smart Confuta-

tion of the Hereticks ; and if *Polycarp* had fed him only with some silly fanciful Stories for true Miracles, he would as soon have expos'd Christianity in general, as those crazed heretical Notions, which in his Books he does. If you say, that *Irenæus* was very young when he made this Enquiry, and received this Information : To this I answer, That tho' he heard *Polycarp* when he was a Lad, yet even to his old Age, he *exactly remembered* what he said, and *continually ruminated* upon what he taught : if his Judgment was weak when he first heard it, it was stronger long after, when upon the most mature and deliberate Thoughts he approv'd it. Therefore you see, *Philologus*, that Christianity was not taken up at first by an unthinking Multitude, and handed down to others by a dark and confused Tradition, as the Unbelievers are wont to object ; but there is as clear tracing its Original, as any other Matter of Fact in the World.

But to come yet nigher to the Apostolick Times, we have the Testimony of another learned and considerable Man, in Favour of the *Miracles* which confirmed Christianity ; and that is of *Quadratus*, who wrote an Apology for the Christian Religion, and presented it to the Emperor *Adrian*, about the Year 120. *Eusebius* says, that his Book does shew forth *λαμπρὰ τεκμήρια τῆ ἀνοίας καὶ τῆς ἀποστολικῆς ὀρθοτομίας* clear Signs of the Wisdom of the Man, and of an Apostolical sound Doctrine ; that this Book was frequently read among the Christians, and that he himself had a Copy of it. Now in this Apology, *Quadratus* has this remarkable Expression. *Τοῦ δὲ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν. The Works of our Saviour were always manifest, because they were true. For those who were cured of Diseases, and those who were raised from the Dead, did not only appear just as they were cured, and when they were risen again, but were to be seen a great while afterwards : and this not only when our Saviour was upon the Earth, but a considerable Time after that ; so that some of them lived even till my Time.* *Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 4. Cap. 3.* That *Quadratus* did not

want Understanding, judiciously to enquire into those Cures wrought by Christ, is plain, by *Eusebius's* Character of him; and that he did not falsify, may very well be supposed, from his addressing his Apology to the Emperor; to whom, if he had the Impudence to tell a notorious Lye, he would have had the Caution not to do it, for fear of ruining the Cause he was pleading for; or if he had not this Consideration himself, his Brethren the Christians, in whose Behalf he acted, would never have suffer'd it.

But we may be farther satisfied in these Matters, by making a Step yet nigher to the Fountain-head; and that is by taking a View of the State of Christianity in the Emperor *Trajan's* Reign, to which Time many of the *Autopste* lived, as particularly *St. John, Barsabas* surnamed *Justus*, *Act. 1. 23.* And the Daughters of *Philip. Act. 21. 8.* vid. *Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 3. Cap. 39.* Now 'tis plain by *Pliny's* Epistle, that at this Time Christianity was very widely spread, and Men of all Qualities were joined to their Communion. Then how is it possible, that the Christians should take up with a blind hear-say Story, when so many considerable Persons were alive, who were Eye-Witnesses to the Matters of Fact in the Gospel History? Don't you think, that all Men's Curiosity would prompt them to enquire nicely of these Matters from these Persons? And if they had not given a very satisfactory Account of them, that Christianity could never have increased, as it did? If they had been dead before this Time, a Cheat might have been carried on better; but if Christianity had been an Imposture, when so many intelligent Person come to be favorable to it, and to enquire after it, as they did in *Trajan's* Time, these surviving Witnesses would have been so hard put to it by so many shrewd Questions, that this Institution must needs, even at that Time, have miscarried.

If we go any farther backwards, we are got into the Apostolick Times. And here we have Authors who

were co-temporary with the Apostles, *viz.* *Barnabas*, *Clemens* and *Ignatius*, which write the same Things, which the Apostles preach'd, and which the Books of the New Testament record. They inculcate the same Truths which the Scriptures do, and suppose the Miracles which confirmed the Apostles Doctrines as unquestionable. So that, you see, *Philologus*, that as to the main, Christianity was the same Sixteen Hundred Years ago as it is now; and that there is as indubitable Proof of the miraculous Powers, which the Propagators of it were endowed with, as there is of any of the Triumphs of the Emperors, or any other Matter of Fact.

*Phil.* You have given me very great Satisfaction as to this Point, and may God Almighty of his Goodness reward you for your Charity. If you have any more Instructions to give me, I am willing to hear them with the most pleasurable Attention.

*Cred.* All that I have to add farther, that you may the easier become a sincere Disciple of Jesus Christ, is this,

1. That for the future, you would leave off all Acts of Sensuality and become a Practitioner of the true Gospel-Sobriety, and Temperance. I don't say this, as if I taxed you with a lewd scandalous Life; but I believe, you as the rest of the Unbelievers, give your self too loose a Rein to sensual Pleasures; and when you will not wean your selves from these, you fall foul upon that Holy Religion which forbids them. Do but once persuade your self sincerely to practice the Gospel Virtues, and your Mind will raise but very few Difficulties, against the Truth of it. For Men of the Persuasion, that you have been engaged in, find in themselves a greater Aversion to leave their Sins, than to embrace Christianity; for the truest Reason, why they so much hate the Christian Religion, is, because it continually upbraids their Consciences with their ill Lives,

2. That you would endeavour to divest your self of that fond Affectation of Reasoning, which the Unbelievers are notoriously guilty of. They are for making

king every Thing they meet with, strike fail to their human Reason, and forcing all Things to a Level with the Principles, they have taken up; not considering, that many divine Truths are bottom'd upon a different Foot, which is not the Reason of Man, but the Reason of God; and *his Thoughts are not like our Thoughts, nor his Ways like our Ways.* If they would come once to be modest, and humble in their Minds, and think that the Measures of a divine Intellect ought not to be always modelled according to the Plan of their carnal Thoughts, they would not be so averse to the Doctrines of Christianity, for not complying with their gross Imaginations.

3. That you would leave off that light Humour of Drolling, which is so common among that Sort of Men; because, as I observed to you before, it hinders the true Use of Reasoning, by the glaring Wit which is dazled in your Eyes, and makes every silly Fallacy, which looks bright and pleasant, to pass for Argument. Accustom your self to close Thought, and to weigh the Nature and Consequence of Things, abstracted from fine Words and witty Expressions; and when you hear atheistical Objections, strip them of that Tinsel, they are for the most Part wrap'd up in; and then you will be quickly able to discover, what poor Things they are.

4. That you should not trouble your self, nor have worse Thoughts of Christianity, for not being able to solve every Objection, which is brought against it. For it is no Argument against the Truth of any Thing, that there are some Difficulties about it. I am sure I move, notwithstanding there are some Arguments against Motion, which may be shocking to me; I am sure I have a Soul, but yet it puzzles me to think, how an immaterial Mind should be united to a gross Body. In such Cases I am only to consider, if I have not sufficient Arguments to confirm me in the Opinion I am of, and if I have, to fix my Thoughts there; for, if I must be moved by every casual Difficulty

which arises, I must be a Sceptick to half the Things in the World, as long as I live.

5. That you would leave off your atheistical Company. For when you hear them continually reviling Religion, you will not have those venerable Thoughts of it, which you ought. When you associate chiefly with such Infidels, whose Thoughts and Talk are all in the atheistical Way, Christianity will appear to you with an Air of Singularity, and you will not have that liking to it, as otherways you would: And besides, the continual echoing in your Ears of their trivial Objections, will silence the wiser Reasonings of your own Mind. This is all, dear *Philologus*, I have to say to you upon this Subject; and I heartily pray to God, it may be for your Advantage.

*Phil.* And for this, my dearest Friend, I return you all the Thanks which a grateful Soul can utter: as having done me the greatest Kindness, I could ever receive. I am already transported with the Goodness of Christianity, and the Benefits I am like to receive by it. I find I am now come to my self, after a Maze of intricate Errors; I have something solid now to rest my Mind upon, after having so long fluctuated, among uncertain and fantastical Notions. I have a steady Rule now to govern my Actions by, and if I act according to that, I am certain of a future Happiness. Vile Wretch that I have been! so ungraciously to despise this inexpressible Goodness of God to Mankind; and to make a Sport with that, which I find must be my only Comfort. I now begin to be sensible what Need I stand in, of an infinite Mercy, and the meritorious Blood of a dying Saviour to atone, for such Impiety. O my Blessed Redeemer! if ever thou canst in Mercy look upon thy Revilers and Crucifiers, let thy Blood be extended to such a wretched Blasphemer as me.

I begin, my good *Credentius*, to be too serious, and too sorrowful for Company; and therefore, with my repeated Thanks, I bid you farewell.





A  
 CONFERENCE  
 WITH A  
 THEIST.

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PART V.

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CREDENTIUS. PHILOGUS. ESTIBIUS.



*Philogus* had for some Time enjoyed the happy Ease of a Mind well settled, in all the principal Parts of the Christian Religion; when some new Disturbance was given to his Thoughts, by a few odd Opinions suggested to him from the Discourse, and Papers, which *Estibius*, a Friend of his, had lately advanced against the Catholick Doctrine of the *Soul's Immortality*. A Shock of this Nature, from a Quarter which he could not suspect, did not more surprize him, than they occasion'd him to cast his Thoughts into a serious Consideration, How he might give himself and others Satisfaction, against the Force of those  
 Argu-

Arguments, which, upon the first Sight, did seem to press hard upon an eminent Article of the common Faith. And it gave him the deeper Reflection upon this Subject, upon Account, that his Friend's Notions were cried up by several, as an irresistible Battery raised against Christianity; which upon the first Onset, (as they gave out) made its Foundations begin to totter. But this he took only as a Specimen of the usual Flourish and Hyperbole, which his old Friends the Atheists and Deists are remarkable for; who never fail to afford the largest Encomiums to the ordinarie Performance, which has the good Luck to appear in their Interest. Yet some Things being advanced in this Dispute, to which he had not allowed an exact Consideration before; he gave himself some Time to recollect his Thoughts, and to consult his Books, upon the foresaid Subject of the *Immortality of the Soul*. And in a little Time he was so happy as to be sufficient Master of this Controversie, and to satisfy himself, as to all the pretended Difficulties, which his Acquaintance had raised against this Doctrine. But however, he had a Mind to consult his good Friend *Credentius*, upon the Emergency of this Affair, and to see, if that Gentleman's Thoughts did fall in, with what he had conceived upon this Argument. The better to bring this about, he appoints a Time when he, and *Estibius*, were to wait on *Credentius*, that they might dispute out this Matter in his hearing; to whose House *Philologus* coming first, he thus addresses himself to his beloved Friend.

*Phil.* My dear *Credentius*! A thousand Blessings attend you! And since I am unable to repay the Thanks I owe you, for the Pains you laid out in my Conversion, may Heaven reward you for it in my Stead. Since you were so kind to make me a Christian, I have, God be thanked, enjoyed a perfect Serenity of Mind, and a Comfort I never experienced before; but still the Devil is never backward upon Occasion to ply me with Temptations; which tho' they have  
not

not that Effect upon me which his Malice designs, yet I must confess I am more than ordinary shocked, upon every Infidel Argument that I am attacked with; for, having so long stood bent to Infidelity, a small Matter puts me out of my right Posture. And this I confess has lately happened to me, from some Arguments, which an Acquaintance of mine has advanced, against the Soul's Immortality. I thank God, I have got over the Disturbance, which his Suggestions gave me, by considering this Point my self. Now, if I could be so happy, as to have my Thoughts receive a Countenance from your Judgment, it would be such an agreeable Satisfaction, as I could not wish for more. And, to let you farther into my Mind, give me leave to tell you, that I have a Design to reduce into the Truth one *Estibius*, a Gentleman of my Acquaintance, who has straggled from it into an odd Notion, which borders very much upon Infidelity, having become of late a furious Advocate for the *Mortality of the Soul*.

Now, Sir, I made bold to take the Opportunity of inviting him, to talk with me upon this Subject in your hearing, partly that I may have the Benefit of your Assistance, in carrying on this honest Design; but chiefly, that being under your Direction, I may not be so liable to Mistakes, in a Dispute about religious Matters, which I have but lately applied my Thoughts to. But however, this little Application, and the Cause of God will make me, I doubt not, an over-match for my Adversary, let him come as well prepared as he pleases.

*Credentius*. I am heartily glad, dearest *Philologus*, That you are acted by such a Noble Zeal for the Honour of Christianity, and a Love for Men's Souls. And may the good God of Heaven give a Blessing to your pious Labours, and every Day more and more raise up such Instruments of his Glory, as by this excellent Design you are endeavouring to be. *Philologus* and any of his Friends are at all Times welcome  
to

to me; but when he comes upon so blessed an Errand as this, I am all in Embraces to receive him. But where is your Friend?

*Phil.* He told me, he would be here precisely at this Time.

*Cred.* It may be the same who is just now come in: For my Servant informs me, that there is a Gentleman with a hard Name who enquires for you, and therefore if it be He, I will go and bring him in to you hither.

*Phil.* Come, make your Entry, good Senior *Estibius Psycholethes*. I protest, this rough Name of yours so sticks in a Man's Throat, when he is not used to it, that 'tis enough to spoil his Swallow.

*Estibius.* From whence I conclude, good *Philologus*, that your Throat is grown something narrow of late.

*Phil.* Why I must needs own, that 'tis a little contracted o'er what it was: For I cannot of late let a great many hard Points of atheistical Faith go down now, which I was wont formerly to swallow without chewing. I am not now so hardy to believe, That God is nothing else but an eternal Chain of material Causes, or an unbounded Power, without Justice or Goodness: That he has given no Laws to Mankind, but only the *Impetus* of their unruly Appetites; That the World had a Duration from all Eternity, and was co-æval with God, or a Part of him; That human Nature was always as frail and ignorant, and wicked as it is now, and came with all these Imperfections from the Hand of its great Creator, who either could not or would not make it better; That Men are under the Obligation of no Laws, but only the capricious Dictates of Men's natural Reason, by which for the most Part they draw Schemes of Religion agreeable to their Fancies or their Lusts; That God Almighty is a tame Being, that will suffer any one at Pleasure to play with his Thunder, and to trample upon his Laws, and all the Talk of Satisfaction, and Punishments, are but the

the Tales of Priests to support their Trade ; That People *fantasied* themselves to eat and to drink, to walk, and to be at ease, when they were fed or cured by Christ's or his Apostles Miracles ; That vagrant Lusts, irreligious Lives, Pride and Revenge are to be prefer'd before Prayer and Humility, and the other holy Duties, and Restraints, which Christianity lays upon us ; That the Writers of our sacred Books were carrying on a successive Cheat for 2000 Years together, to make their Writings pass for God's Word ; which Books tho' they were allowed to be inspired, by the nicest Examiners in the very Times they were written, and for many following Ages, yet no one had the good Luck, till some great Wits in our Age arose, to discover the Fraud. Now I must confess to you, *Estibius*, That my Throat is grown too narrow of late to swallow these Inconsistencies ; and likewise I must own, That I cannot digest a very fond and pernicious Principle, which You have advanced, concerning the Soul's Mortality with the Body.

*Est.* But not too fast, good *Philologus* : For I would have you to understand, that the Point I am concerned to maintain, is not to be mentioned in this black Catalogue of atheistical Heterodoxies. My Doctrine of the Mortality of the Soul, if it should happen to be a Mistake, is a harmless Error ; \* *And, in Relation to the main End of Religion, it matters not whether the Life of Man be his Soul, or a spiritual Substance united to his Body.* I cannot endure to go jogging on in the dull dunstable Road of Divinity, where Things are said over and over in the same Way ; Methinks it makes Religion look a little sprucer, to have the Parts of it set out, sometimes, in a *new-fashioned Dress*, and when † *Truth appears so, the more candid & pious Clergy will embrace it.* Though I must confess, there is *one Party* of Men in the World, † *That think it highly material not to be convinced, as*

\* *Second Thoughts*, Fp. Ded. p. 4. † *ib.* Fp. Ded. p. 3. † p. 4.

*in the Case of Demetrius, who made silver Shrines for the Goddess Diana. Act. 15. 24. There the current of Obstinacy runs strong, and the Prejudice is not only carried on by the Principles of Education, but is heightened also by a fresh Addition of Self-interest. But, tho' I am inclined to pay these Gentlemen all the Defe-  
 rence their Character requires, yet I cannot think my self obliged to follow them, and their Authorities from the ancient \* Fathers, whose Scrutinies in the My-  
 steries of Religion, as appears by their Writings, is very superficial, resolving them into implicit Faith, where the Difficulties seem too knotty for their Apprehension. But after all, Philologus, I protest to you, I have nothing in my View but an honest Design, and if I know my self, I am of an humble and teachable Temper. I do assure you, upon the Faith of a Christian, that all I have published formerly, upon this Head, † was wrote with an honest Intention, to convince the World, and if I my self could be convinced, that these my Opinions de-  
 viated from, or were contrary to divine Truth, I should be more ready to recant my Error, than all good Men will be to expose it as false and atheistical.*

*A willing-  
 ness to be  
 set right, a  
 good sign  
 under He-  
 terodox O-  
 pinions.*

*Phil.* I must needs own, *Estibius*, that, notwithstanding God has suffered you to fall into a most grievous and pernicious Error, yet still his heavenly Grace has been so favourable to you, as to suffer you to retain a good Disposition towards Conviction, and a Willingness to return unto the Faith. Which by the Way is an Attainment which the Generality of those, who have advanced *Heterodox* Opinions, do not arrive to. For such Men are for the most Part four and morose, proud and dogmatical, they having by their ill Opinions forfeited the Esteem of all good Men, it is natural for them to hate them again; and either to enter into a Correspondence with irreligious People, or to abandon themselves to a fullen Retirement. And besides, such a Degree of Self-Love, and

\* Ep. Ded. p. 2.

† Ep. Ded. ult.

Fondness for Men's own Notions, mixes with their Affections, that it is a great Degree of Mortification, to the best Men, to own themselves to be mistaken in the smallest Matters; it is the most literal Verification of the *plucking out the Eye*, and *cutting off the Hand* mentioned in the Gospel; and therefore, to be sure, in great and monstrous Errors, which shake the Foundations of our common Faith, the Devil will not be wanting to make the utmost Advantage, he can, of human Frailty; working up their Pride, and Shame, and Obstinacy to the highest Pitch, to keep them from returning to the Unity of the Faith, and the Bosom of the Church. From hence it has come to pass, that, among so great a Number of gross and senseless Heresies, which through the several Ages have infested the Church of God, we have not an Account from History, but of a very few of the Propagators of these odd and wicked Opinions, who have had the Grace, or the Resolution to recant them, or, as for ought appears, shew'd any Willingness thereunto.

Therefore, Sir, you ought more especially to adore the Mercy and Goodness of God, for suffering the Grace of his Holy Spirit so abundantly to work in your Heart, after so great a Defection from the Faith of the Gospel, in so important an Article thereof: And you ought by all Means to cherish these good Motions; by hearty Endeavours, for understanding the Truth; and by earnest Prayer to God, for the excellent Gift of Charity, of which Grace heterodoxical Opinions are more peculiarly destructive. To do this, will be the properest Method, you can pursue, for being convinced of your Errour; or, at least, for the rendring it more excusable in the Sight of God.

2. Next, Sir, I would advise you to take Notice, that you have no reason to fancy, that you have little to answer for your Opinion, if it prove a Mistake; because, forsooth, it does not affect the Main of Religion. For the same may be said of most of the

Every Heretodox Opinion very dangerous.

Heresies,

Heresies, which have hitherto disquieted the Church: For very few of them all denied the Resurrection and eternal Life; though, by the Way, to assert a Death of the Soul, though but until the End of the World, is half-way in the Doctrine of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*.

But pray, Sir, consider, that there is no Error in Matters of Faith, which is inconsiderable. To deny the smallest Point thereof is to oppose the revealed Will of God, and the Determination of his infinite Wisdom; for, I am sure, it is no small Degree of Arrogance, whatever it be of Error, to think, that to be too little a Point to be insisted on for Men's Belief, which God thought considerable enough, to be made known to us in his Holy Word. Consider farther the mischievous Consequences, which for the most part do ensue, upon the Propagation of any inconsiderable Error, in Point of Doctrine.

Think of the Disturbances, which are given thereby to the Minds of good Christians; how the Consciences of unlearned People are perplexed, to find their Faith unsettled by such odd Notions, advanced against the Belief they were baptised into.

Think how frequently the Unity of the Church is broken, by such erroneous Doctrines; for, when once Men have espoused a fond Opinion, they will endeavour to support that by Numbers and Profelytes, which they are at a Loss to do by Arguments. And, indeed, there are seldom wanting unthinking People to follow any Foolery, which learned Men can with some tolerable Speciousness advance.

And it is worth your farther Consideration to take notice, to what Inconveniencies the slightest Error may expose your self. For all Mistakes, especially when by Writings made publick, are wonderfully prolifick. Men endeavour to make good one Error, by advancing a second; and that again will be supported by another Heterodoxy, till the Man at last is either wholly clouded and bewildred in Whimsy and Caprice, or else makes  
a per-



a perfect Shipwreck of his Faith. I have not been an unobserving Spectator of the different Degrees of Infidelity, which Men have successively fallen into: How from a Dislike of Mysteries in Religion, and of the ancient Terms and Explications of the Church, they have proceeded to deny the Divinity and Satisfaction of our Blessed Lord: From thence they have made a Step farther, to relish nothing in the Christian Religion but the pure Morality of it; and, after that, to fancy that the Christian Religion has informed us of nothing more than the ancient Philosophy did before, besides some streight-laced unpracticable Precepts which their Reason cannot allow; and therefore, for the future, they are resolved to make Deism (as 'tis called) the only Standard of their Religion. And this too, in Time, comes to be unsatisfactory; for if their Lives do not come up to the Principles of natural Religion, and, if, upon Reflection upon their Actions, they cannot persuade themselves into the Hopes of attaining to a future Happiness, or the avoiding of the Punishments of another World, Natural Religion then becomes as much Cant and Priest-craft as Christianity, till at last they sink into the most forlorn Condition of downright Atheism; so as to own no Virtue, no Vice, no future State, nor so much as any God in the World; but only a blind, necessary, universal Nature, or an eternal Chain of Causes. How much your Notion, *Estibius*, contributes to these Effects, shall have a more particular Consideration hereafter.

3. After this I cannot but observe, in what you have said, That you are guilty of an equal Degree of Vanity and Censoriousness therein, when you tax the Clergy not only with not understanding this Question so well as your self, but that they keep up the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, because they find their particular Accounts and Advantages in it. But I pray, good *Estibius*, since you give me the Task of being the Parson's Advocate, What do the Clergy get by this Doctrine, more than by

*Vanity of Innovation, in pretending to understand Religion better than the Ministers of the Gospel.*

any other? The Popish Priests indeed get now and then a Spill for an *Orate pro Animâ*; but since Purgatory is no Doctrine of our Church, why should not our Clergy be as impartial Judges in this Question, as *Estibius* himself? But however a Stroke at the Function, now and then, must be for Decency's sake, and to shew a Man's Parts. To deal one's Blows directly among our own Clergy, favours too much of Roughness and ill Manners; and therefore it becomes more fashionable, to whip the Parsons upon the Backs of Heathen Priests and Popish Friars, as Occasion serves. But chiefly, Sir, I cannot but tax you with a Vanity, which I find you are inclined to, in common with too great a Number of the Gentlemen of the present Age, and that is, That you are very fond of advancing Notions out of the common Way, and in a *new-fashion'd* Dress, as you call it; as if the Doctrines of Jesus Christ were, like your Cloaths, to grow in or out of Fashion as the Humour takes. But there is frequently an unregenerate Pride, which lies at the Bottom of all this: Men love to appear *wiser* than their Teachers, and affect to distinguish themselves by a Superiority of Learning, above that of their Ministers, by venting some strange Tenets, contrary to the current and established Doctrines of the Church. They fantasie, if they did not now and then talk or write out of the common Way, and be picqueering at an Article of Faith or so, they would look like other Folks, and seem as much to be led by the Nose by their Parsons as they; but, upon Occasion, boldly to attack a main Point of Religion, and to advance some strange *Nostrums* in Divinity; this, 'tis supposed, gives a *Character*, and builds a Man up into a Figure, especially in the Opinion of some little unthinking People, who are wont to admire, and gape at every Thing in Religion, which is strange and novel, and which they do not use to hear at Church, on *Sundays*.

I must

I must confess, *Estibius*, I am at a loss to account for it; how some People have of late run into a Notion, That the Clergy are not so good Judges of these Matters as other lettered Gentlemen. This is a Fancy which, I am sure, is contrary to the general Sense of all Mankind, in other Concerns. Does any Man think, that 'tis inconvenient to trust to the Opinions of the Lawyers, concerning a Dispute about his Estate; because they have made it their Business to study all the old Rules of the Law, and are inclined tenaciously to adhere to the Maxims of their ancient Books and Precedents? Will any Man of Sense scruple, to lay the State of his Body before a learned Physician, and to take his Advice in a dangerous Distemper; because he has made it his Business to study *Galen* and *Hippocrates*, and the Books of other eminent Professors of that Art; and who for that Reason, may lie under Suspicion of having his Notions cramp'd, and his Judgment byass'd by the Rules, and Prescriptions, of those former Practitioners; or may be supposed to be of a Party to support the celebrated Aphorisms of that Profession? A Man would be counted mad, if upon such Considerations as these, he should lay aside a learned Council, and trust his Estate in the Hands of a prating Self-conceited Petti-fogger; or, if he should, upon the foresaid Account, prefer a pretending Quack to a learned Doctor. And yet in theological Points the Tables must be quite turn'd, and every Body be a better Judge in Divinity, than those who have made it the Business of their Lives to be skilful in it. If some Men have attained to a little Smattering of *Descartes* or *Hobbs's* Philosophy, or have but gotten their Head furnished with a few Shreads out of *Keckerman* or *Zabarel*, they are presently big with Notion, and out comes a Book to bid Defiance to an Article of Faith. And yet the unanimous Judgment of all the learned Divines in the World, in Opposition to such a Fancy, must have no Weight to counter-balance it. One would think, that, in the Opinion of all impartial Men, those Persons, who have long ap-

plied themselves to the Study of the Holy Scriptures; upon which all theological Points are founded; who have been conversant in the earliest Writers of the Church; who not only best understand the Catholick Doctrine of their own Times, but have had the Advantage of searching into whatever was taught by the Apostles themselves, who lived but just before them; Those Persons who are skilful in the original Languages, in which the Holy Books were written, and have nicely searched into the Customs and Traditions of the Jewish Church, which are the principal Key to the Understanding those Writings: I say 'tis but reasonable to think, That these Persons who are endowed with these Qualifications (as God be thanked a great Number of our Clergy are) should have a Title to be heard in a Question of Divinity, which with so much Diligence they have applied themselves to, before any Man, who being bred up to other Studies, but having sprung an odd Scruple in his Head, turns over his Bible, to fish for Texts to countenance the Singularity.

*Authority  
of the ancient  
Fathers  
in Doctrines  
of Faith.*

4. In the last Place, I beg leave to remind you, That you do with little Reason so slightly reject the Authorities of the ancient Fathers of the Church. There is no Body pretends they are infallible, neither are *their Scrutinies in the Mysteries of Religion so superficial* as you pretend. Their Arguments are not always Demonstration, 'tis true, and they may sometimes advance Proofs in Support of an Article of Faith, which are not so very conclusive; but however, they cannot be denied to be very good Witnesses, of what was an Article of Faith in the Ages they lived in; and, let their Logick be as defective as you please, their Books will still be a standing Evidence against the Heterodoxies of modern Innovators. But notwithstanding this, I believe, the Generality of the World will be of Opinion, that all the Fathers of the Church are less liable to be mistaken, than the single Author of *Second Thoughts*. For they will have a great Deal of Reason on their Side to incline them to think, That 'tis less probable, that the learned Bishops

shops who presided in the great Sees of *Rome* and *Alexandria*, *Constantinople* and *Carthage*, for so many successive Ages, were all mistaken in a plain Article of the Christian Faith, and which was likewise confirmed by the concurrent Doctrine of the Divines of all Ages, and of all Nations ever since; than that the Truth luckily should light only on the Side of a Writer, educated to another Profession, and who was not known to the World till 1700 Years after Christ.

*Est.* Let this be as it will: Yet still I am of Opinion, That Men would not be generally so averse to this Doctrine of ours, if it were not for the Prejudices they have contracted in their Education. \* *How oft have I seen, even in little and trivial Matters, some Men so extraordinary perverse and obstinate, that press your Arguments ever so close, urge your Reasons ever so clear, yet still you will but beat the Air, & non persuadebis etiamsi persuaseris. And this Obstinacy, is perhaps grounded on no other Reason, than what Education has implanted. The Tincture given in Infancy made a very deep Dye, and almost indelible Impression on the Judgment, or rather Fancy, never to be washed out without great Pains and Difficulty, if it ever can be at all. And give me Leave to add to this another Reason, of their not so readily complying with this Opinion; and that is, the Fear of sustaining a popular Odium for going out of the common Tract. † To avoid this Scandal, and Reproach, Men have formed to themselves Rules, and learned some from others, by which as in one common Road they will continually persevere to act; and whosoever shall endeavour to dissuade them, will but seem as one that babbleth, and as a Setter forth of new Doctrines, as St. Paul was by the Stoicks and Epicureans, when he preached to them the Resurrection, Act. xvii. 18. Nay, I doubt not, but that the Clergy themselves would be in a very coming Way to our Opinion, ‡ if by the Influence of Spiritual Promotion they did not own, and practice many Things, as Articles of Faith, which*

\* Page 3.

† Pag. 11.

‡ Pag. 31.

they do not believe. And the Reason of Men's acting so, the Evangelist explains by the Example of the chief Rulers, many of which believed on Jesus, but, because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the Synagogue: For they loved the Praise of Men more than God, Joh. 12. 42. But however we must own that this is an usual Infirmary of human Nature, and Men are as obstinately foolish in other Matters. † Many stickle still for several exploded Opinions in Philosophy, and are fierce Advocates for Fairies and Pigmies, and conceive Death as he is pictured to be a Form of dry Bones, and that he strikes those who at any Sickness are appointed to die, which gives Ground to the vulgar Phrase of being Death-struck. Nay, the learned University of Oxford it self must not pretend to be over-guilty of Infallibility, for they, to serve a Turn in a present Fracture of Affairs, have condemned as highly pernicious, and ranked among antimonarchical and Commonwealth Principles, an unquestionable Maxim, \* Sui ipsius Conversatio est primum Principium Naturæ. Yet our wise Nation of late have swallowed down the Belief of a Deity, with less Scruple than this Doctrine. In short, the Doctrine of the Soul's being a substantial Form, or incorruptible Being distinct from the Body, † is a Doctrine of the Romish Church, out of which the Reformed came, and serves only to bring in more Gold to the Calf in Horeb. And those of the Clergy, who pretend to believe it, are tempted to do so by worldly Profits and good Preferments: and all I can say for them is, that such Men for Lucre sin against God, and their own Conscience.

Phil. This is a home Charge indeed, *Estibins*; and if it were all as true as it is bold, it would bear terribly hard upon all the Preachers, and Believers, of the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality. But really, Sir, 'tis my Opinion, That the Merits of your Cause very much fail you; and that your Argument, upon this Head seems to walk lame in several Particulars. For,

† Pag. 45.

\* Pag. 39.

† Pag. 50, 51.

*First*, Your Imputation is not very just, when you say, we are hindred from going into your Notion, by the Prejudice of our Education. For truly, Sir, I do not think that either Education is so strong, or that your Notions are so clear, that your Cause suffers very much upon that Score. If we were to dispute this Point before Men, that were sprung out of the Earth like Mushroom, who had received no Manner of Prepossession from Education, but enjoyed only the simple Use of Reasoning; I durst venture our Cause, against all that can be said for yours, upon the pure Force of the Arguments on our Side the Question. But to take this Argument at the best, it is an idle Objection: For it may be urged against any Doctrine or Opinion in the World, as well as against this. It will serve equally to discountenance any Art or Science Men are bred up to, when they are young, and will have as good a Pretence to persuade People, That 'tis a needless Project to teach their Children to write and to read, and to bring them up to human Studies; Because it may be said, that the Liking they have to good Letters, is only a Partiality derived from their own selves being educated in them. This Argument, with as good Colours as here 'tis urged, will serve a Turk to convert a Christian; or a Heathen to make Profelytes of both.

But if Men are led into this false Notion of the Soul's Immortality, from the Prejudice of Education, how come Men, I pray, all the World over, to be so falsely educated? Falsities and Errors are never of an uniform Nature: Difference and Irregularity indeed are Properties which belong to them; but nothing is universally consonant, and agreeing to it self, but Truth. Now, whereas all People, of all Nations in the World, have imbibed, in their tender Years, the Notion of the Soul's Immortality, it is somewhat hard to assert, That a Falsity should prevail, without any Intermission, for so many Thousands of Years, and in so many Millions of Families. An Error may be kept up for a Time, and among a considerable Number; but for the

far greatest part of Men to be taught, and to continue in a perpetual and uniform Mistake, is incredible. I believe, That, by the Negligence of a Nurse or by a foolish Imitation, Children may learn some irregular and unnatural Qualities, as to be left-handed, or to be fplay-footed. But I should think that Man to be a Monster, who should tell me, That Nature designed Men should chiefly use their left Hands, and that they were originally made to go upon all four; only, by the Perverseness of Mothers and Nurses, they for the Generality were brought to make Use of their right Hands, and to walk erect.

Not for  
fear of  
Singularity.

Secondly, I must take the Liberty to tell you, That your taxing us with the *Fear of Singularity*, is one of those universal, and wide Sort of Arguments, which will serve indifferently to countenance any odd Sort of whimsical Fancy against a true and established Doctrine. And besides, 'tis an Imputation which contains in it a great Degree of Uncharitableness, but has no Manner of Share of Proof.

But then farther I would desire you to consider, That this was a Doctrine commonly received by wise Men, when Singularity was no great Bar against the opposing it. For in the ancient Times of Heathenism, when the Greek and Roman Learning flourished most, and Men enjoyed as free and impartial an Use of their Reasoning as could ever be wished; nay, when Men gained a Character by advancing Novelties, and had the Honour of being counted the Founders of a Sect, by going out of the common Road of received Doctrines; even then the Generality of wise and learned Men look'd upon this Doctrine, of the Soul's Immortality, to be such an undoubted Truth, that they could not persuade themselves to forsake it, tho' they were under the Temptation of popular Applause which they might receive, for any sceptical Paradoxes advanced against it. And the *Epicureans* of all the numerous Sects of Philosophers (but who likewise had debased human Reason into downright Bestiality) had alone the Hardiness to oppose a  
Truth,



Truth, which all other learned, and unlearned, Men embraced.

Nay, Sir, I am so far from thinking, that the Fear of being reputed singular deters People, from going into your Notion; That I believe your Notion had never been thought of, but only for the Affectation of Singularity. Some Men love to talk and write out of the common Road; they are wonderfully fond to be ranked among the Number of free Thinkers as they call them, and to be striking out untrodden Paths; and, when this Itch takes them, they will venture Religion, Reputation, and every Thing else, to indulge the Humour. And I believe, *Estibius*, if you would consult your own Conscience, that you will find too much of this Fancy mixed with your Thoughts, before you gave your self the Loose of running into this Paradox.

*Thirdly*, You pursue your Uncharitableness, and Unreasonableness of Opinion to a yet farther Length; when you assert, That the Clergy only keep up the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, and that they do not so readily fall into your Notion, for Fear of losing their Preferments, if they should espouse it. For in the first Place, I cannot think it very reasonable, *Estibius*, That the Clergy either of the Church of *England*, or or the Church of *Rome*, should part with their Preferments out of Compliment to your Doctrine, unless it had the Happiness to be supported with a little more Reason, than has hitherto appeared in Favour of it. A Maintenance is too comfortable a Thing to be parted with for an Hypothesis, especially for another Man's. And [you must give some Allowance to human Nature, and may imagine, That every Man is altogether as fond of his own Security, and Well-Being, as you are of your Opinion.

But why, I pray, must the Clergy only be so hardly thought of, for not professing themselves your Converts? Why do you not require other Persons, in publick Posts, to bow down to your Idol? Why don't you say, That they are afraid likewise, of being turned out

of the Synagogue? For that by the Way is a scurvy Punishment, and which no wise Man would care to undergo, for the Sake of a whimsical Opinion. Why don't you clamor at the great Ministers of State, for betraying the Cause of God and Religion, to keep their Places? For under the Reign of our present Queen, who has so high Regards for the established Religion, I think I should not be mistaken, if I should say, that if the greatest Minister she employs should openly espouse your Heterodoxy, he would not be long-lived in his Office. And yet I durst engage, that there is ne'er a one of them all, that has been swayed by this Consideration; but that, if your Book has come to their Hands, they have been very impartial Judges of it for all that. So that upon the whole, *Estibius*, after Examination, I find, That the Parsons are not solely to blame in this Matter, and that Profelytes do not crowd in so fast to your Opinion, but still there are enough left to give Countenance to the Clergy in sticking to their old Doctrine.

But, to speak more seriously to you, I profess, Sir, that it does betoken a great Degree of Uncharitableness in you, to imagine That the Clergy are guilty of that Hypocrisie and Prevarication, which you seem to impute. They frequently declare their Opinion, in the most solemn Manner, in the Presence of God and the Congregation; and therefore why should they not in Charity be allowed to be sincere in such a Profession? Especially when they are not called to such an Attestation, but choose very often this Subject for the better Edification of their People, when they might, if they pleased, make their Choice of some other Theological Head.

4. And now I crave Leave to tell you, that you do not with Justice compare the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality and separate Existence, with the idle Stories of Pygmies and Fairies. Every one knows that these Tales are only the Fictions of Poets, or the Tattle of simple People. But it should engage you to pay something more Deference to this Opinion; to consider, That it has been held by some of the most considerable Men, that

ever the World has seen. *Plato*, and *Aristotle*, and *Cicero*, and all the most famous Philosophers and Divines, who lived since their Time, havemaintained this Doctrine, which you look upon as so trivial: But I dare vouch for them, that they would never have given their Assent to such foolish Chimney-corner Talk, as you are pleased to compare this Article of Faith to. But this is by a Figure in Rhetorick, which I perceive you are well versed in.

5. But as for your Logick (and your Politicks too, let me tell you) you are terribly out in Them, when, to support your beloved Notion, you so unhandsofely strike at the most famous University, and the bravest Nation in the World; at the Breasts of the first of which you drew all the Learning you can boast of, and have so long breathed the Air and Liberties of the latter. How! *the University of Oxford, to serve a Turn in a present Juncture of Affairs, condemned as highly pernicious and antimonarchical, &c. an unquestionable Maxim, Sui ipsius Conversatio est primum Principium nature.* No, the University of *Oxford*, to serve her Mother-Country, which was like to be undone by the factious Tumults of antimonarchical Men, censured a Proposition, which such ill Men made Use of to defend Sedition and Rebellion. The Proposition which stands condemned by the University in Convocation, *July 21. 1683.* was this: *Self-Preservation is the Fundamental Law of Nature, and supersedes the Obligation of all others, whenever they stand in Competition with it,* *Hobbes de Cive, Leviathan.* Now by your Leave, *Estibius*, I think the Condemnation of this Proposition taken out of an atheistical Author, and made Use of since by seditious Mutineers, for the disturbing a lawful Government, and for the supporting treasonable Conspirators who had forfeited their Lives to the Law for their wicked Practices; and for the maintaining a Christian Doctrine, namely, *Submission to the lawful Magistrate*, was a Thing not in the least unbecoming that learned Body. And therefore in *Second Thoughts* \* the Au-

Oxford  
Decree  
1683, vin-  
dicated,  
&c.

thor does not act ingenuously, when he brings in *Grotius* as contradicting the University Decree. The Place of *Grotius* which I suppose he means, is *De Jur. Belli & Pacis, Lib. 1. Cap. 2. §. 1.* Where he proves out of *Tully*, That Self-Preservation is one of the first Principles of Nature. And hence he proves, That War is naturally lawful; Because every Man, *alicnatur ab interitu iisq; rebus que interitum videantur afferre*; is averse from Death, and from those Things which seem to bring on Death. But then this makes nothing for that Proposition which the University condemns: Which is a Self-Preservation pretended to raise Arms against a lawful Authority, or to defend Rebels against the Punishment the Law threatens for the Demerit of their Crimes. For 'tis a Jest to say, That 'tis the natural Desire of Life which is here censured; But, only such a Desire of Life as shall be set up in Contradiction to all Laws of God and Men, as *Hobbs's* Philosophy does advance it; And as other Propositions, drawn out of that pernicious Writer in the same Decree, do evince. Prop. 13. *Every Man after his entring into a Society, retains a Right of defending himself against Force, and cannot transfer that Right to the Common-wealth, when he consents to that Union whereby a Common-wealth is made: And in Case a great many Men together have already resisted the Common-wealth, for which every one of them expecteth Death, they have Liberty then to join together to assist and defend one another. Their bearing of Arms subsequent to the first Breach of their Duty, though it be to maintain what they have done, is no new unjust Act, and if it be only to defend their Persons, is not unjust at all.* Prop. 14. *An Oath superadds no Obligation to Pact, and a Pact obliges no farther than it is credited: And consequently, if a Prince gives any Indication, that he does not believe the Promises of Fealty and Allegiance made by any of his Subjects, they are thereby freed from their Objection, and notwithstanding their Pacts and Oaths, may lawfully rebel against and destroy their Sovereigns.*

*reign.* Hobbes de Cive, Leviathan. This is *Hobbs's* Opinion of these Matters, and I think is justly condemned by the Univerſity: and by our Author's good Leave let me ſay by *Grotius* too. For *Lib. 1. Cap. 4.* he has theſe Words, *Et Naturaliter quidem omnes, &c. By Nature all Men have a Right of reſiſting to propel an Injury from them. But Civil Society being inſtituted to preſerve Peace, thereupon there ariſes to the Government a certain greater Right over us and ours, as far as is neceſſary to that End. Therefore the Government may prohibit that promiſcuous Right of reſiſting for the Sake of publick Peace and Order: And it is not to be doubted but it will, for otherways it cannot obtain its End without it. For if there remains a Right for every one to reſiſt, it will not be a Government but a diſjointed Multitude.* And I would deſire that Author, upon his *Second Thoughts*, to conſider, That, when the Univerſity made that Decree, there was a Law, and an Oath in being; which reſtrained Subjects from *taking up Arms againſt the King, or any commiſſioned by him.* Therefore, Sir, you would do well to conſider, with what Adviſedneſs you reflect two very grievous Reproaches upon the Univerſity; for denying an indubitable Maxim, and that too to ſerve a Turn. For that indubitable Maxim (as you call it) was an atheiſtical Rule calculated for the Uſe of Rebels, and the Turn which was ſerved was a very good one; for, upon this honeſt Reſolve of the Univerſity, it was very obvious to obſerve, how the diſtemper'd Spirits of the Nation began moſt ſenſibly to calm again.

And ſo, *Eſtibus*, I cannot but reſent the Indignity you put upon the Nation, when you ſay, *Our wiſe Nation of late Years has thought no Principle of Divinity half ſo convincing, as the Propoſition they condemn, or ſwallowed down the Belief of a Deity with leſs Scruple or Difficulty.* What a ſtrange Expreſſion is this? Do you think, That we are grown to be a Nation of Atheiſts, who have no Regard at all to Religion, but only to civil Interests? Do you think, That we value the Being of a God leſs than a political Maxim? *With leſs Scruple*  
and

*and Difficulty!* As if the Existence of an eternal, wise, and good God (the Idea of which falls naturally in with the Mind of every Man that thinks of it) should be a Matter of such profound Difficulty to the People of our Nation, as not to go down their Throats without Scruple. I must own to you, Sir, That Atheism and irreligious Opinions have too much prevailed among us; but God be thanked, there are but very few who are tainted with these Sentiments, in Comparison with the whole Body of the Nation. I believe, there were more Men poison'd some Years ago this Way, than there are now; a great many are become sensible of the Inconsistencies of the infidel Notions, and so are in a fair Way of returning to their right Belief again. Thirty or forty Years ago the Philosophy of *Epicurus* was much in Vogue, and some witty Gentlemen were very big with *Lucretius's* Arguments; endeavouring to persuade themselves and others, that in an Infinity of Time, wherein there had been all the possible Combinations of Matter, the World jump'd into this present regular Frame, after an infinite Number of confused Positions. This Notion was proved to labour with a vast many Difficulties; therefore 'twas thought necessary to believe a God, who made and governs the World; and from thenceforwards, among that Set of People, Deism became the more fashionable Opinion. And I find a great many, especially of those who are virtuously inclined, begin to grow weary of such a heathenish Religion, and are come again to have a good Relish of Christianity, if for no other Reason, yet purely because of the Excellence of its Morality; so that 'tis to be hoped, That in Time, by the Grace of God, after a long Run in Infidelity which some vicious or fanciful Men have made among us, all the good and virtuous will return into the Unity of the Faith, and the Pale of Christ's Church, and none be left in our Nation, as a Party against our holy Religion, but only it may be some lewd and unthinking Rakes. So much for your political Observations; for your Kindness to the Nation and University shew'd in your Argument;

ment; I now beg a Word, to make good my Promise, in observing how much Logick there is in it.

Suppose, the University was mistaken in condemning a true Proposition for false; nothing more can be drawn from this, than that 'tis possible, that many learned Men may be mistaken in their Opinions. And who ever denied it? But 'tis more probable, by the Bye, that one single Member of it should be mistaken, than that all the rest should. But where is the Conclusion of this notable Argument? The University of *Oxford* was mistaken in a political Point, under a very great Heat and Ferment of the Nation, before the Rights of the *English* People were sufficiently scan'd and determined: Therefore all the Universities, and all the Learned Men in the World have been mistaken in a plain Article of their Christian Faith, ever since the Apostles Time. And I fancy it will be a good Argument in Favour of the University; That that learned Body teaches better Rules of Logick, than to argue from one Particular to such a wide *Universality*, as the Author of *Second Thoughts* herein does; and will be presumed, if ever she thinks to vindicate herself in this Matter, to advance better Arguments in the Defence of this Proposition than that Author has attacked it with.

*Est.* Hitherto, *Philologus*, I have entertained you only with some Preliminary Discourse upon this Subject; but now I shall attack you closer. It is a very great Objection against your received Doctrine of the Soul's Spirituality and immortal Nature; That the diverse Philosophers, who have presumed to explain the Nature of it, are of so very different Opinions concerning it. \* *The Stoicks conceived, and accordingly defined it to be a hot fiery Blast, and vital Spirit of the Blood, which agitated by the different Impressions, and Objects made on it, formed suitable Ideas in the Minds of Men, and they acted accordingly. Parallel to this says the Poet,*

Igneus est illis vigor & cœlestis origo  
Seminibus, &c-----

\* P. 53, 54.

*Other Philosophers, as Cleanthes, called human Soul a hot Complexion; or corporeal Quality diffused through the whole Body: Dinarclus esteemed it a Harmony of the four Elements: Democritus said, Human Soul was made up of round Atoms incorporated by Air and Fire. Leucippus and Hipparchus, a fiery Body: Critias and Anaximenes, an Aerial: Hesiod, an Earthy: Xenophon, Watery and, Earthy. But above all, the greatest Philosopher in the World has so bewilder'd and lost himself in this Subject, that he has given us such a Definition of it, as no Mortal can make Sense of, and yet \* upon this, the Notion of the Soul of Man, as it is now generally received by all Divines, is built. But their Notion seems the more perplexed, when they assert the Soul to be † a Substantial Form, which does not at all give any one Light into the Nature of the Thing, but rather leaves him more perplexed, to make a farther Enquiry for Satisfaction, if possible.*

*Phil.* Since you have begun to advance your Paces, against the Catholick Doctrine; I will keep up to you as close, as I can. And though hitherto you make your Attack, only upon the Outworks of Christianity, and as it may seem only upon some Philosophical Opinions; yet these Doctrines, which you oppose, are so much interwoven with Religion it self, that your Design seems to be, to wound the Catholick Faith, through the Philosophers Sides. And therefore, as this tends to the Defence of That, I shall speak to the Particulars of what you have said in their Order.

*Different Opinions of Philosophers, no Argument against the Soul's Immortality.* And in the first Place I humbly conceive, Sir, That the Philosophers being of different Opinions with Relation to the Nature of the Soul, is no Argument at all against our Christian Doctrine, of the Spirituality or Immortality of it. It is no great News, to hear of the clashing Opinions of the Philosophers in Matters they were better acquainted with, than with the Nature of the Soul. They were for advancing all imaginable Paradoxes, in the common Phenomena of Nature; They

\* Pag, 57. † Pag, 65.



were for altering often times the very Boundaries of Virtue and Vice ; sometimes for making Virtue an Animal, and other Times an imaginary *Chimera*. This gave Occasion to that terrible Stricture of *Cicero* upon them ; *Sed nescio quomodo nihil tam absurde dici potest, quod non dicatur ab aliquo Philosophorum*, Tusc. Quæst. *I know not how it comes to pass, that a Man cannot speak any Thing so absurd, but that one of the Philosophers has said the same.* But after all, *Estibius*, the Philosophers, who are too apt to wrangle and divide upon other Points, are pretty much of a Side in this. The Atheistical Philosophers, indeed, who made Atoms the Principles of all Things, made the Soul agreeably to consist of some little brisk fiery Spirits, which kept in for a While, but were afterwards extinguished. But the other graver Philosophers of all Sorts, allowed the Soul to be a spiritual Being ; only it may be sometimes they might use the Similies of Air or Fire, to explain it by. For, in the Infancy of the Greek Philosophy, that Tongue wanted Words to express a spiritual Substance by, and therefore the ancient Philosophers might very well be excused, if they expressed their Meaning by the usual Terms which their Tongue afforded ; if so be they bore any Analogy to Spirit, and they could use them to express such a Being, though in a metaphorical or tralatitious Sense. For the Jews were forced to do the same ; for their Word *Ruach*, by which they are wont to express the Soul, signifies originally a Wind ; and yet I think, it will be a difficult Point to prove, that the Jews held the Soul to be nothing more than *Wind*, or *Air*.

But granting the widest Difference, you can imagine, among the Opinions of the Greek Philosophers, concerning the Soul's Spirituality or Immortality ; yet how does this affect the Christian Doctrine thereof ? The Christian Philosophers, and Divines, for many successive Ages, have unanimously maintained this Doctrine, as it was delivered by Christ and his Apostles : and, though the Heathen Philosophers might labour under

der many Scruples, and Diversity of Opinions concerning this Point; yet We, by the Revelation which our Religion affords, have a certain Rule to walk by herein; our blessed Lord having brought *Life and Immortality to Light, through the Gospel.*

Aristotle's  
Definition  
of the Soul  
vindicated.

Secondly, Methinks 'tis hardly worth your While, *Estimius*, to labour another Point so very hard; and that is to confound *Aristotle's* Definition of the *Soul*, by making Nonsense of it. For my Part, I am no more obliged to defend one of *Aristotle's* Definitions, than one of *Lilies* Prophecies: For I think our Christian Religion, and all the Doctrines thereof, may be very true for all his being mistaken. But because *Aristotle's* Definitions have been long made Use of in Christian Schools, and the Authority of that great Philosopher weighs much in the Opinions of all learned Men; but chiefly for Truth's Sake, and because I don't think he deserves in this Point the Treatment you give him; I will speak a Word or two in his Vindication, as to that Affair.

*Aristotle* has given two Definitions of the Soul. The first is general, so as to take in the vegetative and sensible together with the rational Soul. In his second Book *de Animâ*, he thus defines it. *Ψυχὴ ἐστὶν ἐντολεια ἢ πρώτη σώματος φυσικῆς ζῶντος δυνάμει.* *The first perfecting Act or Energy in a natural Body empowering it with Life.* And then farther explains himself. *Τοῦτον δὲ ὁ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργανικῆς.* *I mean by this a natural and organical Body: For the Orgâns of Animals are their Limbs and Parts: Orgâns of Plants are their Barks, Fibres, and Roots: and therefore τὴν κοινὴν ἐπὶ πάσης Ψυχῆς λέγειν, to give a common Definition of a Soul in general: It is the first perfecting Act of an organical Body, &c.* Now what is there in this Definition, that it deserves to be so much arraigned for? The Philosopher when he framed it considered, That let a Body be ever so exactly organised, yet unless God Almighty afforded some *perfective Act or Energy*, as might give Life and Motion to such a dead Machine, it would never be able to perform any Operations, either as a Plant or an Animal. Let us suppose many Tubes or Threads

to be laid together, like the Stalk of a Plant or the Body of a Tree, and let these be spread out into Branches and Root, and let them be placed where there is sufficient Moisture of the Earth to nourish them; and see if by their own Power they will sprout out into Leaves or Flowers, without such a perfective Energy, to draw up and to concoct the Juices, to increase the Parts, and to cloath them with that beautiful Verdure which the Vegetables are wont to appear in. Suppose something of the Nature of Bones to be turn'd into the Proportion of those of an animal Body; suppose them to be clothed with muscular Fibres, and tied together with Tendons, and all the Tubes to convey Blood and animal Spirits; and what will all this signify towards Life and Sensation, unless God infuse into it such a *perfective Energy*, as the Philosopher here describes the Soul to be? Unless God superadd such a *first Act* by his divine Omnipotency to make it *move and perceive*, it will still remain dead Clock-work, and nothing more? And therefore I humbly conceive, that this Definition of *Aristotle* remains firm and unshaken, against all the Attacks you have hitherto made against it.

Indeed *Plotinus* the *Platonick* has advanced something more considerable, in Opposition to it. And he, *Ennead. 4. Lib. 2.* finds Fault with this Definition of *Aristotle*, for making the Soul to be *ἐτελέχεια*, which he thinks does not agree to the rational Soul. But he is mistaken in what *Aristotle* means by *ἐτελέχεια*, who understands not that which is only ordained to give Perfection or Completion to another; but something that is absolute in its own self, but yet adds Perfection to something else it is joined to. Now *Plotinus*, considering that the rational Soul is something absolute in its own Nature, without any Relation to the Body, only upon this Account blames *Aristotle's* Definition; which he would not have done, had he understood *ἐτελέχεια* in the Sense, which the Philosopher designed it.

The other Definition, or rather Description which *Aristotle* gives of the Soul is; *ψυχή δὲ, τοῦτο ὃ ζῶμεν, ἢ αἰσ-*

*ἑαυτοῦ μετα καὶ διανοεῖται πρώτως.* That by which we first live, perceive, and understand. De An. Lib. 2. C. 2. His Meaning is, that in a Plant the first Cause of Life or Vegetation is a vegetative Soul : In a Brute the Cause of Sensation is a sensitive Soul : And that in a Man the Fountain of Reason is the rational Soul, but yet so that upon the Presence of this both Life and Sense depend. I know the *Author of Second Thoughts* looks upon this to be a very extravagant Notion, and thinks it would scare a young *Novice in Philosophy*, to tell him there is a certain  *Creature in the World, that has three Souls in it all distinct as to Essence and Substance : A Soul that never dies, and is a spiritual Substance ; the other two die : notwithstanding they all three are entire distinct Substances, and cohabit together for several Years in one Body, and are intimately so united that they make a noble fourth Thing.* But all this is Banter ; which turns most upon the Author himself, and makes him lose the Character of a Philosopher for that of a Riddle-maker. For there is no Necessity of falling in with the Opinion of some *Aristotelians*, viz. That there are three distinct Souls in a Man, and two at least in every Animal. For I doubt not, but that the sensitive Soul in Brutes does supply the Office of the vegetative. But in a Man, I think with good Reason, that there is something besides the rational Soul, which performs the lower Operations in the Body. That indeed is the *τὸ ἐννοητικόν* or commanding Principle, but 'tis plain, there must be some other inferior Power which is subservient to it. For whilst I am talking with you, *Estibius*, and my Mind is taken up with these Philosophical Debates, I am sure, that there is something besides which makes my Blood to circulate in my Veins, which propels it upwards contrary to its natural Tendency ; which is continually opening a thousand Valves to keep it on in its Course, and shutting them to hinder it from running back again ; something which concocts the Food in my Stomach, and alters it into Juices proper for the Renovation of my decaying Parts ; something which refines my Blood again into Spirit, that affords Motion and Sensation

tion to every Member. Now I am sure it is not this reasoning Principle which I perceive within me that does this; because I find this Principle to be taken up with another Office at the same Time; and, when it is most at Leisure, I find it very little understands how these Operations are performed, or if it did, it has not Ability to perform them. Now I am sure these Operations are performed by some Principle or other, besides the rational Soul; which you may, if you please, call a sensitive Soul, or a plastick Nature, or any thing else; but still I am sure it is not that rational Soul, which reasons with you now about these Matters. Therefore I say, That in a Man (besides his rational Nature, which is the governing Principle,) there is some other Soul or Principle subservient in him at the same Time, which performs these Under-Offices. Now I cannot think it more absurd, to suppose two pneumatick or immaterial Principles to be joined together in the Actuation of one Body, than that two Parts of Matter should be joined together in one *Compositum*; or, at least, than that any one Soul should be joined to one Body. For there is as much Difficulty in conceiving how one Soul should be joined to a Body, as that more should be. Because all the Difficulty of Conception lies, how Matter and Spirit should be united; there being no imaginable Ground, that we know, of Cohesion between them. But if one Soul can be united to a Body, a thousand may; and if they be subordinate one to another, they may all perform their distinct and regular Operations.

*Thirdly*, Neither will my Judgement permit me, to go into your Opinion, as to all that you have advanced concerning substantial Forms. So far I own you are in the right, *Estibius*; That it was a fond Notion of the Schools, to imagine that upon every little Alteration in a natural Body, there was an old substantial Form corrupted, and a new one introduced. They were led into this Error in dark Ages, by their Want of a sufficient Knowledge in the Mathematicks, and Chymistry, and experimental Philosophy. For if they had but understood what an

*Soul of Man  
a Substan-  
tial Form.*

Alteration is made in Matter, by the *Figure* and *Position*, and *Motion* of the Parts; the mighty Changes that are affected by the Chymist's Furnace, in Liquors and Metals; the Contexture of the minute Parts of Bodies, which are discovered by the Microscope, and the Variagation of Colours by the Reflection and Refraction of Light; with the many other Diversifications, in Appearances of Things, which are discovered by the experimental Philosophy in the last Age; they would never have had Recourse to the continual Creation of new substantial Forms, for the Production of every new natural Body. But being destitute of these Advantages, which these noble Arts and Discoveries have afforded; they were forced to make use of those metaphysical Notions, which a subtle Genius afforded them, for the carrying on their Philosophy.

But however, though one cannot assent to their Opinion, That all natural Productions were distinguished, and sorted into their particular Species, by individual substantial Forms: Yet it cannot be denied, but that every single Man has a substantial Form, by which he is distinguished from every other Man, and from all other Creatures; and that this substantial Form is the rational Soul. For *First*, That the Soul is a *Substance*, is evident to every one that considers, that 'tis impossible for an Accident to be the Subject of those several Properties which the Soul is endowed with; as to perceive, to will, to understand, to be capable of Joy and Grief, of Desire and Aversion. There is no one but is sensible of the Absurdity, in attributing these Qualifications to an Accident or Mode of Being. Those Men who are unwilling to allow the Soul to be a spiritual Substance, still for the most Part own it to be some Substance or other, though a material one. The only Difficulty that sticks with them is, That they cannot conceive any Thing to be an immaterial Substance; because they think, that Substance and Matter are convertible Terms, and that they cannot have any Notion of such immaterial or spiritual Substance. But the Fault of such  
Men

Men is, that they have too gross and unphilosophical Conceptions of Things, and suffer their Thoughts to be too much prepossessed, by the low and narrow Ideas conveyed by their Senses; by vulgar Expressions; and by the Representations of material Objects. Because, forsooth, they call a Piece of Cloath or Plate substantial, which has such a sufficient Degree of Thickness, or such a large Quantity of Matter in it, as enables it to continue long in Use and Wearing; therefore they conclude there can be no other proper Notion of Substance but this, which the Vulgar has conceived under that Name; and that there is no Substance but what has Divisibility, Impenetrability, and the other Properties of that gross Substance which they see and feel. Now if, when Philosophers and Divines call the Soul a spiritual Substance, they meant Substance in this Sense; they might be justly chargeable with an absurd and contradictory Notion. But when they declare their Meaning to be, That the Soul is a Substance of a Nature perfectly different from this, exclusive of all Length and Breadth, and Thickness; and is a Being, that has several Modes and Properties agreeable to its Nature attending it, and as perfectly distinct as corporeal Beings have; this carries in it no Impossibility or Contradiction; and they having before defined and explained what they mean by such a Substance, the Word Substance, when applied to this Conception, is altogether as proper, as when it stands for that gross Notion which the Vulgar have of it. For by the same Reason, which they advance against this Expression, they may cavil at most other philosophical Words; which for the Generality (in the Greek Tongue especially) are vulgar Terms appropriated to a philosophical Sense. And Languages not being composed by Divines or Philosophers, these Persons would be put upon the Task of coining a World of strange Jargon, to express their abstracted Notions by; if they were not allowed to use the common Words in a something new Sense. *Secondly*, It is likewise as evident to any one that well considers it, that the Soul of Man is his particular Form.

'Tis that which constitutes him in the Order of Beings he is of, and distinguishes him from all other Individuals of the same Species. *Forma dat esse Rei*. The Form gives Being to the Thing. Now that which makes a Man to be Man, and to be that particular individual Something that he is, is the Soul. For the Body contributes not at all, to make a Man the same Something that he is. For if you allow this, you must allow that a Man is by so much a different individual as his Body alters. But I perceive, and know my self to be the same Something, that I was twenty Years ago, tho' I question, whether or no I have an Ounce of the Body remaining I carried about me then. To say I am patch'd up by gradual Reparations, like an old Ship, till I am wholly altered, will not mend the Matter. For such a Ship so altered, is a different Ship, only it bears the same Name. But I am conscious, I am the same Person, though my Body be ever so much altered: But if my Body were the I, or that Something that I am, there could be no Ground for me to perceive that Alteration; Because the new-added Parts could have no possible Traces or Ideas of an old Perception. And here I cannot but observe, that you fall into your old Error again, of conceiving philosophical Truths after the vulgar Way of thinking. The vulgar *Form*, or Idea which Men have of *Alcibiades* is, comely, black-hair'd, tall, eloquent, passionate, endowed with such a Number of other Accidents and Qualities, which are remarkable, and serve to distinguish that noble Personage from other Men. But if these Qualities happen to be altered, and if on a sudden, he become grey, stammering, wrinkled, mild, &c. we no longer know this Person to be *Alcibiades*; and so this outward Form we distinguish him by, is lost and gone. But if we gradually perceive these Alterations growing upon him, and take up other new Marks of Distinction, we conceive a new external Form of him, which insensibly coming upon us, we imagine him to be the same *Alcibiades* still. But after all, these outward Appearances do by no Means make *Alcibiades* to be that  
 parti-



particular rational Man: For he is conscious to himself to be the same *Alcibiades*, though no Body besides knows him to be such. For that Self-consciousness of one's own Thoughts would tell one, he was the same Man, tho' his Body was so much altered, that one did not know it one's self. I think no Body will deny a Man to be the same individual, after the Small Pox as before; though his Face be so much altered, that he is scared at it himself, when he looks in the Glass. And he is still the same, though he lose his Arms and Legs; nay, though he should lose all the rest of his Body; if so be he have any other Organs continued to him, to convey the Impressions of corporeal Beings in the Way of human Life, and did not become a separate Soul. And even in that State he would continue the same rational Being, though disjoined from organised Matter; as I shall shew you farther by and by. From all which I conclude, That since the Soul of a Man is a true Substance, and not any Accident or Mode, which does constitute him to be that particular rational Creature that he is; the Soul is not improperly called by the Schools the substantial Form of Man.

*Est.* But you have not proved the Soul not to be an Accident yet; and, for all the rest you have said, I am so very little satisfied with *Aristotle's* Definition of the Soul, and with the common Notion which Philosophers and Divines have of it, that I will venture to give a Definition of it my self, which will, I suppose, be liable to fewer Exceptions, than any that hitherto have been given: and in the Explication thereof, \* *I shall declare what Sentiments I conceive of the true Essence of human Soul, and what I presume to be the most rational Idea thereof.* Anima est Afflatus originaliter insensibili materiæ divinitus infusus, quo eadem vivit, sentit, & ratiocinatur. † *The Soul is a Breath originally infused by God into insensible Matter, by which it lives, and exerts Sense and Reason. I call it an Afflatus or Breath, because this is agreeable to the Scriptures. The Spirit of the Lord has made me, and the Breath of the Almighty has given me Life,*

\* Pag. 89.

† P. 91.

Job xxxiii. 4. *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth.* Psal. xxxiii. 6. which are Allusions to God's breathing into Man's Nostrils the Breath of Life in the History of the Creation, *which is no more, than that God made dead Matter, or Man, with his exterior Shape to become a living Creature; but it would be an absurd Supposition to suppose, that God conveyed into him a spiritual Substance through his Nostrils. I say, \* quo materia vivit, &c. by which I mean an active Power in seminal Matter, derived at first from God, which is but an Accident, † and which is so far from being a Derogation to God, that it is rather a magnifying his Power, that he is able to make Accidents to execute such Operations as others conceived impossible to be done, without the Assistance of a substantial Agent. ‡ Which Accident or Afflatus is the Cause, not only of Life and Sense, but of Reasoning likewise; for \*\* I make Reasoning not to be the sole Act of Man, but of every Animal in a lesser Degree, it being a Propriety which necessarily follows Life and Sensation. So that in short, \*† Man is only a meer Piece of Mechanism, a curious Frame of Clock-work, and only a reasoning Engine; which is agreeable to that of St. Paul, Hath not the Potter Power over his Clay, &c. But however, Man is such a curious Piece of Mechanism, as shews, only an Almighty Power could be the first and sole Artificer, to make a Reasoning Engine out of dead Matter, †† to pry and search into the Nature of Heaven and Earth.*

*Phil.* I protest, *Estibius*, This is Novel enough of all Conscience, and if Singularity will carry your Cause, you will do it without Exception. Afflatus's, and Accidents, and Machines I durst engage, were never before jumbled together in a Discourse of the Soul; and I fancy were your Master Mr. *Hobbs* now alive, he would quickly be upon you with a bantering Translation of what you here advance; and we should have more of his *in-blowings*, and *blowings-upon*, to make your Terms intelligible to the English Reader.

\* Pag. 92. † P. 98. ‡ P. 101. \*\* P. 97. \*† P. 123. †† P. 124.

I. But before I come to examine your famous Definition, which I may presume to say is entirely yours; I beg leave to speak a Word or two to you, concerning your Notion of the Soul's being an Accident. I presumed, that this had been a Thought so incontestably absurd, that one might safely have argued from the contrary thereof, as a most allowed Principle. But this is a prying Age, which will not suffer us to take any Thing for granted, but what is home-proved: And therefore, with humble Compliance, I set my self to make out that the Soul is not an Accident; which by the Way the Generality of the World will think as wise a Piece of Work, as to prove that *Socrates* is not his Horse.

*Soul not an  
Accident.*

Accidents, among Logicians and Metaphysicians, are divided into two Sorts; Accidents of *Inhesion*, and Accidents of *Predication*. Those are called Accidents of *Inhesion*, which are supposed to inhere or really exist in the Subject; as for Instance, Whiteness, Bitterness, Hardness. Those are called Accidents of *Predication*, which are not really in the Thing it self, by Way of real Existence, but are framed by the Mind into a Sort of accidental Nature, by abstracting or joining together some particular Relations or Affections in the Subject; as Paternity, Orbity, Happiness, Holiness. Now to which Class of Accidents, I beseech you, is the Soul to be reduced?

Accidents of Predication, I presume, they will not be ranked under. For then the Soul must be only an abstracted Idea, which has nothing real in its Nature, but only the Foundation of its Abstraction; and therefore we could not so properly call it the Soul, as *Soulness*, *Animality*, or at best, *Rationability*. But all these are Fictions of the Mind, or Modes of Thinking, to assist Men, and make them more ready in the Art of Reasoning; but have no Manner of real Existence in Nature. And to make the Soul to be such an Accident, is to say the Soul is no more, than a Centaur or *Chimera*; which is as much as to say, there is no Soul at all.

Let us now see, if the Nature of *inherent* Accidents will suit with it. Is the Soul, can you think, in the same Manner in the Body, as Heat in the Fire, and Sweetness in the Sugar? I presume not. For most if not all of these Accidents, which are improperly called of *Inhesion*, do not inhere in the Subject, as most of the old Philosophers supposed them to do. For *Heat* is not in the Fire, but in the Hand, or other Part of a sensitive Creature that perceives it; and if there were no Sensation in the World, Fire could be no more said to be hot, than Snow is. So Bitterness is not in the Aloes but in the Tongue, whilst it is tasting Aloes, or by Occasion of this, the Idea of Bitterness is excited in the Mind; and we can no more conclude from thence, that Bitterness is in the Aloes, than that Griping is, because when it comes into the Belly it produces that Pain. So that, in short, these Sort of Accidents have not much more Reality in them, than the former.

Nay, if we consider those Accidents, which do seem more closely to adhere to the Subject, such as Quantity, Figure, and even Motion; even these will not appear to have so much in Reality in them, as is imagined. For *Quantity* is nothing else but Body considered by the Mind as extended. *Figure* is not any thing more than the same Body, considered as extended within such particular Limits of Space, and determined by so many crooked or strait Lines of such a Longitude; which nevertheless do not add any Thing positive to the Nature of Body. And as for *Motion*, which seems to bid the fairest, for a positive Being, of any Thing we call Accidents; I cannot be assured, whether That add any Thing new, and of real Existence, to Body or no. If each Body maintains its Duration by Reproduction, (as seems to some Philosophers most probable) and God's Conservation of Beings is continual Creation; then what we call Motion is not at all distinct from Body, but only Body considered, as successively produced in several Places.

But perhaps you are governed in your Opinion, by what *Second Thoughts* lays down, p. 101; That the Soul is *Motion with Sensation*. For my Part, I am not able to understand, either how the Soul should be Motion, or Motion with Sensation. For if the Soul be Motion, then where there is most Motion, there is most Soul; so that, by this Notion, Souls must abound most in Storms, and Belfries, and in the Explosion of Cannons. But if the Soul be Motion, what is the Subject of it? Perhaps you will say, \* *Seminal Matter which is the Vehicle of it, from Generation to Generation, like the Motion of a Bowl*. But such an Assertion will not cure the Weakness of this Hypothesis. Suppose the whole *Animal*, or *Vital Nature* belonging to Mankind, that is, according to your Fancy, such a Degree of Motion, to be communicated to *Adam*; then *Adam* had as much vital Motion, as all Mankind have had since *Adam*, or at least as all Mankind have now: For, according to this Supposition, they had their Motion from *Adam*; therefore *Adam* could not confer more vital Motion than he had himself. So that *Adam* must have as much Life, as a thousand Millions of Men: That is, he must live thirty or forty Thousand Millions of Years: or at least for some Time of the several hundred Years he lived, he must have enjoyed thirty or forty Millions of Degrees of vital Motion, more than any one single Man now does. For the Case is plain; If one great Bowl hit against three little ones at Rest, and communicates Motion to them; all the three little ones can't have more Motion, than the great Bowl gave them, and which the great Bowl it self had. If there be five thousand Pipes, in *London*, laid in of the New-River Water; all these five thousand Pipes cannot contain more Water, than the New-River did before. So that, upon the whole, *Adam* must be a very strange Sort of Monster, to have all the vital Motion in him, which all the Men in the World have: Or there must be more vital Motion in the World than was in *Adam*; and

\* Pag. 100.

therefore

therefore it was not conveyed from him, in the *Vehicle of Seminal Matter*. This I think is very plain.

Nor do I understand, how the Soul should be *Motion with Sensation*. Motion I have some Idea of, and Sensation I can readily conceive; but, if I join Motion and Sensation together, there I confess I am at a Loss. For sensitive Motion is to me as incomprehensible, as green Motion, or bitter Motion. But, how comes Motion to be sensitive? Motion as Motion is not such; nor can it be said, that its being joined with organised Matter makes it so. For Motion in organised Matter is but Motion still. For, let Matter be ever so well organised, the Motion thereof can be only Motion to East or West; or swift or slow Motion; or Motion in a right or circular Line, or the like; but all these Qualifications of Motion will never make it sensible. Therefore to make Motion sensible, you must add to it a sensible Being, which is what we call a Soul. From all which I conclude, that the Soul is not Motion, nor any other Accident whatsoever.

*How Man  
is the Affla-  
tus or  
Breath of  
God.*

II. You define the Soul to be an *Afflatus* or *Breath*, infused into Matter by God at the Creation. Now I think you go contrary to the Rules of Definition, to make Use of a metaphorical Expression therein; and which besides you understand in a Sense, which the inspired Writer of the Holy Scripture, you cite, never meant. For when *Moses* says in the History of the Creation, that God *breath'd into Adam's Nostrils the Breath of Life, and he became a living Soul*: There can be nothing of that Kind of *Afflatus* concluded from hence, that your Hypothesis fancies. It is plain, that the Word *Breathing* must be used in a metaphorical Sense; for God being a Spirit, and not of human Shape, he cannot properly be said to *breath*, in the common Acceptation of the Word, as Animals do. Therefore, by this Word, must be understood some other particular Action of the divine Power, as is suitable to the Nature of God. It is evident, by this Relation, that God was pleased to make Use of some other divine Action in the Creation of Man, different

different from that of the Creation of other Beings. He was pleas'd to create them, and to give Life to them, by saying or speaking. *And God said, Let the Waters bring forth abundantly,* Gen. i. 20. *And God said, let the Earth bring forth the living Creature after his Kind,* v. 24. But in the Relation of Man's Creation, God very remarkably, takes a Sort of Council or Deliberation, *Let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness,* Gen. i. 26. And he has a Soul given him, not by saying, but by breathing. Now what imaginable Reason can be assign'd, why the Creation of Man should be so related, in so different a Manner from that of other Animals, if there had not been something very different, in the essential Parts of their Constitution? What is there in a Man, excepting his reasonable Soul, that can with any tolerable Pretence, be said to be the Image of God? For, as for the *Socinian* Notion of Dominion, I look upon that to be insipid Banter. But the rational Soul of Man may not improperly be said to be the Image of God; for nothing in all the World does so nighly resemble him, as such a spiritual Being. Therefore the Holy Scripture calls the Angels, the *Sons of God*, Job: ii. 1. Because of their Resemblance of his Nature. And *Plato* \* calls his *Demons*, θεῶν παῖδας, for the same Reason. So *Hierocles*, †, in his Notes upon the *Pythagorick* Verses, having divided the *Demons* or intellectual Natures into three Ranks, he says, *That God places in the first Class, τὰ μάλιστα ὁμοιόμενα αὐτῷ, those Spirits which most nighly resemble him. In the second Class, τὴν μέτην ὁμοιότητι καὶ τινὲς, those that have the middle Likeness of him. But in the third and last Bench, πάντων ἢ ἐλαχίστων αὐτῷ, τὰ περὶ αὐτὸν ἕτερον ὁμοίωσιν μάλα ὀλίγα ὑφεικόμενα, those of all the Images which are most distant from the divine Likeness.* And in another Place, *Πρότερον γὰρ τῷ Θεῷ &c. It is agreeable to the divine Nature, to produce Images of himself not altogether liable to Perturbations, and to fall into Sins, as the Souls of Men, which are the lowest Kind of intelligent Natures.*

\* *Plat in Apol. Sacr.*† *Hier. in Car. Pyth. Vers. 1.*

Nor was this Notion, of the divine Imagery of the Soul, the Opinion only of the Heathen Writers; but the Jewish Doctors themselves explain the Words of *Moses*, in that Sense likewise. I shall mention two of the most considerable, *Philo* and *Maimonides*. *Philo*, *de Mund. Opif.* says, *ἡ δ' εἰκὼν λελεχται κατὰ τὸν τῆς Ψυχῆς ἡγεμόνα ὄντι.* This Similitude of Man to God is spoken with Relation to the Mind, which is the governing Principle of the Soul. And again in his Treatise, *Quod Deterior Potiori insidiari soleat*, he calls the Soul, *χαρακτήρι θεῶν δυνάμειος*, &c. the Character and Effigies of the divine Power, which *Moses* very properly calls *God's Image*, meaning that God is the Original or Sampler of the rational Nature, and Man the Copy made from it: *ἐδ' ἀφ' ἑσῶς ζῶον*, not Man considered together with his sensitive Soul, but that nobler Part of the Soul, which is called Mind or Reason. The like is affirmed by *Maimonides*, *More Nevochim* Cap. 1. For, as Man has a Faculty, which agrees to no sublunary Being, viz. the Intellect, therefore he is, in some Measure, compared to the Intellect of the Creator. For this divine Intellect, he is said, to be made after the Image of God.

Nor is the Soul's *Likeness* to God an Argument only, of its being an immaterial Substance distinct from the Body; but it's being said, to be *breathed* by God is so too. *Philo* \* very well remarks the Distinction between *Breathing* and *Blowing*: *πνεον δὲ, οὐ πνεῦμα ἔρρηκεν, ὡς διαφορᾶς ἔσται*, *Moses* did not say *Blowing* but *Breathing*, there being a Difference between these. And the Action of the Deity must be esteemed more extraordinary in the *Breathing* Man's Soul, than when the *Wind* of God moved upon the *Waters*, *Gen. i. 2.*

Nay the very Expression, and *Man became a living Soul*, as we translate it, is understood by the Jews a rational one: And *Onkelos* † explains, *benephešh Chajah* by *animam loquentem*, a speaking or reasoning Soul: And

\* *Phil. de Leg. Allegor.*

† *Cald. Paraph in Loc.*

‡ *Maimonides*



† *Maimonides* says, *Chajah* Life is frequently in Scripture used for Wisdom or Reason, *Prov.* iii. 22. *Prov.* viii. 35. And subjoins, *that they are forced frequently to use Words metaphorically in the Hebrew Tongue: and therefore our Rabbins of blessed Memory say, The Just in their Death are called Living, and on the other Side, the wicked Living are called Dead.* Nor is it material what the Defence of *Second Thoughts* \* says, That this Expression is made use of in relating the Creation of irrational Creatures, *Gen.* i. For Man's *living Soul*, which came by Virtue of God's Breathing, must be supposed to be very different from the living Soul of Brutes. And if an Argument from the primary Signification of the Words were any ways cogent, to prove the Soul only bare animal Life, it might as well be concluded, that the *divine Life* is only such. For the Word *Nepheesh* is used to express the very Essence of God, in Scripture, *The Lord of Hosts has sworn Benaphsho by his Soul*, *Jer.* li. 14. And no Appellation is more frequent, in Scripture, than That of the *Living God*. Nay, sometimes, he is called absolutely *Chaj the Living*, *Gen.* xvi. 14. *Eccl.* vii. 3. Now it would be very bad Logick, from these Expressions in Scripture, to conclude; That God has no other *Nepheesh* or Essence, than the Soul of a Brute: Or, because, he is called *Chaj* or living, that the Life of the immortal God is but like that of the Beasts that perish.

III. I come now, Sir, to consider your Notion of *Brutes* having Reason. This Fancy, I confess, is very agreeable to your Hypothesis; and answers well the Design of equalling Men with Beasts, and advancing Beasts as near as can be to Men. But I cannot persuade my self (and I believe the Case is the same of most other Men) that Brutes have Reason; for these following Considerations:

† *Maim. Moreh Netz. Part. 1. Cap. 42.*

\* *Vid. Farther Thoughts concerning human Soul.*

*Because no  
one certain  
thereof.*

*First,* Because it can never certainly come to the Knowledge of any Man, that they do exercise any Acts of Reason. For they want Speech, to communicate their Ideas or Thoughts to us; and therefore we can never judge, whether their Thoughts have any logical Connexion or no, or whether there can be any Thing in them, which we can properly call Reason. 'Tis not your saying they have Reason, and my being not able to prove the contrary can persuade me, that they are possessed of this Faculty; for this is no more, than if a Man should tell me, that the Moon was a great Mountain of Gold; which, though I could not get thither to disprove his Assertion, yet I have as many Arguments against the Moon's being made of Gold, as there are other Bodies in the World besides Gold, which 'tis equally as probable the Moon is composed of, as of that Metal. If you tell me, that Brutes do exercise several Acts, which cannot be distinguished from Reason, as a great many may be instanced in, from Horses and Dogs, and Elephants, and other Creatures. I say, though it must be granted that some of the Actions of Brutes do proceed from a reasoning Mind; yet the Question is still, what that reasoning Mind is, whether it be the Reason of the Brute it self, or the Reason of God. When a Man builds a House after a particular Figure, raises the Walls to a Height proportionable to their Thickness, and covers it with an Arch agreeable to the *Basis*; we must allow this to be done by Reason, which considers these Proportions, and adapts the particular Parts agreeable thereunto. And therefore we must allow likewise, that Reason does direct, in the Formation of the sexangular Cells of the Bees. But this Reason, which so directs them, is not the Reason of these Insects, but the Reason of the supreme Creator of all Things; which impels these little Creatures, to form their Cells in such a mathematical Proportion. And, in the same Manner, such a superior Reason pushes on all other Creatures to avoid hurtful Objects; without a particular Consideration of the Danger, they are like to receive from them. This

is so very powerful in Nature, that Man, (whose Actions are determined mostly by the rational Soul) when He fancies he is standing upon a Precipice, and ready to have his Brains dashed out by the mighty Fall; his Body startles, tho' but at the vain Apprehension thereof, and tho' he knows before-hand, he can receive no Danger from such a Conception. But 'tis reasonable to think, That in Brutes the Impulse is yet much stronger, they being more scared at the Apprehension of Danger, fancying it often from those who do not design them Hurt; which makes them so difficult to be tamed. Now 'tis from this Principle, that all the Docility, which they can pretend to, proceeds. A Dog falls into his Fetches and Cringes at first, only to avoid the Blows which are given him; and, when he has been long used to these, he repeats them without any more Thought, than a Man moves his Fingers upon the Strings, in a Tune he has played over a thousand Times.

*Secondly*, It is not conceivable, That a Brute should exert any Act of Reason, without what the Philosophers call *Reflection*; That is, a considering of the Nature and Properties of Things, and drawing Consequences from them. There can be no Reasoning, without having abstracted Thoughts of the Nature of Things, and drawing general or universal Ideas from particular ones: Without compounding some Thoughts and dividing others: Without having Perception of the Truth and Falsity of Things; without judging those Ideas, they have but little Conception of, to be agreeable to those of which they have a clear one: And *Lastly*, without being able to draw Conclusions, from the aforesaid Operations of the Understanding. Now, I think, that no one can with Justice ascribe such a Power to Brutes; and therefore it may fairly be concluded, they have not the Faculty of Reasoning.

Indeed the Author of *Second Thoughts* is so sanguine as to imagine, that the Souls of Brutes do make reflex Actions upon themselves, and do not only form universal Propositions, but have likewise a Consciousness of Fault.

And says expressly, \* *A Brute finds that this Man beats him, another does so too, and likewise a third; upon which, he will necessarily avoid all Mankind in general.* But I would fain know of that Author, what Brute does after two or three Beatings avoid Mankind in general. Nay, those Brutes which do avoid Mankind in general, have seldom been beat by them at all. Birds and Reptiles, and all other weak Animals flie off, the first Time they see a Man, before they are able to form an universal Notion of Mankind. I confess I should have thought, and wiser Heads than my self are of my Mind; That all this might be fairly attributed to Self-Preservation, and a strong Principle of natural Fear, which prompts them to run away from every Thing unknown as dangerous; and I believe the Generality of the World will rest satisfied with this Account, till this new Logick of Brutes is better explained. But a *Consciousness of Fault* is another new Improvement of the brutal Knowledge. We have seen before, what Advances the Beasts have made in the dialectical Studies, and now we are to observe what great Moralists they are going to be. But I pray who ever talked of Brutes being *conscious of Fault* before? Fault is the Transgression of a moral Law. And Consciousness is the Knowledge of such a Law, together with a Sense of the Demerit of Punishment, upon the Violation of it. But I am at a Loss to find, what moral Law the Brutes are subject to. Their natural Law, as it is called, that is, the Direction of their Nature by their All-wise Creator to the particular Ends he has determined, has been often discoursed of: But as for any moral Law, which concludes them under Fault, and their being conscious of it too, it is, I think, here the first Time said. Certainly no Man ever talked, strictly and philosophically of a Dog's *Fault* before: Or that ever the poor Beast was morally conscious of his Crime, and, for this Reason, for the future endeavoured to avoid it. Every one is convinced, that he endeavours to avoid nothing but Blows, which he is sensible will follow upon

\* Pag. 170.

such an Action. And, when he avoids the Place of any punishable Action which he has formerly smarted for, 'tis not the Consciousness of the Fault, but the Memory of the Pain, which makes him fly from it; in the same Manner as a Man throws his Body into a Poise, to secure himself upon a Stumble; which is not occasioned by any rational Deduction, but by a pure Instinct of Nature.

To support this famous Doctrine our Author advances another, and that is, That Brutes have a Sort of Free-will, which he founds upon their\* *Obstinacy and Refractoriness*: and tells us roundly, *That whatever Medium can be brought to prove Will in Man, the same may be brought to testify its Being in Brutes*. But I suppose this Positiveness may be a little abated, when it shall be considered, that it is an evident Proof of Man's free Will, That he has a Liberty to do what he is commanded, or nor do it; or if he please, to do the just contrary; or to suspend his Volition, and not to will at all; or lastly, to will any Thing else upon no other Motive than to shew his Liberty of Willing. Now I think it will be difficult to prove, That Brutes have a Will, as to all these Particulars. For a hungry Beast, if you do not frighten him from his Food, will necessarily eat. You cannot persuade a healthy Horse to will Fasting, as readily as to stand at a full Rack. He cannot refrain from any Impulse of Nature, unless you put some violent Restraint or Terror upon him. But I am weary of confuting such Absurdities; and I fancy, *Estibius*, that a Man of your Sense and Learning can never go heartily into such odd Opinions: but that you only have a Mind to see, how well you can banter the World, in maintaining some Paradoxes, which you are pleased to try your Skill upon, and to draw your Pen in Matters untouched by former Writers.

IV. I now, Sir, come to perform the last Task your Objection has laid upon me. And having confuted, I think, the Notion which your new Philosophy lays

*M<sup>n</sup> not a  
Machine.*

\* Pag. 172.

down, *That Brutes have Reason*; I proceed to examine your other Opinion, *That Man is but a Machine*. What a singular Invention is here? Beasts have Understanding, and Man is Clock-work. A good Compliment this I profess to Hogs and Horses, *Estibius*; but *our Species* are very little obliged to you, for it.

Now for once, *Estibius*, for your Satisfaction, and in Vindication of our own Kind, I will prove that Man is not a mere Machine. By Man's being a Machine, I presume you mean, That Man performs all the mental Operations of Thinking, Reasoning, Willing, &c. by the pure Motion and Configuration of material Parts; and that it is not requisite to this End, to add Mind or any spiritual Principle; distinct from Matter; but that Matter so organised does think and will in Man. Now I plainly declare to you, Sir, that I am of a contrary Opinion, and besides the being countenanced therein, by almost all wise Men in all Ages, my Judgment is governed in this Point, by these following Considerations.

*Because  
Thought  
without  
Body.*

*First*, Because there is Thought in the World, where there is no Mechanism or organical Contexture; and therefore it is possible, at least, that the Soul or thinking Faculty of Man is something else, besides Matter organised or enlivened. But, since we are sure that God is a thinking Being, and has Understanding, and Life and Will, without any mechanical Contexture of Parts; and we are not absolutely sure, that any Thing else is endued with Thought by any other Means, therefore 'tis more probable, That the Soul of Man too is a thinking Being, distinct from the Compages of the Body. This Argument is very conclusive upon your Principles, *Estibius*; who I think allow God to be a Mind, and acknowledge the Existence of Angels too. Now if God, and all the numerous Host of heavenly Spirits do think without Organisation, as they are spiritual Beings; it is but reasonable to suppose, that human Souls do so too. If you go off from your Point, and say that all Things are Matter, and God is so too, either whole Matter, or a Part of it; I ask the first Question, if all Things be Mat-  
ter,

ter, How comes there to be any Thought ; unless Matter-it self be cogitative ? But if all Matter thinks, how comes a Man to be a more thinking Thing than a Tree ? Nay, if all Matter thinks, where there is more Matter there is more Thought ; and so a Mountain must be the wisest Thing we can find out. If God be only some fine reasonable Part of Matter : What Account can be given, why one Part of Matter should be more reasonable than another ; or why Fineness should include Rationality ? Or lastly, how comes there to be such an infinite Distance between Matter ; that fine Matter should be the God, and coarse Matter the Creature ?

*Secondly*, Because Body so mechanically ordered cannot, by any Means, be conceived capable of producing Thought. Now if organised Matter could produce Thought, it must be one of these three ways ; either by its own Power simply as it is Matter ; or by Virtue of its Organization ; or as it is assisted by the Power of God. We will try all these three Ways, and the Difficulties which attend each.

*First*, Matter of its own self, by all that we can conceive of it, is a dead unactive Thing ; which has nothing imaginable in it but what is purely passive ; and though it be capable of receiving many Qualities, yet it is impossible it can give any. Or if Matter were capable of conferring any Qualifications ; all material Beings, which had an equal Quantity of Matter, must have an equal Degree of Perfections ; than which nothing can be more absurd. But though Matter were capable of conferring any Qualities, which were agreeable to-its own Nature, and which it self could be the Subject of : Yet it shocks common Sense to imagine, that Matter can give a Quality or Perfection which it has not in it self, and which is as different from its Nature, as the most direct Contrariety or Contradiction can be. For all that we can possibly conceive of Matter is, That it is something extended or taking up Room ; That it is impenetrable or solid, and will not let another Body get into the same Place with it ; and That it is capable of receiving a great Number of Figures.

*Matter not  
cogitative  
by Organi-  
zation.*

But how can this contribute any Thing towards making a Soul or a thinking Being? Indeed one Part of Matter joined to another will increase Bulk; and the Parts differently situated will produce a new Figure; because Bulk and Figure are originally included in Matter, and which by its Nature it may be supposed to contribute to. But to say, Matter can produce Mind, is more absurd than to say, I can produce an Angel, or a Mouse can write a Book of Mathematicks. For Mind is more above Matter, than any one of these is out of the Power of the other. For my Part I have been often wondering, how the Materialists should get it into their Head, to join two such incompatible Notions together, as Mind and Matter; or to imagine Matter, not only to confer the Power, but ever to be so much as capable of thinking. A white Blackness, a slow Swift, or a cold Hot is not half so much Nonsense; because a Subject may contain some Degrees of each of these contrary Qualities: As Water may be luke-warm. But extended Thought or thinking Solidity is all Contradiction and Absurdity. And so indeed are all the Properties of Mind and Matter, when put together. For the Mind is presently shocked with Jargon and unintelligible Notion, if you talk of a Yard of Understanding, or a wise Cube, of a triangular Desire, or a hoping Hexagon. Therefore how is it possible, that Matter should be any ways able to produce Thought, which it not only has not in it self, but which in its Nature, and all its Properties it is so directly repugnant to.

*Secondly,* It is not by any Means conceivable how the Organization of Matter should produce Thought. For we can imagine nothing in the Organization of Matter, but only Matter augmented, or increased to a greater Bulk; or the Parts of Matter attenuated; or Matter put in a different Situation or Figure; or Matter moved in such a Degree of Swiftness, or within such or such Terms or Points. Now not one of these Modifications of Matter, or all of them together, are capable of producing Thought. If to augment Matter, or to add more of it can be productive of Thought; then an Elephant would



would be more thoughtful than a Man. If Matter attenuated could work the same Effect, the Mind would be more excellent in the Bodies of Flies and Mites; because all their Organs are of a finer Contexture, and their Animal Spirits, which move in such little Vessels, must be much purer drawn off than ours. Neither can it be asserted with Probability, That Matter moved with any Degree of Velocity whatever should make it thoughtful; for that is only the carrying it into a Number of successive Places. But if Matter be not thoughtful in one Place, it cannot become so by being carried into ten Thousand: For the Change of Place cannot change the Nature of a Thing. And the Case is just the same of Figure. For Figure is only the Disposition of the Parts with Relation to one another: And if Matter be not thoughtful before the Figuration of it, the being figured can never produce such an Effect: For what Relation has it to Thought, that five thousand Parts of Matter lie Eastward of the Center of any Body, and ten thousand Westward; that on this Side it is conical, on another Side pyramidal or circular? All this is no more than the bare Situation of Parts, with Relation to each other; and is but just the like, as when I shake twenty Shillings in my Pocket; it is but the same twenty Shillings still, though this or that, or the other Piece lie uppermost. Nay, 'tis not Matter in gross or Matter attenuated, with Motion to East or West or any other Way, nor all Kinds of Figures put together which can produce Thought; because these singly having no Manner of Tendency to produce it, they all in Conjunction will be but like so many Cyphers without Figures; added together, they will stand for just nothing at all.

*Thirdly*, Neither is Matter capable of thinking, though assisted by the *Power of God*. I will not say so rough a Thing as, That 'tis out of the Power of God to make Matter think; but I say, 'tis contrary to all our Conceptions, and to the ordinary Ideas that we have of the Nature of Things, that he should make it cogitative. For if we suppose any Part of Man, as supposing some Part  
of

of the Brain of *Adam's* Body, which God at first fashioned out of the Earth, to be made cogitative by Almighty God; this Part of his Brain so made cogitative would be no longer Matter; for the Materiality of it would be destroyed, and it would immediately become a Spirit. For, in this Case, there would be a double Share of God's Omnipotency required; first to annihilate this Matter, and then to produce a Mind or Spirit in its Room. And then, besides, it could not with any Propriety be said, That that Matter was cogitative, but that the new-created Mind was so. For the Matter would be no longer remaining, but would become a pure Non-entity, of which there could be no Affections predicated. If you say, That God in this Case would add a cogitative Nature to the Matter so organized, and by this Means make it live and think; This is but in other Words to say, God added a Soul to it, and is what we call a Mind.

If you assert, That there is nothing real in Man, besides the Matter he is composed of and his Organization; but that only God raises in him some seeming Thoughts, which are only a perpetual Dream for the Term of Life, and, when this fantastick Illusion is over, upon the Dissolution of the Body, Life and Thought are gone together: I reply, this Opinion is injurious to the Nature of God, and is inconsistent with his eternal Attributes. For how is it agreeable to the infinite *Truth* of God, who cannot lye; for threecore or fourscore Years together, to put a Cheat upon a poor Creature; and to make him fanstie, he is all that Time thinking and reasoning, when he is nothing else but dreaming? How can you reconcile it with the *Goodness* of God, who bears such a continual Love to all his Productions, to abuse the noblest Part of his Creation with such an unsufferable Delusion? Or how can you render it consistent with the infinite Power of God, who can if he pleases make a real existent Soul to perform all these Operations; whom nevertheless you will foolishly put upon Shifts and Tricks, to seem to do that by Appearance and Collusion, which, by the least Word of his Command, he could effect in Reality. However

fond some modern Speculatists are of this Notion, I profess I could sooner be a downright Atheist, and believe no God at all; than to suppose, That a good and wise God could stoop to such mean Designs and Artifices.

There is but one Way more, you can suppose Matter to be made cogitative by the divine Power, and that is by God's immediate and real acting in it, so as absolutely of himself to be the last, and only Cause of Thought, and all other Operations in it. But this Supposition destroys all the Notion of Good and Evil, and leaves nothing to be denominated so, but only what the Power of the *Leviathan*, or the Customs of a Country happen to make such. This Supposition granted will not allow Man to be accountable for any Immorality; for then 'tis God that thinks in us wickedly; 'tis God that commits the lewd Action; 'tis God that falls into the Error; 'tis God that wills amiss; 'tis God that does all those enormous Crimes, which Men suffer by the Law, or die for. But what horrible Blasphemy is this Opinion pregnant with? Into such monstrous Heterodoxies do Men fall, when, to encourage foolish Opinions, they forsake the Guide of the Holy Scriptures, and the Unity of Faith.

V. There is one Thing more in your Objection, which remains to be spoke to; and that is, that you suppose it a Sort of ridiculous Absurdity, That God should *breath into Man's Nostrils the Breath of Life*, or as we understand it, a rational Soul. But before you fancied such an Incongruity in this Notion; you ought to have considered well the original Word *Beappo*, which signifies no more than into *his Face* or *Head*. And if taken in this Sense we can understand only, that God inspired the rational Soul into Man's Head as the principal Seat thereof; which is the Doctrine of the best Philosophers likewise.

*Esti.* But notwithstanding all that you have said, 'Tis a considerable Argument to convince me of the Mortality of the Soul, and the Materiality of it; That it depends so much upon the Motion of the Blood, and the animal Spirits in all its Operations. *For when these seem to move slow or stagnate, though not wholly deprived of Moti-*

on, Man acts more or less in Degrees of Perfection, and a brisk Circulation generally denotes Quickness of Parts, even as to the very Understanding and Apprehension; so that the Operations of the Soul as it is usually called, seem extremely to depend naturally upon the Circulation of the Blood, as several considerable Instances of this Nature might be produced if Leisure would permit; which, were the Soul that immaterial Substance, as the Psychomathist contends it to be, certainly it might operate as freely, and rationally in Madmen and Fools, notwithstanding the Obstruction, the irregular Conformation of Parts, or undue Organization can give to Spirituality as they imagine it can.

*Phil.* This I confess is one of the Top Arguments of the Materialists; they are wont to plume themselves, and to look big when they have an Opportunity of urging this Objection; being as full of their Air of Assurance upon it, as if its Belly was full of Demonstration. But a little of this Confidence may be bated; if it can be made out, That it is highly reasonable, that upon Supposition a spiritual Soul be joined to a Body, the Operations of the Soul will very much depend upon the Texture, and good Order of the bodily Organs.

*Soul cannot resist all the Obstructions of the Body.*

*First,* Now in the first Place it is very consonant to Reason, to suppose That the Soul is not an All-sufficient or unresistible Power, which can perform its Operation in despite of all external Agents whatsoever. For this is only the Property of Almighty God, which the noblest Creature of the whole Universe can never pretend to. Therefore since the Agency of the Soul is limited, and may be overpowered; it is no Inconsistency to imagine, That when it is joined with Matter, it may be so clogged and hindered by it as not to perform its Actions with that Agility and Readiness, as when it is absolutely free and dislodg'd from such Impediments; or when the material Organs are so well disposed, as to assist in its Operations. Indeed Motion in Matter, and the Soul in an organical Body, do not bear an exact Analogy to one another in all Things; but yet we may learn, from the Comparison of these, something which may give us some

Light

Light in the present Disquisition. It must be allowed by every one, that Matter will move on infinitely, unless obstructed by some contrary Motion, or retarded by a Body at Rest, which absorbs it. Upon this Account every Motion cannot move all Matter, but each Motion has its limited Power, beyond which it cannot exert any Energy or Effect. But whilst it is not overpowered by a superabundant Renitency it acts freely, and without Controll. And the like happens in the Operations of the Soul; whose Actuations upon an organised Body, though they are not exactly conceived by us, yet we are certain, that its Power is not infinite, and the Repugnancy of the corporeal Parts may be so great, and so much Indisposition may be in them, that it may often flag in the Performance of its Offices.

*Secondly,* It is to be considered, that the bodily *Soul cannot* Organs are the Instruments which the Soul makes use of, *use well* in conveying of outward Objects to it, and laying be- *bad Instru-* fore it Images and Representations. Now when the Or- *ments of* gans necessary for this End are disturbed and indisposed, *acting.* it then happens to the Soul, as it does to a good Artificer with a bad Tool or unfit Materials; his Work becomes clumsy and ill-shapen, not for Want of Skill in himself, but because he is bereft of the proper Means, to give him Opportunity in displaying his Art. Now this is the Case of Fools or Madmen; they have a rational Soul as well as others: the only Misfortune they labour under is, their Organs are not well fitted to represent the Appearance of Things, as they ought to be. They could pass a right Judgment of them, if they were duly represented, as well as other People. I don't speak of the Representation made by the outward Senses, but of the Fancy or Imagination in the Brain, where the Images are scattered in a distracted Confusion; and as they lie floating there without any Order, they are presented to the Soul in the same Huddle; whereby she is not able to take such a distinct View of them, as when they are orderly laid before her. Now when Images are represented to the Soul thus confusedly; it is no Wonder; that she makes her

her Judgment and Choice, as a Man does in the dark ; when 'tis by Chance only that he is in the Right.

*A rational and immaterial Principle appears even in Madmen.*

*Thirdly*, Nor are there wanting Appearances, in Fools and Madmen, that are so far from proving their Souls to be material, that they afford the greatest Demonstration of their having in them a Principle superior to Matter. For they can make exact Judgments of what is conveyed by their outward Senses, and draw rational Conclusions as far as these afford Information ; But when they come to reflect upon the Images which these convey, and depend upon their Imagination to present them truly to them again ; this hands cross and extravagant Ideas to them, instead of the true ones, and so all turns into sad Confusion. But still 'tis observable, that under all this Misfortune, and Cloud of gross Imagination, the governing Principle of the Soul does frequently display it self ; giving a Command and Check to this extravagant Fancy, and making it represent more fairly what it wills ; or, when it pleases, turns it off from the present, and calls for another Object ; which for some Time it views with a very rational Circumspection, till a new Shoal of disturbed Ideas float in upon it, and it is lost again in wild Distraction.

*Esti.* Another considerable Argument which makes against the Immateriality of the Soul and consequently its Immortality, is the easie Separation of it from the Body. *For it does not seem to me so easy to be comprehended, how an immaterial Substance should be disunited from the Body it is joined to, and driven out of its ancient Habitation, by so many trivial, \* and inconsiderable Causes as perhaps a strong Fume of artificial Spirits, a sulphureous Blast of Lightning, nay a Prick of a Nerve causing Convulsions, sudden Fits of Joy or Grief, or a Fit of Coughing ; because when a Spirit has taken Possession a long Time in other Cases, we find it a great Difficulty to dispossess him, insomuch that our Saviour's Disciples complained of it, though they had an immediate miraculous Power given them to eject Spirits and Devils ;*

\* Pag. 105.

as you may read, Mat. Cap. xvii. Ver. 16, 18, 19. But here a Knock of the Head dispossesses the Soul of Man, that noble spiritual Being so much admired for its Excellency, and sends him to a Mansion I cannot determine where: Now it is easily intelligible how Life upon these trivial Accounts, nay more trivial than these I have named sometimes, may cease to actuate the Body.

*Phil.* But this Argument, *Estibius*, which you look upon as so very considerable, does appear to me to be a poor shrimping Thing: and, but that it comes from You to whom I would not be wanting in any Regards, I should rather despise and pish at it, than set my self to answer it.

*First*, But why is it an Argument of the Materiality of the Soul, That it is drawn away from the Body by little Causes, supposing these which you assign were so? Little Causes or great Causes, suppose they be material ones, are all one with Relation to a Spirit; and a Dram of Matter, can have no more effective Influence upon a Mind, than the whole Body of Mount *Caucasus*. Would it argue a Man any more to have a Mind of spiritual Subsistence, if he could not be killed but by a battering Ram? For what signifies Greatness or Littleness of Matter to a Being, which cannot be acted upon by either of them, but only as it pleases the Almighty Creator to tie it down to certain Laws, by Reason of its Union with Matter in this Life?

*Secondly*, Or how are these Causes of Man's Dissolution, which you speak of, such little Things to destroy a Man, as you take them to be? The *Smell of poisonous Spirits*, suppose they stop the Passage of the animal Spirits in the Brain, or coagulate the Blood, or hinder the vital Operations any other Way; are as great and powerful a Cause to kill a Man, as if you split his Skull with a Hatchet. *A Blast of Lightning*, which shrinks and scorches the Nerves and Veins; which hinders the Circulation of the Blood, and the Passage of the animal Spirits to and from the Brain, is in it self as great and dreadful a Cause of Destruction, as the leaping

into

into the Furnace of Mount *Ætna*. A Fit of Joy or Grief, if they stop the Motion of the Blood on a sudden; and hinder the Heart from spouting out fresh Streams to supply the Veins and Arteries, do as necessarily cause Death, as the striking a Dagger into one's Breast. And so is a Fit of coughing, suppose it strangles a Man, as great a Cause of killing as a Halter.

*Soul leaves the Body, because Organs spoiled.*

*Thirdly*, But it is not for the Potency or Impotency of the Cause which produces Death, that the Soul leaves the Body: But by Reason that the Bodily Organs are out of Order and spoiled, so that they can no longer serve it for its Use. It is then Time for the Soul to remove to another Quarter, when the ruinous Tenement is falling. 'Tis not to be supposed, that the Soul should continue in a rotting Carcase, which, were it sensible, would be as offensive to it self as it is to others: Or to actuate a Number of unweildy Limbs, all whose Joints and Sinews are decayed and useles, and unfit for the Offices they were at first designed for. Therefore it is not any of these external material Agents which occasion Death, that have any Influence upon the Soul; but whereas they are endowed with Efficacy sufficient to destroy the Contexture of a human Body; the Soul is by Nature directed rather to take its Flight, than to live uncomfortably in such an unorganised, and putrefied Mass of Matter.

*The Difficulty of casting out a Spirit, no Argument of the Soul's Materiality.*

*Fourthly*, O, but it is a very difficult Thing to turn a Spirit out of a Body it has possessed it self of. And this you say is evident from the Disciples not being able to cast out a certain Spirit mentioned, *Mat. xvii*. But pray, Sir, be pleased to consider, that there is very little Analogy between a Man's being possessed by a wicked Spirit, and the Soul's being united to the Body. Such a wicked Spirit, as you suppose to torment the Person mentioned there, most probably was endowed with material Organs or an Aerial Vehicle as most Dæmons are presumed to have; and therefore being in its complete State, might join himself to the Body of a Man, or relinquish it at Pleasure. But the Soul being essentially designed by God for the Information of a Body, it can no longer

stay



stay in a Body, which for Defect of organical Contexture is incapable of being informed. Now whenever the Body by Disease or outward Force becomes so incapacitated; the Soul by the Wisdom of God is disposed of, as the Rules of his Providence have determined; and carried to such Places of the World as he has made Choice of, for being a Receptacle of them until the Resurrection. Now 'tis ridiculous to imagine, that the Soul which by the Direction of God's necessary Laws is determined to live for some Time in a separate State, should be able to struggle with its Creator; and in Despight of him to continue in this World, when he has resolved to dispose of it in another: Or to think, that it should contend to live in an uninhabitable Carcass, against the Will of God; as a malicious Spirit persisted to stay in the Demoniack, against the Command of the Disciples.

Though after all, *Estibius*, the Instance perhaps, which you have made Choice of, does not serve to make out the Point which you design it for. For though I am very well satisfied, that our Saviour did cast out many Devils, which had possessed the Bodies of Men at that Time he lived upon Earth, God Almighty suffering the infernal Kingdom to rage then more than ordinary over human Kind; to the End that the Power of the Messias might more particularly be displayed, by a Demonstration of his Miracles that Way: Yet by the Context of this Place it should seem, that this afflicted Person, at that Time cured, did not labour under more than an ordinary Disease; it being as much a Miracle in our blessed Lord to restore Health to such an one by a Word speaking, as if he had done a Miracle of the same Nature which you suppose. For the affected Person, there spoken of, is said *σεληνιαζομαι* to be *Lunatick*, as we translate it, or to be under the Influence of the Moon. Though the Word *σεληνιαζομαι* signifies properly to have the *Falling-Sickness*, which the Latins call *Morbus sacer* or *Cornitialis*. And *σεληνιαζομαι* in classical Writers signifies one, that suffers under that Infirmary.

Though it must be acknowledged, that not only the Jews, but the Heathens did imagine, that Persons who had this Distemper were possessed by a Dæmon, and were at that Time thought to be under a prophetick Inspiration *ὡς ἐνθεάζοντες καὶ ἐσόμμενα προλέγοντες*, and which *Paulus Aegineta* the *Epitomiser* of *Galen* calls *ἐνθεαστικὸς*, Lib. 3. c. 14. But however all the Symptoms, mentioned in the History of this diseased Person, do exactly agree to the Falling-Sickness; *κακῶς πάσχειν* to be under lamentable Paroxysms or Passions, and *οftentimes to fall into the Fire, and into the Water*, v. 15. Now it being usual to the Jews to attribute most Effects to spiritual Causes; prosperous Events to good Angels; and unlucky ones to bad ones: Therefore the Evangelist, according to the Jews national Philosophy, calls the Disease here spoken of; *δαίμόνιον* a Cacodæmon or Devil. Now, it being uncertain whether the Affliction of this Person were more than an ordinary Disease, you have not Foundation sufficient to build your Argument upon, of the Difficulty of ejecting a Spirit out of a Body.

Though after all, *Estibius*, I will not break with you upon this Point; and I am of Opinion, That there is more spiritual Agency mingled it self, not only in the Matter of Diseases, but in other Affairs of human Life, than I believe you do: For I cannot easily bring my self to think, that you who are so avow'd an Enemy against Ghosts and Apparitions, are over-fond of Possessions or Enchantments.

*Esti*. I shall now accost you with another Argument against the Soul's Immateriality, which I presume you will not have the good Luck to hit off so well. And that shall be drawn from the gradual Increase of the Soul's Faculties and Perfections, from the State of Childhood to Manhood. \* *For in Order to make compleat Man, that is, Man able and capable of exerting the Operations of Reason in Perfection (for a Boy is a Man, quatenus a living Soul) so far at least as a Man by Learning, Conversation,*

&c. is able to attain, a full Growth of Parts seems to be one necessary Ingredient towards a perfect and compleat Organization, i. e. when a Man has attained to his full Growth, for before that his Judgment seldom becomes confirmed and settled, his Reason fluctuates, and all his Actions seem to be done with great Variety and Unsteadiness, as if his Soul had not the full Growth, nor stretched it self to the utmost Pitch of Expansion, to create and settle fixt Notions in the Mind of Men, without that Levity and Ignorance that generally attends younger Years. Now if any one should ask me, why I attribute Solidity of Judgment not to begin generally, till Men have attained to their full Growth; I give them no other than this philosophical Conjecture, though Matter of Fact plainly confirms what I say; Because according to the Supplement continually made by Meats, and Drinks to the Blood, Accretion to Parts is usually continually made, or the Parts of the Body continually augment or increase, and because the Blood is in perpetual Circulation, and receives continual Additions of nutritious Juice, the Ideas impressed on the Spirits (the finer Part of the Blood) cannot but suffer various Alterations, and when they ought to be fiercer, and settled (suppose in the Brain) a new Flux of nutritious Juice blots out the former Ideas, and inclines Man to think, and act, according to the Impressions the former Ideas made on him: This makes you so inconstant and various in all rational Actions, and Infants at first seem to be mere Machines, and shew but slender Glimmerings of Reason. So that in short, \* the intellective Faculty or essential Part of the Soul is augmented and increased by Learning, Education and Conversation; therefore capable of Augmentation, and consequently liable to perish.

Phil. However fond you may seem, Sir, of this fine philosophical Reasoning; yet I think it is so very far from establishing the Point you contend for, that it is contrary to the ordinary Dictates of common Sense and usual Experience. For, if the Soul receives its Improvement from the Growth of the Body, you must allow, that

Improvement of the Soul by Age, no Argument of its Materiality.

\* Pag. 136.

upon every Increase of the Body, the Soul must be advanced, either to a greater Degree of Magnitude, or at least, to a higher Degree of Perfection, in its Qualities or Endowments. But I suppose this is not very agreeable to the Notion, which every one must have of a Soul, nor to the Observations which we are able to make, concerning its Operations. For no one can think, That a Man's Soul is like his Skin; that it stretches out to such a Length and Breadth, according as his Body is more or less extended. For this would engage us upon a new Language, and different Form of Speaking and Understanding, from what we have: and then we should talk of Souls of two, or four, or six Foot long, the very Imagination whereof is absurd and shocking to the Mind.

Or if you suppose, That, as the Body increases, the Soul only receives some perfective Qualifications; this also is pregnant with an equal Number of Inconsistencies. For if the Growth of the Body add Perfection to the Soul, then the more the Body grows, the more Perfections the Soul must be endowed with. And then the most thoughtful and wise Persons, that could be assigned, would be your greatest big-boned People, the *Hercules's* and *Coleburns* of the Age. Nay, when ever Men grow fat or lean, their Intellectuals must increase or abate upon it: For their Bulk increasing must add Thought and Wisdom; and their Spareness of Flesh must take off from their Understanding. But Experience, which shews that none of these Effects happen from these assigned Causes, does likewise demonstrate, that your Supposition has no Ground to warrant it. And 'tis impossible that ever you should prove your Point, unless you can make out, that Men of little Stature have no more Reason and Judgment, than Boys of the same Size are endowed with.

But if you had been pleased to have given your self a little more Reflection upon this Head, you might easily have been convinced, That young Persons do not owe the Improvement of their Understandings to the Growth of their Bodies, but to the Cultivation

of their Minds, by a good Education ; or to Attention and Application, and mature Experience. And this Volatility or Levity in Youth, which you attribute to the Addition of new Parts, is more properly assigned to another Cause ; *viz.* to their Inexperience and Want of Acquaintance with some new Ideas, which they are taken with upon the first Appearance, and disrelish again upon a nearer Examination. For, when the Soul makes its first Entrance into the World, every Image, which does not carry Dread or Danger with it, is pleasant and entertaining ; which, when it has been sometimes under View, and all the Pleasures, which it can afford, have been enjoyed over, is laid aside with as much Indifferency, as it is taken up with Eagerness. And upon this Account, every Stage of Life has its particular Scenes of Pleasures, wherein it finds its respective Gratifications ; and when these are over, a new Set of Satisfactions succeed to entertain us with. Children run with Eagerness to painted Toys, to Whistles and Rattles, or to any other little Thing, which carries with it a gayish Novelty ; which, after a short Time, they look upon with as much Coldness and Indifferency as we Men do. Young Men pursue the Pleasures of Sense, together with Jollity and Humour, in a no less vehement Degree of Passion and Desire ; all which Things are as tasteless to old Age, as they are charming to Youth. So that a great Deal of that, which you call Inconstancy or Unsteadiness in Youth, is really none of those Faults which you make it ; it is rather some growing Degree of Wisdom, and does plainly shew forth the Excellency of the Mind, which, in an unknown State and a World of Matter, is not always to be charmed by the empty Pleasures it finds here : but having viewed them all round, comes at length to know, that they do not abound with those Perfections, which they seem at first to promise to the admiring Spectator. But if Youth in these tender Years, and under those great Disadvantages of Inexperience, should stand obliged never to change their Opinions of Things, but tenaciously to espouse and keep up their first mistaken Thoughts

and Conclusions; Men must be Boys as long as they live, and never have their Judgments in the least improved, from seven to seventy. But the wise God has laid human Nature under other Rules and Dispensations; he lets Truth into Man's Mind by gradual Portions, as he is capable of it; suffers him to be entertained with the Satisfaction of one Object for a While, and, when he grows tired with that, relieves him with another; thus comfortably leading him through the different Stages of Life, by a constant View of fresh Entertainments; the Imperfections whereof are continually discovered, till we drop at last into another State: where we can enjoy the inexhaustible Stock of Perfection in the Deity it self, *at whose right Hand are Pleasures for evermore.*

Therefore I conclude, *Estibius*, That this Inconstancy or Levity in Youth, as you call it, is owing to Inexperience, and the Frame of our Natures, which is constituted by God, to gain its Notices of Things by Degrees; and I cannot bring my self to think, that it should be attributed to the new Parts added to the Body of a Youth, in his growing. For if these new Parts added to the Body were the Occasion of the Change in Opinion, there is no Reason to be assigned, why all new added Parts of the same Nature should not produce the same Opinions. And then Men, that live upon the same Food, must have the same Thoughts generated in them; and they would acquire new Notions, not from Books and Experience, but from their Diet. A Man that has been used long to feed upon Flesh, would have his Head new turned, and a fresh Set of Notions infused into him, by keeping *Lent*. People must have one Sort of Food to make them *Calvinists*, and another *Remonstrants*; one Kind of Diet to incline them to be *Cartesians*, and another to be *Aristotelians*. And if you will oblige me so far, as to tell me what Diet you lived chiefly upon, when you changed the Catholick Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality for your new Notion, I will for your Sake, set a Mark upon that Food for the future.

*Esti.* For all your Pleasants on this Subject, I have another knotty Difficulty for you to dissolve, which you will not be able to laugh off at the same Rate; and this is an Argument drawn from the respective Briskness and Dulness of Men's Parts. \* *For the Degrees of Perfection of acting in a Man's Soul, undoubtedly much depend on the Subject of which Man is compounded: One is of agile and subtile Parts, others more heavy and dull by their natural Constitutions; besides the Advantages of Education and Conversation. Now this could not be if the Soul were the Fountain of all these Operations, and that spiritual Substance they would have it to be: Because immaterial Beings in the same Species, we must suppose to be equal in Perfection of Operation quatenus immaterial; be the Subject Matter, in which it is, ever so much indisposed. For what Obstruction can Matter make to an immaterial Being, which can penetrate it? And consequently every Creature endowed with such an immaterial Substance, would be equally perfect in its Operations too, which we see manifestly contradicts Reason and Experience.*

*Phil.* That some Men are blessed with far greater Abilities of Mind than others are, I think is a Truth denied by none; but the Question is, Whether this Disparity of Endowments proceeds, from a different Make or Constitution of the Soul it self, or from the Organization of the Body? or, if it does receive Improvement from the happy Frame of bodily Organs, whether this be an Argument to prove it material? We assert therefore in the first Place,

I. That it is not improbable, but that the Souls of Men are of different Degrees of Perfection in their very original Nature. For all the Productions of God do abound with wonderful Variety; and there is not only an infinite Number of different Species and Classes of Beings, but the particular Individuals are distinguished from each other, by the Presence or the Want of some peculiar Perfections; which some of them enjoy, and others are bereft of.

\* Pag. 155.

The Apostle has remarked it of the Celestial Bodies, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars*; and the same is as observable in the other Parts of the Creation. In all Plants and Flowers of the same Kind when nicely examined, you may find how they are distinguished from each other, by singular Streaks and Textures; by the Slenderneſs of the Stalks, or the Spread of the Leaves, or by a thousand other particular Beauties and Elegancies. What a mighty Difference is there in the Strength, and Swiftneſs, and Generoſity of Horſes? How greatly does one Dog excel another in his Smell, his Nimbleneſs, or his Sagacity? How is one Bird inferior to another, in the Strength of its Wings, the Colour of its Feathers, or the Pleaſantneſs of its Note?

And it cannot paſs the Obſervation of any one, That the Features and Shapes of the Faces and Bodies of Men, and Women, are not owing altogether to fancy and liking; but that there is, in every one of them, ſuch a particular Symmetry and relative Proportion, either to the whole or the adjoining Parts, as makes every ſingle individual either ſuperior or inferior, in their Perſonage, upon Compariſon with another.

And to come yet nigher to the Nature of a human Soul, we are informed by God's Word, that there are very diſtinguiſhing Perfections among the angelick Beings, which make ſeveral of them ſuperior to others. They are called Angels and Archangels, Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers; all which do denote, if not different Ranks and Claſſes, yet very unequal Degrees of Perfections in theſe exalted Beings.

Now upon Conſideration of all This, I am very much inclined to think, *Eſtibiis*, That ſince God Almighty has framed all the Work of his Creation, in ſuch different Degrees of Excellence; 'tis hardly to be ſuppoſed, that he has caſt the Souls of Men ſo exactly into the ſame Mold, as to leave no Matter of Difference, with Reſpect of Meliority or Deteriority, among them.

You



You say moreover, that *immaterial Beings in the same Species must be equal in their Operations* quatenus *immaterial*. But I do not see any Manner of Cogency in this Argument: Nor do I think the Words, which you express it by, reconcilable to common Sense. If your Meaning be, that all immaterial Beings are equal as, to their Immateriality, that is, one is as much an immaterial Being as another; who ever denied it? But this is a very improper Sense of Equality, and does rather denote, that they agree but in one Thing, and are different in all the rest; than that they should, with any just Propriety, be denominated equal. For properly Equality does signify such an Agreeableness in the Make and Constitution, the Durability, Beauty, Readiness of Operations and the like, in two distinct Beings; that one is lookt upon as altogether as good (as we use to say) and valuable as the other. Now in material Beings this Equality may be receded from; when one of the two Objects compared together, is diversified by Figure or Motion, or by Addition or Subtraction of Parts. So that, if Bodies equal (to use your Way of Speaking) *quatenus Material*, can be diversified into several Degrees of Perfection by these different Modifications of Matter; by a Parity of Reason it must be allowed, That of two thinking Substances, equal as to their *Cogitation*, one may receive a different Perfection, from its being endowed with a nobler Understanding or a more rectified Will than the other. For, if an *extended Being* becomes more noble, and better, by being well figured without, or well organised within, or from its being impelled by just and orderly Motions; why should not one *thinking Being* be more excellent than another; by how much the more the Capacity of its Understanding is enlarged, and its Will has a Propensity to be more easily governed? Therefore if a Soul comes into one Body, which is better inclined to understand what-ever is proposed to it than another, and with a Will more readily disposed to follow the Dictates of that Understanding; such a Soul is more excellent in its original

Constitution; and consequently all Souls, upon Supposition that they are immaterial, are not equal.

II. Neither is it credible, that the Soul receives its Liveliness and Brightness, from the good Contexture and Disposition of the Body.

*Qualifications of the Soul proceed not from the Disposition of the Body.*

*First*, Because it is very obvious to consider, that many Persons who are of a very weak and sickly Constitution, are nevertheless endowed with a Soul of the most vigorous Nature. Although their Bodies labour under very grievous Infirmities, and they hardly enjoy a Minute's Respite from Pain and Sickness; yet all this While their Soul exerts its Operations with the greatest Sprightfulness and Agility; and oftentimes takes in a larger View of Things, makes closer Observations, and deduces Consequences at a remoter Distance, than those who continually feel the Ease of athletick Health. Now if the Soul did entirely depend upon the Body, for the regular Discharge of its Operations; a sickly Body would always occasion faint and languid Thoughts, and such Men's Reasons would be as feeble as their Joints. Nay, if this Philosophy which you advance were universally true; the Amputation of a Limb would maim a Man of a considerable Degree of his Understanding; and a useless Hand or Foot would make a proportionable Defalcation, from all the reasoning Faculties.

*Secondly*, Because oftentimes in the very Article of Death, when all the bodily Faculties are decayed, the Mind displays it self in the utmost Vigour, and discovers such noble Conceptions of God and Religion, of the Vanity of this World, and the Joys of the next, as Men in the best State of their Health are hardly ever able to arrive to. The Soul then seems, in good Measure, to have lightned her self of her Burden of Flesh, and to be moving towards God without Clogs and Fetters; and being in a Manner got loose from the Carcase she was tied to, she begins to perform her Operations with her natural Freedom, and take a Taste before-hand of the Liberty of that free Heaven she is going to.

III. Nor, though the Soul does receive Improvement or Disadvantage from the Contexture of the bodily Organs, is it any Argument to prove that the Soul is material. It cannot be denied, but that the quick Motion of the animal Spirits does very much invigorate the Fancy, and quicken the Memory, and give the Soul a new Turn of brisk and lively Thoughts: And when these are heavy and languid, the Wings of the Soul flag by the dull Weight, all the Operations thereof being performed with a wearisome Unweildiness. But then this does by no Means prove, that the Soul is material; but that it acts in material Organs, which, according to the good or bad Disposition thereof, makes its Faculties display themselves, in more or less Degrees of Perfection: Just as the Air breathed into a musical Pipe, if it be well and artificially fashioned, gives forth all the different Sounds clearly and harmoniously; but if it be less nicely made, the Notes are rough and grating. Now, as in this Case, no one can say, That that Breath of Air, which is blow'd into it, is the Pipe, tho' it very much depends upon the Pipe as to its Harmoniousness; so you can with as little Reason say, that the Soul is Matter, because it depends upon the curious Disposition of the material Organs of the Body, to be able to perform its Operations with any Degree of Eminency.

*This granted proves not the Soul material.*

*Esti.* Now look to your self, *Philologus*: I am going to charge Home upon you this Time. Here is a terrible Demonstration in Mood and Figure planted against you, which will sweep away you, and all your little Arguments for the Immortality of the Soul, Rank and File.

\* Major. *That Doctrine or Belief is most agreeable to a rational Nature, which is most easy to be comprehended or understood, as having in it more probable Grounds of Truth.*

Minor. *But the Doctrine of the Mortality of humane Souls, is more easy to be comprehended, and has in it more probable Grounds of Truth than the Immortality.*

Concl. *Ergo, it is a Belief or Doctrine more agreeable to rational Nature.*

\* Pag. 150.

The Major Proposition I do not conceive can any Ways be denied: For though there are some Things difficult to be comprehended and understood, and those very Things too have equally probable Grounds of Truth; yet we must allow a rational Nature does most approve of Things; easy to be understood, and Things which carry with them the Face of plain downright Truths, rather than mysterious Intricacies and oft-times nothing but perplexed Oppositions. 'Tis but a Strain or Stretch, as 'twere, upon a rational Nature to urge it with incomprehensible Problems, extraordinary difficult if at all to be understood; but that which is most agreeable to it, is undoubtedly plain easy Truth. Now as to <sup>\*</sup> the Proof of the Minor Proposition, I think it admits of very little Difficulty (though I will not do it syllogistically as favouring too much of Pedantry always to proceed so) for 'tis more easy to be comprehended that a mortal Principle should be joined to a mortal, and both equally perishable, than that an immortal one should be join'd to a mortal one, viz. Soul to Body, and to survive it to all Eternity. This I urge philosophically, abstracted from the Notions of Religion; and according to the Opinions Heathens had of the Soul, and the Nature of Union by them laid down, as simile gaudet simili.

*Phil.* This Demonstration, *Estibius*, especially when 'tis ushered in with all this logical Solemnity, is such a terrible thing, as is enough to scare us ordinary People at the Apprehension of it. But however it has this good Effect upon us, as to make us look about us a little, and to take a nice View, whether or no the Adversary be really possessed of that frightful Strength which he pretends to. Therefore being awakened into good sober Caution by the Danger which you threaten; we will for once take Courage to examine into the Force of this demonstrative Syllogism, which, tho' it look as big as the Trojan Horse, perhaps upon Trial, will be found to have nothing else but Wind in its Belly. But to take to Pieces this Monster of an Argument. It is a pretty

while, *Estibius*, since I have been conversant with the Laws of Syllogism; but yet, if my Memory does not fail me, one of them is, that the Terms of one Proposition ought not to be varied when repeated in another; but I think your Syllogism is a little peccant in this Matter, by changing the Words, *as having in it* into *and has in it*; which Alteration is very material, and makes your Minor to assume more than your Major lays down.

I. We will begin with the first Proposition. *That The Major Doctrine or Belief is most agreeable to a rational Nature which is most easy to be comprehended or understood, as having in it more probable Grounds of Truth.* This Proposition you conceive cannot any Ways be denied; but I am of Opinion, that it is all Ways to be denied, and that there is hardly any Part of it, which is not with just Reason deniable. Nay when you say, *That what is most easy to be comprehended, or understood, is most agreeable to rational Nature*, even that Proposition is not universally true. For there are Truths very difficult to be found out, which the Mind very readily acquiesces in, when she has attained to the Knowledge of them. For a great Part of the Pleasure of mathematical Studies proceeds, not barely from the Investigation of Truth, but in great Measure from a comfortable Reflection, upon having surmounted such great Difficulties in the coming at it. Nay, 'tis evident to me, that a great many Men are not best pleased with plain Truths and Matters which lie easy in their Understanding; from their appearing so very fond of any odd out of the way Notion, which may present it self to their Fancies. For 'tis common enough to observe, that these Persons pride themselves upon such fantastick Opinions, which they can never have any tolerable Comprehension of, more than upon solid Truths, of which they have the clearest Ideas. And I appeal to the Conscience of some you know; if they do not feel a secret Pride in their Minds arising from the Consideration, "That they, by the Dint of strong Reasoning, or deep Application, have opened some new Mines of Truth, which were inaccessible to all before them; and

*The Major Prop. of the pretended Demonstration considered.*

“ and if they do not like their own Opinion the better;  
 “ because of the Difficulties they have waded through in  
 “ the Pursuit of it; or, however, for that they were  
 “ so great as to leave the *Endeavours of all former Ex-*  
 “ *plorators in the Search thereof unsuccessful*, who have  
 “ given them the Occasion of reaping the Honour of  
 “ making the first Discovery.” Nay farther, there are  
 some Truths which are very agreeable to rational Na-  
 ture, and which are not at all comprehensible; Reason  
 not at all boggling to comply with them upon that  
 Account. I am perfectly satisfied of the infinite Di-  
 visibility of Quantity, and yet I have no Manner of  
 Comprehension how it should be performed. I am  
 absolutely certain, that God Almighty is infinitely good;  
 And yet I am not able to comprehend either what God  
 is, or what infinite Goodness is. For in such Cases it  
 is not requisite, that the Nature of the Subject, or the  
 precise Manner of such Operation should be exactly com-  
 prehended by the Mind: It is sufficient, that the Un-  
 derstanding perceives the Agreeableness between the Con-  
 ceptions it has of those Affections, which are manifestly  
 evident in such an incomprehensible Being. For though  
 the Soul cannot comprehend the Nature of God, or the  
 Nature of infinite Goodness; it can understand the A-  
 greeableness between the Idea of God, and the Idea of  
 infinite Goodness. And the Understanding is altogether  
 as easy, whilst it is demonstrating infinite or incompre-  
 hensible Affections of infinite Subjects, as it is whilst  
 it is predicating finite Properties of finite Subjects; be-  
 cause it is highly agreeable to Reason, that an infinite  
 and incomprehensible Subject should contain many  
 Truths not to be comprehended.

But you are guilty yet of a farther Mistake, when you  
 lay down, that a Thing is *more easy to be understood, as*  
*having more probable Grounds of Truth*. For I do not  
 by any Means think, that this Expression is consistent,  
 either with Propriety or indeed with Truth it self. For  
 Intelligibleness, or Comprehensibility, does not altogether  
 depend upon probable Grounds, but upon other Causes,  
 For

For probable Grounds of Truth are the Causes rather of *Assent*; than *Intelligibility*. I do believe or think such a Thing to be true, because there are probable Grounds to persuade me into that Belief or Opinion; but these probable Grounds do not make it one Jot more intelligible. For to render a Thing intelligible I must have either an exact Notion of the Nature of the Thing, or of the *Modus* of its Operation, or at least, that the Affections of it are agreeable to some other undoubted Principles, which my Mind is before possessed of. But, as for the *probable Grounds* you speak of, they do only assure me of the pure Existence of the Thing, without any farther Consideration. For things which have no real Existence are capable of being understood, though they have no probable Grounds of Truth as to their Being. Thus Universals and pure *entia Rationis*, which have no real Existence, but are only Creatures of the Mind, are Things which nevertheless are intelligible, and are the proper Object of the Understanding. For I can very well understand, that a Man is an Animal, and that a Centaur is a Thing made up of a Man and a Horse; and yet I have no probable Grounds to persuade me, that there are any such things in the World, in the Manner I conceive them to be.

II. Neither is the minor Proposition of your boasted Syllogism without its Faults, in which you assert, *That the Doctrine of the Mortality of human Souls is more easy to be comprehended, and has in it more probable Grounds of Truth than the Immor-*

*tality.* And here in the first Place give me Leave to observe, that of the two Clauses this Proposition is made up of, the former is by no Means agreeable to Truth. For just contrary to what you say, the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality is more easy to be comprehended, than that of its Mortality. Because existing or living is more agreeable to the Notion every Man has of a Soul, than dying. I don't believe, that the Mind could readily be persuaded, that any Animal could die, if it had never

*Mortality  
of the Soul,  
not more  
easy to be  
compre-  
hended.*

beheld

beheld any Instances thereof. For if Man were immediately sprung up out of the Ground in the Manner the *Epicureans* fanſie him; or, as we Chriſtians are inſtructed from ſacred Writ, like as *Adam* was formed; I don't think any Man, ſo made by God, could perſuade himſelf, before he ſaw the Death of ſome Creature; that even his Body was perſhable. For whereas he found this organiſed Body in Being, from his firſt Acquaintance with it, he could not tell but that it might always continue in this Being; unleſs he had experienced, that the Courſe and Order of Nature were againſt ſuch Continuance; which Experience was not to be obtained, till the Death or Diſſolution of ſome ſuch-like organiſed Body afforded Demonſtration to the Mind that the Body was perſhable. But I will defy all Mankind, to produce ſuch demonſtrative Inſtances of the Diſſolution of the Soul; and ſince Men are abſolutely certain, that the Soul does exiſt, and they can never be certain That it is any Time hereafter in a State of Non-Exiſtence; therefore I conclude 'tis more eaſy to the Underſtanding to conceive, that That Soul does always exiſt or is immortal; and conſequently, what you aſſert, is falſe.

*Nor has  
more pro-  
bable  
grounds of  
Truth.*

*Secondly*, Neither is there any Truth in your other Clause wherein you lay down, That there are more probable Grounds of Truth, in the Doctrine of the Soul's Mortality, than for the contrary Doctrine. For, not only upon Account of ſeveral unanſwerable Arguments, (which I could urge upon you now, in Behalf of this Doctrine, and ſhall have Occaſion to uſe before you and I part) the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality ſtands built upon the moſt probable Grounds, which can be imagined: But your Doctrine, of the Mortality of it, is founded upon no Manner of Grounds at all, (as is evident by what we ſaid before) when the Proof is turn'd upon your Side. For whereas 'tis certain, that the Soul is in Being, and you can never prove that any Soul ever ceaſed to be: ſo we muſt needs have the greater Share of Probability on our Side of the Queſtion: For

we



we are in Possession of Being and actually experience it; but I am sure you cannot say so much, for your future State of Non-Existence.

III. But you endeavour to confirm this Argument, by a philosophical Axiom. *Simile gaudet simili*. From whence you conclude, that if the Body be mortal and material, the Soul which is joined with it is so too. Now I know not what Force this Axiom may have in some philosophical Matters; but I am satisfied it can have very little Force in the Affair which you apply it to. I doubt not but this is a very true Expression, when applied to the Humours and Dispositions of Mankind, and indeed of all other Animals: which love to converse, and keep Company with those, that are of a Temper like to their own; and are apt to disrelish those whose Qualities are different. Hence that of *Horace*;

*Oderunt hilarem tristes, tristemq; jocosum,  
Sedatum celeres, agilem gnarumq; remissi.*

Hor. Ep. 18.

And this makes *Martial* wonder, that when a very bad Couple were come together, that they did not better agree.

*Uxor pessima, pessimus maritus:  
Miror non bene convenire vobis.*

Of the Validity of your Axiom in this Sense, *Estibius*, I will not dispute with you. But how far it holds in Philosophy we will a little consider. I think *Aristotle* some where or other does make use of an Axiom pretty like this, which you bring. *Ὁμοίον ὁμοίῳ φίλον*. Like has a Friendship for Like. That is, according to the Principles of his Philosophy, Bodies of a similar Nature have a Sort of Appetency to unite together. Thus Fire moves upward to meet the great Mass of that Element, which he supposed to be situated above the Air: and Stones with other earthy Substances move downward, to consort with the other Parts of that gross Element, which they are related to. But that was a great Mistake in that Philosophy, to imagine any proper Places or Regions of the four Elements, to which all the particular

scattered Parts at a Distance were tending, as to a Center. And the Aristotelians were led into this Error, by their presuming that Gravity and Levity, were two absolute Qualities, essentially distinct; by one of which, Things were enabled to move upwards, and by the other to move downwards. But if they had considered, that all Matter was in it self weighty; that what we call light, was only something not so heavy as another Body it was compared with; and that such light Bodies moved upwards only by the Protrusion of more heavy ones, that forced their Way first to the Center: I say if the *Aristotelians* had sufficiently attended to these Observations, they would have had no Occasion for your *simile gaudet simili*, to carry the scattered Parts of the Elements to their respective Regions. Some farther countenance to this Maxim has been given by the Operations in Chymistry; wherein the Parts of Bodies that are of a similar Nature seem by a Kind of natural Desire to run together. But there does not seem to be any thing in these Operations, that does necessarily imply such an Appetency. For when by the Heat of the Fire the insensible Parts are put into a violent Motion, the more subtile Particles flie away, and the other by Reason of a particular Configuration stick together, as they happen to meet in their tumbling and tossing about. Now this Cohæision is no more occasioned by a natural Impulse or Desire of the similar Parts to be united together; than the same is required to make my Hand more disposed to stick to a Piece of Pitch, rather than to a Piece of Marble. And the Reason is the same in the Mixture of Liquors that occasion Fermentation: Which is not any Animosity or Fight properly so called between the Parts, which bear a natural Antipathy and Irreconcilableness to one another, as some have imagined. For that Intensens of Heat which is occasioned by the pouring Water upon Lime, or the Mixture of Spirit of Wine with *Aqua Fortis*, Spirit of *Nitre*, or Oil of *Vitriol*; is not a Fight or Strife of the Parts with each other, but an Ebullition  
caused

caused by a real burning; the fiery Particles being let out of the Cavens of the respective Bodies in which they were lodged, by the Insinuation of the Water, or Spirit of Wine. And to this, or the like Causes, may be attributed any great sudden Alteration in the Heat or Colour of mixed Liquors; rather than to any conceived Enmity between the Parts. So that the Foundation of your Argument being destroyed, and there not appearing any such Friendship or Enmity in Nature as you suppose; it will not follow, that there is any such Incompatibility between Body and Spirit, as will make the Union of them improbable upon this Account.

Nay the Argument, which you urge to weaken the Doctrine of the Immateriality of the Soul, does very much support it. For, if there had been an exact Friendship and Agreement between the Soul and Body, it would be an Argument that it was material; but since not only the ancient Philosophy, but the Christian Theology does plainly denote a particular Struggle and Enmity between each other, it is no little Part of a Demonstration, that it is a spiritual Being, to which the other has no Manner of Relation. This Sort of *Lucta* or Wrestling together is remarkable among all the Philosophers, particularly the Stoicks and Platonists. And the Apostle St. Paul observes the same, *For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit; and the Spirit against the Flesh: And these are contrary the one towards the other; so that ye cannot do the Things that ye would,* Gal. v. 17.

*Esti.* But notwithstanding all this Speciousness, I shall find you farther work yet, which will put you harder to it to give a rational Satisfaction for. For when I shall have laid before you a Proposition backed with the Proofs which I design to support it by, you will find it a difficult Task to get over it. And that is, \* *That the Doctrine or Belief of the Mortality of human Souls contains in it no moral Turpitude, and consequently the Light of Nature is not repugnant to it. For that*

\* Pag. 153.

which contains in it any moral Turpitude must be repugnant \* to the Law of God, in contradicting the moral Obligations, which he has laid upon us, that are essentially true, which it is plain that this Doctrine does not. Nay on the contrary, the Doctrine which you maintain, leads to Superstition, as being the true Grounds of praying for the Dead and feigning a Purgatory.

*Phil.* But I think, there needs very little Study, to give a satisfactory Answer to this Apology for your own Doctrine, and the Imputation you lay against ours. And in Order to this, I shall endeavour to make good against your Opinion, in the first Place, this Charge.

*Doctrine of  
the Mortality of the  
Soul.*

I. That the Doctrine of the Mortality of the Soul, which you are Advocate for, does contain in it a moral Turpitude; and therefore cannot justly put in for that Innocency and Indifferency, which you plead in its Behalf. For

*First,* Any Doctrine must contain in it moral Turpitude, which is contrary (as you will observe) to the Law natural: And, upon Consideration, it will appear that this Doctrine of yours is so, For if you take the natural Law to be, the undoubted Rules of right Reason, which the Minds of all impartial Men do readily assent to. Your Doctrine is directly repugnant to this. For there is not one Man in ten thousand, but who will readily close in with the Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, as we hold it; but I question whether there are or ever were a hundred Men in the World, that espoused your Notion. If you take the Law natural to be a Scheme of Religion, revealed to the first Parents of Mankind, and handed through all Ages, and to all Nations in the World: The Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality is very agreeable to this Tradition, but yours carries the greatest Opposition to it. For all Nations in the World, by some Means or other (either by Reason or Revelation) have fallen into the Opinion which we contend for: But few Men, unless *Epicureans* and *Atheists*, and such like Scum of the Philosophers of old Time, have been Advocates for yours. And, indeed,

if you take the Notion of natural Law from universal Consent, I do not know any one Branch of the Law natural, which has been more universally received, than the Belief of the Soul's Immortality. Other Parts of moral Duty have been universally transgressed, or publickly discountenanced by whole Nations; as Theft was tolerated in some Measure by the *Spartans*; publick Com-mixtures by the *Britains*; *Polygamy* and vagrant Love by others; some prostituted their Wives at their Marriage, others killed and eat their Parents when old: But even these Nations, though they so notoriously violated natural Law in the foresaid Particulars, still maintained the Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul. So that it from hence appears, that hardly any Law natural was so firmly imprinted in the Minds of all Men, as this Belief which we are now defending. From all which, *Estibius*, I conclude, that if moral Turpitude be founded in the Breach of natural Law; your Opinion, which breaks in upon such a Law of Nature, which the most barbarous Nations, in the midst of all their Ferity and Savageness, when they had stripped themselves of so many other Rules of Duty, could never divest themselves of: This Opinion of yours, I say, is one of the broadest Inroads, which can be made, upon the Law of Nature, and consequently does contain in it a very great Degree of moral Turpitude.

*Secondly*, Another Reason, which I have to evince the Illness of your Opinion, is, that it opens a wide Door to a wicked Course of Life. For if once Men can be persuaded, that their Souls are mortal, they will indulge themselves in more Sensuality than they dare do now. When they consider they have a Soul existing in them, a Soul which will continue long after them, and which is like to pay a sad Reckoning for the wicked Actions of Life which they have committed here: Their Hearts will often smite them, and their Consciences recoil upon them, and there is a continual Damp within them which palls all their vicious Enjoyments. As long as any Belief, as long as any Distrust of this remains in a Man's Mind,

the Adulterer's Pillow is stuck round with Thorns, and the Drunkard's Cup is mixed with Gall. By which Means the Grace of God oftentimes brings it about, that Men take Shelter in Virtue and Religion, only to avoid the Uneasiness of Vice. This the *Epicureans* were so sensible of, that they endeavoured with all Might and Main, to efface this Belief out of the Minds of Men; for they could never arrive to an undisturbed Sensuality, whilst these natural Notions were galling them in the Commission of their Crimes.

---*Mictus ille foras praeceps Acheruntis agendus  
Funditus, humanam qui vitam turbat ab imo,  
Omnia suffundens moris nigrore: neq, Ullam  
Esse voluptatem liquidam puramq; relinquit.*

Lucre. Lib. 3.

*Away we must the Fear of Acheron drive,  
That ruffles into Storms all human Life:  
That spreads around Death's Blackness, and annoys  
With dismal Thoughts the most refined Joys.*

And this made the Author of these Verses spend a sixth Part of his atheistical Work, in endeavouring to prove the Mortality, and Materiality of the Soul. For, without this Notion well secured in the Minds of his Disciples, they could never be such *Epicuri de grege Porci*, such compleat *Epicurean* Hogs as he designed them. For no Sect of Philosophy whatsoever, but what maintained the Mortality of the Soul, could allow Men in a full Swing of sensual Pleasures. For if there were no *Elysium*, and no *Acheron*, no Heaven and no Hell, yet wicked Men could never be easy if the Soul was immortal in any Respect, even upon the Pythagorick Principles of Transmigration. For a Man could not readily allow himself in a Course of Viciousness, if he was only afraid, in another Revolution of the Soul, to be condemned to the Body of a nasty Swine, or to carry Panniers as an Ass or a Pack-horse. But, as for those that are persuaded that the Soul is absolutely mortal, and does not survive the Grave; their Conclusion must be that of the Sensualists the Apostle speaks

speaks of, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.* For such Men cannot possibly have any Check upon their Actions, be they ever so lewd and vicious: For, if they are persuaded the Soul does not live to another State, 'tis but Wisdom to indulge it in all that is pleasant to it in this: All the Caution is, not to live so fast as to destroy Life; but there can be no Restraint upon them, not to make it as pleasant as they can.

O! but you go upon Christian Principles of a Resurrection of the Body, and Men shall be rewarded and punished after their new Organization. Perhaps this may be your Opinion; but I am afraid if you draw off any one from the Catholick Belief of the separate Existence, and make him believe that this is all Heathenish Invention, Impossibility, *Jargon*, and *Demetrius's* Craft: I warrant you, your Profelyte will have so good Thoughts of himself, as to think he has learned as far as his Master can teach him. A thousand to one, *Estibius*, but your apt Scholar drops you there, and will venture to shift for himself, concerning the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body. I think, I so well understand the Temper of those Sort of People, who are like to be the greatest of Admirers of your Arguments, as not to be a false Prophet in this Case. For, if once you set them loose from the common Principles of Religion, they will take such a Swing afterwards, that you shall never be able to stop them in their Career. You teach them that the Soul must die; but you will never persuade them that it shall ever live again. For what they are persuaded dies once, they will be apt to think does always continue in that dead State. When once you have convinced them of the Mortality of the Soul, you may talk to them as long as you will of the Reviviscency of the Body; and they, like deaf Adders, will stop their Ears to it, though you charm ever so wisely.

Besides, it is the Custom of this Age, to indulge it self in a Curiosity of having all things proved, as much as may be, by Dint of Reason; and Matters,

which are bottom'd only upon Revelation, are too apt to be received with a Flatness and Indifferency. Now you will find it a hard Matter, to demonstrate to such People, the Resurrection of the Body simply of it self; but this Doctrine is very much help'd forward by a Belief of a separate Soul, which is supposed to be waiting for a joyful Resurrection. Therefore you do very ill, to go about to enervate this Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, which is probable upon pure natural Principles, and opens a ready Way to the Belief of the Resurrection of the Body. And if you considered, how much of the Atheists Work you did for them, by this Project; you would tremble to think of the Consequences of it.

And though I am willing still to retain a good Opinion of you, *Estibius*; yet I cannot think, That if any Atheist, or Infidel, had a Mind to undermine the Christian Religion, he would, upon the first Onset, have pursued any other Methods than you have done. For 'tis a common Subtilty practis'd by those wicked Men, not to attack the whole of Christianity at once, but only to destroy some main Parts of it; and to leave the rest standing, to be kick'd down by any Body else, of less Abilities. And thus *Hobbs* and *Spinoza*, who I am fully satisfied were two of the most absolute Atheists, that ever were in the World, left a great Deal of Christian Phraseology in their Writings, which they industriously turned into a ridiculous Cant, to make our Religion more odious; but I am verily persuaded that they believed no more of God, or Devil, or Heaven, or Hell, or Virtue or Vice, or any Thing we call Religion, either Revealed or Natural, than the Grand Senior believes, that he shall be saved by Jesus Christ. And indeed I do not know any atheistical Book, which for several Ages has been written, but has pretended high Regards for some Parts of Christianity, whilst it has been attacking others, if for no other Reason, yet purely to beguile unwary Readers. For 'tis plain, that



that even That Wretch *Vaninus* pretends, by a sham Defence, to support Christianity; whilst he is, in the most spiteful Manner, opposing it. And the same is observable of the *Epicureans* of old, that they did *Verbis ponere, rebus tollere deos*. Therefore I must needs farther say, *Estibius*, that it is also a very great Sin of Scandal, which you give your Fellow-Christians, not only by advancing such unorthodox Opinions, but by managing them so, as to give Occasion for many to think, you are driving on an Interest against the common Religion, by the same crafty Methods as its greatest Adversaries are wont to do. And by this you put your Friends, upon extending their charitable Opinions to the utmost Stretch, in hoping, that you have no farther Design against the Faith, than you have as to this Particular declared.

II. Neither is it any Argument against this Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, That it has been abused by some Persons to Superstition, and That the Papists have taken Advantage therefrom, to set up Superstition or Prayers for the Dead.

*First*, Because the best Things in the World are liable to be abused, and very often actually are so; and yet we ought not to abridge our selves of the lawful Use of them, for that Reason. The Fire, which cherishes our Bodies, and dresses our Food, is often made use of for the Destruction of Men's Lives; and so the Meat and Drink which nourishes us, is turned, by the Intemperance of others, to their Ruin. But yet I believe this Consideration will not have Weight enough with any Man, to forego the Conveniencies of them, to avoid these possible Misfortunes, which may happen from them. And, as this Rule holds in the Transactions of human Life, so it has its Force likewise in the Doctrines and positive Institutions of Religion. We learn from the Holy Scriptures, how the Injunction of the Ceremonial Law, which was designed partly as a Typical Representation of the Oeconomy of the Second Covenant, and partly as a Bar of Distinction from the Heathens,

thens, was abused by the *Pharisees* in our Saviour's Time, to the setting up a pure external Worship, to the perfect exclusion of the Moral Precepts. And even the most ancient Institution of Sacrifices was perverted to the most diabolical Uses, and abused by the Heathens, even to the Cruelty of human Victims. Nay there is hardly any part of God's Worship, which was not, by the Mimickry of the Devil, translated to the most abominable Superstition. And yet for all this, it would bear very little of an Argument to conclude, That these Ordinances ought to have been laid aside, to avoid the Superstitions which attended them; unless God Almighty had been pleased, by a particular Revelation, to have superseded his former Command which established them, as in Case of the Brazen Serpent. Nay, there is hardly any part of Natural Religion, or any Attribute of the Divine Nature, but some wicked Persons make an ill use of. How often is the Notion of God's Eternal Justice perverted, to countenance Despair? How often is his Goodness abused, for Presumption? Now no rational Man can say, these are any good Reasons for laying aside any of these Branches of Religion; which are originally designed for Men to make a good use of, though some Men, by the Perverseness of their Inclinations, have given an ill Turn to them.

*Secondly*, Because the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality was held, when there were no Prayers for the Dead, nor any Purgatory acknowledged in the Church. We do not find any of these Notions, in the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, among the *Brachmans* and *Druids*, the *Thracians* and *Germans*, and other ancient Nations, who held this Opinion from Tradition; nor among many of the Greek Philosophers, nor among any of them before *Plato*. And it cannot be proved, the Jews had any such like Notions, unless it may be among some of them, that had blended their national Tenets with the Platonick Philosophy, which they had learned at *Alexandria*, such as *Philo*, and it may be the Author of the *Maccabees*. Neither can it be said, That either

either of these Practices were known in the Christian Church, till about the III. or IV. Century. But long before this, the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality and separate Existence did obtain in the Christian Church, as an indubitable Doctrine, which no one questions. It were tedious to recount all the Instances, which might be produced for this Purpose. I will add one or two out of the most early Fathers, to put this Matter even in your Opinion out of all Doubt. *Ignatius*, when he was shortly going to suffer his Martyrdom in being torn by the Beasts, glories in the Happiness he shall enjoy after his Soul's Separation from the Body. *Μᾶλλον δὲ κολακίσου τε, &c.* *Rather entreat the Beasts that their Bellics may be my Sepulchre, that they may leave nothing of my Body, so that when I am dead, I may not be offensive to any one.* Τότε ἢ ἴσομαι μαθητῆς ἀληθῆς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτε εἰδὲ τὸ σῶμά μου ὁ κόσμος ὄψεται. *Then I shall be a true Disciple of Jesus Christ, when my Body shall be seen no more.* Ign. Ep ad. Rom. Συγγνωμονεῖτε μοῦ ἀδελφοί; &c. *Pardon me, O my Brethren, and do not hinder me being corrupted into Life.* Ἄφιστέ με καθαρῶ φῶς λαβεῖν. ἐκεῖ παραγγεόμενος ἄνθρωπος Θεῷ ἴσομαι. *Suffer me to partake of the pure light: For when I come there I shall be a Man of God.* Id. ib. Now can any one who is in a perfect State of Non-Existence, be a more true Disciple than in this World? Can he be said to be corrupted into Life, and to be Partaker of pure Light, and to be a Man of God? *Irenaeus* makes Souls not only to subsist, after the Dissolution of the Body, but to remember all the Actions of Life, and, by a particular Sort of Extension or Configuration of their Body, to be known to others. *Iren. adv. Har. Lib. 3. Cap. 62. 63, 64.* And he says elsewhere Ἄψυχὰ ἀπερχονται εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ὀρισμένον αὐταῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, κακεῖ, μέχρι τῆς ἀναστάσεως, φοιτᾶσι περιμένονσαι τὴν ἀνάστασιν. ἔπειτα ἀπολαβεῖσαι τὰ σώματα, καὶ ὀλοκλήρως ἀναστᾶσαι, τετίσσι σωματικῶς, καθῶς καὶ ὁ Κύριος ἀνέστη, ἕτως ἐλεύσονται εἰς τὴν ὄψιν τοῦ Θεοῦ. *Their Souls shall go into a certain invisible Place designed for them by God, and there shall stay waiting for the Resurrection. Afterwards receiving their Bodies, and perfectly rising, that is, bodily, as*

*our Lord arose, they shall then come into the Sight of God.* Id. Lib. 5. Cap. 31. Now Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead are not imputed to the Practice of the Church, in the Ages when these Authors wrote; and therefore the Immortality of the Soul may blamelessly be held, without running into these Errors, which you object, as the Consequences of it. I will add only to these the Authority of *Justin Martyr*; who, though a Platonick Philosopher, does not appear to be any Advocate for Purgatory, or Prayers for the Dead, and he gives his Opinion of the separate Existence of human Souls, Thus, *Ἀλλὰ μὲν ἐδὲν ἀποθνήσκουσιν, &c. I do not say that all human Souls do die, for that would be a Gain to wicked Men. What then? Those of good Men remain in a better Place, but unjust and wicked Souls in a worse Place, expecting the Time of Judgment. And those that are worthy to appear before God shall not die any more; but the other shall be punished, as long as God is pleased, they shall be, or shall be punished.* Dial. cum Tryph. Which Opinion of his, though it be particular as to the perpetual Duration of wicked Souls; yet it shews the Doctrine of the Church in his Time, of the separate Existence of Souls after Death, and before the Resurrection.

*Thirdly,* But in a Word, the true Reason of the creeping in of these Errors into the Church, was the Decay of Christian Piety, and the mixing too much of Philosophy with Religion. When the Fervour of Primitive Christianity began to cool, and the Faithful allow'd themselves in some Liberties, which were neither countenanced by the holy Scriptures nor the Practice of their Predecessors: They could not tell how to reconcile these and Religion together; for such Practices, by the Tenor of the Gospel, were found to exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore they cast about, how to render such Actions consistent with Salvation. For when any of their Friends or Relations, of whom they had a natural Inclination to hope the best, were found to die in some known Sins which the Gospel threatned with Damnation; they were very uneasy, to think Persons

sons, they loved so well, should incur so sad a Punishment; and therefore they turned their Thoughts about every Way, to make themselves easy on this Reflection. And so likewise there were some Bosom Sins, which they cherish'd within themselves, and could not be persuaded to divest themselves of, that made them as eager upon the same Search; how they might enjoy the Pleasure of those beloved Sins here, and not be out of Hopes of Salvation hereafter. Now the Platonick Philosophy came in very seasonably to their Relief here, by Reason of that Purgation of Souls which they speak of; whereby wicked Souls they tell us were amended and purified, by having the ὄχημα, or Vehicle for a long time continued in Water or Flame: And thus καθαρίζομενοι τῶντε ἀδικημάτων διδόντες δίκας, ἀπαλύονται, εἴ τις τι ἠδίκησε τῶντε εὐεργεσιῶν πμῶς φέρονται κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἕκαστος. Plat. Phæd. *Being purged from their Faults, by suffering Punishment for what every one has offended, they are at length freed or absolved: And then they receive the Rewards of their good Works, every one according as he has deserved.* And, if any one has the Leisure exactly to observe that Dialogue of *Plato*, and the Comment made upon it in the sixth Book of *Virgil's Æneis*, with the Account which the Popish Books give of the particular *Limbi*, or Degrees of Punishment, or Purgation in their Purgatory; he will find, that the latter are only a Copy from the former.

*Esti.* I will consider farther of these Matters at leisure: But in the mean Time I would desire you to look out, what you can say to the next Argument I have ready to accost you with. And that is, the Countenance that my Opinion receives, from its containing no Impossibility in it, as many others of my Adversaries do. For in the first Place it is evident, *that whole Man is born, and therefore it does imply no Impossibility, that whole Man both the Body and Soul does die.* For, \* as the Apostle urges it, *why should it be thought a thing impossible, that God should raise the Dead,* Act. xxvi. 8. *So I urge it; Why should it*

\* Pag. 154, 155.

be thought incredible, that God should make Man of a Mortal Soul and Body? And this Argument receives farther Strength from the Consideration of the Parity between Men and Beasts, and consequently as they are born, so they must die alike. This is asserted by Job, Chap. xi. v. 12. Vain Man would be wise, though he be born like the wild Asses Colt, that is, Tho' he has no more visible sign of being Rational at his Birth than a Colt or Foal of a wild Ass, plainly intimating Man in his Original to have a Parity of Souls, if I may so call it, with a Brute or Beast that perishes. But \*Eccles. describes Man's Original in Comparison with a Beast more fully. I said in my Heart concerning the State of the Sons of Men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that themselves are Beasts; for that which befalleth the Sons of Men, befalleth Beasts, even one Thing befalleth them; as one dieth, so dieth the other, they have all one Breath: So that Man hath no Pre-eminence above a Beast; All go down to one place; All are of the Dust, and unto Dust return again. Eccl. cap. xi. v. 18, 19, 20. And if it be, as you assert, ‡ that Rationality in Man be a Demonstration of an immaterial, and consequently an immortal Substance in Man, it would be a Demonstration of the same in Brutes. Besides, this Doctrine of ours remedies two great Inconveniencies which arise from your Notion; whereof the first is, if the Soul be a Spiritual cogitative Being, it must always think, which it is plain it does not, as appears from Man in Sleep, \*in which the outward Senses being locked up, the Soul cannot be thoughtful, active or designing. And secondly, † It would prevent many frivolous Disputes about the Union of the Body with the Soul, when supposed to be a distinct immaterial Substance.

Phil. You have for the Defence of your Opinion taken shelter, *Fstibiis*, in a very strong Hold, which you are sure not to be beat out of, viz. the Power of God, and the Possibility of the Truth of what you assert. But to grant you all that you contend for: How does this make more for your Opinion than for mine; for mine is as

\* Pag. 157. ‡ Pag. 159. \* Pag. 174. ‡ Pag. 176

possible to be true as yours is? But Possibilities are but lame Arguments, having this Prejudice against them, that there is nothing so extravagant but these will serve to prove. By such a Reason, I can prove, That all the Jews, throughout the whole Dispersion, will be converted before *Saturday Night* next; and that the Day of Judgment will begin before *Easter Day*. But I believe, I shall neither be able to convince my self, nor any Body else, by such Proofs.

Well, but you claim a Parity of Reason in your Argument, with that of the Apostle; and indeed you have chose a very good Companion, to stand or fall with. But I never remember any two things worse paired, than your Arguments: For as for the Apostle's, it must be own'd by all Men demonstratively conclusive; but as for yours, I will make any Man judge, that it can prove nothing at all. And methinks the very first View of *St. Paul's* Argument, would have informed you in what only Case it can be proper to conclude from Possibilities. For there is but one Case, in which an Argument drawn from Possibility will have any Force, and that is when any Matter of Fact, present or future, or any other Truth is asserted by a previous Revelation from God. For if God Almighty says, any thing is so, or shall be so; I am sure it is or will be so, if it is not impossible to be otherwise. For, as for all the Difficulties which may attend such a Thing, I am to overlook all these, because there is an Almighty Power to conflict with them. There is but one Thing then to be enquired into, and that is, if the Thing so said or promised be not impossible; because nothing can hinder God's doing any Thing, but an absolute Impossibility and Contradiction in the Supposition.

Now the Apostle argues very agreeable to this Rule; for God having revealed to Mankind the Resurrection of the Dead at the last Day, some carnal Men were very backward to credit it, because of the Difficulties contained in gathering together the dispersed Parts of human Body, and invigorating a dead Mass with new  
Life.

Life. To this the Apostle gives an unanswerable Reply, by putting them in Mind of the Person who had promised this. *Why should it be thought a Thing incredible, for God to raise the Dead?* I need not insist upon your changing *Incredible*, in the Apostle's Argument, to the *Impossible* of yours: For I look upon ἀπίστον, to signify the same with ἀδύνατον here; So that this shall break no Squares between us. Upon the Whole therefore, *Estibius*, if you can produce a Revelation as much in Favour of your organised Matter, and rational Clock-work, as the Apostle had to shew for the Support of the Doctrine of the Resurrection, we will allow your Argument to go even Paces with that of the Apostle: But till you afford us this Satisfaction, we must beg the Liberty, to allow the Preference on St. *Paul's* Side.

*Argument  
from Beasts  
answered.*

II. Another Part of your Objection I observe is this. You say, that if Rationality or Immateriality did necessarily include Immortality, Beasts would be immortal as well as Men; they having in them a reasoning Faculty, and, according to some, an immaterial Soul. But I have returned an Answer to this in Part already, when I shew'd you that Beasts do not exert Acts of Reason, and therefore they not having Rationality cannot pretend, upon that Account, to Immortality. "But you  
" will reply upon me, That at the same Time I pro-  
" ved that Matter could not think. Now it being  
" plain that Brutes have some Sort of Thoughts or  
" Perceptions, they must have these then from an im-  
" material Soul according to your Principles; and  
" therefore upon that Account, This immaterial Soul  
" of theirs must likewise be immortal. Indeed I  
must freely own that I do acknowledge some Kind  
of Thought or Perception in Brutes, they evidently  
appearing to have some Ideas of Pleasure and Pain, and to  
have something very like the Passions we feel of Joy  
and Grief, of Hope and Fear: For, upon the closest  
View of this Matter, I could never bring my self o-



ver to their Opinion, who allow Brutes to be mere *Automata*, without any Manner of Sense; and that a Dog cut up alive feels no more Pain, than a dead Carcass. The Shrieks and Groans of such poor Creatures do undeniably bespeak the Misery which they sustain; and one may as well pretend, that a Man whose Looks, and Words, and Sighs, and Tears, declare to us the lamentable Pains he undergoes, is only mistaken in, or counterfeits, such an Anguish. For there is no other Reason to deny, that such an one does endure the Pain which he complains of, but only because we our selves don't feel it; which indeed is a very sorry one. But, if the outward *Indicia* of Pain carry any Force to persuade us, of the Truth of it in Man, Brutes do afford as many Signs thereof as Men can do, except by *speaking*, which is peculiar to our Species. And I must likewise farther acknowledge, that I am not convinced that the Souls of Brutes are nothing but refined Matter. Nay I am of Opinion, that there is an immaterial Principle within them, by which they live and move, and perceive. Now this must be either the immediate Act of God in them, or what we call a sensitive Soul. That God immediately acts in them, does not seem so probable; upon Account of several Blemishes and Errors which happen in their Formation; and their many Ways of acting, which do not so exactly tend to their Preservation, as if they were immediately directed by the infallible Hand of God. Neither could I ever subscribe to their Opinion, which makes the Souls of Brutes to be nothing but a subtile active fiery Part of the Blood, as *Gassendus*, and *Dr. Willis*. For, after a full Consideration of this Fancy, a Man will be as soon persuaded, that the Soul is made of Gun-powder. For what can a brisk fiery Part of the Blood contribute to Sensation? A brisk and fiery Part of the Blood might perhaps make the Body frisk, and caper about, like a Boy's Squib; but how would this convey to it the Sense of Pain, or the Perception of

Sweetness, or Whiteness? It remains therefore, that the Souls of Brutes are some certain created immaterial Substances, which are the Cause of all the vital and sensitive Actions we observe in them. But here lies the terrible Objection against this Opinion; that Brutes Souls then must be immortal, as well as Mens. You have not yet, *Estibius*, heard me lay down that, as an undoubted Principle, as some indeed do, *That every Thing that is immaterial is immortal*. And I am persuaded, that this Proposition is not universally true: For Motion, and the Ideas of our Mind are immaterial, but we cannot say these are immortal. And tho' these may possibly be but Modes of Beings, yet I cannot conceive that an immaterial Substance should necessarily infer a Perpetuity of Existence. For it is not clear to me, that any Thing should necessarily be any longer, than the Will of the Creator determines it to be. Now if it be the Will of God, that the Souls of Brutes should only be of a temporary Continuance, extended with their Lives, they must of Course fall into a State of Non-Entity, when ever their Bodies are dissolved by Death. For it is the pure Almighty Will, and good Pleasure of God, that gives the Souls of Men a Capacity of an immortal Continuance; and if he pleases, he can deal out his Bounty more scantily to Brutes, in giving them Souls, though immaterial, but of a temporary Permanence. We in this imperfect State know no more of the wise Designs of his Providence, than he has been pleased to reveal to us in his holy Word: And he may have several Methods in Disposal of these inferior Souls, that we Men cannot so much as guess at. He may if he pleases annihilate them at their Separation from their Bodies, or put them upon a new Office in actuating another Body by Transmigration. But if we grant they be annihilated; there will not any Absurdity follow thereupon, as if it were out of the Power of God so to do; for he that at first gave them a Being may, when he pleases, take it back again. Nor will

will it follow from thence, that if the immaterial Souls of Beasts die, the Immaterial Souls of Men do so likewise. For our Reason suggests to us a great Deal of Difference, between these two Cases. As for the Souls of Brutes, after they have actuated their Bodies they were design'd for, either during the natural Lives of the respective Creatures, or during the Continuance of this visible World, it does not seem that Providence has any farther Use for them; but they having attain'd the End that God did fore-cast, it is not unreasonable to think, that he may let them drop into their former State of Non-Existence.

But the Case is very different in the Souls of Men; which are not like those of Brutes, that serve only for Salt to keep their Flesh sweet, for the little Time they live. For our Souls are ordained for a much nobler End, *viz.* for the Praise and Worship of God, and for contemplating, and imitating his Excellencies. Now, whereas there can be no possible Time assign'd, wherein these Ends can totally be fulfilled (for no future Age can be so remote, wherein there will not still be a God to praise and worship; and wherein God shall not continually out of his infinite Stock of Perfection, afford new Excellencies for the Soul to transcribe,) therefore there will for ever be the same Reason, for the Continuance of the human Soul, as there was at first for its Creation. And if there be no Reason for God's annihilating the Soul, and there be the same Reason for continuing it, as there was for the Creation of it; it must continue on to all Eternity. Unless you will say, that God acts only by his Will without Reason: And those Reasons, which are sufficient to determine him at one Time, will not be equally cogent at another.

And the Consideration which shews, that the Souls of Men have more different Reasons of their Continuance, than those of Brutes, will evince likewise, that the Soul must be not only in a State of Existence but of Sensibility too in a separate State. For since there is then a God to be worshiped and imitated,

and the Soul is given for this very End: Therefore the Soul must be in such a Condition, in which it may be capable of worshipping and imitating him, which without Existence and Sensibility it cannot be.

*Soul does  
always  
think.*

III. But you object to us, that the Soul does not always think here in this World; and therefore what Difficulty is it to suppose it to be, for some Time, in an unthinking State, between this and the Resurrection? Now to this we answer, that the Matter of Fact, which you build your Argument upon, is not true; and therefore whatever you draw from it falls to the Ground, and signifies nothing. For, notwithstanding all your Positiveness, and that of your Friends, *Estibius*, in this Matter; it is clear to all considering and impartial Men; That the Soul does always think: And 'tis impossible for you to prove, that it is at any Time without Thinking. I won't pretend to dive into the Nature of Things, and to say positively, that Cogitation is the very Essence of the Soul. But I cannot conceive a Soul to continue one Minute, without thinking, any more than I can imagine, that a Body should continue the same Time without Quantity or Extension. For when in the first Place I have denied all Materiality, Extension, Divisibility, &c. of the Soul, and come at last to strip it of its Thinking too, I then make a perfect Nothing of it, and cannot conceive any Notion of it at all. Now, whether it be the Essence, or only an inseparable Property of the Soul to think; however this Faculty of thinking is so closely interwoven with its Nature, that One is not supposable without the Other. Therefore the Soul without the Body (in a State of Separation) is as much thoughtful, as Body without the Soul is extended.

But I pray what Reason have these Men to doubt, that the Soul does always think? I am sure, when ever any Man gave himself the Reflection of examining his Mind, whether it thought or no, he always found it did. And therefore for that Reason, why should any Man doubt of it any more, than he can  
doubt

doubt of the Dimensions of a Field or a Piece of Timber, which he has often measured, and always found exactly the same it was, when he first tried it? Now why should not the Soul be adjudged to preserve its Cogitation, which whenever he examined it, he found it to have; as well as those forementioned Bodies be allowed, to retain their Dimensions?

All that can be said in this Behalf is, "that they do not remember their Thoughts, as particularly in their Sleep; which, if they had any then, could not escape their Memory." But I would fain again ask them another Question, whether they never forgot any Thing in their Lives? and how they are sure, that they have not forgot those Thoughts, which their Minds had, at the Time when they affirm they were without? We are all sensible, that we forget more Things than we retain in Memory: And a Man, at threescore, does not remember so many of the Thoughts of his whole Life all put together, as he may have had successively upon his Mind, in the Course of one single Year. Now is it reasonable, for such an old Gentleman to say, his Soul was asleep, or not thinking all that Time, in which he does not remember it to think? For that the Soul should barely think it is only necessary, that it have purely Perception; but for to retain this in Memory, it is necessary that the Impression should be strong, and most sensibly affect our Senses, or Imaginations, or Passions. For if the Impression be not strong upon us, even when we are awake, we presently forget what the Mind thinks of: Nay, those sensible Objects, which usually give the smartest Strokes, if the Mind have been long habituated to the Perception, even these are received very faintly, and lost again as soon as over. How often do we ask the next Man, what we were going to say? How do we sometimes lose the Force of an Argument, whilst we are writing it down? Now if these Things happen, when we are broad awake, and when the Imagination is clear, and undisturbed, and all the Senses stand fixed upon

their Guard; we may well conclude, that the Thoughts of the Mind will be more faint and languid, when it receives no Impressions from the outward Senses, but it enjoys only the Reflections of old Ideas, and perhaps such new ones, as a rambling Imagination presents to it. So that to lay all this together, 'tis no Wonder, that Men should dream, and not remember it; but rather 'tis more strange, that they should remember any Dreams at all, considering the Faintness of the Impression, and how little the Soul is affected by the Images then afforded.

*Union of  
the Soul  
with Body  
not altogether  
inconceivable.*

IV. It remains only, that I speak to what you object, concerning the Absurdity of conceiving a Mind's being joined to a Body, according to our Belief. I observed to you before, that I do acknowledge this to be a great Difficulty to conceive, as a thousand other unknown Things are: For we can never certainly tell, what should be the Ground of Cohesion between Body and Spirit. All our Thoughts and Disquisitions about so strange and unknown a Thing must needs be very dark and perplexed: But we may be fully satisfied, it does by no Means imply an Impossibility: And, but that the Generality of People, who believe the Spirituality of the Soul, do notwithstanding retain several gross material Conceptions thereof, it would appear much easier in its Conception, than it does.

The very common Forms of Expression, which we make Use of concerning the Soul (when we consider them only according to the natural Sense of the Words, and not as metaphorically taken) sometimes breed no little Confusion. *The Seat of the Soul is in the Brain, or the Heart, or (as Mr. Hobbs says) in the Stomach. And a Man's Soul is still in his Body: it is by this Time got to Heaven, &c.* Men by being accustomed to these and the like Phrases, fanstie the Union of the Soul with the Body, to be like two material Substances joined together: And that the Soul is carried about with the Body, as a Nail drove into a Staff: And that it is subject to all the Laws of

local

local Motion, as Bodies are. Now this must induce a great Degree of Confusion in our Thoughts, not only with Relation to the Union of Soul and Body, but with Respect to all other Properties and Affections, that belong to the Soul.

Under the Influence of this Prejudice, Men are apt to run into a very perplexed Doubtfulness; how there should ever be such an Union between Body and Spirit; and how, upon every Motion of the Body, the Spirit should follow: How a Man should be able to be carried in a Ship or a Coach: And how it comes to pass, that, though the Body is forcibly carried, the Mind is not left behind. But all these puzzling Doubts arise, from a too gross Conception of the Nature of a spiritual Being, which having no Extension is not properly in Place, nor can have any local Motion properly so called; and yet we will conceive it to be in Place, and to move in Place just like corporeal Substances. Now I do not take that Notion of some of the Schoolmen, to be frivolous; that an Angel, or Spirit, can move *ab extremo ad extremum non pertransito medio*, that is, in a Motion of the Length of the Line  $\frac{a}{A} \frac{a}{B} \frac{a}{C}$ ; a Spirit can move from the Point A to C, without going thro' the Point B, or any other of the intermediate Spaces. For, when Body moves through the Space, it is continued in a Succession of momentary Existences, through all the Points A *aaa*, &c. till it comes to C. But if you will suppose a Spirit to move (though to use that Word is an improper Way of Expression) from A to C, it has no Manner of Existence during that Action in B, or any other Place between A or C: But exists one Moment in A, and the next in C. So that were a Soul this Moment separated from a Body in this Earth of ours, it might be joined the next Moment to a Body, in the Extremities of the material World; which is at such a prodigious Distance from the Earth, that a Canon-Ball shot from hence, and going thither with a constant Degree of Velocity, would be perhaps  
 S 4 a thou-

a thousand Ages agoing. For Body being a quantitative or extended Thing, it must necessarily observe the Laws of local Motion, and take a great Time in moving to such distant Terms, between which there is such a vast Quantity of Bulk intervening: All which must be passed over, Point by Point, before the End of the Motion can be arrived at. But for a Soul which has nothing in it quantitative or extended, and of which we can have no other Notion, but that it is cogitative or rational; this is there, where-ever it thinks or reasons; And were not my Soul tied to my Body, by Laws of vital Union for the Information of it, which Body is in Place; I say, if it were not for this natural Tie, whenever my Soul thinks of a fixed Star, it is as much in that fixed Star, as it is in *London*. Though, properly speaking, a Spirit cannot be present to any Thing but to God, and to it self; but all the Presentialness it can have with Body, is either by Thoughts of it, or by exercising a Power or Energy upon it.

Which last Observation if we considered exactly, we should have yet clearer Notions of the Union of the Soul with the Body, in this World. For we must not think, that this Union is like that of two Bodies, which lie close to one another as two Planks in a Ship, or two Stones in a Wall; or that they are, as it were, incorporated together, like two different Liquors. For in both the first and last Instance, there is nothing but mere Juxta-position, or Parts lying so close as to touch one another. But Soul and Body cannot touch: for whatever is touchable has Parts, which the Soul has not. Upon the Whole therefore, the Union of the Soul with the Body, is a Union of Action with Passion, that is, an Union of an active spiritual Being with the sluggish passive one of Matter; the first exercising a Command, or Energy, or Power over the latter, according to such Laws, and according to such Limits and Duration, as the All-wise Creator does think fit. So that it is not proper to say, that the Soul is in the Body, or in any particular



particular Part of the Body, any farther, than that the Soul exercises its Energy visibly therein

*Esti.* I begin to be tired with philosophical Reasoning, which may serve to please some fine-spun platonical Brains: But I am, *Philologus*, for plain Sense of the Growth of old *England*; and therefore I shall leave you, and your Heathen Sages, to dispute over these unintelligible Points among your selves. And therefore I will, throughout the remaining Part of our Debate, draw Arguments chiefly from the holy Scriptures. And in the first Place it is Demonstration against your Notion of an immaterial immortal Soul, \* *That the Word Soul in Scripture, besides its Signification of Person, Gen. xii. 5. xiv. 27. Exod. xii. 16. Lev. xvii. 10. of self, Jos. xxiii. 11. Jer. xxxvii. 9. of Passions, Prov. xvi. 32. Psal. cvii. 18. signifies most commonly Life, Gen. i. 20, and 30. And so xii. 10.* In whose Hand is the Soul or Life of every living Thing, and the Breath of all Mankind. Let my Soul die the Death of the righteous: and let the End of my Life be like his. So *Abigail* says to *David*, Yet a Man is risen to pursue thee, and seek thy Soul, &c. Nor are these Significations of the Word Soul, less frequent in the New Testament. What is a Man profited, if he gain the whole World and lose his own Soul? Or what shall he give in Exchange for his Soul? *which is no more than nothing can be a Compensation for the Loss of his Life as the Context manifestly explains it, whosoever will save his Life shall lose it. † And this is the ordinary Signification of the Word Nepheih in Hebrew, as may be evinced from the forecited Places of the old Testament. This is likewise the Signification of the Word ψυχή in the Greek Tongue, as ὡς ψυχῆς κινδυνεύειν; To be in Danger of Life, Thucyd. ψυχὴ τῶν ὁστρεῶν, Lucian. And it is just the same with Anima in the Latin Tongue, Animam debet, says Terence, of a Man so far in Debt, that nothing but his Life can make Compensation.* Now

‡ Pag. 178, & 193.

† Pag. 199, 200, &c.

since this is the Meaning of the Word Soul in all Languages, it is very strange, \* that such a Doctrine, as you hold of the Soul should be scattered abroad among the Christian World, whereas the Words immortal Soul, or Soul that never dies, do not so much as once occur in the whole Scripture; Nay the Words Salvation of Souls is mentioned but in one Place, over all † the Old and New Testament, as 1 *Pet.* i. 9. and there it only denotes Persons or their Lives to be delivered from Persecution. To this I add another Observation, that where our Saviour or the Apostles raised any Person from the Dead, they never commanded the Soul to return back to the Body of the Deceased, but always used such Expressions as signified, Thou dead Person live again; or what is tantamount, as *Damsel arise, Mar.* v. 41. *Young Man, arise, Luk.* vii. 14.

But if the Soul be such an intelligent Being it is strange, that in some † Cases it should not be able to return from the Dead. But to assert any Thing of this is Popish Fable, and advantageous Fiction. *For the living know that they shall die, but the dead know not any thing, Eccl.* ix. 5. *Man's Breath goeth forth, he returneth to the Earth, and then all his Thoughts perish, Psal.* cxlvi. 4. *The dead praise not the Lord, nor any that go down into silence. Psal.* cxv. 17. From all which I think I have sufficiently proved, that by Life and Soul in Scripture are meant one and the same Thing, and consequently the Notion of a Spiritual Immortal Substance, in Man, is erroneous.

*Phil.* I find, *Estibius*, 'tis Time to look to our selves now; since you play your Batteries thick upon us from all Quarters. And here indeed lies the main Strength of your Cause, and if this fail you, I do not think you have such promising Hopes of Victory, as your Friends could wish you. And therefore I desire you would be pleased to take Notice,

\* Pag. 184.

† Pag. 185.

\* Pag. 208.

I. That though the Word *Nepheſh*, which ſignifies *Soul* in Scripture, does ſignify very frequently Life, yet this does not neceſſarily conclude, but that it may ſignifie that governing Principle in Man contradistinguished from the Body, which we commonly call by the Name of Soul; and which alſo we aſſert to be an Immaterial and Immortal Being. The Hebrew Language as every one knows, is a Tongue which labours under a very great Poverty of Words, and therefore the Writers in it are forced to give to a great many Words a different Signification; whereas ſometimes there is but a ſmall Analogy to give Countenance to ſuch a Tranſlation, from the Primitive Signification. And I believe, *Eſtibus*, that you are ſo far in the right, when you ſay, that the Word *Nepheſh* does ſignify in its Primitive Senſe, *Breath* or *Life*; as being derived from the Hebrew Verb, *Naphaſh*, which ſignifies *Spiravit*. But it moreover ſignifies an individual Perſon; the human Soul with the Will and Affections; as alſo a dead Body. Now what Reaſon have you, *Eſtibus*, to ſingle out one of theſe Significations, and to aſſert this to be the true Senſe of the Word *Nepheſh*, to the Excluſion of all the reſt? There is nothing can countenance you in this Fancy, but only it comes in very ſeaſonably to the Relief of your Hypotheſis, tho' it be not ſo agreeable to Truth. A Man might, by the ſame way of arguing, prove that there was no living Thing in all the World, becauſe the Word *Nepheſh*, in Scripture, is ſo frequently uſed to ſignifie a dead Body. So that by as good a flight of Hand, as you metamorphize all Mankind into Machines and Clockwork, I could turn them into Corſes and Mummies. Upon my Word, *Eſtibus*, a Man would make pleaſant Work of it, if he ſhould, with a grave philoſophical Air, ſet himſelf to deduce Conſequences from ambiguous Words, ſuch as *Canis* or *Corpus* in Latin, or *Light* or *Green* in Engliſh; and without Diſtinction predicate the Properties belonging to one of the other. Thus a Man might prove a Maſtiff to be a Fiſh, and a new Cheeſe to be a Tanſy.

But

*The Soul in Scripture ſignifies Life, no Argument for the Materiality of the Soul.*

But this would serve to no other Use, but to make University Youngsters gape at one, and to tell the World, what a mighty Proficiency a Head well cultivated by Logick can arrive unto. And if your Critical Observations about the Word *Soul*, be not as wise a Performance, I leave the World to judge.

The Word  
Nephefsh in  
Scripture  
fignifies  
what we  
commonly  
call Soul.

II. I do assert, That the Word *Nephefsh*, or Soul, does frequently signifie the governing Principle in Man, contradistinguished from Body, and quite different from Life, and what we commonly call Soul. Now that we may clearly make it appear, that the Writers of the Holy Scriptures had the same Notion of the Soul that we have, and that they did not only mean Life by it, as your Fancy suggests; let us observe, that all the usual Affections which the nicest Philosophers have attributed to the Soul in their Books, are ascribed likewise to the Soul in the sacred Writings; and in all those Places the Soul, is called in the Hebrew, by the Word *Nephefsh*, and translated by the *Septuagint* ψυχη. 'Tis the *Nephefsh*, or Soul distinct from Body or Life, that *Understands*, and *Wills*, and *Joy*s, and *Grieves*: but to attribute these Affections to Life, will make Nonsense of all the Expressions. For how can Life understand, or Life will, or Life joy, or Life grieve? But to make your Error hereafter upon this Point wholly inexcusable, I will give my self the Trouble, to recount the principal Places in Scripture, where these Affections are attributed to the Soul, which 'tis impossible can ever be ascribed to Life.

*Understanding* is attributed to the Soul, Prov. xix. 2. *That the Soul be without Knowledge is not good. How long shall I take Counsel in my Soul?* Psal. xiii. 2. So is *Volition* or *Will* ascribed to the Soul. *The Lord hath commanded thee to keep, and do these Statutes with all thy Soul*, Deut. xxvi. 16. *Take heed to serve him with all your Heart and with all your Soul*, Jos. xxii. 5. *And thou, Solomon, my Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect Heart,*  
Ubenephefsh

Ubenepheſh Chaphetſa, *and a willing Mind*, which the *Septuagint* do tranſlate, *ψυχὴ θελήσασα.* 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

So likewise is the Paſſion of *Deſiring* given in Scripture to the Soul. *Whatſoever thy Soul luſteth or longeth after*, Deut. xii. 20. *My Soul thirſteth for the living God*, Pf. xlii. 2. So is that of *Averſation*, *My Soul is weary of Life*, Job x. 1. *My Soul refuseth to be comforted*, Pfal. lxxvii. 2. And thus *Joy* is aſcribed to the Soul. *My Soul ſhall be joyful in the Lord*, Pfal. xxxv. 9. *My Soul ſhall be joyful in my God*, If. lxi. 10. And ſo is *Grief*. *We ſaw the Anguiſh of his Soul*, Gen. xlii. 21. *Ye ſhall afflict your Souls*, Lev. xvi. 29. *His Soul within him ſhall mourn*, Job xiv. 22. *My Soul is exceeding ſorrowful*. Mat. xxvi. 28. Now, if all theſe are Affections, which do properly belong to the Soul, and cannot be attributed to Life: Then that Propoſition which you aſſert is falſe, *That it is a Doctrin moſt conſonant to the whole Tenor of the Holy Scriptures, That human Soul and Life are the ſame Thing.*

I have one or two Remarks to make farther; before I let you go from this Point. Now I deſire to know, what Senſe you can make of thoſe Texts of Scripture, which aſcribe Sin to the Soul, if Life and Soul be the ſame Thing. *Shall I give my firſt-born for my Tranſgreſſion, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul?* Mic. vi. 7. But how can Life with any tolerable Propriety be ſaid to ſin? For Sin is only incident to a reaſonable Being; but Life, according to you, is nothing elſe but organical Contexture continued in Motion. But this Text of Scripture attributes Sin to a Principle intirely diſtinct from this organized Body, *viz.* to the Soul: which the Prophet here as nicely diſtinguiſhes from the Body, as any of the *Ethnick* Philoſophers, whoſe Notion you will have this to be. Nay, I will truſt it to the Judgment of any reaſonable Man in the World, if he does not think, upon reading theſe Words, that Prophet who wrote them, had not a Notion of the Diſtinction between Soul and Body, by each of which there were perfectly different Effects produced: The *Fruit*  
of

of the *Body* were Children, and *Sin* was the Produce of a degenerate Soul.

Another Thing I shall observe is this, That when the Word *Nephefch*, in Scripture, has a Signification different from what we understand Soul, in our Language, this very Difference of Signification does imply the Existence of such a Soul, or Being, distinct from the Body, which you make it your Business to impugn: And consequently those Proofs, which you bring for the Support of your Doctrine, destroy it. 'Tis plain, that the Word Soul does sometimes signifie *Self* in Scripture, *Defile not your selves or Souls with any Manner of creeping thing*, Lev. xi. 44. Hab. ii. 16. But there would be no Reason, why Soul should signifie *Self* in Hebrew, if the Jews did not think, that the Soul was the only Principle of Individuation, and made a Man that *self-same*, that he is. But if the Jews retained the Notion, which you Materialists follow, that one Man is distinguished from another, only by the different Parts of Matter, which go into their Composition, and by the different Configuration and Organization of them; It would have been a Jest for to call *Self* by the Name of *Soul*, when Selfness was only occasioned by Body. If the Jews, whilst they were forming their Language, had been of this Mind, they would rather have adapted their Forms of Speech to more corporeal Conceptions, and have expressed Selfness or Individuation by something of Body, as our *Saxon* Predecessors did in coining our Tongue, who had no Revelation to assist them, and no other Philosophy than what their Senses allowed them. Upon this Supposition they would not have said a *Soul*, *this Soul*, &c. but a *Body*, *some Body*, *no Body*, to denote Individuation.

And so again, whereas the Jews in their Census's, reckoned by the Souls, as *all the Souls* (the Persons) *were threescore and six*, Gen. xlvi. 26. if they had not thought Man compounded of a Body, and a reasonable Soul, whereof the Soul was the most worthy Part; they would have said as the *Romans* do, not so many Souls,

Souls, but *tot Capita censabantur in Civitate*. There were so many Heads, or Bodies, in the Commonwealth.

I shall make one more Remark, which is this, That, as for the other Signification of the Word *Nephefch*, which sometimes also denotes a *dead Body*, this Signification of the Word does manifestly imply, That the Jews had a Notion, not only of the Soul's being distinct from the Body, but that it did separately exist after its Dissolution from the Body. For unless they fancied, that there was a Soul always hovering about a Man's dead Body, they would never have called, that dead Body a Soul. It should seem most probable, That there was an Opinion among the Jews as among other People, that the Soul of every deceased Person, had for a Time, an hankering after the Body, and would endeavour to be as near it, as it could, and that whilst the Body was above Ground, the Soul would be so too: And therefore they were of Opinion, that the Soul could never be perfectly quiet, till the Body was buried. Now this burying of the Body was called, the Burial of the *Soul*, as is plain from that of *Virgil*.

-----*Animamq; sepulchro*  
*Condimus*-----

It being a common Opinion among the Heathen, that the Souls were not at rest, if their Bodies lay unburied: as appears by the Complaints of *Elpenor* in *Hommer's Odyssey*, *Lib. 11.* and of *Palinurus* in *Virgil's Æneis*, *Lib. 6.* Now though I will not presume, positively to fix this Opinion upon the Jewish Nation; yet, unless we will suppose, that the separate Soul had some Relation more than ordinary to the Corps before its Burial, there can be no Reason assigned, why the touching a dead Body, should be said to be defiled by a *Soul*.

III. Neither is your Assertion without just Exception, when you say, that the Soul is not, in any Part of Scripture, said to be Immortal.

Truth

*Immortality of the Soul, the plain Doctrine of Scripture*

Truth be not laid down in exprefs Terms, yet there are many Texts which do unexceptionably imply the fame Truth. *As, The Spirit returns to God that gave it, Eccl. xii. 7. Fear not thofe which kill the Body, but cannot kill the Soul, Mat. x. 28. To day shalt thou be with me in Paradifè, Luk. xxiii. 43. Whilst we are at home in the Body, we are abfent from the Lord, and we are willing rather to be abfent from the Body, and be prefent with the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 6. Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord, for they reft from their Labours, Rev. xiv. 13. I pray God that your whole Spirit, Soul and Body be preferved blamelefs unto the Coming of our Lord Jefus Chrift, 1. Cor. v. 23.* Now thefe, and fome other Texts which might be farther urged for this Purpofe, do as plainly evince, that the Doctrinè of the Soul's Immortality (as we hold it) was believed by thefe Writers, as if they had fet down, *ANIMA EST IMMORTALIS*, in Capital Letters in a Hundred Places. But if our Conference be not interrupted, thefe Texts fhall farther be infifted upon, and you fhall have a fair Hearing to any Objections, which you can make againft them.

*Salvation  
of Souls  
mentioned  
more than  
once in  
Scripture.*

IV. You urge it as another Objection againft our Doctrinè, that Salvation of Souls is mentioned but in one Place, of all the Old and New Testament, and then it fignifies Deliverance from Perfecution. *1 Pet. i. 9. Receiving the End of your Faith, even the Salvation of your Souls.* And fupposing this to be true, yet this one plain Text of Scripture is enough to ruin your whole Hypothefis. For 'tis plain from hence, that there is a Salvation of Men's Souls; and if Men's Souls be faved, then there is not only a Salvation of Men's Bodies at the Refurrection; and there is a great Danger, that the Souls may fall into, without any Confideration of the Body. And the Apoftle calls this the Salvation of Souls; becaufe Souls are liable to fall into a State of Punifhment, before the Bodies of Men do. But pray let us confider, a little, this temporal Punifhment which you fay, that the Apoftle, only in this Place, fpeaks of, a  
Delive-



Deliverance from. But, this, I must needs say, *Esti-  
bins*, is the wildest Notion that ever was advanced. For  
the very first Words of the Text do eternally silence  
all that you have to say upon that Head. *Receiving  
the End of your Faith, even the Salvation of your Souls.*  
Now could it ever enter into any one's Head to imagine,  
that a Deliverance from Persecution was the End of the  
Christian Faith. Did the Christians, by embracing  
their Religion, think you, propose no other End to  
themselves than this? This was a strange Motive indeed,  
to take up a New Religion upon. If this was all they  
aimed at; could they not better have avoided Persecuti-  
on, by not being Christians at all? But it makes one  
ashamed, to set one's self seriously to answer such a Jest  
of an Argument, Which but that you talk it with a  
grave Air, I should only imagine you designed to  
banter us with it.

But let me tell you, Sir, that though the Salvation  
of Souls, in those very Terms, be expressed but once;  
there are other Places which make out the very same  
Doctrine clearly, in other Words. For when the Apo-  
stle says, *I would gladly be spent for your Souls*, 2 Cor. xii.  
15. what can be meant otherways, than that he would  
wear out his Life for the Salvation of the Souls of his  
Christian Brethren? Again, the Apostle writes, *Heb. xiii.  
17. Obey them that have the Rule over you, and sub-  
mit your selves, for they watch for your Souls.* The  
Meaning can only be, that they must follow the Advice  
of their Pastors, who are encharged with the Instructi-  
on of them, in Order to the Salvation of their Souls.  
And when Christ is called the *Shepherd and Bishop of our  
Souls*, 1 Pet. ii. 25. I cannot imagine any Sense can be  
given of that Expression, but that he does, by his Al-  
mighty Power, inspect and overlook us, in Order to the  
Salvation of our Souls. And the same Apostle again,  
1 Pet. iv. 19. *Wherefore let them that suffer accord-  
ing to the Will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls,  
to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* By  
which can be understood nothing else, but that the suf-  
fering

fering Christians should not repine at what they underwent; but, though they suffered Death it self, they should trust their Souls with an All-gracious God, who would keep, and take Care of them, with alike Kindness, as he first created them. I have one Text more which I shall urge; which though it has not in it the very numerical Words, *Salvation of Souls*, yet I think it comes as nigh it, as you can well desire, *Receive with Meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your Souls*, Jam. i. 21. And I do not suppose, that you will say there is any material Difference, between *σωτηρία ψυχῶν*, and *σῶσαι ψυχὰς*. Now upon the View of all this together, do you imagine, that the Holy Writers of these inspired Books, would have shewed such high Regard to the Souls of Men, as to talk so much of the Care and Edification, and Salvation of them; if the Soul had been only a little Blast of Wind or Motion, which only kept the Body alive and sweet, whilst it lasted here, and then dispersed or sank into nothing at the Dissolution of it. If the Soul indeed were an immortal Substance, it would deserve such high Respects as are here vouchsafed it; but if it be that little Thing, which you make of it, I am sure all these Passages of Scripture are in the highest Degree unaccountable.

*Account of  
our Saviour's  
Expressions  
upon his  
raising the  
Dead.*

V. As to the other Observation, That our Saviour, when he raised any dead Person, did not say, *Soul, return back again*, but, *Young Man, arise*, &c. I can't tell, *Estibius*, what you would have by this; unless you would have our Saviour to be recorded to have said all Things that could be said; and then without a Figure, the World would not be able to contain the Books that should be written of him. Dr. *Lightfoot* has given a not improbable Conjecture, why our Saviour used the Word *arise* in these Places. And that is; our Saviour in these Instances, as in many other, did accommodate himself to the common Usages of the Jews, in his Time; and They, when they ministred Physick to any sick Person, were wont

wont to say, *Arise from thy Disease*. Lightf. Hor. Hebr. in *Mar. V.* But I rather choose to think, that our Saviour by using the Word *arise*, would demonstrate, not only that the Person was really dead, and stood as much in Need of a Resurrection as those that have lain many Years in their Graves, but would shew by this the Omnipotent Power inherent in him, by which at the least Word of his Command he could restore Life to the Dead.

VI. But you say, That if Souls are intelligent Beings in another State, it is strange they should not, sometime or other, give us an Account of that World. Now if I should entertain you, *Estibius*, with some Relations, which are credibly attested upon this Head; You, I am sure, would afford very little Belief to them, and therefore I shall spare my self that Trouble. But however it is a sufficient Answer to your Objection; That upon Supposition, that Souls do exist in a separate State, they are under some Laws and Restrictions which they cannot break through, without some special Licence and Authority. For it is not improbable, that there are several Bars hid upon the Activity of Spirits in the invisible World, which they cannot without Permission pass: So that for Spirits, upon all Occasions, to assume Bodies, and to come, and converse in this World, is as difficult as for me to put on Wings, and to flie to the Planets *Jupiter*, or *Saturn*, whenever I please. But, as for Information concerning another State, there is sufficient Light, as to all those Matters, afforded us in God's Word already: And our blessed Saviour, long ago, gave an Answer, which one would have thought, should for ever have silenced the Impertinency of such Arguments: *If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one arose from the Dead.*

*Why Ghosts  
do not p-  
pear fre-  
quently and  
give an Ac-  
count of the  
other world.*

Esti. \* *Another Grand Argument to prove the Notion of a Spiritual Immortal Substance erroneous, may be*

\* Pag. 213.

drawn from the Fall of Man, suppose him to be really compounded of Soul and Body, as the Psychomuthists imagine: which thus I prove.

*What was to be Immortal in a State of Innocence, became Mortal by Transgression;*

*But whole Man was to have been Immortal in a State of Innocence, Ergo, Whole Man became Mortal by Transgression.*

*That whole Man became Mortal by Transgression, is proved by the Curse denounced on Adam for his Transgression, for eating the forbidden Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge; says God Almighty to Adam, thou shalt not eat, for in the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, i. e. thou shalt wholly become Mortal; which Decree of God was finished, Gen. iii. 19. Out of dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. I say, the whole Man became Mortal; for if the Body only by the Curse became Mortal, then the Bodies only of the Reprobate, not Souls, can be liable to Damnation.*

*Again, If nothing died but Man's Body, the Denunciation of the Curse was but a meer Bugbear, and indeed no Curse at all; for he that had an Immaterial Self-Existent and Immortal Being, might in Respect of the Nature of the Thing, enjoy more Perfection of Pleasure when disunited, than when united to the Body; and consequently the Curse denounced would have been a Blessing, because it had bereft him of that Clog, which was an Obstruction or Hindrance to the full and entire Enjoyment of Pleasures, as the Wise Man observes: The Corruptible Body presseth down the Soul, and the Earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind, that museth upon many Things, Wisd. ix. 15.*

*Phil.* I will dispatch all the Branches of your Objection upon this Head, with what Brevity I can.

*Distinction  
between  
spiritual  
and natu-  
ral Death.*

I. And in the first Place, I will venture to encounter with your Sylogistical Argument, which, though I'll warrant you design it for no less than Demonstration; yet I doubt not but to make it appear, to be but a very ordinary Fallacy. For either you your self  
mistake,

mistake, or you design to impose upon others, by the ambiguous Sense of the Word Mortality. For Mortality may be taken either in a spiritual, or a physical Sense. To be *spiritually Mortal*, which Death is only incident to the Soul, is to be excluded from the Presence of God, to be subject to his high Wrath and Displeasure, or to be liable to any other Torments or Vexation, which a Mind is capable of. This is properly the Death of a Soul; as the Life of it is its Presence with God, when it is cherished and enlivened by a constant View of his Wisdom and Purity, and by a Communication of his Goodness. But to be *physically Mortal*, is to have a Period of its Existence, and to be liable some Time or other to lose its Being. Now this physical Mortality we deny the Soul to be subject to. Now if you will allow Mortality in the first Sense, we will grant all that your Syllogism pretends to conclude, *viz.* that *whole Man became Mortal by Transgression*. For his Body became liable to Corruption, and to have the noble Contexture of it destroyed, which was the proper Death for a Body to undergo. And so likewise his Soul became Mortal, in the only Sense that a Soul can die: it was abandoned by the Favour of God, and shut out from his Presence for ever, and subject to all other Penalties, which an offended God should think fit to lay upon it: And this Death both of Body and Soul, must without Remedy have continued upon all the Posterity of fallen Man, unless the Mediation of the second Covenant had took Place: But in This, upon the Performance of the Conditions therein specified, Mankind is restored to its original Immortality; the Soul to be received at the Dissolution of the Body into God's Presence, and both Soul and Body, at the Resurrection, to begin again an immortal Life. This is the Catholick Doctrine, and This has been in all Ages, the best of them I am sure, the Belief of Christ's Flock. This Belief fits very easy in a Man's Mind, gives him very great and just Notions of God's Wisdom and Mercy, and chalks out as ready a Way for Salvation, as

any other can do : And therefore I would advise you, *Estibius*, ev'n to take up with the good old Faith again, and leave off any wild Opinions, which your philosophical *Ergo's* have led you to : For these will only draw you in successively to a new Set of Errors, as you discover the former ; till at last you take your Farewel of all Religion.

*Invalidity  
of the Ar-  
gument  
from Repro-  
bates, &c.*

II. But you urge farther, *If the Body by the Curse only became Mortal, then the Bodies only, not the Souls of the Reprobate, can be liable to Damnation.* But this Assertion is owing to your last Mistake, in not considering the true Notion of the Soul's Spiritual Death. For we own that Reprobates both Body and Soul are subject to Death, their Bodies to temporal Death ; and after the Resurrection, both Body and Soul to eternal.

*To be freed  
from the  
Body, no  
Kinaneſs to  
wicked  
Souls.*

III. As for the latter Part of your Objection, That in Case the Soul were immortal, Death would be so far from a Punishment, that it would be a Favour to it to be freed from the Clog of the Body. I answer, that Temporal Death is not a Punishment to a virtuous Soul ; for the Happiness, which such blessed Spirits enjoy, is an Over-Compensation for the Loss of Animal Life, though attended with the greatest Conveniencies. But then it is the greatest of Punishments to a wicked one : For it deprives them of all the Comforts they shall ever enjoy, and hurries them away to a State, where they shall be bereft of the Presence of God, and be forced to live in the blackest Despair and Anguish, and in the saddest Expectation of a merciless Doom, hereafter to be inflicted on them. And let me tell you, Sir, that you do not take a Part in the best of Offices, when you say, the *Denunciation of the Curse is a mere Bugbear* to such Persons : For that intermediate State of wicked Men, without Regard to the eternal Death which follows, is so uncomfortable a Condition of Being, that one would rather forego all the Pleasures of this Life, than to fall into it. For, as the Apostle well concludes, that *to be with Christ is better* than to live in  
this

this World ; so to be without Christ, that is, to be abandoned by God, and all blessed Spirits, is such a lamentable Condition, that we are not able to conceive, and I pray God we may never experience.

It is sufficient, *Estibius*, that the Denunciation of the Curse should execute its Effect upon wicked Persons only ; for, by Virtue of Christ's Mediation, the Sting of Death is taken out, with Relation to good Christians : Which is the Occasion of that Noble Exultation of *St. Paul*. *O Death ! where is thy Sting ? O Grave ! where is thy Victory ? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law. But Thanks be to God who giveth us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* But the Souls of wicked Men have no Reason to be raised into such a Transport, upon the Thoughts of their Dissolution.

*Esti.* \* *Another Argument is drawn from the Nature of the Resurrection, which this Doctrine of an Immortal, Immaterial, Self-subsisting Being after Death seems very much to perplex, if not fundamentally to subvert.*

*If the Soul of Man as distinct from the Body be the only Cause of Life, in Material Man, and distinct from it ; then the Body is only a pure passive Lump and Instrument of the Soul, even whilst it is conceived to live, and consequently ought not to suffer for the Sins Man commits.*

† *Again the Apostle says, We shall all be changed, in a Moment, in the twinkling of an Eye, at the last Trump, &c. Where it is very observable here, and in the whole Course of his Writing, he says, We, not our Bodies, who cannot be called We, as, We shall not all sleep, We shall be raised Incorruptible, and, We shall be changed ; which could not be true, were the Soul, our better Part, an Incorruptible, Immortal Being already, for that has no Change at all, but retains its first Immortal Nature.*

‡ *Add to this, That the End of the Resurrection, which is the bringing Men to account for their Deeds done in*

\* Pag. 217.

† Pag. 222.

‡ *ibid.*

*the Flesh, would seem vain and needless. For if the Souls of Good Men when they died, went immediately to Heaven, and the Souls of the Wicked immediately to Hell; what Need of a general Day of Judgment, to call Men to account for their Actions? If they are in Heaven already, they have their ultimate End of Reward; if in Hell, their Punishment; a Revocation from either of which is granted to be neither probable nor possible. For to say, the Body added to the Soul after the Resurrection augments Happiness or Misery, I look upon such Doctrine to be precarious, and founded only on irrational Conjecture.*

*And lastly, If the Soul were in a State of Happiness or Misery, as soon as separated from the Body, it must be prejudged before a Resurrection, which is contrary to the whole Tenure of Scripture, 1 Cor. iv. 5. Rom. xiv. 10. Jude 14, 15. † I know some Divines urge the Necessity of a general Judgment, notwithstanding Mens being glorified or condemned before-hand, viz. That Sinners may in the Face of the World be convict, and brought to publick Shame for their Offences; and that the Righteous may in like Manner be publickly commended and rewarded; which is only a pretty Notion to please vulgar Heads, and cozen a rustick Understanding into the Obedience of Religion: But if we scan the Depth of it, there is no Weight in it. For we see by common Observation \* with what Impudence, and strange Effrontery many Criminals bear their Sufferings; and therefore sure a despairing reprobate damn'd Sinner can have but little Shame on him that Day.*

*Phil.* You have advanced nothing upon this Head, but what will admit of a very easy Reply; and methinks there appears so little Strength in these Arguments, that you must before-hand have very good Dispositions to this Cause, if they can have any Manner of Influence upon You your self.

*No Injustice for the Body, to suffer, tho' 'tis the Soul that sins* I. As to the Injustice of the Body's suffering, when 'tis the Soul according to us, that sins; That is too

† Pag. 225.

\* Pag. 226.



unphilosophical to insist upon. For I will grant readily, with you, that 'tis the Soul, properly speaking, which sins; but then on the other Side, I say, that 'tis the Soul only that suffers too. For as Body *quà* Body cannot sin, so likewise, Body *quà* Body cannot suffer. If my Finger be bruised or cut off, 'tis not my Finger that suffers, but I that suffer by the Hurt or Loss of my Finger: Now that I which suffers, is not Finger, or Leg, or Arm, or Head; but that Principle I find in me, which understands, and wills, and perceives. Now if there were not this understanding perceptive Principle in me, That Part of the Body might be cut, and mangled a thousand Times over, and no Pain produced. Therefore, though 'tis the Soul that sins, and afterwards suffers in the Body, it can be no Injustice to the Body; because the Body cannot suffer; and therefore your Supposition is absurd, which supposes the Body to suffer. For there is a great Deal of Difference between the Body's suffering, and the Soul's suffering, by Means of the Body: For though Body cannot suffer, yet the Soul is capable of Suffering diverse Ways. The Soul, as Soul, may suffer by terrible and despairing Thoughts, and Reflections upon its own ill State; but then all this Suffering is such as is agreeable to a Spiritual Being, without any sensible Pain. But to make the Soul capable of suffering Pain of Sense, or Pain from the Impression of outward Objects, it is necessary, that the Soul should be joined to Body. But then still 'tis the Soul that suffers the Pain, which by Virtue of the Body is convey'd to it: And 'tis not the Body which is pained, but the Soul is pained bodily. And the Case is something the same, as if a Man steals away my Money, and applies 'it, it may be, to worse Uses than I designed it; it is not my Money that suffers, but I that suffer by my Money. Now Man's Body being the most dear and intimate of Possessions, and being united to him by a vital Union, this occasions Pain in the Mind more smartly, and more frequently than any thing else, that bears a more distant Relation to it. But still 'tis no  
more

more the Body that suffers by having the Organization of it discomposed by a Cut or a Blow, than my Money suffers by the foresaid Misapplication.

*That 'tis said, We shall be changed, no Argument of the Soul's Mortality.*

II. Neither is it any Argument against the Immortality of the Soul, that the Apostle says, *We that are alive shall be changed, we shall be caught up, &c.* For what more Impropriety is there in this if the Soul be Immortal, than if it were Mortal? But you say an Immortal Soul cannot be changed; very good! No more it can't as to its Immortality, but it may as to its other Qualifications; It may be more good, more holy, more disposed, and inclined to God; it may have its Knowledge more improved, and all its Appetites, and Passions more at its Command. So that, if the Soul be only changed in this Sense at the Resurrection, it is sufficient to justify the Propriety of the Apostle's Expression, *We shall all be changed.* But it is evident from *Revelation*, that we shall be greatly changed with Relation to our Bodies, for this *corruptible Body shall put on Incorruption.* For as it is at present composed of corruptible Principles, such as are subject to decay, and to be worn out in Length of Time, it shall then be made up of such Parts, which tho' perhaps as nimble as the Light, shall be more lasting than the most solid Adamant. Now we are made up of Parts, which have Relation chiefly to the maintaining and continuing animal Life; but 'tis most probable, that these Parts shall be vastly altered, when we shall no longer eat or drink, or marry, or be given in Marriage. Now whereas the Bodies of Men are at the Resurrection to be so much changed, from what they are in this World; the Apostle does with very great Propriety say, *We shall all be changed;* although the Soul did receive no Manner of Alteration at all. For a Man may as well be said to be changed, with Relation to his Body, as to his Soul.

*Happiness of the Soul improved after the Resurrection.*

III. But I assert farther, in Answer to what you have advanced in this Objection, that the Happiness of Souls is improved at the Resurrection beyond what it was in the State of Separation: So that what you say is

not

not well grounded; that if they are in Heaven already, they have their ultimate End of Reward. For the whole Tenor of the Scripture-Language shews, That there is a great Difference between the Satisfactions in these two States. The first is called a Being with Christ, a Being with the Lord, a Sleeping, a Rest from our Labours: But the Phrase of the Holy Scriptures is very much heightned, when they come to speak of the Joys, which the Soul and Body shall partake of, after their Re-union at the Resurrection. For this State of Bliss is described by *Kingdoms and Crowns, and a House eternal in the Heavens; Joys, which neither Eye hath seen, nor Ear hath heard, neither hath it entred into the Heart of Man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him.* And 'tis upon this Account, that our Church makes Use of this Expression, in her Office for the Burial of the Dead. *Beseeching thee of thy Goodness, shortly to accomplish the Number of thine Elect, and to hasten thy Kingdom; that we, and all those that are departed in the true Faith of thy holy Name, may have our perfect Consummation and Bliss, both in Body and Soul, in thy eternal and everlasting Glory.*

IV. But you say, that this Doctrine of ours concerning the separate State of the Soul, does imply there are two Judgments; which you think is not only inconsistent with it self, but is contrary to the Tenor of the Holy Scriptures. And to support this your Opinion, you bring several Texts out of the New Testament. The first is, *1 Cor. iv. 5. Therefore judge nothing before the Time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden Works of Darknes, and will make manifest the Counsels of Hearts, and then every Man shall have Praise of God.* But this Text does by no Means invalidate the Doctrine of the Soul's going to a Place of Joy or Sorrow, before the general Resurrection. The Meaning of it is, the Apostle having been calumniated by some of the Judaizers, for having too great a Regard to the *Gentiles*, and shewing the Disanulment of the Ceremonial Law by the Death of Christ; he does very mildly reprehend them,

*Argument drawn from the Absurdity of two Judgments. answered.*

them, for the Injustice of such Censures; and tells them, that in such a disputable Case, in which there might be good Men of both Persuasions, they should not judge too rashly, but leave the Determination thereof to the Day of Judgment: And then it shall be declared, who is in the Right. And if he were such an ill Man as some represented him, his *hidden Works of Darknes should be made manifest*: But if he appeared to be a good and sincere Man, he *should have Praise of God*. And so in the other Texts out of the *Romans*, the Apostle argues against rash judging, by an Argument drawn from the same Topick. *But why dost thou judge thy Brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy Brother?* For we shall all stand before the *Judgment-Seat of Christ*. And as for the Text which you quote out of *St. Jude*. *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his Saints: To execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly Deeds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of their hard Speeches, which ungodly Sinners have spoken against him,* Jud. 14. This shews an ancient Prophecie or Tradition, of the Jewish Church, that there would be a general Judgment of all Men, whether good or bad; for the Manifestation of God's Justice, and for the rewarding every one according to his Works. But this does not evince, That in the mean Time, good or bad Souls should not be in a different Condition of Sorrow or Happiness. For, as we do not suppose that good Souls do arrive in that intermediate State to their full Completion of Bliss, so neither that bad Souls undergo their terrible Agonies, which they must submit to after the Resurrection. For in this Interim, the Souls of good or bad Persons do not perhaps enjoy or suffer more, than what the Tendency or Inclination of their Natures disposes them to. Good Souls, by their pious Dispositions towards God, do naturally receive the Comforts and Satisfactions of contemplating the Divine Nature, and adoring and imitating, according to their Capacities, his Excellencies: and (I doubt not) but God of his Goodness is inclined, with Regard to their earnest Thirst and Desire after Holiness and Di-

vine Truth, to afford Variety of Illuminations and Comforts, to support and entertain them till the joyful Resurrection comes. And besides, if there were nothing of all this, the very Reflection upon their well-spent Life, and their comfortable Assurance of their being Partakers hereafter of such inestimable Joys; That their State of Probation is over; That they are no longer in Hazard or Jeopardy of their Salvation; and That they are no more subject to Temptations, and in Danger to miscarry in their everlasting Welfare: This would create a very great Degree of heavenly Happiness; and there would be no Need of a particular Judgment or Discrimination of Souls to separate Conditions, to instate them in this Happiness. So on the other Side, wicked Souls have contracted such diabolical Dispositions, by their evil Actions in this World, that they must needs carry these Habits with them to the other, and their Spight and Malice, and Aversion to Goodness, together with their Want of Taste of all spiritual Refreshments, and their being deprived of all corporeal Pleasures, to which their Souls in their Lifetime have been only accustomed; this must make the Condition of such earthly Souls very uncomfortable; and it would be Hell enough for such Souls, to be under these sad Thoughts and Disappointments. But when they reflect upon that Happiness which they have forfeited, and those terrible Punishments which they are shortly like to be doomed to; there needs no positive Punishment to be added to them, to make their Condition as comfortless and miserable, as a Soul of it self can be capable of being.

If you ask, how such Souls can be assured of their everlasting Condition, before the General Judgment: I answer, that the very Company of the Spirits, which they must perceive conversant with them, will give too sad a Demonstration of what they must hereafter expect. For as good Souls are under the Conduct and enjoy the Society of good Angels and righteous Souls, so wicked ones have their Portion with the Devil and his Angels.

V. But before we dismiss this Head of Discourse, I must speak a Word or two to the Cavil you advance against the Reason,

*Reason of  
Divines for  
a general  
Judgment  
confirmed.*

Reason, which our Divines give for a general Judgment : *That Sinners in the Face of the World may be condemned, and brought to publick Shame.* And though you call this a pretty Device to cozen rustick Understandings ; yet it is such a Device, if you will call it so, that all Religion and Morality depends upon. For the only Demonstration that we have of a future State (I mean by natural Reason exclusive of Revelation) is, that it is but agreeable to the Justice of God, to make amends for the Suffering of good Men, and the Prosperity of bad. Now it is not reasonable, that God should set these Things in Ways, that Men who took Notice of the Inequality in this World can have no Knowledge of. For thus when God condemns Hypocrites to everlasting Punishment, for their vile Abuse of Religion to ungodly Purposes and selfish Designs ; it is but reasonable, that they who have been in this World deceived by their outward Form of Godliness, should be satisfied by seeing the secret Wickedness of their Heart displayed, that they do deserve the Punishment which is allotted them. And thus when God rewards some with eternal Happiness, who have lost their Reputation in the Eyes of this World by the Malice or Treachery of others ; unless God, at that great Publick Audit, does discover their Integrity publickly to the World, his Justice will not be displayed with that Exactness, as is requisite for the righteous God to have it.

Nay, I must add farther, that the very Thoughts of such a publick Shame, is such a killing Reflection to all Men of a generous Spirit, that it oftentimes gives a Check to wicked Inclinations, and does frequently occasion Men to avoid a Sin, which though they can do here in Privacy, yet they know that at the general Assize, it shall be published in such a numerous Assembly, among all the holy Angels of Heaven, before all the religious and pious Saints, before their highest and dearest Relations, before all those Myriads of Inhabitants of all Nations, of all Ages, before all the numerous Progeny of Mankind down from *Adam* to that very Day. Men that can tolerably bear their Faults being disclosed among

mong their own Companions, can never bear being exposed, in so publick a Manner.

And besides, if this had been a Fancy, that was calculated only to *cozen rustick Understandings*; I presume, our Saviour would not have urged it, as an Argument worthy of the Consideration of his Followers. *For there is nothing covered which shall not be revealed: neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in Darknes shall be heard in the Light: And that which ye have spoken in the Ear in Closets, shall be proclaimed upon the House Tops,* Luk. xii. 2, 3.

Neither is there any Force in what you assert, as to the Impudence of such reprobate Sinners, who it is not likely will have any Sense of Shame: For all the Effect, that God expects from their Shame in the other World is, that by the Fear of being so publickly exposed, they may be deterred from Sin in this World; and though their being exposed to Shame will not then tend to their bettering, their Day of Grace being past; yet it will mightily tend to the Manifestation of God's Justice, and to shew that he is righteous in all his Works.

*Esti. Another Argument which I shall make Use of to support the Doctrine of the Soul's Mortality, is drawn from the Nature of our Redemption, as thus, \* That which fell by Transgression required, by Christ's Blood, Redemption. But Adam or the whole Man fell by Transgression; Ergo, the whole Man by Christ's Blood, required Redemption. The Syllogism, I think perfect in every Part, and the minor Proposition proved already. For if the Body were only subject to Mortality, then not Adam, but a Part only of Adam became subject, and consequently, that Part only fell by the Transgression. Now what only fell required, or needed Redemption, Redemption being only necessary for Transgression. But this the whole Tenor of Scripture loudly declares against: For Christ is He who has delivered us from the Power of Darknes, and hath translated us into the Power of his dear Son, in whom we have Redemption thro' his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins, Col. i. 13. Where the Parti-*

\* Pag. 227; 228.

*cles US and WE cannot denote the Redemption of our Bodies only, but the whole Man, the whole Transgression, by him, that v. 18. was the first born from the Dead, who v. 21. reconciled us his Enemies to present us holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in his Sight: These Texts without troubling my self to cite infinite more, evidently shew, that Christ by his Death hath redeemed US, viz. the whole Man who sinned and required Redemption. This I think I need not urge with any more confirmatory Texts, the Scripture affording so many, and so numerous Arguments to prove this Point, viz. That the Sacrifice of Christ's Blood once shed, shall be an Atonement for the Sins of the Whole, and not a Part of Man.*

*Christ's Redemption extends both to Body and Soul.*

*Phil.* Indeed, *Estibius*, you might have spared your self the Trouble of this long Argument: For you have set your self to prove in many Words, that which I don't know any Body denies; or at least very few. For I know no Sect of Christians but the *Socinians*, that does not acknowledge, that Christ has redeemed our Souls as well as our Bodies: And they own a Sort of Redemption of our Souls too, that is from the Power and Slavery of Sin. But all orthodox Christians whatsoever do acknowledge, that by the Blood of Christ we are redeemed both Body and Soul: Or that the Effects of that meritorious Satisfaction do extend to our Souls, as well as our Bodies. Our Bodies are redeem'd, by that All-sufficient Sacrifice, from the Power of the Grave or temporal Death at the Resurrection: And our Souls from the Power of the Devil, and that spiritual Death, which Sin occasioned in the Rigor of the Law, by obtaining the easier Terms of Salvation in the Method of the second Covenant, which was obtained. and sealed by this Sacrifice of our Blessed Lord. So that I cannot tell what you would be at, *Estibius*, when you insist so much upon the Redemption of the whole Man: For we of the Church of *England*, I am sure, never talk of a Redemption of half Man. For we learn out of the Holy Scripture, that the Redemption purchased by the Blood of Christ extended to our Souls as well as Bodies. And this we take to be the Meaning of the



the Salvation of Souls mentioned therein, *Jam. i. 21.*  
*1 Pet. i. 9.* And accordingly at the Delivery of the Elements in the Administration of the Lord's Supper, We make Use of those Words, *The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for Thee, The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for Thee, preserve thee Body and Soul unto Eternal Life.* And this I think is sufficient to be said to this Objection, which tho' it be designed, I suppose, to attack the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, does rather defend it: But all the Mischief that lies in it is This, it seems to impute a Doctrine to Christianity, *viz.* that half Man only, *i. e.* Man's Body, is redeemed, which I say is a Doctrine, that not one Christian in a thousand will vouchsafe to own.

*Esti.* The last Argument, or rather Complex of Arguments being the several Texts of Scripture, comes next to be considered, whereby I will endeavour to prove the second Part of my general Proposition, That the Soul of Man or Life (as I call it) will not be renewed until the Day of the Resurrection. As first from *Job x. 18.* I should have been as if I never had been, and been carried from the Womb to the Grave. And so *Eccl. iii. 9.* *Is. xxviii. 18.* *Job. iii. 12. id. xiv. 7.* *Psal. lxxxix. 48, &c.*

*Phil.* But the Time wears so fast, that I cannot stay to give a distinct Answer to all these Texts of Scripture which you have misinterpreted, and given a wrong Sense to. For the Objections of the Materialists drawn from these Passages have been confuted an \* hundred Times over.

*Esti.* But in good Truth, *Philologus*, I don't love to be put off with such quick Answers: I find you have a Mind to shake off the Dispute, when 'tis like to go hard against you. But you shall hear, before we have done the Historical Account, which I have ready for you; to shew what a modern Invention the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality is; and how the World had been some Thousands of Years, before ever Men's Heads were

\* Vid. Calv.

filled with this Notion. \* Now I as to this Matter assert, that the Generality of the Jews, nay, I may say universally, were of Opinion, that Man would die, and never live again, especially the Sadducees, tho' some owned both Spirits and Angels. Thus upon our Saviour's Argument, that God was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; they seemed to be confounded and struck dumb, not thinking that Text related to the Resurrection of the Dead. And in the next Place I affirm, that whosoever he or they were, that first ascribed Immortality to the Soul of Man, † as conceived to be a Spiritual Substance united to his Body, I will not at present controvert, but only make this general Conclusion; That he was, and must be a Heathen, that first broached that Doctrine; and if the Ægyptians did it, as it is very probable they first did, they must either do it, by misconstruing the Books of Moses, and misinterpreting the Meaning of some Texts therein contained, or else out of a Bravado, to out-balance the Doctrine of Moses, as they imagined, by promising Blessings and Rewards in another Life to their Disciples, when as the Jews apprehended only Temporal Blessings to be their Reward in this present Life ‡ for their Vertues and Religion. From the Ægyptians, this Doctrine was carried to the Chaldeans, who added several other Whims to it, as the Notions of Supercelestial Intelligencies, irrational Souls, as is to be seen among the Remains of the Philosophy of that Country. The Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality being thus propagated in Egypt, Chaldæa, and it may be some other of those neighbouring Countries, the Greek Philosophers fetcht it thence. \*\* And the first that travelled for it, was Thales the Milesian, who taught it to his Scholars, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Pythagoras. Pythagoras cultivated this Doctrine further, having also travelled into Ægypt and Chaldæa, and learned the Mysteries of those Countries. \*† Socrates made no farther Advances in this Doctrine, than Pythagoras had done before, treading very near in the Steps of him, and the

\* Pag. 359. † Pag. 357. ‡ Pag. 361. \*\* Pag. 367.

\*† Pag. 380.

former Philosophers. But at length this Doctrine was wrought up to its highest Pitch by Plato, who added to it *Præ-existence, Self-Motion, &c.* so that all the Writers about the Soul since, have been Copiers from him. Nor did his Doctrines prevail only among the better Part of the Heathen World, but in following Ages. The first Fathers of the Church, says a learned Author, were almost all Platonicks, \* and great Characters were given of Plato, by St. Denys, St. Justin, Clemens Alexandrinus, St. Origen, St. Cyril. St. Basil, Eusebius, Theodoret, Arnobius, Lactantius, St. Austin, St. Ambrose, and many others. Whereby it appears to me demonstratively plain; That this Notion of humane Soul conceived to be a Spirit united to the Body, crept into the Church by the Means of the first Fathers thereof, so heartily espousing the Platonick Philosophy.

*Phil.* You have here, *Estibius*, afforded us a great deal of fine Historical Learning, which if it were all true, would go a great Way to destroy our Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul. But by making some Remarks upon these Matters of Fact, which you here afforded, and by alledging some other Passages out of ancient Writers, I doubt not but to defend this Point of our Religion from all the Attacks, that you and all others have made against it.

I. I find, *Estibius*, that we are agreed on both Sides, that this Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul is no Modern Opinion. You your self own, that it was the Doctrine of the most early Fathers of the Church; some of which lived 150 Years after Christ: So that it was the Doctrine of Christians at that Time. But you allow it to be a Doctrine generally received among the Heathens, Greeks and Romans, much older than that: For their Philosophers Books were full of it after *Plato's* time, who flourished 360 Years before Christ. And you own further, that this Doctrine was taught in Greece by *Thales*, who flourished in the Year of the World 3336, that is

*Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality in Greece, long before Plato or Thales.*

252 Years before *Plato*. So that according to your Concession, this is an Error which has obtained among the learned Men in the World, for above 230 Years. But by your Leave, *Estibius*, we will go a little farther with it, and carry it on to the Time of old *Homer* the ancientest Writer which *Greece* affords; and he lived 336 Years before *Thales*, that is about the Year of the World 3000, which is 948 Years before Christ. And how long before *Homer's* Time it had been a Traditional Doctrine in *Greece*, no one can tell. For it appears by reading of *Homer's* Poems, that the Generality of People had much the same Notion of the separate Existence of Humane Souls, as we have. Thus *Achilles* addresses himself to the Soul of *Patroclus*, as a Thing really existing after his Death: Which *Homer*, who so very well understood humane Life, as rarely to be guilty of any great Indecency or Impropriety, would never have done; if it had not been the settled Opinion of the People of his Age, in *Greece*.

Καίρ' ἐ μοι ᾧ Πάτροκλε κ' ἐν Ἄϊδαο δόμοισι

*All hail, O Patroclus, altho' thou dwellest,*

*In Hades darksome Vaults-----*

Ἦλθε δ' ἐπὶ ψυχῇ Πατροκλήῳ δειλοῖο

Πατ' αὐτῷ μεγεθός τε κ' ἔμματα καλ' εἰκῆα

Καὶ φωνὴν κ' τοῖα περὶ χρόι εἴματα ἔστο

Σπῆδ' ἄρ' ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς καὶ μιν πάρος μῦθεν ἔειπεν.

Hom. Iliad. Lib. 23.

*Unhappy Patroclus his Soul appear'd,*

*In Face and Shape, exactly like to him:*

*With the same Voice he spoke, and Clothes he wore,*

*And standing by his Pillow, thus he spake.*

And in his *Odysses*, he seems to have a like Notion of separate Souls, with us. There is a common Receptacle or Repository for them, which he calls, *Hades*: Good Souls live in a pleasing Quiet, and those of wicked Men are condemned to some grievous Punishment, as to roll a great Stone up a Hill; to be always a dry and hungry; and

and for the most wicked of all to be thrown down into the Flames of a bottomless Pit in Hell, called *Tartarus*. How long before *Homer's* Time, these Notions were entertained in *Greece*, cannot be made out by History : For *Homer* is the oldest Writer extant in the Greek Tongue. Therefore to talk, that the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality was brought into *Greece* by *Pathagoras*, *Phe-recydes*, or *Thales*, is a Jest : Because you see plainly it was a received Opinion in *Homer's* Time, who lived so long before. These Philosophers probably, when they travelled into *Agypt*, might bring Home some of the mystick Cant of their Theology ; or might fetch thence some few odd Opinions, as to the Manner of the Soul's future Existence ; as for Instance, the Transmigration of Souls : But the main Doctrine of its Subsistence in general was in *Greece* long before, I believe from the very first peopling of it.

II. And since we have carried up this Doctrine Time out of Mind in *Greece*, we will see, if we can find any Beginning of it in other Nations. Now *Seneca* is of Opinion, that this is a Doctrine embraced by all Nations in the World. *Cum de Animarum Immortalitate loquimur, non leve mamontum apud nos habet Consensus Hominum, aut timentium inferos, aut colentium. Utor hac persuasione publicâ. When we speak concerning the Immortality of the Soul, that Argument has considerable Weight with me, which is drawn from the Consent of all Nations, that either fear the infernal Powers or worship them. This publick Perswasion is very cogent with Me,* Sen. Ep. cxvii. And if we particularly examine this Assertion of his, we shall find it very agreeable to Truth. As for the *Agyptians* and *Chaldeans*, you your self know, *Estibius*, that these Nations held the Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul as a very sacred Truth, and the very Foundation of their Religion, and of all their Mysteries : And therefore there is no Occasion to produce any Passages out of Ancient Writers, to confirm a Matter of Fact, which is so obvious and plain, that you cannot deny it. We will therefore spare a little Time to

shew, that this was not any particular fond Notion of these Countries, but the universal Dictate of humane Nature, or a Tradition delivered down to them by their Forefathers, and handed down to them from the first Parents of Mankind. For it is impossible, that a Tradition could be so universally uniform, unless it had this Original. We will first shew this to have been the Opinion of the most Eastern Nations, *viz.* the *Indians*, as appears by the Remainders of the Learning, which is come to our Hands of their Ancient Priests or Wise-men the *Brachmans*. And *Strabo* records of them, Παραπλέκασί δε καὶ μύθος, ὡς περὶ καὶ Πλάτων πρὸς τὴν ἀφθαρσίας ψυχῆς, καὶ τῶν καθ' Ἄδης κρίσεων, καὶ ἄλλα τοιαῦτα. *They have several mythological Relations, like Plato of the Immortality of the Soul, and Judicatures in Hades, and some other Matters of a like Nature. Strabo, Lib. 15.* And *Clemens Alexandrinus* says something much like this of these Philosophers. Καταφρονεῖσι δὲ θανάτου, καὶ παρ' ἐδὲν ἡγνῶνται τὸ ζῆν, περὶ θοῦναι ἧ εἶναι παλιγγενεσίαν. *They despise Death, and do not value at all to live, being persuaded of the Transmigration of their Soul, Clem. Alex. Strom. 3.* And *Diodorus Siculus* records something not unlike of them. Παραλαμβάνονται δὲ ὑπὸ μὲν τῶν ἰδίων εἰς τὴν πύλιν ἐν τῷ βίῳ θυσίας, καὶ εἰς τὴν τῶν τετελευτηκῶν ἐπιμελείας, ὡς θεοῖς γεγονότες προσφιλέσται, καὶ πρὸς τῶν ἐν Ἄδῃ μεγάλῃς ἐμπειρίαις ἔχοντες. Ταύτης δὲ καὶ ὑπερβίας δόξα τὴν καὶ τιμὰς λαμβάνουσι ἀξιολόγως. *They take out of their own for their Sacrifices for Life, and also for performing the Solemnities in Honour of their dead Friends, whom they esteem to be most beloved of the Gods, and most skilful of the Affairs of Hades. For this Administration, they receive very great Gifts, and most honourable Acknowledgements.*

But if we turn our Eyes to Nations in the Southern Part of the World, we shall find the same Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality maintained by them, tho' blended perhaps with some particular Superstition, proper to those Countries. *Pomponius Mela* relates this of some of the People in *Africa*; *Angile Manes tantum Deos putant, per eos dejerant, eos ut Oracula consulunt; precati; quæ volunt, ubi tumultis incubuere, pro responsis ferunt som-*

*nia.* “ The *Angile* think the Ghosts of Men the only  
 “ Gods; by these they swear, these they consult as O-  
 “ racles; to whom when they have prayed what they  
 “ have a Mind to, they lie down upon their Tombs,  
 “ and whatsoever they dream on there, goes for an ora-  
 “ cular Response. *Pomp. Mcl. lib. I.* If we take a  
 Progress to the Northern Part of the World, we shall  
 find the same Opinion tenaciously espoused there. This  
 appears, as from other Memoirs, so particularly from a  
 remarkable Passage in the Speech which *Julian* feigns  
*Trajan* to speak in his *Cæsares*. And from thence it is  
 plain, that this Doctrine was owned by the old *Getes*.  
*Και τῶν Γετῶν ἕως ἄρτι ἐξέειλον, &c.* I have totally destroyed the  
 Nation of the *Getes*; who were of all Mankind the most  
 warlike; not so much for the Strength of their Body, but  
 for the Opinion that *Zamolxis*, whom they worship for a  
 God, has fixed in their Minds. For because they do not  
 think they shall die, but that they shall be transplanted to  
 other Habitations, they go to die with as much Readiness as  
 Men are wont to set out upon a Journey. And the same  
 Thing with some Variation is witnessed by *Mela*; *Quidam*  
*feri sunt, & ad mortem paratissimi, Getæ utique: id varia o-*  
*pinio perficit. Alii redituras putant animas obcuntium.*  
*Alii etsi non redeant, non extinguunt tamen, sed ad beatiora*  
*transire. Alii emori quidem, sed id melius esse quam vivere.*  
*Iraque lugentur apud quosdam puerperia natiq̄ue desolentur.*  
*Funera contra Festa sunt, & veluti sacra, cantu lusuq̄;*  
*celebrantur.* “ There are some of the *Thracians*, barba-  
 “ rous and most ready to lose their Lives, as particularly  
 “ the *Getes*; and that is occasioned by some different O-  
 “ pinions which obtain among them. Some think the  
 “ Souls of deceased Men return into Bodies again. And  
 “ some that, tho’ they do not return, yet they are not ex-  
 “ tinguished, but go to some very happy Places. Others  
 “ are of Opinion indeed, that they die, but that such  
 “ Death is better than Life. Therefore Births are be-  
 “ wailed among them. And Funerals are made Festi-  
 “ vals; and, as if they were Holy-days, are celebrated  
 “ with Songs and Sports. *Pomp. Mcl. Lib. II. in*

*Thracia*. If we turn our Eyes Westward, and take a View of the *Gauls* and ancient *Britains*, we shall find the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality to be rooted in their Minds likewise; as having this Lesson constantly taught them by their Masters the *Druids*. For thus *Cæsar* writes of them. *Non interire animas, sed ab aliis post mortem transire ad alios; atque hoc maxime ad virtutem excitari putant, metu mortis neglecto.* "They do  
 " not believe that the Souls die, but that after Death  
 " they pass from one to another; and they think that  
 " they are very much excited to Valour by this Opini-  
 " on, by contemning Death. *Cæs. Bell. Gall. Lib. VI.*  
 The like *Appian, de Rebus Celticis*, declares of the *Ger-  
 mans*: *Linchosatanus* of the Inhabitants of *Guiney*, and of  
 the *Chinese*: and of the *Peruvians* and *Mexicans*, *Josephus Aco-  
 sta*. So that what you, *Estibius*, make the In-  
 vention of the *Agyptians*, is the current Doctrine of all  
 Nations in the World; and the Belief of nothing but  
 the Existence of a God, has so univerfally obtained in all  
 Ages and in all Countries, as This.

I cannot conceive that you have any Grounds to pre-  
 tend, that this Doctrine was propagated from the *Agyptians*  
 to other Places of the World: For several Nations  
 have embraced this Doctrine which never heard of the  
*Agyptians*, and never had any Manner of Conversation  
 with them; and lying at such a remote Distance from  
 them, could not possibly have any Manner of Communi-  
 cation with them. Or if they had had Traffick with them,  
 and by that Means communicated this Notion; or if it  
 were conveyed by the Assistance of other intermediate  
 Notions; yet it does not seem probable that all the World  
 should just run into one *Agyptian* Opinion conveyed  
 to them and no more: If we should find the Worship  
 of Garlick and Onions, of Monkies and Crocodiles,  
 the Stories of *Isis* and *Osiris*, and a great deal of Hiero-  
 glyphical Mystery dispers'd every where over the World;  
 this Tale of yours might find some Countenance: But  
 that the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality should be  
 sent from *Agypt* to all Countries, and no *Dogma* of that  
 Nation



Nation be conveyed besides, this does want more Light and Confirmation than you have, *Estibius*, been pleased hitherto to afford us.

III. But before I dismiss what I have to say upon this Head, I must do one Point of Justice to the *Jewish* Nation, and that is, to prove that this was one of their Doctrines, and that they do not stand distinguished from all the rest of the World in this Matter. And you give me the better Handle to undertake the Management of this Point, because you say that the *Jews* generally, nay universally, hold that Men die, and never live again. But one need not go very far about to prove the Absurdity of this Assertion; for the Relation of the bringing up *Samuel's* Ghost at *Endor*, related 1 *Sam.* xxviii. is sufficient Demonstration, That the *Jews* had the same Notion of the Soul's separate Existence, as we have. For let this be true *Samuel*, or an infernal *Demon* representing him; or let it be a Trick of the Witch, who beguiled *Saul*: Yet it still proves, that the *Jews* had a Notion, that Souls were in Being, after their Disunion from the Body, and did separately exist of themselves during that Time. For else there is no Account to be given, why *Saul* should go to the Witch to have *Samuel* brought up, that he might converse with him. You can't imagine, that 'twas *Samuel's* dead Corpse that he desired to see, for he could have opened his Grave, without more ado, to have come to That. 'Tis plain therefore, that 'twas *Samuel's* Soul which he desired to converse with, which he was persuaded, from his Acquaintance with *Samuel* upon Earth, must needs be, after its Separation, a very wise and knowing Spirit, and in particular Favour with Almighty God: And therefore he is so very earnestly pressing to have some Communication with it; hoping, if that could be obtained, some Ways might be found out by that blessed Spirit, how his Kingdom might be establish'd again, and the Affairs of his Crown be brought again to a better Posture, which were at present so miserably entangled. This must be the Thoughts of *Saul* when he came to the Witch, and must have been the Opinion

of those others, that advis'd his coming to her, *ver. 7.* And no Doubt the Generality of the People of the *Jews* at that Time, had a Notion that Souls did subsist separately from the Bodies, in some Receptacle either underground or elsewhere; and that it was in the Power of some Persons, who by their Cunning, or by the Assistance of some superiour Nature, had gained an Authority over other Spirits, to make them attend at their Pleasure. Now if it be plain from this Supposition of *Saul*, (no Matter whether he had Grounds for his Opinion or no) that it was the Opinion of the *Jews*, that Souls do exist after Separation; we have enough to confute your Assertion, in saying, that they believed the Soul to die with the Body.

Nay, I will be content that any Atheist should be Judge in this Point, tho' he does not believe a Word of the Matter of Fact recorded in Scripture. For let him be ask'd when he has read this Relation, if he does not think, that the Person who penned that Relation, did not live among People that believed the Being of separate Souls, from the Circumstances mentioned therein; I durst engage whatever you will, that this Infidel shall determine this Point, in the Favour of the Side which I am of.

But after all, I must tell you, *Estibius*, that I think it very plain from this Place, that the true Soul of *Samuel* did appear, and by this gave a very demonstrative Proof of the separate Existence of Human Soul. For as for the Colusion of the Witch, which is pretended by some; that appears to me, after the fullest Consideration of it, to be a silly Thought, and unworthy of the great Names that advance it. For tho' possibly a Witch or Gipsy may put her Tricks upon your ordinary People: Yet you may imagine, that a Prince with his Attendants, might have Sagacity enough not to be imposed on by a Trick, which the Witch might be supposed to play to deceive them. And the Account they give of this Matter, that the Woman only saw *Samuel*, or pretended to see him; and that *Saul* was wrought into that terrible Consternation by

by a feigned Voice which she made *Saul* believe that *Samuel* utter'd: This is such an unpracticable Cheat to be put upon a Prince, that I cannot think it was capable to be pass'd upon one of the ordinarieſt of his Retinue. But you will say, "If it were really the Soul of *Samuel* which appeared; How came it into the Power of a Witch to have such an ascendent Authority over blessed Spirits? Certainly God Almighty takes more Care of them, than to let their Rest be disturbed, upon every wild Vagary or abominable Design of those impious Wretches." And indeed, *Estibius*, I am very much inclined to agree with you in this: But then you must acknowledge, that such separate Souls are under the Direction of God; and I believe, that this extraordinary Occurrence was brought about, not by any magical or daemonic Power, but solely by the Will and Command of Almighty God. For by the divine Order and Appointment, the Soul of *Samuel* did really appear, by assuming an Aerial Body, at the Time when she would have brought up a Dæmoniacal Spectrum, or have put some Cheat upon *Saul*, which she had, it may be, successfully carried on upon some silly Persons before. Now this was as much a Surprize to the Woman, as to *Saul*, as is plain from *v. 12.* *And when the Woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud Voicc.* Now it was not a Thing uncommon for the Divine Power to interpoſe, when Men were disposed to seek for the Knowledge of future Events by magical Enchantments; and since they were inclined to know his Will by such wicked Means, to send a Message to let them understand, what Vials of his Wrath were prepared for them. Thus when the King of *Moab* was employing a Necromancer to consult the Devil, or a false God, about his Affairs; the Angel of God met him in the Way, and forced *Balaam* to prophesie against his Master, *Numb. xxii. 32.* And so when *Abaziah* King of *Israel*, sent Messengers to enquire of the State of his Health of a Heathen Idol, it is said, that the Angel of the Lord bid *Elijah* tell the King; which he accordingly did; *Thus, saith the Lord, forasmuch as*

*thoſe*

*thou hast sent Messengers to enquire of Baalzebub the God of Ekron (is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his Word?) therefore thou shalt not come down off that Bed on which thou art gone up, but shall surely die.* 2 King. i. 16. But not to run this Matter into a greater Length, it is evidently plain, (if there were no other Argument to support it) that the *Jews* did believe that this was the true Soul of *Samuel*, which is recorded thus to have spoken to *Saul*; from a Passage of the Son of *Syrach*; *Eccl. xxvi. 20. And after his Death Samuel prophesied, and shewed the King his End, and lift up his Voice from the Earth in Prophecy, to blot out the Wickedness of the People.* Nay 'tis Proof enough, what was the Sense of the *Jewish* Nation as to this Point, from their ancient Doxology or Form of Thanksgiving, which we usually call the Song of the Three Children. For after having invocated, to the joining in the Praise of God, Meteors, and Vegetables, Fishes, Birds, and Beasts, and good Men; it adds, *O ye Spirits and Souls of the Righteous, Bless ye the Lord, praise him, and magnifie him for ever.* I shall forbear in confirming the Point we are upon, to bring in the Testimonies of *Josephus* and *Philo*; for they, you will say, were too platonical to be fair Witnesses in this Case. But I hope you cannot except against the Writings of the New Testament; and if you will credit them, they clearly make out what was the Opinion of the *Jews*, as to the separate Existence of Souls, in our Saviour's Time. *When the Disciples saw Christ walking on the Sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a Spirit, and they cried out for Fear.* Matth. xiv. 27. And again, when Christ appeared after the Resurrection, *they were terrified and afraid, supposing they had seen a Spirit.* Luke xxiv. 37. Now both these Times they supposed our Blessed Lord, whom they esteemed as yet only a mortal Man, to be actually dead, and that they only saw his Ghost. Which is not only an Argument what was the Notion of the *Jews* at that Time, but of the real Existence of such Spirits; for if this Notion had been so foolish and dangerous as *Eftibius* pretends, I am confident, our blessed

Lord

Lord would not have been wanting, to have rectified an Error of that utmost Consequence.

And further, That the separate Existence of the Soul, was a Point of the *Jewish* Faith, is evident to any one that looks into their ancient Writers. This is clear from *Shemoth Rabba*; *Why did Moses say*, *Exod. xxii. 13. Remember, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Riethin saith, The Lord said unto Moses, I look for ten Men from thee, as I looked for that Number in Sodom. Find me out ten Righteous Persons among the People, and I will not destroy thy People. Then said Moses, Behold here am I, and Aaron, Eleazar and Thamer, Phinehas, Caleb and Josiah: But, saith God, These are but seven, Where are the other three? When Moses knew not what to do, he saith, O Eternal God, do those live that are dead? Yes, saith God. Then saith Moses, If those that are dead do live, remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, So another Jewish Writer, Rabbi Samuel, lar Noichman, saith, R. Jonathan saith, How doth it appear, that the Dead have any Discourse among themselves? It appears from what is said. And the Lord said unto him, This is the Law concerning which I swear unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, &c. and then relates some long Tales between two Spirits in a Church-Yard. And because, *Estibius*, you seem to lay some Strefs upon the Song of the Mother and seven Sons in the *2 Macca-bees vii.* as if they had no Hopes of any longer Existence, till the Resurrection: I will recite to you an old Rabbinical Gloss upon that Part of History. When six of her Sons were slain, and the youngest brought out in Order thereunto, tho' he was not more than two Years and a half old; The Mother said, *Cesar, by the Life of thy Head, I beseech thee, let me embrace and kiss my Child. This being permitted her, she plucked out her Breasts, and gave it suck. Then, said she, by the Life of thy Head I intreat thee, Cesar, that thou wouldst first kill me, and then the Child. Cesar answered, I will not yield to thee in this Matter; for it is written in your own Law, The Heifer or Sheep with its young one, thou shalt not kill on the same day. To whom she: O thou foolishbest of all Mortals,**

*tals, hast thou performed all the Commands, that this only is wanting? He forthwith commands, that the Child should be kill'd. The Mother running into the Embraces of her little Son, kissed him, and said, Go thou, O my Son, to Abraham thy Father, and tell him, thus saith my Mother: Do not thou boast, saying, I built an Altar, and offer'd my Son: For my Mother hath built seven Altars, and offer'd seven Sons in one Day. Midrash. Ecpah. Now tho' these Stories are foolishly told after the talmudical Way; yet they shew the Sense of the Jews, concerning the separate Soul, and that good Souls do immediately go to Happiness, or to Abraham's Bosom. For that Phrase which our Saviour makes Use of, to denote the intermediate State of Happiness of a good Soul, viz. Abraham's Bosom, is the common Language in Rabbinical Writers: Rabbi Judah this Day sits in Abraham's Bosom. Hieros. Relaim.*

Neither is this the Doctrine only of the mystical talmudical Writers, but the more accurate of the Rabbins assert the same. *Maimonides* defines the Resurrection, to be the Return of the same Soul into the same Body. Epist. de Resur. Mort. So another famous Rabbi, *Judas Zabara*; *When ever any good Man is made Partaker of the World to come, as soon as he departs out of this World, he shall enjoy the Splendor of the Divine Majesty, and such high Delights; Why should we believe, that every just Man should return into this World, when his Body and Soul is united; I say into this turbulent poor World, that is next Door to Hell it self, and for the Sake of this, to leave those Joys to which nothing is wanting? Is not this an undervaluing Thing, for a just Man to do? How much better then is it to believe, that the Soul of a just Man only returns to his Body, and that his Joys are not intermitted which are eternal? Rabbi Levi said, Whilst the Soul is in its State of Glory, it supports it self with the superior Light, and is clothed with it: But when it shall return to its Body in the World to come, it shall return to it precisely with the same Light. And then the Body too shall shine, with the Clearness of Heaven. It is a Saying of Rabbi Saadias Jaon, in Sapher Haemanot,*  
that

that is, in a Treatise of the Essence of the Soul. *Moreover, I say, that Mens Souls shall so long continue separate, till the rest of the Souls are gathered together, which the Divine Essence has decreed. And this shall be the End of the Duration of the World. But when the Number of them shall be compleat and gathered together, the Souls shall be united to their Bodies.* And, tho' some of the *Jewish* Writers do allow with the *Socinians*, that the Souls of the Wicked do perish; yet these very Persons do grant, that the Souls of the Just do remain in a happy State, waiting for the Resurrection. *The Soul of the Wise remains after Death, but the Soul of the Fool goes to defect.* Ibn. Latiph. In short, never were Writers more unanimous in the maintaining any Doctrine, than the *Jews* are in maintaining the Immortality of the Soul. And I cannot leave my Thoughts upon this Head, before I have laid before you a handsome Stricture made by an old oriental Writer, whose Name is *Algazel*, upon some Virtuoso's or Physicians, who had studied Nature so long, till they had forgotten the most uncontroverted Maxims in Religion, and made the Soul only a Complexion of the Body. And in his Book, which is intituled *The Deliverance from Error*, he has these Words. *Of Naturalists there are some, who contemplating sensible Things, as the Situation of Feathers in Birds, and of Scales and Fins in Fishes: Of Flowers and Leaves, and Fruits and Kernels, in Plants and Trees: Of Nerves, and Veins, and Arteries, and Limbs in Animals: And besides the Proprieties of all these Things, looking upon Colours, Odors and Savors, finding in some Life, and in others Life and Sense of Touch: In others Sight, Hearing, in others Smelling, Taste, and Touch: Finding in all these so much Skill and Industry, they are forc'd to own a God; but in going further they fancy Man to be all Things in like other Animals, and think the Rational Soul does consist in the Complexion of the Body, and that upon the Destruction of the Body, and its Complexion, does follow the Destruction of the Rational Soul likewise.*

And now I beg your Pardon, *Estibius*, for tiring your Patience with this long Beadrole of dry Rabbinical Citations, which I would not have offered unto you, but that

that I thought it very necessary to rectify your Mistake, in thinking, That the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, and separate Existence, was owing only to the Notions of Heathen Philosophers. And for Want of sufficient Consideration, that the *Jews* were as much chargeable with this Opinion as the Heathens, you have ventured to start your *Hypothesis*; but I hope upon this Light, you will afford what I have here gather'd together a just Reflexion in your Thoughts. We must all own indeed, that 'tis our Blessed Lord alone, that *has brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel*. But yet it must be allow'd too, that the World had some considerable Notions of it before. The Heathens were upon good Grounds persuaded, that the Soul was a Being, whose Existence did not depend upon Matter; and therefore might subsist after its Separation from it. The Jews, who being assisted by Revelation, could go further than the Heathens, were persuaded that the Body too, after a determinate Time, would revive again, and be freed from the present Inconveniencies of Animal Life; but still they could not have any great Degrees of Certainty thereof; because they never saw any Instances of it. But the Christians have the utmost Assurance of all this, by the Resurrection and Ascension of *Jesus Christ*; who has given Demonstration, by his Rising again from the Dead, and so visibly ascending into Heaven, that the Soul, once separated from the Body, may be united again to it; and that the Bodies and Souls of all his good Followers shall partake of that everlasting Happiness, which their Blessed Lord is gone before to take Possession of. Now I wonder, *Estibius*, that you should ever undertake so unhandsome an Office, as to go about to undermine one of those common Notions of Religion, that even the Heathens are vouchsafed the Knowledge of; and after all that extraordinary Light, which Christianity has blessed the World with, in Relation to the Soul's future Condition, to endeavour to bring us back to a greater Darknes, than ever spread the Face of the Earth in the grossest State of



Paganism. But I hope you will hereafter consider better of it.

*Estib.* Well, Sir, I will do in this Matter as I shall judge proper. But I am afraid, by this long Talk of ours, we shall tire *Credentius*.

*Cred.* You need not make any Compliment, *Estibius*, to my Patience: For I will assure you I have heard what has been said on both Sides, with a great Degree of Satisfaction. I must needs say, that the Merits of the Cause lie on *Philologus's* Side: But yet it must be owned, that you have advanced more Arguments for the Opinion, than are usually urged by that Sort of Men, whose Interest it is to fish most about for them. I condemn you chiefly for making such a Waste of your good Learning, to support an Infidel Question, and which might have done some considerable Service to the World, if it had been employed upon a more useful Subject. And if I could find Fault with *Philologus* for any Thing, it should be for rallying a little too smartly upon *Estibius*, and for some few Severities of Expression, which make up too common a Part of all Controversies. Not but *Estibius* has many Faults to account for upon that Head; for his rough Way of treating his Adversaries, and sometimes whole Bodies of Men that lie in his Way, can never be excused; and if *Philologus* mixes more Salts with his Vinegar, he makes it but the more smarting.

*Phil.* Come, *Credentius*, never give your Head Disturbance with that Matter: *Estibius* and I are old Acquaintance, and can indulge our selves in taking some Freedom with each other, which you grave Gentlemen will not allow. We shall not fall out, for a few sparring Blows: For these serve only for a little Salt and Sauce, to give Relish to a dry Dispute. But never think, that we have any Spite or ill Will at one another. We are like the Lawyers at the Bar, who rub one another up with a few rough Expressions, in the Heat of their Cause; but when that is over, are in good Humour again. And, I am sure *Estibius* will not take any Thing ill of me, that I design'd for his Good, and Advantage. For since

*Credentius* has by the Blessing of God wrought so happy a Change in me, That Saying of our Saviour shall be my Motto, *Conversus tu confirma fratres*: I am resolv'd, upon all Occasions, to reduce into the Truth every Straggler from the Orthodox Faith, who lies in my Way. and I hope what I have said, *Estibius*, may have its good Effect upon you. And, if you are convinc'd by any Reasons that I have offer'd, I would not have you suffer an Obstinacy, or a Fondness to your own Notions, or a Fear of owning a Mistake, to keep you up to the Point you have formerly espous'd, tho' you are perswaded of the Errour of it. I confess 'tis a great Piece of Mortification for any one to own a Mistake: For almost every private Man, tho' he condemns Infallibility in the Pope, would fain be thought to have a little of it in himself. But this is more especially among Persons, whose Reputation engages them to appear very knowing in those Matters, which they happen to be mistaken in. And this is the Occasion of those bloody Fights, which happen sometimes among Theologues, in their Writings against one another. Each of the contending Parties thinks his Honour is nicely concern'd, to have the Truth of his Side; and that it will be a lasting Blemish upon his Reputation, not to understand a Point of Divinity as well as another that is bred up to that Profession. This is the Occasion of Controversies being spun out to such a troublesome Length; that Men will write Books when they have nothing to say; and that after one is convinc'd, and both are tired, yet neither will yield. But, *Estibius*, you have, God be thanked, none of these Difficulties to conflict with; for you being bred up to another Profession, your Honour is not so tenderly concern'd, if it appear to the World that you are mistaken in a Point of Divinity. For Divinity having not been a Study which you have particularly applied your self to, it is no Disgrace to you not to be so understanding in that, as you are in Matters belonging to your own Profession.

Therefore

Therefore pray, good *Estibius*, take this Matter into your Consideration once more, and do not divide yourself in Opinion from the Orthodox Belief, if you can find any tolerable Reasons, which may settle your Judgment in this Point again. It must needs be a great Uneasiness to a Man, to stand divided from the established Doctrine of the Church, which he belongs to. It makes him very uneasy even to himself. For whether you will call it Conscience, or the Prejudice of Education, or what likes you best; yet still his Mind haunts and torments him; raises a great many Suspicions and Misgivings, that he may be in the wrong, and what fatal Consequences may attend his opposing a Divine Truth, if he should happen to be so. This makes him uneasy to other good Christians; for such pious Persons are shock'd at their very falling into the Company of one, whom they know to have made a Revolt from the Faith in so important an Article; and they are apt to imagine that the Converse of that Man must spread Contagion about him, whom God, by the withdrawing his Grace, has suffered to fall into so great an Error. Besides, the Consideration of the Harmlessness of our received Doctrine, and the Pleasantness with which it sits upon the Minds of Men, altho' a Man were persuaded it were a Mistake, would make good Man think a thousand Times, before he could have the Heart to oppose it. *Quod si in hoc erro, quod animos hominum immortales esse credam, lubenter erro; nec mihi hunc Errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo.* But if I am mistaken  
 “ in this, that I believe the Souls of Men are immortal,  
 “ 'tis a Mistake that I am willing to continue in; and  
 “ I would not have an Error that I am so wonderfully  
 “ delighted in, be taken away from me as long as I live.” If there were no more Fault in opposing this Doctrine, than the Cruelty and ill Nature of depriving People of so comfortable a Fancy, it would make a Man of a tender Heart refrain from making People uneasy by the unsettling them in it.

Therefore, *Estibius*, if I were in your Case, I would never plague my self and disturb the World, in pertinaciously maintaining an Opinion, which, if you could make all the World believe it, would never make them one jot the better Christians; but I would rather beg God's and good Christians Pardon for the Fault I had committed, and the Offence I had given, and endeavour by all Means to persuade my self to fall into the old Orthodox Faith and Profession again.



Confe-



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# CONFERENCE

WITH A

## *MACHIAVELIAN.*

*Between DEMOBORUS, an Atheistical Sup-  
porter of Tyranny, and EUDEMIUS, a  
Christian Statesman.*



*Demoborus* was a Man born in *France*, and but of a mean Extraction. He had in his Childhood some small Rudiments of Literature afforded him; but his Friends not being able to finish his Education, nor himself shewing any great Liking to Letters, he entered into the Service of a Financer in that Kingdom, under

whom he spent a considerable Part of his Youth. It was in this Station, that he learnt to develt himself of all Bowels and Commiseration at the Cries of oppressed Subjects; and to have nothing at Heart, but only the

extravagant Glory of the Grand Monarch his Chief Master; and which he thought too rich to be purchased at any Rate, without any Consideration had, either of Justice and Clemency. For he was of Opinion, that Power and Conquest only made a great Prince, and if so be a King's Dominions were but extended, it was no Matter tho' his Subjects lost all their Liberties and Properties to obtain it. Let him but build their Houses, and raise him his Duties, and 'tis no Matter, though his Subjects fed only upon coarse Bread and Sallet, and were cloathed with nothing but Rags. But *Demobonus* being likewise of a Temper naturally cruel, and publickly avowing the *Hobbian* and *Machiavelian* Principles which he had carlily inbided, he perfectly over-acted his Part, in Discharge of the Office he was employed in: And Complaint being made of some notorious Instances of his Barbarity and irreligious Tenets, the Government he lived under, bad as it was, thought it too great a Reflection upon them, to have an under Agent openly to avow those Principles which they kept as a securer Reserve to themselves; partly to justify their own Actions, and partly to pacify the People, by giving up a sorry Instrument to their Resentments, Orders were given that *Demobonus* should be discharged his Employ, and another Person be took into his Place, who might be, as much, tho' more discreetly, oppressive. Being disappointed of his Expectations in his own Country, he cast about to see, if his Stars might have a better Influence elsewhere; and therefore resolves to transplant himself into a Soil, where the Weeds of his Kind did not grow so thick as in *France*, and where he might think to thrive better than he had done at Home, upon Account only of the Rariety. He therefore forthwith embarked for *England*, which he was the more encouraged to do, for that at that same Time, warm Disputes were entertained there about the Extent of the Royal Prerogative and popular Priviledges. *Demobonus* was hardly enough acquainted with the Language to express himself intelligibly, but he struck,

struck in with the prevailing Party at that Time, both as they were uppermost, and as they seem'd by the unwarly Actions of some, and the treacherous Designs of others, to be laying the Foundation of that Scheme of Government, that he was particularly fond of. Therefore *Demobonus* with all the Heat and Passion he could muster up, declaims upon the Novelty and Usefulness of Parliaments, as being a Power first ravished from the Crown, and assumable again at the Royal Pleasure. He was mighty hot in the Business of Quo warrantos, and Regulations of Corporations, and was highly pleased with every Thing which was done on any Side that might tend to oppress the People's Liberties, and to build up Arbitrary Power. But his Talk was generally so extravagant, and his Principles so loose, that all sober Men whom he happened to converse with, were afraid that he would involve them in Danger, and therefore for the most Part took Care to avoid his Company after the first Time. But once he happening as he walked in the Park to meet with *Eudemius* a Country Gentleman, whom he had some small Knowledge of, he did in a Manner force him into a Dispute concerning Government; which tho' for the most Part a dangerous and invidious Subject, yet he so cautiously managed, thereby to give no Advantage to *Demobonus*, nor any Offence to Superiours.

*Demob.* You are welcome to Town, *Eudemius*. What, your Time of Burgessing in the Country is over.

*Eudem.* Yes, we have been sometime busy in choosing Parliament Men.

*Demob.* And perhaps you had as good have spared your Labour; for you only send up five hundred Kings to govern us, which is better done by the Prince alone.

*Eudem.* But I take the Liberty to be of a different Opinion; and to think our Parliament to be a most admirable Constitution: For what a wise Contrivance is it, for every Man of considerable Property in the Nation, to have his Representative in the Legislature; to have Laws of his own making; and Money of his own gi-

ving; and for the People to have so many honourable and wise Persons ready to assert their Liberties, whenever they may be invaded by any bold Flatterers or other designing Men.

*Demob.* And I take the Liberty likewise to confess my Opinion, tho' I am not for a Prince that is pinion'd and shackled by Laws and Sharers in the Legislature: For such a Prince can never enterprize a gallant Action, but he has the dull Weight of so many hundred People's Consents to procure Money to carry it on: And then is cramped by so many Laws, that he cannot find Elbow-room to move himself as he should: The whining Priests too will be in with him, with their Scruples of Conscience, to retard him in his Designs, and to abridge him in his full Liberty of acting. So that a Prince thus circumstantiated, is like an *Egyptian* Mummy, Hand and Foot, Breast and Back, and Fingers and Toes bound round with Cordage; now, is a Prince thus hampered fit to govern, that is hardly able to stir? For my Money, give me a Prince who, when he is once got into the Saddle, knows no Law but his Will, and no Religion but his Advantage.

*Eudem.* But this is to devest a Prince of all Conscience and Religion.

*Demob.* I would have a Prince have something of these Matters too, and not too much neither. For since these are Names which give Reputation in the World, a Prince should have so much of them as to make People think he has a great deal more. I would have a Prince make a considerable Shew of Godliness and Piety, but 'tis no great Matter whether he be really so in his Heart or no. For the Generality of Men are led by outward Appearances, and they do not make a Judgment from their Causes, but from their Effects. Besides, by this he may receive all the Advantages which Religion can afford him, of being praised and trusted; and yet he need not be tyed up by the Strictness and Niceties of those who are truly Religious. By this counterfeiting he can get all the Credit of being a godly Man, and not be obliged to  
be



be praying, when he should be fighting or intriguing. All that you can say is, that those who have a particular Intimacy with him will come at Length to see through his Mask, and discover his feigned Piety. But what then, such Favourites will not come to contradict the more common Judgment of those, who are perswaded their Prince is truly Religious.

*Eudem.* You have given, *Demoborus*, a no unfair Account of the wicked Hypocrisie, which the Atheistic Politicians would have their Prince which they set up, be guilty of. But I leave all the impartial World to be Judge, if the Holy Scriptures do not give much better Directions, when they exhort Princes to a sincere Piety towards God, without Dissimulation: I shall instance in the two most remarkable Particulars thereof, the praying to God, and the being conversant in hearing or reading his holy Word. We read, *1 Chron. xxviii. 9.* of the Advice which the inspired King *David* gives to his Son *Solomon*, at his Entrance upon the Throne; *and thou, Prince Solomon my Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect Heart, and with a willing Mind; for the Lord searcheth all Hearts, and understandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts: If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.* And so likewise the Holy Scriptures by the Examples of *Moses, David, Saul, Hezekias*, and other good Princes, do afford very excellent Instructions to Magistrates; who if they design a Blessing upon their great Undertakings, they ought constantly to apply to him by devout Prayer.

And we may further observe, what Advice the Holy Scriptures give to Princes to make themselves conversant in these inspired Writings. *And when thou art come into the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a King over me, like as all the Nations that are about me. And it shall be when he siteth upon the Throne of his Kingdom, that he shall write him a Copy of this Law in a Book, out of that*

*that which is before the Priests and Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the Days of his Life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the Words of this Law and these Statutes, to do them. That his Heart be not lifted up above his Brethren, and that he turn not aside from the Commandment, to the right Hand, or to the left; to the end that he may prolong his Days in his Kingdom, Deut. xvii. 14, &c.*

And so as to Prayer to God Almighty. Now if it be highly necessary for the Direction of every particular Man's private Affairs, it is more especially so for the Guidance of Princely Actions, which are of so high Importance, and involve them frequently, in such extraordinary Dangers, Difficulties and Temptations.

What a better Expedient can be found out than Prayer, to empower them to conquer all those Imperfections of Human Nature, which that high State is wont to expose them to: What can better enable them to stand firm and stedfast against all the Shocks of Temptations which assault them, than by a devout imploring God Almighty's Aid and Assistance to secure them, that they may continue in a firm and erect State of Mind, and not be elevated with the Glories and Grandeur of this World, so as to despise their poor Fellow-Creatures, on whom God has been pleased to bestow his Benefits with a more sparing Hand; and not to forget that heavenly Goodness which has reached out his Favours more indulgently to them, and in whose Power it lies to slack them again at his good Pleasure? From this holy Exercise, Persons of that high Dignity may receive a present Aid, to defend them against all the Artifices and Stratagems of flattering Addressers; who by unfair Suggestions and wily Insinuations, and a thousand other crafty Arts, are continually laying out their Thoughts to practice upon an unguarded Generosity. To flie to this heavenly Assistance, is the best grounded Method to obtain such a Mastery over human Passions; that Magistrates, in the Discharge of their great Office, by an over-fond Pity,

or

or a remiss Lenity, do not weaken the Nerves of Government on one Side; or by a rigid Severity, or by personal Resentments, they do not set the Edge of Justice too keen on the other.

II. And further, Princes stand in a very great Need of the Assistance of a superiour Power, to afford 'em a supereminent Degree of Wisdom and Patience; that they may be able to go through such a Multiplicity of Business, as must of Necessity pass their Hands. To receive the Suits of such a Number of Appliers; to abide all the Formalities and Ceremonials of Complement and Address: to bear with the Importunities of many urgent Petitioners; to dispose of Favours with such an equal Hand, that no Merit may go unregarded, and that the less successful may bear a Repulse with Satisfaction and good Humour; and, in a Word, to have so many Cares crowding together into their Thoughts, of Affairs of Sea and of Land, of City and Country, of Church and of State, and which do frequently receive more Distraction from the Variety of contrary, and equally plausible Opinions. This is enough to overset and unhinge a Mind that is supported with the greatest natural Strength and Steadiness, unless it receives an Influence by a particular Act of the divine Succour. Add to this the still greater Perplexities which encrease the Princely Cares; the Storms which are frequently rais'd by opposite Factions, which sometimes rise to such a Height and Fury as threaten Danger to publick Quiet; and the Difficulties which are found in reconciling and tuning together the Jars and Discords of so many irritated Spirits. There is still a greater Trouble frequently incident to those great Persons, and that is the Care and Danger arising from bloody Wars; which so often cut off such a Number of their dear and brave Subjects; that turn oftentimes the most flourishing Kingdoms into *Aceldama's* and Fields of Blood; that from the most promising Beginnings, end in Desolation and utter Confusion; or, by  
some

some unseen Turn of Affairs, change the Lawrels of a triumphant Monarch into Prisons and Chains. Add to this the Uneasinesses which arise from calling for Supplies from their Subjects, to maintain the Charges of Government and expensive Wars, and to be forced, against their Inclinations, to draw Money to defray the publick Expences, oftentimes from poor Families, whose urgent Necessities make them pine under the Want of it. Add farther yet, the Cares which arise from the Intricacies of deep and hazardous Counsels; which continually keep their Minds thoughtful and pensive, with a constant Eye of Caution and Exactness; always to be engaged in concerted Methods to form Correspondencies and to keep up Alliancys, and to have in View the several Attempts and Intrigues of so many foreign Courts, who by the Assistance of so many crafty Politicians, are all pursuing their separate Interests; and that but too often, to the Detriment of their Neighbours.

Now when the gracious Creator of Heaven and Earth has promised his Assistance to all those who call upon him faithfully, when 'tis He that giveth Wisdom, *Eccl. ii. 26.* and Patience, *Rom. xv. 5.* when 'tis He that *stilleth the noise of the waves and the tumults of the people, Psal. lxxv. 5.* when 'tis he that *makes peace and creates evil, Isa. xlv. 8.* whither can Princes apply themselves in these Exigencies, with so much Hopes of Succour, as to such an Almighty Assistant? Wicked Princes (who, by their enormous Violation of God's Laws, have lost their Hopes in the divine Protection, and can trust only in the Arm of Flesh for their Defence) when at any time they are pressed by any of these Difficulties, they sink into the utmost Despondency, and all their natural Courage turns into wretched Abjection and Timidity: Whilst he that has God for his Friend, and flies to his Assistance for Aid in the Time of Trouble, can look the most formidable Danger in the Face with Courage and Security; as expecting a Protection from Him, whom all Things in Heaven and Earth do

do obey. And those who endeavour to poison Princes by ill Principles, and incline them by evil Practices to forfeit this heavenly Comfort and Protection, are guilty of most wicked Treason; and do rob them of a greater Satisfaction than the amplest Revenues or Dignity can afford.

III. Another Argument for Princes to persevere in a sincere Piety towards Almighty God, is the Consideration of the manifold Dangers, which they are continually exposed to. We find, that the wicked Contrivances against these sacred Personages some where or other do so frequently take Effect, as, for this very Reason, to draw over the Minds of Princes with more Concern and Anxiety, than those of other Persons. This is observable enough in any one Generation of Men, and for the most Part in any single Nation; where some one Prince, or more, has not only been laid at, but ruined and destroyed by some such wicked Contrivance. But if we carry our View into the larger Field of ancient History, there we shall have a Scene opened to us of such tragical Ends and Misfortunes of Princes, as would make any one to think, that has not a firm Belief of the wise and unsearchable Methods of God, That Providence had abandon'd them, without any Care or Concern, to be worried by the Fury of wicked and merciless Men. How many do we read of murdered by Ruffians? How many poisoned? How many killed in the open Field? How many received a Dagger into their Bowels, whilst they were giving a kind Reception (as they thought) to a dear Friend? How many have been invited to a Banquet, which, when they have kindly accepted of, to the utmost Violation of all the Faith of Hospitality and Honour, they have taken in their Bane with the Meat or Drink, which has been offered them by their perfidious Entertainer? How many have been slain with their whole Armies, by the more powerful Arms of an invading Neighbour? How many have fell Sacrifices to the Tumults, or Rebellions of their

*Because of the Dangers which they are liable to.*

their own Subjects? And how many more have dropt from the Top Pinacle of Honour to the most abject and forlorn Estate of Misery; that have begun their Lives in a Throne, and finish'd them in a dolesom Dungeon! Now, since the princely State is surrounded with so many Dangers, whither can one of that Dignity so justly flie for Succour as to Almighty God; Who, by a watchful Providence, does over-rule all the Affairs of the World, and wisely dispose them according to his good Pleasure; to that good God whose *Angel encampeth round about them that fear him; who covereth them with his Feathers, and under his wings is their trust: They shall not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the Destruction that wasteth at noon day: A thousand shall fall at their side, and ten thousand at their right hand, but it shall not come nigh them.* Certainly, it must be the greatest Comfort in the World for a Prince, that by the Tenour of a good Life and a constant Application by devout Prayer to the Throne of Grace, is assured of the divine Protection, and that God takes a special Care of his Preservation. For then he will pass on with Courage and Satisfaction, whilst all the Dangers of that high Station are flying thick about him; and the Reflexion upon his Friendship with God, and his Dependence upon him, will make him fearless to all those formidable Evils, which so much threaten and affrighten other Princes; who by their ill Lives, or by Neglect of God's Worship, may presume themselves to be out of his Protection. He can enjoy Peace and Serenity, let the Clouds be never so dark and black about him; whilst the others by a constant Series of Fears, and Suspicions, and Jealousies, and other Passions, which their timorous Fancy must suggest, do suffer beforehand all the Misfortunes, which that Condition is liable to. These are such cogent Reasons, as must needs persuade all those, who have any Belief of God and Providence; that a Prince can never be so well dispos'd

Pfalm  
xxxiv. 8.

to govern his Country, or to serve his own true Interest, with his People, or with his Allies, as by a sincere Piety and true Devotion to God Almighty: For as by his Providence he must be supposed to be the supreme Governour of all humane Affairs; therefore, to be sure, even the greatest of Princes, (who are but some little under-Wheels, which take their Turns and Movements from his Almighty Direction) can have no Power or Assistance from themselves; and are not enabled to secure themselves from Danger, but as they are beholding to the infinite Source of Power in Almighty God; and who, by repeated Assurances in his holy Word, has promised to exert it for the Sake of his good Servants.

IV. But to carry this Matter something farther: Even the Atheist himself must be forced to confess, upon better Consideration, That tho' there were no God, and no Providence, and no future State; yet still it were better to be really pious, than to counterfeit that religious Quality: For Error (tho' it be not an eligible Thing) is better than Dissimulation. This is only to be pitied, but the other is to be abominated. To be guilty of a Cheat or a counterfeit Action, is look'd upon, by the concurrent Adjudgment of all Mankind, as the vilest Piece of Wickedness and Roguery; even in People of inferior Character; in whose Minds nothing of a remarkable Generosity is to be expected. But to recommend such a Point of base Dissimulation to be a Part of the Duty and Qualification of a Prince, is to debase the highest Honour to the vilest Degree of Contempt; and could never have come into the Mind of any one, but only of those Atheistical Wretches, who are possess'd by all the lowest and most pitiful Passions, which the basest Part of Mankind is subject to. But setting aside the Meanness and Baseness, which such a counterfeit Deportment would betray a Prince into; it must needs also weaken the Nerves of his Government, and some Time or other expose him to the  
Scorn

Scorn and Mockery of the Multitude. It has always been a very considerable Argument to me, of the divine Original of Government, That the Atheists have as clumsy a Hand in the framing of this, as in their forming of a World. And I think our fore-mentioned Atheistical Politician has given us a remarkable Instance, how ridiculous and monstrous a Thing a Government (as well as a World) without God must appear, when pursued into all its Consequences. For can any Thing be more foolish, than to put a Prince upon a Practice, which (if once discover'd) must end in his utter Discredit and Ruin? For no Body will ever repose any Confidence in a Person whom they have once found in a Cheat, especially in one of that vile and scandalous Nature, which these Politicians recommend. For no Dissimulation can be carried on long undetected, the Vizard will in a little Time fall off, and then the Shame and Confusion, which ensues upon such a Mishap, will do a greater Discredit to the Counterfeit, than he can possibly reap upon the Success of it. For whilst a Prince maintains a plain and sincere Character, and performs all his Actions in the Integrity of his Heart, although he sometimes happens to be mistaken in his Opinions or Intentions, yet his Honesty and Well-meaning still keeps up a good Esteem in the Minds of his Subjects after a great many Failures; but a crafty Dissimulation once discover'd, creates such a Disgust in all People, that he will never be trusted again, this will render even his intire Resolutions for the future to be suspected. And that of *Machiavel's* is but a poor Evasion, to imagine that the Intimates of such a Prince, to whom his Designs must be first made known, will not discover them, or that other Persons cannot take Notice of them. For Men of a courtly Education, though they be trained up to all the Arts of Closeness and Secrecy, yet amidst a mighty Variety of Conversation and Correspondence, something of such a great Secret will one time or other unadvisedly drop from



from them ; which sagacious People taking a Hint from, by laying Circumstances together, will unravel the whole Mystery by. But granting them all so exquisitely close and reserv'd, that the acutest Eye can observe nothing from them, and make no Advantage of their Unwari-ness : This will be very far from enabling a Prince to carry on such a pious Cheat Successfully, unless he were sure they were as honest and entire, as they were close and impenetrable. 'Tis too well known from all Histories and Ages, that the most able Ministers of State have been corrupted by the Enemy's Gold to betray the most wholesome Counsels of their Masters ; and it may be as reasonably supposed, that the same Charms may be as effectual to bring on a Discovery of those Projects which are of a less justifiable Nature. But there is no Occasion to bribe Men to lay open such a fraudulent Pretence of a *Machia-velian* Prince ; every disobliged Favourite stands ready charged with Revenge, not only to reveal it, but to ag- gravate it with all the inhanfing Circumstances : For, up- on such Occasions, we find Persons take hold of lesser Faults to blacken the Character of their Prince who has discarded them ; but if it lay in their Way to charge to his Account so foul a Crime as Hypocrisy, they would, in such a Case, be so far from Secrécy and Tender-ness, that they would have no Mercy upon his Reputa- tion.

So that upon the whole Issue of the Matter, we may thus fairly conclude, That whereas Piety, and a devout Worship of God, are necessarily required in a Prince, for to procure a Blessing upon his Government ; they ought to have the first Consideration in the Minds of all those whom it has pleased God to call to that high Station ; if so be that they would expect any Happiness in the Con- cerns which are under their Care. And since Piety is likewise so necessary, to keep up a good Esteem and Ve- neration for the chief Magistrate, in the Hearts of Men, he must take Care that this be true and unfeigned, and paid as heartily and readily, as if there were no secular Ad- vantage to accrue from it. For all counterfeit Devotion

and Mock-shews of Piety, serve only a Turn for a while; they are Games, which can be but once or twice play'd, and then must end in Shame and Infamy.

*Demob.* This is Harangue which is calculated for the Use of those shallow Heads, who prefer their Devotion before their Interest. And perhaps you can be ready with as many ineffectual Words, to persuade a Monarch to holy and righteous Actions. But such a dreaming Monarch as this would make (if there ever was such an one in the World) would be fitter for a Cloister than a Throne. But the Florentine Politician, who understood these Matters best, declares his Mind thus. \* “ To set aside that  
 “ which the Generality of Men have devised concerning  
 “ the Pattern of a perfect Prince, with an Eye had to  
 “ that only which does exist in Nature, and is received in  
 “ vulgar Use; I maintain that a Prince, in order to main-  
 “ tain his Dignity and Possessions, must learn and study  
 “ how he may sometimes deviate from Virtue and be  
 “ wicked, according as his Concerns may require. For  
 “ if he be resolved to keep in the right Road of Virtue,  
 “ and perform all the Duties of an honest Man, 'tis im-  
 “ possible he can live in Safety among such a Multitude  
 “ of wicked Men as the World abounds with.

And in another Place he lays down this: “ *Pertinax*  
 “ was promoted to the Empire against the Will of the  
 “ Soldiers, who under the Government of *Commodus*,  
 “ were accustomed to a licentious Use of Vice and Plea-  
 “ sure. Therefore *Pertinax*, a good and a wise Prince,  
 “ was hated by the Soldiers, who were in fear lest he  
 “ should recall the ancient Discipline. By the same Dis-  
 “ aster *Alexander Severus* was destroyed, a young Prince  
 “ endued with a great many extraordinary Virtues. From  
 “ whence we are to learn, that the ill Opinion of Men  
 “ is as easily incurred by Virtue, as by Vice. Therefore  
 “ if a Prince would maintain the State of his Govern-  
 “ ment, he must accommodate himself to the Genius of  
 “ those from whom he fears any Loss or Injury; and

\* Mac. Prin. c. 17.

“ must imitate their Manners, though ever so corrupt.  
 “ For Virtue and honest Actions, will, in such a Case,  
 “ prove dangerous and pernicious.

*Eudem.* I find that the World is not so wicked already, but that you and your Masters, by your ill Principles, would make it worse. For as much as you may value your self upon the Scheme; I think the Christian Politicks, set down in the holy Scriptures, are much better; which, in direct Opposition to all you have said, do lay it down, as a fundamental Maxim of the Religion we profess.

I. That a holy Life is serviceable and advantageous in every State and Condition, even of this Life. *Godliness is profitable unto all Things, having a Promise of the Life which now is, and of that which is to come, 1 Tim. iv. 8.* And they tell us that *those who do Evil that Good may come, their Damnation is just, Rom. iii. 8.* The same holy Books inform us, that nothing can more truly advance the Interest of a crowned Head, or any other supreme Magistrate, than Virtue and Integrity. *Mercy and Truth preserve the King, and his Throne shall be established in Righteousness, Prov. xxv. 5.* They tell us likewise, That a holy Life is the best Point of Politicks; and that Piety is more true and substantial Wisdom, than any ungodly Cunning. *The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom, and a good Understanding have all they that do his Commandments, Psal. cxi. 12.* That *Magistrates should be able Men, such as fear God, Men of Truth, hating Covetousness, Exod. xviii. 21.* So likewise we find there a particular Promise of God's Blessing to religious and holy Princes. For, says God to Solomon, *2 Kings ix. 4. If thou wilt walk before me as David thy Father walked, in Integrity of Heart, and Uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my Statutes and my Judgments, then will I establish the Throne of thy Kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy Father.* And the Example of Saul ought to be a terrible Warning to Princes against their being disobedient to the Word of God. *Thou hast not kept the Commandment of God which he commanded thee: for now*

*Scripture  
Account of  
the Princely  
Virtues.*

would the Lord have establish'd thy Kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy Kingdom shall not continue, 1 Sam. xiii. 13. And again, Chap. v. 23. Because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, the Lord hath rejected thee from being King.

Now, whether or no these Instances of the Princely Duty, recommended in Scripture, be not more agreeable to Reason, than what is laid down by the Atheistical Politicians, I leave to any impartial Man, upon the following Considerations, to judge.

*Princes have the same common Obligations to Virtue with other Men.*

II. For Princes have Souls to be saved as well as other Men; and therefore they must pursue the same Methods, which the Gospel directs to work out their Salvation by. They by God's Word are persuaded, that there will be a Time of future Recompence; and that we must *All appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the Things done in the Body, whether good or bad.* And besides, at this mighty Audit, or Trial of all Mankind, wicked Kings are represented in as dismay'd and desponding a Condition as other Men. *And the Kings of the Earth, and the great Men hid themselves in the Dens; and said to the Rocks and the Mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb,* Rev. vi. 15. Upon this Consideration, all Christians and believing Princes, who have any Reliance upon the Being of those future Conditions of good and bad Men in another World, which our blessed Saviour has discover'd to us, must make Provision here, for their Well-being there; taking care that the Choiceness of their Satisfaction which they enjoy in this World, be not a Bar to the immortal Joys of the next; and that a little transitory Pleasure be not the Fore-runner of eternal Misery.

Indeed, the Atheistical Men (who are wont to instill the ill Principles before-mention'd into Princes) endeavour withal, to expel out of their Minds all the Foundation of Christianity, and Religion likewise. But, for the most Part, their Success fails them in the carrying on this wicked Enterprize: For, though an excessive Love

of Power and Glory, leads many Princes into some broad Transgressions of their Duty, yet there are few or none to be met with, that have bid an open Defiance to all Religion.

They have often in their declining Years, endeavoured to make amends for former Acts of Inclemency and Injustice, by Superstition and Bigotry; but the Nature of such great Persons is too generous, and their Education too good, ever to be brought over to a total Infidelity. For your Atheists are all pitiful narrow-spirited Wretches, that have no Sense of Honour or Goodness: But 'tis a very rare Thing to find even the worst of Princes, debased to so abject a Temper; for even in the midst of a great many notorious Vices, they, for the most Part retain (at least) the Belief of the main Points of Religion. This is a peculiar Act of divine Providence, which hinders these wicked Agents of the Devil, the Atheistical Politicians, from doing so much Mischief to the World, as their abominable Principles would otherwise do, if they could once persuade Princes to embrace the whole Set of their pestilential Tenets.

Now since all Princes, as well bad as good, cannot but have a firm Belief of future Rewards and Punishments, they must provide for another State as well as other Men: For God, who is no Respector of Persons, when they come into the other World, will have no greater Regard to them, to exempt them from Punishment, more than to other People; every one alike must stand or fall, according to the good or bad Actions of his Life, in whatsoever Condition God hath placed him; and one shall be as liable to be punished for having been an ill Prince, as the other shall for having been an ill Subject. They must therefore work out their Salvation, with the same Fear and Trembling, as other People. They must take Care, not only to discharge all the Respect owing to Almighty God, but also must perform all the rest of the Parts of Christian Duty, which are incumbent upon other Members of Christ's Flock. They must not permit themselves in the constant Practice of any one known Sin, or in the

Neglect of any one Duty. They must endeavour to the utmost to watch against, and to subdue their own natural Infirmities, and to conquer their Passions: And as they excel the ordinary Part of the World in many great and shining Virtues, so they should not be behind-hand with them in the ordinary Tasks of Religion.

*Vicious  
Princes ac-  
countable  
for the Sins  
of their  
Subjects.*

III. But this Duty does receive particular Re-inforcements from the Consideration, That if Princes be not circumspect in their Lives themselves, the Excesses which they indulge themselves in, will not fail to be imitated by others; which should be a great Motive to such august Personages, to take the exactest Paces they can in the Ways of Virtue; lest, by making any unwarrantable Excursions into Vice, they should be answerable for the Sins of those who transgress after their Pattern.

And whereas God Almighty has repos'd so great a Charge in their Hands, they should take care to be remarkable in excellent Acts of Piety and Virtue; that others, of inferiour Rank, may take a Copy from their exemplary Goodness: For there is no Instruction in the World so prevalent as that of Example is. For as for moral Rules and Precepts, they (in respect of this one) are but dead and unaffecting: They only tell us of our Duty, and leave us there; but this explains it to us in the most lively Characters; it gives us a Demonstration that it may be done, and withall shews us how to do it.

But of all Examples, those of Princes are the most Instructive; for they being placed upon the highest Ascent of Honour, their Virtues are displayed every where around them; so that *Men, seeing their good Works may glorify their Father which is Heaven.*

The Virtues of ordinary Men seem but dull and clouded, through the Meanness of their Quality, but the same enlightned by the Beams of the supream Honour, become so illustrious and glorious, that they excite the Admiration of all who have their Eyes fix'd upon that high Dignity. Besides, Men are mightily inclined to imitate the Virtues of these sublime Personages, out of a kind of Ambition of appearing and acting like them. Vice  
by

by this Means will grow out of fashion, and scandalous; and Men will abhor to do an ill Action, because 'tis ungentle and uncourt-like: They will choose to be brave and charitable, and sober, and religious, because they see Persons of that extraordinary Dignity choose to do the like.

This will have the first Influence upon the prime Nobility of a Country, to whom their Prince's Virtues shine the brightest; but by Degrees it will diffuse it self to the inferiour Quality, and to People often of the lowest Condition; who will all be striving to get a Reputation by those Actions, which Persons of so high a Character, do with so much Glory distinguish themselves by.

Now if Princes of all Nations would take care to set such a virtuous Example to their Subjects, what a blessed Age should we behold! What an assimilating Quality would they attain to by their Characters, turning all their Subject's Actions into the same heavenly Disposition with their own, and making it every where to be shameful and irreputable, to be lewd and dissolute, as now in too many places it is to be good and virtuous.

IV. But supposing, that Princes were not in the least to answer for their People's Faults, which their ill Example had led them into; yet it were worth the while to set them a good Copy of Virtue to transcribe, only upon account that their Government thereby would be more easy to them. For the Helm of Government never moves so smoothly in a Prince's Hands, as when the People are made tractable by good and virtuous Dispositions. For Vice actuates Men with such sower Passions, and such an Unwillingness to be reduced to a better Temper, as Occasions no little Vexation to those Governours who have the Misfortune to be set over them.

But whenever these rugged Dispositions are smooth'd away by Virtue and Religion, Government then will go on with quiet and even Paces; for then the Governour's Work is, in a manner, done to his Hands; the Fear of God having divested Men already of those ill Qualities

*Virtuous  
Subjects  
more easy  
to be go-  
verned.*

which are so prejudicial to the Community, and which the Magistrate's Care is chiefly concern'd to correct.

*Vicious  
Subjects  
govern'd  
better by  
Virtue,  
than by  
vicious  
Compli-  
ance.*

V. But however, though Subjects be vicious to the last Degree, they are governed better by the Rules of Virtue, than by a Compliance with their Vices. For Virtue is a venerable and awful Thing, and keeps up an Esteem even among those that act the most contrary to it. But Vice makes Men cheap and contemptible, not only among good Men, but even those that commit the same wicked Actions themselves.

But when Esteem is lost, the Nerves of Government are perfectly dissolved; the Ruler has no Authority left; or else he dares not execute it: For no one, of what Figure soever, has a Face, to animadvert upon another for that Fault which he is guilty of himself. So that 'tis plain, a vicious Compliance with the Subjects of a disorderly Government, is so far from mending it, that it will make it a great deal worse.

The only Fault which is like to be committed by a virtuous Prince, who is come to the Rule of a People so depraved, is by being too quick and precipitated in Reformation. For as such Irregularities have grown to their Height by Degrees, so they cannot be reclaim'd in the Gross. When the Correction of one Fault is digested, and the Error amended, 'tis soon enough to proceed to an Animadversion upon the second. For Men naturally grow Stubborn and Refractory when there is too much charged upon them, and rather choose to defend their Irregularities than to forsake them all at once. So that whenever any good Princes have been unfortunate by executing a virtuous Rule over vicious Subjects, the Fault has not lain in their governing according to Virtue, but in their Defect in Prudence; by too rigidly enjoining some severe Precepts, before they had made way for them by some gentler Preparations.

VI. As for your Instances of *Pertinax* and *Alexander Severus*, for the Unsuccessfulness of a virtuous Government; we may answer, That the Government of the *Roman* Empire was very different from any Principality



now in Being; for the Emperor was set up by the Soldiers of the Army upon any fond Esteem, and pulled down oftentimes upon as unaccountable a Disgust. So that the Accidents which that Government was liable to, are not to be charg'd upon those of our Times, which are transmitted from one to another by a just Succession, and the known Laws of a Country. For many odd Occurrences might put an Army in a Ferment, and make them Mutiny against their Commanders, which are not sufficient to raise a Commotion in a Kingdom, or to dethrone a Prince.

But upon a fair View of the Matter, it will appear, that in the Case of \* *Pertinax*, this Prince was not unfortunate for his Virtues, but became hated for a very fordid and unprincely Vice, *viz.* Covetousness †: For having exercised Merchandise when he was a private Man, he very fordidly kept on the Trade after he was promoted to the imperial Dignity, by which he lost his Reputation, not only amongst the Army, but over all the Empire. And that which enraged the Soldiers most, and was the Occasion of his Death, was so far from being a Virtue, that it was an Act of unmerciful Hardness: For he kept back the Pay of the Army, which had been due to them for nine Years together.

And *Herodian* (who was cotemporary with § *Alexander Severus*) writes, That his Misfortunes were owing not to his Virtues, but to the intolerable Covetousness of his Mother *Mammaea*; which raised the Disaffections of the Army to him, upon her Account. But this Accident was chiefly owing to the Wickedness of the *Roman* Army at that Time, which had been spoiled by Vice and Laziness under the debauch'd Government of *Helioabalus*.

*Demob.* Yes, *Eudemius*, and you, I'll warrant you, are for having your Kings and Queens to be Nursing Fathers, and Nursing Mothers to the Church; and would have them think themselves in Conscience obliged to defend their Religion, which they believe to be the

\* *Capitol. in Pertin.* † *Herod., Lib. 6.* § *Herod. in Vit. Sev. truest,*

trueſt, tho' ever ſo much to the prejudice of their temporal Affairs.

But thoſe great Perſons ought truly to inform themſelves of the juſt Extent of their Authority; and not think themſelves bound to defend any Religion, becauſe they think it true; but that it is in their power to make any Religion true, if they think fit to eſtabliſh it. For old *Tom. Hobbs* \* has made it clear, “ That the very  
 “ *Scriptures* themſelves receive all their Authority and  
 “ Obligation from the Magiſtrate. Nor is it any matter  
 “ that a Prince ſhould tie himſelf up to countenance only  
 “ thoſe things which are founded upon true *Revelations*  
 “ from God; for the giving out of falſe Miracles will  
 “ ſerve his Intereſt, altogether as well; becauſe they con-  
 “ tribute to the Increate of Piety among their People,  
 “ which he may make Advantages from as he pleaſes.  
 “ And in this Chriſtian Princes ought to imitate the  
 “ antient *Romans*, who uſ'd to feign Miracles and Ora-  
 “ cles from Heaven; as well to ſtir up the Courage of  
 “ the Soldiers, as to make the People more obedient:  
 “ † For they were wont to give out among the common  
 “ Folks, that they had inſpected the Sibylline Books;  
 “ or had ſent to enquire of *Apollo's* Oracle at *Dclphi*;  
 “ or that the Omens were very lucky. For when the  
 “ People are perſuaded, that what things their Magi-  
 “ ſtrates command are directed by God, they obey  
 “ them as willingly, as if God himſelf had perſonally  
 “ commanded them. Nor is it requiſite that any one,  
 “ but the Magiſtrate, know the little Credit which ought  
 “ to be given to theſe Devices. Now by this a Prince  
 “ may reap all the Advantages both to himſelf and to  
 “ his People, as if he really was a Defender of the Faith.  
 “ *Eudem.* But in Oppoſition to all, this lewd Doctrin  
 “ of your *Demoborus*, we will oppoſe the *Doctrine* of  
 “ the holy *Scriptures* concerning theſe Matters. And let  
 “ all the World be judge which are moſt reaſonable of  
 “ the two.

\* *Lev.* cap. 33 & 42. † *Mach. Com. Liv. Lib.* 1. cap. 12 13, 14.

I. The Account which the Holy Scripture gives concerning this Point stands thus. 'Tis prophesied by the Holy Ghost, that under the Gospel-Dispensation, *Kings should be Nursing-Fathers, and Queens Nursing-Mothers* to the Church, *Isa. xlix. 23.* And the Apostle tells us, That the supream Magistrate is *the Minister of God for Good, Rom. xiii. 4.* And the Examples of pious Kings are recommended in Scripture, for instructing their People in the true Religion: Thus by a Commission from King *Jehosopha*, certain *Levites taught in Judah; and they had the Book of the Law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the Cities of Judah and taught the People, 2 Chron. xvi. 9.* And other Princes are very honourably mention'd for rooting out false Religions, and other Corruptions which had crept in among God's People. Thus King *Asa* is reported to *have done good in the Eyes of the Lord; for he took away the Altars of the strange Gods, and the high Places, and brake down the Images, and cut down the Grove, 2 Chron. xiv. 3.* And *Saul* himself, in the best Part of his Reign before his falling from God, is recorded to have *cut off those who had familiar Spirits, and the Wizards out of the Land, 1 Sam. xxviii. 9.* From which, and many more Instances, we find it remark'd, as a very noble Quality of a Prince to promote true Religion and Piety, and to extirpate all false and erroneous Worships and Practices, but we find nothing in favour of Counterfeits and Impostures.

Moreover we find holy Princes piously employ'd in building Temples to the supream God, *2 Chron. iii. 1. Ezz. vi. 8.* and repairing them, *2 Kings xii. 5. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22.* and reforming some Irregularities which had got into the Ecclesiastical Offices, and improving the divine Worship; as particularly *Solomon*, who *appointed, according to the Order of David his Father, the Courses of the Priests to their Service, and the Levites to their Charges, to praise and minister before the Priests, as the Duty of every Day required, 2 Chron. viii. 14.*

But throughout the whole Bible there is not the least Encouragement given for false Gods, or a false Worship;

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*The Scripture Doctrine, that Princes ought to take care of the true Religion.*

but contrarywise a Curse denounced against all such Votaries, *Deut.* xxvii. 15. and immediate Death inflicted upon Persons who shall entice to such a strange Religion, *Deut.* xiii. 1.

Now all this Account of the Princely Duty, as it is laid down in Scripture, is very pious and rational, as that of the Unbelievers is unreasonable and impious; as will be farther manifest by the Consideration of the following Particulars.

*Princes  
must defend  
Religion  
out of Gra-  
titude to  
God.*

II. For it is highly reasonable that Princes should exert their Sovereign Power in Defence of the true Religion revealed by God, out of Gratitude to Almighty God for the mighty Favour conferred on them in placing them in so high and august a Station.

It was not from any Merit of their own, that God permitted them to be born to this shining Honour: He might (if he had pleas'd) have ordered them to grind at the Mill, as easily as to sit upon the Throne; or might have clothed them in Rags, instead of Purple. And whereas there are so many Millions of People in a Country, whereof the greatest Number are forced to get a poor Subsistence by the Sweat of their Brows, and the easier Circumstances of others are oftentimes by truckling to the haughty Contempt of domineering Superiors: The greatest Monarch in the World, might have been placed (if the great Creator of all things had so pleas'd) in the lowest of these Conditions. But when he has singled out for them so choice a Condition, when he has selected and refined all the Satisfaction of human Life, and as it were drawn them off the Lees which other People's Pleasures are mixed with, for their Use; and this without any Subserviency and uneasy Dependence, but all these Pleasures are heightened by the Enjoyment of the intirest Liberty which human Nature affords; most certainly there rests upon them the highest Degree of Gratitude to be paid to so bountiful a Creator, who has befriended them with so distinguishing Favours.

Now since God is an all-sufficient Being, and there is no Recompence to be made to him, all the Returns which

which a Prince can make must be to God's Creatures, and those especially to whom he bears the greatest Love.

Now this is the Church of Christ, the Congregation of all faithful People, *which Christ so loved that he gave himself for it, Eph. v. 25.* Now if our blessed Lord does esteem Unkindness done to any one of his poor Disciples, as done to himself, *Matt. xxv. 45.* we may be assured that a beneficent Action done to the whole collective Body of his faithful Servants, or to a very large part of it, will not be valued in Heaven at a lower Rate.

III. Another Argument that it is Part of the Duty of a Prince to succour and defend the Church, is upon account, That the Doctrines of Christ's Church do very much tend to the Support of his sacred Office.

*Because the Christian Religion supports their Office.*

There was never any Religion in the World which did bespeak such high Honour and Esteem for, and such exact Regard to the supream Power, as that which was delivered to Mankind by our blessed Lord. He taught us, by the most illustrious Example, how to discharge our Duties this Way: For he himself being a Person of the highest Dignity upon Earth, was yet pleased to shew the most humble Obedience to his Civil Superiors. Rather than be wanting in the Payment of a small Tax which was charged upon him, he put himself to the Expence of a Miracle to procure it for the Government; taking a great deal of Pains to rectify the mistaken Opinions of some Men, (who under the Pretence of being God's People, thought themselves exempt from all Duties to the Civil Government; commanding them *to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, as well as unto God the things which are God's, Matt. xii. 21.* When the Multitude would have forced the Crown of *Israel* upon his Head; which tempting Offer would have shook the Loyalty of some of the greatest Pretenders to it; he refuses the illegal Overture with a pious Indignation, and tells them, *That his Kingdom was not of this World, Joh. xvi. 36.* And when a warm Disciple of his, in Defence of his Master, drew his Sword upon an Officer

ficer of the Civil Magistrate, he not only rebukes him; but for that Offence denounces a severe Sentence against him, which was afterwards inflicted upon him; *They that take the Sword, shall perish by the Sword*, Matt. xxvi. 52. And lastly, such a Regard did he pay to the Civil Magistrate, that tho' he pass'd Judgment upon him by a strained Interpretation of the Law, and without any Ground, but only to gratify the Importunity and Malice of the Jewish Clergy; yet he vouchsafed quietly to acquiesce under his unjust Sentence, and to undergo that painful and infamous Death which he had adjudged him to, when by the least Word he might have summon'd in Myriads of Angels to his Rescue; or by his own Power might have laid all his Adversaries dead before him.

His Apostles after him, both by their Doctrine and Example preached the same Lesson to the World. They exhort all Christians to *be subject to the higher Powers*, upon consideration that *they are ordained of God*, Rom. xiii. 1. and have a divine Authority enforcing an Obedience to their Injunctions. They require a Submission to every human *Ordinance for the Lord's sake*, 1 Pet. ii. 13. not only out of Fear, but for Conscience sake, both out of Obedience to the Commands, and in Compliance with the Example of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Christ himself. Now since the Christian Church is constituted upon such peaceable Principles as tend so much to the Ease and Quiet of Governours, and are so admirably suited to the Support of their Authority; they cannot pursue their own Interest by any properer Methods, than by taking into their Care and more especial Protection, a Body of Men, who, by the Rules of their holy Profession, are solemnly engaged to pay them all that Duty and Respect, which others must be brought to, by Terror and Compulsion. Now, by how much any Body of Christians shall by false Glosses upon this plain Doctrine of our Lord and his Apostles, or other pestilential Opinions copied from the Atheistical Philosophy, corrupt these wholesome Tenets of Christianity; they by so much the more

more do forfeit the Countenance and good Esteem of a Christian Prince, and have thereby a less Pretence to his Care and Sovereign Protection. As on the other side, those Christians that keep up steadily to the Rule of their blessed Master, and take care conscientiously to discharge their Duty to their Prince, in all those respects which the Gospel requires of them, they have a more especial Title to his Patronage and Love; and every good Prince, both by Inclination and Interest, will be disposed more peculiarly to befriend them, who not so much out of any Prospect of Advantage, as from the pure Dictates of their Consciences, think themselves obliged readily to obey him.

Besides, this Argument will have its farther Weight, when it shall be considered, that the Christian Religion, when it has its full Influence upon Men's Lives that it ought to have, gives such a peaceable Bent to their Natures, and molds them into such quiet and pliable Habits, as takes off a great Part of the Trouble and Turmoil of Government, when it is exercised over the untractable Tempers of wicked and irreligious People. This cures them of Pride and Ambition, which spur Men on to make the most insolent Demands, and afterwards push them upon the precipitate Methods of revenging the Refusal of them by Plots and Seditions, when they prove unsuccessful. This inspires them with a Christian Charity, with a Love of Peace, and a hearty Concern for the publick Good; and inclines them to postpone all private Advantages, to the general Welfare of the Community and mutual Concord. This divests Men of all those Passions and Vices which are the Bane of Society, and inures them to the Habits of those generous Virtues and Qualities, which make Communities happy, even with the least Application of their Governours.

Now it must be the nighest Concern and Interest of a Prince to cherish with a most tender Care, that Holy Religion which makes their Government sit so easy upon their Hands; and by a voluntary Compliance with their  
Laws

Laws and Injunctions, rids them of all the Trouble and Invidiousness which an Obedience enforced by civil Penalties, and a coercive Power, would occasion.

*Princes  
should de-  
fend Chri-  
stianity, be-  
cause de-  
ferre celis.*

IV. A farther Reason why Princes should take care of, and protect Religion, is, because it is not endowed with sufficient Power to defend it self, and provide it self of those Advantages, which are requisite for its Subsistence. Now this is a sufficient Plea to any generous Mind, for Relief and Assistance. And since God Almighty has lodged so much Power in princely Hands, they cannot make that good use of it, which Providence expects of them, unless they lay it out in the Assistance of those who want it. This has occasion'd the succouring of Orphans and Widows, from the Usurpations and Ravages of powerful Men, to be a point of Justice, which has in all Ages claimed the Magistrate's Aid; and to deny it when designed, has been esteemed to be a Sort of renouncing the Pity and Tenderness of human Nature. Now it has pleased Almighty God to constitute his Church in a State of Pupillage, and to deny it that coercive Authority which he has vested the secular Power with.

And since in a Christian Government the Church is so mutually blended with the State, that in some respect they make up but one Body: Whatever Power the Church wants for the Support of its Constitution, and for the Defence of it against its Adversaries, it must borrow of the chief Magistrate of the State; to the end that those evil Persons who are not to be restrained by Church-Censures, whose Penalty is only Spiritual, they by the Smart of secular Punishments, may be either forced into their Duty, or be obliged to forbear their Injuries offered to the Congregation of the Faithful. And this is more especially necessary in these latter Ages of the Church, when the Power of Miracles is ceased. For in the primitive Times a temporal Penalty did most commonly attend Excommunication, which the Apostle calls, a *Buffering by Satan*, 1 Cor. iv. 11. which extraordinary Power upon the Government's becoming Christian, became



came less frequent: A delivering over to the secular Power supply'd the place of that mighty Dereliction of the Holy Spirit of God which accompany'd it before. Now since God Almighty has in this, as well as in other Cases, appointed Princes to be his Vice-gerents, and to receive the Church into their Patronage, which for a Time he kept in his own, they cannot answer the Trust repositied in their Hands, unless they imploy their great Power in the Defence of the Church, which he has made them *Nursing Fathers* of, when he deliver'd it into their Protection.

The several Ways by which a Prince may succour and defend the Church, may be as many as the Dangers and Necessities of it. And therefore their Power is to be implored, whenever the Church is infected by pestilent Heresies, or Schisms; that those poisonous Doctrines, or impious Defections, may not tend to the Subversion of the Faith. They are to be applied to, when the Rights of the Church are invaded, or their Censures despis'd; that those who value not the being turned out of the Congregation of the Faithful, may either be reclaimed or deterred, by feeling the Stroke of the secular Arm. It lies within the compass of their high Fortune or Power, either by their own Liberality, or recommending it to the Charity of their Subjects, to build up or repair the Edifices of the Church, that the Worship of God may be performed in a decent manner; and that the Sordidness of the Place where Devotion is perform'd, may not take off the Reverence which is due to the Exercise of those holy Offices. It may be a further part of their princely Care, to augment the Revenues of those who officiate in the Church, when the Scantiness of their Income will not provide for the Necessities of their Subsistence, or for the Dignity of their Calling; that their Minds may not be distracted by the Urgency of their Wants, from the Duties and Studies of their Function; and that the Meanness of their Circumstances, may not create a Disgust to their Profession.

*Not for the  
Interest of a  
Prince to  
defend a  
false Reli-  
gion.*

V. But as for the Defence of a false Religion, no wise or good Prince, or indeed any one who has the least Sense of God's Providence or Goodness, will undertake it. For when he considers that every Minute he is under the Direction of God's good Will and Pleasure, and that his Crown stands or falls accordingly as his Goodness and Wisdom appoints; he must with the utmost Care and Caution, avoid the doing any thing which may tend to the dishonour of that great Being, from whom he expects continual Succour and Defence. Now nothing can be more displeasing to, or a higher Provocation of Almighty God, than to set up a false Worship. For this lessens the Reverence and Esteem which is owing to the great Creator and Preserver of all Things; it gives a Share of the Honour, which is only due to the Maker of the World, to his poor Creatures; or finds out wrong Ways to pay an unacceptable Respect to him, which either he in himself abominates, or, in his Revelation to Mankind, has no where directed. For indeed nothing can be so spitefully contrived, in Opposition to the Honour of Almighty God, and to bring him, as much as may be, into Contempt with his Creatures, as to impart the Worship which is due to him, to Devils, or dead Men; or, to pretend, out of Respect to the God of Truth, to advance Lies and Impostures. This is plain from the Nature of the Thing it self, but is more remarkably so from his Holy Word, as it is laid down to us in his earliest Revelations to Mankind. For we find that the whole Book of the Old Testament does abound with the most terrible Threats and Denunciations against the Sins of Idolatry and Superstition. By reason of these abominable Crimes, which the first Generations of Mankind after the Flood fell into the Guilt of; God Almighty, who at first communicated himself to all his devout Worshipers, left these Apostate Nations to their own selves, and confined his Correspondence and particular Influence to the Family of *Abraham*; which alone, of all the People in the World, continued in the Worship of the one and the true God. This inclined him to

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bles this People most remarkably, even in their worst Afflictions; and whilst they were under an unmerciful Captivity in *Agypt*, to increase them into such a prodigious Multitude, as exceeded all the common Productions of Nature, either before or since. It was for this Cause that he prospered them so exceedingly in the Reduction of the Inhabitants of the Land of *Canaan*, and that he gave them such an Advantage over their idolatrous Enemies. For this reason he preserved them pure and unmixed with the *Syrian* Multitudes in the *Babylonish* Captivity; and afterward partly by Trade, partly by Colonies, and by the Conquests of *Pompey* and *Vespasian*, dispersed them, with their Religion, entire, throughout the whole World, to be as it were the Seed from which he in his all-wise Providence did design Christianity should arise for the Reformation of the Roman World, for the Instructing them in the Knowledge of the true God, and the Salvation manifested to the World by our Blessed Lord. And by a standing Instance of his Providence, does still continue them separate from the rest of the World, till he in his good Pleasure shall think fit to call them home to the Knowledge of their Saviour; when they at last shall be, as it were, a new Leaven to the whole World, when by their Conversion all the Kingdoms of the Earth shall be impregnated with the Gospel Truths, and shall prepare a way for the universal Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Now as God has thus remarkably shewed his Favour to that Nation for its keeping up the true Worship of God in the general Depravation of the Heathen World; so he has shewed his Displeasure to Nations and Princes in particular, whenever they have departed from it. For as for the Jewish Nation, there is hardly any Prince thereof, that fell into Idolatry, but either lived or died unfortunately. And since this part of the World became Christian, no Prince that I know of, ever apostatized from the Faith, but his End was remarkably Tragical, or Calamitous.

*Julian*, Nephew to *Constantine the Great*, being educated in the Principles of the Christian Religion, under

*Ensebius* Bishop of *Nicomedia*, and during the Reign of his Cousin *Constantius*, taking upon him the Office of a Reader in the Church; but was perverted to Paganism by the Subtily of *Maximus* the Philosopher, and being proclaimed Emperor, he openly renounced the Faith. He began to rebuild the Heathen Temples, and to revive the Sacrifices; he demolished the Christian Churches, deposed or persecuted the Bishops, forbid the Christian Children to be educated in Humane Literature, and did every thing he could in despite to the Holy Religion. Being called into the East to repress the *Persian* War, he threatned an utter Extirpation to Christianity when he returned from his Expedition. But God, by a remarkable Judgment, cut him short, being mortally wounded in a Battel which he rashly enterprized with the *Persians*, he died most execrably blaspheming; catching up the Blood which flow'd from his Wound, into his Hand, and throwing it up to Heaven, he cried out in a diabolical Rage, *Thou hast conquered me, \* O Galilean*; which was the contumelious Name the apostate Wretch was want to call our Blessed Saviour by.

*Bede* reports †, that *Redvalt* King of the *East Saxons*, being converted to Christianity, afterwards relapsed into Heathenism; and like the old *Samaritan*, worshiped God and his Country Idols in the same Temple; but presently afterwards was taken off by Death, living however to see his eldest Son basely murdered by one *Richebert* a Heathen Man.

*William Rufus* †, by some of our Historians is reported to have been so loose in his Principles of Christianity, that he designed a Dispute between the *Jews* and the Christians, of which, if the first prevailed by Arguments, he declared he would renounce his Baptism: Which Story, if it be true (and he be not belied by the Monks of that time, to whom he was extraordinary severe, by pillaging their Convents) the Justice of God was very remarkable in his End. For he was suddenly

\* Sozom. Hist. Eccl. † Bed. Hist. Ang. Lib. 2. c. 15. † Ma. Paris.

killed by the glancing of an Arrow shot at a Deer in the *New Forest* by one *Sir Walter Tyrrel* a *French Knight*.

*Henry* the Fourth of *France*, after his reconciling himself to the Church of *Rome*, could never be trusted by the *Jesuits*, and the other *Bigots* of that Church: But was first attempted upon to be murder'd by one *John Castel*, who directing his *Dagger* at his *Throat*, but missing his *Aim*, only struck out one of his *Teeth*. His pious *Sister* thereupon made this religious *Reflection*, *You have denied God already, Brother, with your Mouth, which, you see, has been thus so remarkably punished. Have a Care of denying him in your Heart.* He reigned ten Years after in a very prosperous Condition; but *God Almighty*, by a terrible, tho' late *Act* of his *Justice*, punished his *Apostacy*: For in the Year 1610. at a time of *Publick Joy*, when he, riding in a pompous *Procession* at a solemn *Coronation* of his *Queen*, he was stabbed to the *Heart* with a *poison'd Dagger* by *Francis Ravallac*, a *Franciscan Monk*.

*Christina*, late *Queen* of *Sweden*, by her forced *Renunciation* of her *Crown*, and some other late *Princes* of *Europe*, by their *Misfortunes* which they have sustained after their *Perversion* to the *Romish Faith*; are very clear *Instances* of *God's heavy Indignation* falling upon those *Princes*, who instead of defending the true *Religion*, have unhappily opposed it, and by the *Rules* of ungodly *Policy*, and to serve some *secular Ends*, have been persuaded to protect and countenance a false one in lieu of it.

But since I have proceeded thus far in these *Historical Remarks*, I will beg leave to observe further (which the famous *Lactantius* has wrote a *Book* about) that of all the *Roman Princes* who were the *Authors* of those most terrible *Persecutions* in the primitive *Times*, against the poor *Christians*, not one of them died in peace. *Nero*, the *Author* of the first *Persecution* against the *Christians*, upon whom he laid the blame of burning of the *City*, which he had fired himself; at the *Approach* of *Galb.'s Army* to *Rome*, he run away in

a Disguise, hid himself in a Cellar, and fearing lest he should be deliver'd alive into *Galba's* Hands, laid violent Hands upon himself, and that too after the most cowardly manner, persuading his Page to kill himself first, to shew him what it was to die.

*Domitian*, the next fierce Enemy of the Christians, was murdered by a Conspiracy of his own Domesticks; his own Wife likewise being in the Design.

The Emperor *Decius*, who gave so great Vexation to the Church of Christ, ended his Life unfortunately in his Expedition against the *Scythians*: For being worsted by the Enemy, either endeavouring to fly, or to escape falling into the Hands of the Barbarians, he and his Horse were plunged into the Mire of the Fens which lay near the place where the Battle was fought, and his Body never afterwards recovered to receive the Rights of an honourable Burial: But, as *Lactantius* says, *Lay naked and uncovered, and, as became the Enemy of God, was the Food to wild Beasts and Birds.*

*Valerian*, who at his first Entrance upon the Empire, was somewhat favourable to the Christians; when he grew more settled therein, shed a great deal of their Blood. Which was remarkably avenged by God in his following Sufferings. For being betrayed in the fight with *Sapores*, King of *Persia*, by *Machinus*, he was taken Prisoner by that barbarous King, who made use of him for a Step to tread upon when he mounted his Horse; after having detained him a Captive till he grew old, he at last freed him alive.

*Aurelian* the Author of another Persecution against the Christians, was murdered by a Conspiracy, which was set on Foot by *Ministens* his *Libertus*, who feigned a List of several noble Persons, who he pretended his Master had designed to take off, which drew them to a Plot against his Life, which Design they bloodily executed at a place in *Thrace*, called *Cænophrurium*, as he was going to the *Persian* War.

The Persecution of *Dioclesian* was jointly carried on by himself, and his Coleagues in the Empire, *Maximinian* and *Galerius*. The ends of all which were signally unfortunate. *Dioclesian* vext by the Troubles of the State; and that the Christian Religion which he designed to eradicate, grew but the more for his Cruelties against it, in a Pet resigned the Empire, and afterwards left the World under a lingring and painful Disease. *Maximinian* hanged himself, being besieged by *Constantine* at *Marseilles*. *Galerius*, the chief Instigator of that Persecution, died of an Ulcer, which spread it self over his whole Body, which occasioned such a noisome Stench to proceed therefrom, that all his Physicians forsook him, whom in a rage he caused to be Slain, as also several others whom he sent to for Relief; from whom, when he had learnt that he could receive no Benefit from the Rules of their Art, he likewise cruelly murdered; himself, dying shortly after in a most terrible Torment.

Now all these dismal Calamities which have beset the forementioned Princes, who have either been Apostates from, or Persecutors of the true Religion, cannot be ascribed to pure Chance, or the ordinary Course of Providence; they were too remarkable, and too universal, to be ascribed to such a Cause. For if the Persecutors and Apostates had been ordinarily as happy as other Princes, this Plea might seem something fair; but it does not appear from History, that any one of all these Persons lived and died happily, but on the contrary, every one of them had the Finger of God signally evident in their Punishment. This I presume is sufficient to evince, that every good and wise Prince must be inclined to protect the true Religion, and not to countenance a false one, with regard to the Honour of God; which is discredited by a false Worship, and which he has in several Ages vindicated by such remarkable Judgments upon Princes, who have in this particular violated it.

VI. Another Reason why a Prince should not countenance a false Religion, upon account of furthering a politick Interest, is, because such measures will certainly

*A Counterfeit Religion cannot long prevail*

at last fail him and turn more to his detriment, than possibly he can reap advantage by serving a present turn by it. For nothing but Truth can bear an exact scanning; and there are prying Men in all Countries who will search to the bottom of Things, of Religion, especially, which lays Restraints upon Men's Actions, and they will endeavour to throw off the Yoke as far as may be almost of any Institution; but however, will never be long tied down to the Rules of a Religion, in which they can discover any Flaws; which no Superstition, set up only by a Politick Invention, can be free from. Now whenever such a Discovery is brought to light, the Reputation of a Government which sets it a foot, is intirely lost, and it is not in the Power of any after-game, to recover the Disgrace which such an Imposture brings with it. Indeed the Impostures, which carried on the longest and the most successful Cheat, are those of the *Sibylline* Books, and the Oracles of *Delphi*, mentioned by *Machiavel*; but even these in time lost their Credit. The Oracle of *Apollo* was remarked, in King *Philip* of *Macedon's* Time, *φιλίππιζεν*, to declare whatever King *Philip* would have it; and I do not know, whether ever it was received by any sensible Man, more than as a juggling Office set up to deceive simple People, by a few loose and ambiguous Words. The *Sibylline* Books were kept up so close in the Hands of the chief Magistrates of *Rome*, and consulted only upon Extremities of Dangers, when Men's frights made them construe any thing to their Advantage; that they could never come to be scanned by Men, in their cool and sedate Thoughts. And it may be a question, whether those ambiguous Verses were not counterfeited by the *Pontifices*, upon the pretended search, rather than found in the Original. But if they had been suffered to come under the publick View, and to have been commonly read by the People, there is no doubt but they would have been as contemptible in former Times, as they became in the latter.

VII. But



VII. But after all, altho' Princes could be assured, that any Superstition or Religion they should set up, was out of all fear of being discovered to be a Cheat; yet that Timidity, which it would for the most part strike into their Subject's Mind, would do more Mischief to their State, than could be recompensed by any Advantage which would accrue from the success of the Imposture. For all Superstition fills the Mind with such unnatural Fears, that upon any eminent Danger, they are more ready to grovel and languish under it, than with a brave Alacrity to encounter with it. For this possesses Men with a Sense of the Anger of some great preternatural Power, and at the same time gives them but very uncertain Hopes of appeasing it. For to have a Notion only of the Power and Severity of God, without his Goodness and his Willingness to be reconciled to, and to befriend Mankind, must load Men with anxious and distracting Cares, and make them very Heartless in enterprising any thing which they are persuaded they have an offended Deity to oppose them in, and whose Wrath they know not how to avert, but only by some fanciful Opinions which they cannot give any great credit to. Now the Christian Religion alone, by the Clearness of its Revelations, has represented to Mankind the Nature of God in its true Light: This shews how much Goodness does always mix it self with the Divine Severity; how ready our gracious Creator is to be reconciled to his Penitent Creatures; and that it is his essential Property in the midst of Judgment to remember Mercy. 'Tis this superstitious Humour that makes the barbarous Nations oftentimes lose the opportunity of an advantagious Battle, upon the Account of an Eclipse, or some other fancied *Omen*. Neither would the Roman Nation have made such a mighty Run in their Conquests through the World; if their Generals had always tied themselves close to the Rules of their Country's Superstition. Sometimes they made the *Augurs* try over their Art again and again, till something at last offered it self, which was according to their Pleasure. Or sometimes they despised them; as

*Superstition  
or false Re-  
ligion inti-  
midates  
Men.*

*Publius Claudius*, who in the second *Punic* War, when he was deterred by the *Augur* from attacking the *Carthaginian* Fleet, because the sacred Chicken would not eat; he commanded them forthwith to be thrown into the Sea, saying, If they would not eat, he was resolved they should drink.

Superstition  
when known  
discounte-  
nanced by  
wise Na-  
tions.

IX. I will crave leave to add one thing further for support of this Argument, and that is the common Practice of wise Nations, to suppress and discountenance any Religion, which upon careful Consideration they have found to be false. It is reported by *Livy* \*, that when the *Bacchanalia*, or Feasts of *Bacchus* were first introduced at *Rome*, there were scandalous and unheard of Wickednesses practised, under pretence of those Mysteries. Uncleanliness of all sorts were perpetrated even upon the most tender Ages of both Sexes, and that for the most part by force; the Shreeks and Outcries of the Sufferers being drowned by the noise of the Drums and Cymbals, which did always attend those Rites. When these things came to the Knowledge of the Senate, instead of encouraging a Religion which the common People were very fond of, and therefore according to *Machiavel's* Policy, ought to have been cherished, they delegated an extraordinary Power to the Consuls, to examine into those Enormities, and to punish them with the utmost Severity. And Information being given in against a great many; several Men and Women, rather than be brought to the Disgrace of a Trial, made away with themselves; many others were found guilty and executed; it appearing that above 7000 Persons of all Qualities, had Lifted themselves into this horrid Combination. After this the Consuls had further Order given them, to extirpate the *Bacchanalia* first out of *Rome*, and then out of all *Italy*.

It appear'd to the Senate at another time †, that there were some unallowable Practices in the Rites of *Isis* and *Scrapis*; and therefore by Decree of the Fathers, the Temples of those Deities were ordered to be demolished, But no Artificer in the City out of Reverence to these

\* *Liv. Hist. Lib. 39.* † *Val. Max. Lib. 1. Cap. 2.*

Gods, daring to undertake the Work which the Senate had commanded: At length *Paulus Æmilius* the Consul laying aside his Coat, took a Hatchet into his Hand, and with it split down the Door of the Temple his own self.

The Magistrates of *Bern* \* before the Reformation, condemned four Dominican Friars for a piece of roguish Imposture upon one *Fetzer*, whom they made to believe that he saw Visions of the Virgin *Mary*, and the holy Angels, in order to support the Dominican Tenets, against the *Franciscans*; making use of the Devil, as it is said, to carry on the Cheat. Of which Villainies the Friars being convict by their own Confessions, were burnt in a Meadow near *Bern*, A. D. 1509.

Add to this a remarkable Story out of the Acts and Arrests of the Courts of *Paris* †. There was in that City belonging to the Shop of a Painter, a Piece, in which was painted the Image of the Virgin *Mary*, and which the Painter was wont to hang out for a Sign of his Profession. This, for a very small Price, was bought up by a Country Curate near *Paris*. As soon as he had got it into his Possession, he forthwith sets to work, and bores two Holes through the Picture in the place of the Eyes, and fastned behind it two Branches of a green Vine, cut off at the time when the Vines are used to bleed; so very artificially, that from the Distillation of the Vine, the Picture seem'd to cry. A vast Crowd of ordinary People daily come to see this new Miracle, and among the rest, the Painter and his Wife. They presently know their old Picture; and after a little Examination, finding out the Cheat, make it known to the whole Country. The Priest being convicted of the Fraud, is condemned to be hanged, and the Picture to be broke in Pieces. But if the Politicks of *Machiavel* had been as much in vogue in that Nation then, as they have been of late, the Priest had not deserved so great a Penalty upon any other score, than that he did not manage the Cheat with sufficient Dexterity.

\* Vid. Burnet's *Letters*. Munsters Geogr. Lib. 3.

† Papon. in Com. Sen. Lib. 1. Tit. 1.



*Of the Duty of a PRINCE to his neighbour-  
ing STATES and POTENTATES.*

*Demob.* But I think that those strait-laced conscientious Counsellors, which are about a great many Princes, are very much out in their Politicks, when they preach it into their Ears, \* “ That they ought inviolably to keep his Faith, even when such an Obligation is pre- judicial to him, and the Necessities and Occasions which brought him into these Engagements, are over with him. Indeed, if all Men were good, this Pre- cept were to be condemned; but when so much Wick- edness abounds among Mankind, and whereas it is not likely they will keep their Faith, the Prince is not obliged to preserve his. Besides, it is to be presumed, that Promises extorted by Force, may be broken (e- specially if it be for the Publick Good) whenever that Force or Necessity is gone. † That the Prince who has a Mind to increase his Revenues, and to extend his Dominions, must above all Things, take care to learn the Art of Deceit. Now to be able to deceive, he must learn readily to make use of a great many Pre- tences, Dissimulations, and Perjuries; and a Prince framed by Nature and Art for this Purpose, will never fail of being successful in the Designs he is carry- ing on by these Means. For Men, for the most part are so very simple, and so little cautious, and so often pressed by their present Necessities, that he that can act a masterly Part in these Arts, seldom fails of finding some one or other, ready to be drawn into these Toils. † † That if a Prince be in such firm Friendship with any Neighbour of his, that he dare not directly violate it, and wage War upon him; let him find some specious

\* Mach. Prin. Cap. 18. † Com, in Liv. Lib. 2. Cap. 13.  
‡ Com. Lib. 2. Cap. 9.

“ Pretence to make a Rupture with some Ally of his.  
 “ For then he will think himself obliged to defend his  
 “ Confederate, and by so doing, he will be adjudged to  
 “ have broke the Peace betwixt them first.

*Eudem.* But as I am of another Opinion, *viz.* That it is the Duty of a Prince to preserve inviolably the Leagues which he is entered into; so, God be thanked, *Demoborus*, our Bibles do give us a wiser and honefter Part of these Matters than you do, and speak directly contrary to the Fraud and Perfidiousness which you would set up in the World.

I. We are told in those holy Books, that no one shall live in God's Tabernacle, or is fit to be reckoned among godly People; but who walketh uprightly, and doeth Righteousness, and speaketh the Truth in his Heart, Psal. xv. 2. Nay, If he change, though he sweareth to his own Hurt, v. 4. he is unworthy of that Honour. It is an universal Rule of Christianity, laid down by the Apostle, incumbent upon all the Professors of it to observe, *Lye not to one another*, Col. iii. 9. But of all Lies and Falshoods, Frauds in the concerting, or the maintaining national Contracts, are of the deepest dye, by how much the Injury is the further extended; a whole Nation suffering by any indirect Dealing offered to the Prince thereof. And how little is to be gained by any Potentates tricking and shifting in these solemn Engagements, may be learned from that of the wise Man: *The Hand of the stout or brave* (not diligent, as we translate it) *shall bear Rule; but the deceitful shall be under Tribute*, Prov. xii. 24. And we likewise find, that the holy Scripture does always represent good Princes inviolably observing the Leagues which they had made; and that there is a certain Mark of God's Displeasure set upon those that did refuse to stand to them. Thus we read that *Abraham* religiously observed the League which he made with *Abimeleck*, Gen. xxi. 22. and the Alliance with that Prince's Family was continued in his Son *Isaac's* Time, Gen. xxvi. 26. And *Jofuah* thought himself obliged with Exactness to maintain the League which he had made with the

*Scripture Doctrine, that Princes must observe their Leagues*

*Gibe-*

*Gibeonites*, although he was led into it by the Fraud and Dissimulation of that People, *Jos. ix. 26.* Thus a League is solemnly entered into, and faithfully discharged between King *Solomon* and *Hiram* King of *Tyre*, *1 Kings v. 12.* Add to this what we learn from these holy Books, *2 Chron. xxxvi.* where the breaking of the League with *Nebuchadnezzar*, is said to be the principal Cause of *Zedekiah*, and his People's Sufferings by their Captivity. *And he rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God. — Therefore he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees, who slew the young Men with a Sword in the House of their Sanctuary, and had no Compassion on young Man or Maiden, old Man, or he that stooped for Age: He gave them all into his Hand.* From all which it is plain, that the holy Scriptures do require of a Prince, that whatever he has solemnly engaged with any neighbouring Prince or Potentate to perform, he ought, whatsoever temporal Detriment may ensue, conscientiously to make good. And in support of God's Word against the atheistical Pretences, he has the Dictates of right Reason to bear him out.

*Leagues  
irrevocable,  
because  
God a Wit-  
ness of  
them.*

II. For every wise and good Prince, that has any Sense of Religion and Providence, must think himself indispensably obliged to discharge whatever he has promised under so solemn a Tie; because he has made God Almighty a Witness of his Sincerity, and has voluntarily called down his Vengeance upon him; if he be not entire in his Resolutions, and do not take care to make good all, that in that most religious Engagement he has bound himself to perform. For to be false to God Almighty, after his Name is so solemnly invoked, his eternal Veracity and Omniscience appeal'd to, and his Vengeance imprecated: This is to make the prophaneſt Mockery with the adorable Perfections of God, and to play with the very Thunderbolts of Heaven: And God will, in his due Time, pour out the severest Vials of his Wrath upon such perfidious Offenders. Indeed he does oftentimes, to carry on some special Designs which his good Providence has forecast, spare them a while, it may be,

to fill up the Measure of their Wickedness, and to make 'em afterwards fall more remarkable Victims to his Justice. But if their Punishment does not attend them in this World, they must expect a woful Reckoning in the the next. For such a profane Mockery of God, such Violations of the most sacred Engagements, such a base Collusion with good Men, and horrid Deceit and Oppression of the Innocent, are Crimes of so diabolical a Complexion, that we cannot expect God will let them enjoy all the Comforts of this World, and suffer them to drop into the next with the same Fate as other People, whose Actions have been far better, and their Fortune worse. And we shall hereafter see, that when God comes to wind up, and to make even in his providential Acts, the last sad Tragedy of such prosperous Offenders, will perfectly acquit God's Justice of any seeming Irregularity here; the most terrible Degree of God's Vengeance being prepared for such enormous Violations of his Laws, and Affronts to his Honour: *For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the King it is prepared: He hath made it deep and large; the Pile thereof is Fire and much Wood; the Breath of the Lord, like a Stream of Brimstone, doth kindle it,* Isa. xxx. 33.

III. All good Princes must be very circumspect how they bear in upon these sacred Engagements; because they are the only Fence, when they are out of actual Arms, for the Security of their State and People. For if once those religious Ties should be laid aside, all Mankind must disband, and break up into a State of War and Confusion. Wherever Power did prevail, Justice must give place: The World would be fill'd with miserable Outrages, and Acts of barbarous Hostilities; and all Nations overspread with Dissolution and Blood; Kings would continually break their Promises to their People, and Subjects disclaim their Allegiance to their Prince; small Principalities would be constant Preys to powerful Monarchs, and great Princes would wear out their Strength, and destroy their People, by continual Warring upon one another; and every crowned Head must be forced either

*Because  
Leagues  
the only  
Security of  
Nations.*

to be a perpetual Butcher of his Neighbours, all his Lifetime wading through Blood; or else to be a Victim to the Cruelty of others, or to wear his Conquerors Chains.

This would most certainly be the Fate of the World, if the Security of Alliances were removed, and Princes could trust to nothing but Force and open Arms. Now whatsoever Prince is guilty of Unfaithfulness in his Alliances, does as much as in him lies, endeavour to bring the World into such miserable Confusion. For if the rest of his Neighbours should imitate the Falseness of such a Copy, there would be no Fidelity left in the World, but all Mankind must fall a worrying one another like Bears and Tygers.

*Princes  
who ob-  
serve  
Leagues,  
most happy.*

IV. It is a further Argument, that Princes ought conscientiously to observe whatever they have covenanted with their Allies; because those Princes and States which have been the most punctual Observers of these Promises, have been the most flourishing and successful. It was this Integrity, more than the Force of the *Roman* Arms, which help'd on the Growth of that mighty Empire. For whoever had once put themselves under their Protection, and had obtained their Promises of Friendship and Security; for the Generality, out of Love to their Justice and Fidelity, they ever after, till the Dissolution of that Empire, continued in their Alliance. Instances of their Fidelity in this kind, lie thick throughout all the History of that brave People.

\**Ptolemy* King of *Aegypt* dying, left his young Son to the Guardianship of the *Roman* People. So rich a Prey would have been a tempting Opportunity to Men of *Machiavelian* Consciences. But the honest Senate were so faithful to discharge the Will of the old King their Friend, that they sent *Æmylius Lepidus*, who had twice been Consul to *Alexandria*, to take Care there of the young King's Education. A wonderful Act of Fidelity! to depute a Person of that high Dignity, in his old Age, into a fo-

\* Val. Max. Liv. 6.



reign Nation, to take upon him the Office of a Tutor; that they might be sure faithfully to discharge their Trust.

*Scipio* waging War against the *Carthaginians* in *Africa*\*, his Embassadors which were sent to *Carthage* to concert about a Peace, were perfidiously against the Law of Nations injured; but the *Carthaginian* Embassadors, who were with *Scipio*, he sent home with Safety; saying, that tho' the perfidious *Carthaginians* valued not what all Nations counted sacred, he would act nothing disagreeable to the Honour and Justice of the *Roman* Nation.

In the second † *Punick* War, the City of *Saguntum* in *Spain*, held very honourably out for the *Romans* to the very last, but at length being taken by *Hannibal*, the Inhabitants were sold for Slaves. The *Romans* for the sake of their Allies, carried the War into *Spain*, and kept it on foot fourteen Years, till they had drove all the *Carthaginians* out of that Country. And having cleared the Town from the Enemy, they sent Messengers every where to pick up the poor *Saguntinians*, setting them free from their respective Masters; and having done so, sent them safe to their native Town.

But above all, most memorable is the Example of *M. Attilius Regulus* ‡, who being taken in a Fight at *Africa* by *Hamilcar*, the Father of *Hannibal*, was sent to the Senate to be Agent, for the Redemption of the Captives, he being sworn to return if he did not effect it; but *Regulus* disliking the Offer, instead of persuading the Senate, argued against it, whom having brought over to his Opinion, he returned to *Carthage* again, in pursuance to his Oath, and readily underwent the Torments and Death which he foresaw were preparing for him.

So afterwards when † *Hannibal* had got the Advantage over the *Romans*, at the bloody Fight of *Canna*; he being desirous of Money, gave Liberty to several *Roman* Captives, to go to *Rome* to meet about the Redemption of the rest. Ten of them were departed, and sworn to

\* Liv. Hist. Lib. 32.

† Liv. Hist. Lib. 28.

‡ Cic. Off. Lib. 3.

‡ Liv. Hist. Lib. 13.

return, if the Offer proved Fruitless. But one of them being gone out of the Tents, returned again, as if he had forgot something, overtaking the rest of his Companions before Night. But when the Senate had decreed that the Captives should not be redeemed, the rest returned to *Hannibal*. But the foresaid Person thinking himself to be discharged of his Oath, by his coming back before, went home to his own Family. Which Fraud, when it was known to the Senate, they voted him to be a crafty Knave, and one that was a Blemish to the *Roman* Sincerity, forthwith ordering him to be returned back in Chains to *Hannibal*.

By these noble Acts of Fidelity, both to their Enemies and their Allies, the *Roman* State arrived to that extraordinary Pitch of Glory, which has drawn the Eyes of all future Generations upon them; and which they never could have attained to, if they had squared their Actions by those mean and narrow Principles which some modern Politicians have advanced.

*Misfortunes  
of Princes  
unfaithful  
in Leagues.*

V. It is another Motive to Princes to be faithful in their Alliances, to consider the Fate of those who have violated them, or by fallacious Artifices have evaded them. The People of *Carthage* were, of all Nations, the most remarkable for their Fraud in Contracts and Leagues with their neighbouring States; whence *Punica Fides*, the Faith of the *Carthaginians*, grew to be a By-word to signify Treachery. In all the long War which they had with the *Romans*, they carried it on by Falsehood, rather than by the Force of their Arms. Neither was their Faith more entirely kept with others. For in the first \* Punick War, having made great use of *Xanthippus* the *Lacedaemonian*, against the *Romans*, they agreed to carry him safe home to his Country; but envying him the Glory he had obtained, drowned him by the Way. Of the like Treachery their General *Hannibal* was guilty, when having agreed with the Inhabitants of *Nuceria*, a Town in *Italy*, upon a Capitulation, to march out safely with two

\* Val. Max. Lib. 7.

Garniments a Man, they choaked a great many of them by the Smoke of a Bath in the Passage through which they were to go. With the same Fallhood and Cruelty he behaved himself to the Senate of the *Acerani*\*; and having drawn them out of their Walls with the promise of safe Conduct, he drown'd them all in a deep Well. But both the General and the City which employ'd him, had Ends suitable to such shameful Arts which they had long exercised. *Hannibal* having his Army totally routed by *Scipio*, was forced to fly to *Prusias* King of *Bithynia* for Succour: But being demanded of him by the *Romans*, and fearing the King's Fidelity to him, poison'd himself. And the City of *Carthage*, not many Years after, was utterly destroyed by the *Roman* Senate.

The Downfal of *Scyphax* King of *Numidia* †, was owing to his Breach of the League with the *Romans*, Offensive and Defensive, against the *Carthaginians*. For he being inveigled to marry *Asdrubal* the *Carthaginian* General's Daughter, broke his Faith, and made War upon the *Romans*, with whom he had first confederated. But in carrying on that unfaithful War, he was beaten and taken Prisoner by *Scipio*; bewailing in his Captivity the Violation of his Faith. His Kingdom was given to *Massanissa*, a Prince who had been true to the *Roman* Interest, with whom his Wife *Sophonisba*, who had been the Occasion of his Miseries, consented to marry.

Modern Histories || likewise give us frequent Instances of the Misfortunes of those Princes who have violated their Faith in this Nature. For *Philip VI.* King of *France*, having solemnly sworn never to invade any Territory of the Empire; and being desirous to be in Possession of a Fort near *Cambrai*, which did very much annoy him, he sent his Son the Duke of *Normandy* with an Army to besiege it, whilst he himself only bore the part of an ordinary Soldier; thinking he had escaped the force of his Oath by this Trick. But the just Providence of God was not deluded by such a Wile. For the Duke of *Normandy* was forced to raise the Siege;

\* Id. ib.

† Lib. Hist. Lib. 30.

|| Froiss. Hist. Lib. 7.

and a little while after the King had the terrible Overthrow given him by the *English* at *Cressy*.

A like Misfortune befel *Charles* Duke of *Burgundy* \*; who having given his Faith to the Earl of *St. Paul*, Constable of *France*, to protect him, he perfidiously gave him up to the *French* King, by whom he was afterwards beheaded. But this Prince taking not long after into his Service one *Campobach*, an *Italian* Count, he betrayed him to the Duke of *Lorraine* at the Siege of *Nancy*; who by means of his Treachery setting upon him unawares, routed him, and kill'd him, and seiz'd upon his Principality.

Many more Instances might be alledg'd upon this Head, but I refrain from so ungrateful a Task: What has been alledg'd being sufficient to evince, that the Divine Displeasure does not fail of discovering it self in the Punishment of those Princes who have not had a sufficient regard to those solemn Engagements, which in their Treaties, and other publick Agreements, they have entred into.

*Demob.* But what a Simpleton do you *Christian* Politicians make of a Prince, whom you would have stand with his Hands behind him very tame and peaceable; when by aiming against a neighbouring Nation, he might add a good large Province to his Dominions: But he must stay, forsooth, according to your Doctors, till he have a lawful Cause to go to War, and then he has lost the opportunity. But the *Florentine* Politician much better advises his Friend *Laurentie de Medices*; “To set upon the  
“ Conquest of all *Italy*, which he might easily bring  
“ about, if he follow'd the Examples of *Agathocles* and  
“ *Cesar Borgia*: That tho' these were great and admirable  
“ Persons, yet they were but Men; and they had  
“ not a more favourable opportunity offer'd them than  
“ *Laurentius* has. And those great Actions which they  
“ enterpriz'd, were not more just; nor did God AL-  
“ mighty, by giving them Success, shew himself more  
“ friendly to them. In this Enterprize there is the

\* Com. Lib. 4. c. 12.

Height of Justice. For that War is just which is needful: "Those Arms are pious which are taken up for the publick Weal"; that is in plain English, the Prince's Glory or Convenience.

*Endem.* But I shall maintain, (for all you have said on this Head,) that a Prince is to take Care that the Wars he wages with his Neighbours be grounded upon just Causes, and shall stick to the Scripture Doctrine therein, which enjoins all Christians, to have Peace one with another, Mark ix. 50. If it be possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all Men, Rom. xii. 18. We learn from the Holy Scriptures, that Wars proceed from Mens ungoverned Affections, such as the Gospel will not allow, From whence come Wars and Fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your Lusts, that War in your Members? Jam. iv. 1. We are informed from hence, that God scatters the People that delight in War, Psal. lxxviii. 30. that God hateth Hands that shed innocent Blood, Prov. vi. 17. And it is given as a special Character of the Son of God, That in Righteousness he doth make War, Rev. xix. 11. And the Holy Ghost in the sacred Records hath remarked the great Misfortunes of some Princes and Nations, who have begun an unjust War. As of the Amalekites, Exod. xviii. of Sihon King of the Amorites, Numb. xxi. 21. and Ogg the King of Bashan, Deut. iii. 1. and of Nabash Prince of the Ammonites, who would not make a League with the Inhabitants of Jabesh Gilcad, but only if he might put out their right Eye, 1 Sam. xi. 2.

Now if this Doctrine, Demoborus, which the Scriptures lay down, be not more agreeable to Reason, and to that natural Tendernefs and Compassion which God has planted in us towards our Fellow-creatures, let impartial Judgment be made from the following Particulars.

II. For nothing can be a greater Act of Injustice, than for a Prince, without any just Cause, but only to extend his Dominions, or to gratify his Vanity, to overrun the Countries of his Neighbours, and to subject them to his Power. For nothing is so dear to Men as their

*The Scriptural Doctrine, that there ought to be a just Cause of War.*

*The Injustice of unnecessary Wars.*

Liberty is, there is nothing they are so pleased with, and so fond of, as to be governed by their own Country Laws; and to live under the Direction of their own natural Princes. To take these from them, and to subject them to foreign Jurisdictions, is to wound them further to the Heart, than any other Affliction can reach. For many Persons, who have courageously undergone the loss of Estates and Children, and have looked the most formidable Dangers in the Face with Bravery; have yet pined away under the Sense of their lost Liberties. Therefore to ravish these away from a People, is an Injustice which no Prince can answer for; because every Person is Master of his own Liberties, unless where God Almighty has restrained them, by a natural Subjection, to his own Prince and Laws, which Nature has made equally dear to him; and no Man ought to take away from him, unless, by an Injury first offer'd, he has expos'd them to the Fate of War, and upon that Account lost them by the unlucky Event of it. But when we add to this, the loss of so many Lives and Estates, which usually attends the Conquests of aspiring Princes, the Injustice still grows the greater; no Prince being ever able to make Satisfaction for it; and it must be expected, that God, in the great Day of Retribution, will severely avenge the making such lamentable Ravages, upon the Rights of their Fellow-creatures.

*Cruelty.*

III. Nor is it only very unjust, unnecessarily to make War upon a harmless People, but it carries with it as great a Degree of Cruelty likewise. For how contrary is it to the Tenderness of humane Nature, to be the Cause of all those miserable Calamities, which Princes, in pursuing their Conquests, must occasion both to their own Subjects, as well as to the Countries they are desiring to subdue. How unkind a Part is it to their own natural-born Subjects, whom they ought to the utmost, to cherish and succour, to slay them by hard and griping Taxes upon an unnecessary Account, only to gratify their Ambition and fond Vanity; and to drain the Strength of a Nation, to feed their airy Notion of Glory; and to lavish

lavish away their Subject's Treasure, which ought to be spared, to enable them to repel the force of an invading Enemy? How unnatural is it, for such vile and little Ends to squander away the Blood of so many of their dear Subjects, and to sacrifice the Lives of such a Number of the brave Youth of a Nation, from whom Posterity might expect such a numerous Increase, and to tumble into their Graves thousands of accomplished young Gentlemen, who are the Pride and Hopes of their Parents, and an Ornament to their Country? These indeed are the inevitable Misfortunes of War, and which must with Patience be born with, whenever, Princes for the Defence of their Countries, are forced to engage in it. But when they let the Blood of their Subjects run waste, and only design to erect themselves Trophies at the Expence of the Lives of so many brave and loyal Friends: This is a Barbarity which nothing can parallel, and, but that the fond Humour of the World has contributed to give some countenance to it, is not inferiour to the Brazen Bulls, and Men-eating Horses of the old Tyrants. Besides, how cruel is it to make such Spoil, Ravage, and Murder, in the Country of a harmless Neighbour, only to get Possession of it; and to have the Vanity of commanding over one half of the People, after having killed the other? How great a Satisfaction it may be for a Prince to ride through triumphal Arches, to scatter about Medals of Victory, or to read in the Novels, that his Army had cut the Throats of so many thousand poor People, who were defending their Country, I am a perfect Stranger to: But I think there can be little Pleasure in the after Reflections, upon such glorious Successes, as they call them. For it must give a melancholly Prospect to ones Thoughts to consider, that this little shadowy Glory to ones self was purchased at the Expence of so much Misery to Mankind; that to obtain such a trifle, thousands of poor People have been drove from their Habitations, have been plundered of all their little Substance, have had their Wives or Daughters ravished, and their Houses fired about their Ears;

Gentlemen of a plentiful Patrimony dispossessed of that and all they had besides, and turned out naked to the World to beg or starve; Ladies of the best Quality forced to live by Service or Charity; flourishing Cities in a Moment reduc'd to Ashes, and Streets flowing with Christian Blood. How much truer Pleasure does that Prince Experience, that is content with the Government which God Almighty has handed down to him, from his Progenitors, and then governs with Justice and Clemency, and as much as may be in Peace; when he takes a View of the Happiness which his People enjoy, pleased to see their Cities populous and wealthy, and their Countries fruitful, crowded Barns, and numerous Herds, and stately Buildings every where rising, his Markets stockt with the Provisions and the Manufacture of his own Country, and his Ports fill'd with foreign Wealth. This must be, to any good Prince, a far more delightful Sight, than large Extents of new Conquests purchas'd by Blood and Rapine, which afford only a great deal of Ground without Tillers of it, and a Number of ragged Towns, with a few tatter'd Inhabitants. Indeed such a kind of Empire is but the Skeleton of Government, it wants both Blood, and Flesh, and Spirit, to make it live and flourish; and tho' the Bulk of it may make it continue for a while, it must shortly after decay away and moulder into Dust.

*The un-  
timely  
Deaths of  
Conque-  
rors.*

IV. But tho' the way to great Conquests, was never so open and fair, and Princes might get Possession of their Neighbour's Territories, with less Expence of Blood and Breach of Faith, than it usually costs them. Yet the Difficulty and Trouble of keeping them after all, would not make a wise Prince over-fond of them. The *Scythian* Embassadors dry Hide, was a very good Emblem of an overgrown Government, which as soon as it was trod down in one place, it mounted up in another. For a conquer'd People must be kept quiet by main Force, which when ever it is lessened, or drawn off to another Quarter, they are forthwith for resuming their old Liberties and Government. So that upon the whole,



whole, when a Prince casts up the Charge and Trouble he has to maintain his new Conquests in tolerable quiet, he will not find himself much a gainer by the acquist of them. And besides, 'tis very rare that he is able to deliver them intirely down to his Posterity. For his neighbouring Princes have always a jealous Eye, upon the overgrowing Power of such an ambitious Conqueror, and their Arms seldom fail to take him down from that Pitch, which he has aspired to by his new Accessions. So that within a few Years, after the ill Success or Fatigue of another War, an ensuing Treaty sets such an ambitious Monarch upon the same Foot on which he at first stood, after a mighty Expence of Blood and Treasure.

V. It may be another Argument to dissuade Princes from enterprizing unjust or unreasonable Wars; that they run themselves upon a great Hazard, and venture a certain Happiness for an uncertain and imaginary one. The *Latins* very properly call it *Belli alea*, the Dice at Lottery or War; because when Countries engage in it, they do as it were throw Dice for their Dominions. For nothing can be a greater Lottery than the Chance of War. Numbers, Courage, and Martial Discipline, carry no Certainty with them: They only put the Engagers in better Hopes, and give them so many more degrees of Chance on their side; but 'tis all Chance still, or that which is equivalent to us, the unknown Providence of Almighty God. Those who have been so curious as to have made Remarks upon ancient History, find, that a few Hundreds have oftentimes been an overmatch in a Battle for many Thousands. Men, who have been newly called from their Shops, and their Plough, have oftentimes defeated the veteran Troops of the Enemy. A flying Army has frequently beaten their Pursuers, when a Presumption of their Conquests, or a Greediness of their Plunder has suffer'd them to fall into disorder. The Number of Domestick and Auxiliary Troops has often been the occasion of loosing a Battle, which in all Probability had been won if it had been managed by a lesser Number of Soldiers; their Hands being clogged up  
and

*Hazard  
of unnecessary  
Wars.*

and rendered unfit for Action, by the crowd of an unnecessary Multitude: So that whilst their Commander has endeavoured by over-powering the Enemy, with an unproportionate Number of Forces to put the Success of the Battle out of all doubt, he has by that very means turned it against himself. Some Princes have lost their Kingdoms, and more their Lives in the Wars which they have unnecessarily begun. So that when Princes may enjoy all the Happiness which this World affords, it is the most unaccountable Degree of Imprudence to venture so many Hazards of living or dying miserable, only for the Chance, it may be, of a thousand to one, of getting the Jurisdiction of a Market-Town or two, and the Fields about them. The Consideration of this puts me in mind of a Story, recorded in the Life of *Diogenes*, the furlly old *Cynick*, who among his *Morosities* used to say a great many wise and good Things. When *Philip* King of *Macedon*, (one of these *Gloriosa* Princes, who was for extending his Dominions, as far as the Strength of his Country would permit) was carrying on his Arms against the *Greeks*; *Diogenes* comes to view his Camp, and being taken up as a Spy by some of the Soldiers, was brought to the King. The *Cynick* being asked by the Prince what brought him thither; whether a design to make a Discovery of his Preparations, or any other Error; Indeed, noble Prince, says he, I only come to make a clearer Discovery of your Vanity, who without any just Reason compelling you, are going to throw a Die for your Life and Kingdom, and all you have in the World besides.

And indeed, methinks, it should be a very awakening Consideration to such ambitious Princes to take Notice, that not one in Ten of those Hotspurs that have been pushing on for Glory, by causeless Wars upon their Neighbours, have reaped the Success which they expected, or indeed have come off without loss either of their Lives, or some considerable Part of their Dominions. As for the little Disturbers of the World of the lower Form, they after having surpriz'd a Town or two of their

their Neighbours, have generally been knockt on the Head, and no more heard of them: And tho' they have plagued the World for a while, their Names have hardly been transmitted down to Posterity. And the most famous Conquerors, that have over-run the largest Tract of Ground by their Arms, have for the most Part made such tragical *Exits* out of the World, that if they could have foreseen their Misfortunes, they would have choose rather to have had the Government only of some little Town, than with all the Extents of their Dominions, to have undergone their following Disasters.

As for *Cæsar Borgia*, he was of too little a Figure to be reckoned among these, but only because *Machiavel* has been pleased to Honour him with the Title of the *Pattern of a perfect Prince*; I shall therefore make a short Remark upon his Misfortunes. He was promoted by his Father, Pope *Alexander* the Sixth, to the Dignity of a Cardinal, which being minded to set up for a Lay-Prince, pretending he had taken Orders against his Will, he resigned. He afterwards got into Possession of the Dukedom of *Valenza*, and under the Countenance of the Pope his Father, disturbed all *Italy* by his Arms for several Years. But after the Death of *Alexander*, he was beat out of his Dominions by the *French* and the *Venetians*: And forced to lurk sometime in the Palace of Pope *Julius* the Second. He was afterwards taken Prisoner, and sent into *Spain*, where he continued long in Bonds. From whence escaping, he fled to his Brother-in-law the King of *Navar*, and sometime after was killed in a Skirmish. Of him *Sabellicus* an elegant and wise Historian remarks this. *Subit nunc reputatio quam raro in aliquo hominum majus vita documentum extitit, &c. I cannot but take Notice\**, that we seldom meet with a more remarkable Instruction for human Life, than this of the Person we have mentioned. He might have been content to have been the second Person to the Pope, enjoying so great Preferments, which afforded him as much Riches and Honour, as any Person that has been known. But

\* C. Sabel. Enn. Lib. ult.

forgetting himself and wearying out Fortune, whom he so long experienced, an indulgent Mother, he at last found her a Step-mother, and rather choose to be in none, than in the most desirable Degree of Honour. But nothing is shorter lived than an inconsiderate Happiness, he scorned the highest Condition for a sad and calamitous one.

But to come to Princes of a larger Size, even those who have been esteem'd Conquerors of the whole World, or however possessed a very large Share of it. *Cyrus the Great* had the good Fortune to subdue the whole *Assyrian* Empire which had lasted so long, and had stretched it self out to so vast an Extent; but was at last beaten by a Woman, viz. *Tomiris* Queen of the *Scythians*, and not only beheaded by her Order, but was insulted by that fierce Princess after his Death; his Head being put into a Pitcher of Blood, to be drenched enough with that, which he had so long thirsted after.

The next Conqueror was the famous *Alexander* King of *Macedon*; he having a mighty run of Success, first in the overthrow of *Darius's* Army, and by that getting Possession of *Persia* and *Media*, and afterwards in conquering *India* and *Scythia*, grew so foolishly conceited upon these mighty Advantages of Fortune, that he would be worshiped as a God, tho' at the same time he fell into such shameful Degrees of Intemperance and Outrage, as made him seem beneath a Man. This made him hated by his best Friends, who poison'd him at *Babylon*, when he was not much more than thirty Years of Age. And the Empire which he had obtained, was divided among his great Officers, *Antipater*, *Seleucus*, and *Ptolemy*.

There is one more of this victorious Size, and that is, *Julius Cesar*. And truly he, in other Respects, had too many good Qualities to be reckoned among these bully Princes. He was a noble Orator, and a brave Statesman and Soldier; and, but that his Ambition was so great as to engage his Country in a Civil War, and to enslave their Liberties; he deserves to be reckoned as one of the greatest Personages which ever the World bred. He entirely conquer'd all *France*, and brought it into  
the

the Form of a Province: He made a considerable Progress in the Reduction of *Germany* and *Britain*; and after this, because he was deny'd suing for the Consulship in his Absence, waged War upon his own Country, which after the beating of *Pompey*, and his Adherents, he became Emperor of: But, as *Paterculus* observes. *Non obtigit illi plus quam quinque mensium principalis quies.* He had the Enjoyment of this Empire, which he had sought with so much Earnestness, and obtained with so much Hazard and Bloodshed, no more than five Months. For he was then stabbed in the Senate by *Brutus* and *Cassius*, and some other Conspirators; who having been bred up under a Republick, would not brook their Liberties should be invaded, and that one of their own Order should exercise a kingly Power over them.

These are the great Conquerors which make such a found in ancient History, and which have fired later Princes by an Emulation of their Examples, to pursue the like Steps in extending their Dominions. But if these great Persons would consider likewise the unfortunate Ends, which all of these made, they would not be so over-fond in taking Copy from them. For it is not owing to Chance that they went out of the World in so Tragical a manner; but it was a necessary Result of the bold and hazardous Undertakings they went upon. For nothing enrages Men more than the oppressing their Liberties, and the enslaving their Country: And the more Countries a Prince subdues, the more Enemies he has; which are all at work to destroy the Person which has done them that insupportable Injury. So that it is no wonder that in the largest Conquests, in which more Enemies are enraged, and there are fewer Friends about him to trust, among such a Number of treasonable Conspirators being a-foot at the same time, some of them must in all Probability succeed.

Then is it worth while for a Prince to involve himself in necessary Ruin, if he was sure to get the Empire of the whole World for a Year or two? And yet, as matters stand in the present Age, it is not like that any one  
 Prince

Prince should ever be able to attain the Dominion of one twentieth Part of it. For in former times, Countries lay more open, one decisive Battle oftentimes determining the Fate of a whole Nation. And when there was any great Empire in being, if the Emperor's main Army was once destroyed, all that mighty Government must of course overturn upon it. So that the Chance of such a vast Government, might be a pretty reasonable spur to an ambitious Prince, to venture a considerable Stake to attain it. But at this time of Day, every Foot of Land is to be got by Inches and hard Blows; every conquered Country being bought dearer than it is worth. And one might give an Instance of a modern Prince, and make it to Demonstration appear, that he has wasted the Lives of more Men in conquering a few little Countries, than were destroyed heretofore by *Cyrus*, *Alexander*, and *Cesar*, in conquering the whole World, three times over. Now it is matter of great wonder, that any Person, that knows the Difficulties and the Hazards of conquering but one neighbouring Country, unless the Affections of the People be in a Disposition to a Revolution, should ever attempt it; much less should be forming any Schemes for an Universal Monarchy. The chiefest Mistake which leads Princes into this Itch of conquering is, the false Notion of *Glory* got into the World, which inclines them to think, that this consists only in winning Battles, taking Towns, and laying large Tracts of Land under Contribution. Whereas there is more true Glory in making a good Law, or in doing a beneficent Action, than in destroying an Enemies Army of twenty thousand Men. Because the first are Benefits to the Common-wealth, without being prejudicial to any one else; and by doing these, Princes do in some measure imitate the divine Goodness, which is friendly to all Mankind, and injurious to none. Upon this consideration I think Posterity is more obliged to any one of our old Kings or Queens, who have built us but an Hospital or a Bridge, than to the great King *Henry* the Fifth, for his famous Victory at *Agincourt*, and all his

other

other Conquests in *France*. And truly some of the best Princes in former Ages, were of the same Opinion. *Antoninus Pius*, that wise *Roman* Emperor declared, *That he had rather save the Life of one of his own Subjects, than kill a thousand Enemies*. And having the Happiness of a peaceful Reign, he took advantage thereby of promoting the Study of Philosophy throughout all his Country, and his Provinces; of Erecting stately Edifices for the Honour of the Empire, and repairing others which were decayed by Age. So the Emperor *Trajan*, during the Intervals of his Wars, was famous for making the Havens more commodious; for throwing up great Causeways; for pitching the Road throughout the *Pomptine Fens*; and for building and furnishing famous Libraries. Now let any impartial Man judge, if these Princes, by such Actions, have not arrived to more true and substantial Glory, than any of those famous conquering Princes who purchased their Lawrels, by wasting so much of Mankind, and which Victories we find no other Effects of now, but only that the World is so much the thinner for them.

*Demob.* And then again you Christians persuade your Prince to be a poor tender-hearted Creature, who when he has conquered a Country, must be afraid of cutting a few Throats to make all secure; and must be forced to maintain so many Guards and Garrisons in it to hold the People in awe, that it will cost more in keeping them, than the place is worth. But my *Italian* Master gives something better Instructions. "There is no better \* Counsel (says he) " for a Prince to follow, who has taken a new Country, " than to drive out the old Inhabitants, and to place " therein a new Colony of his Subjects and Friends. " From whence will proceed a double Advantage to the " Prince: The new Colony will be quiet, and the Subjects at home being thinned, will not be in such a " condition to rebel as before, and will be afraid also to " do it for fear of being sent abroad after the rest. But " the old Inhabitants are by no means to be left. For

*What the  
Irreligious  
teach.*

\* Mach. Princ. Cap. 7.

" this

“ this is a certain Rule, whenever you do an Injury to  
 “ do it so, that it be out of the Sufferer’s Power to re-  
 “ venge it. And again, “ I think all wise Men must  
 “ be of Opinion, that no State of a Common-wealth  
 “ can be of long Continuance, unless those from whom  
 “ they fear an Insurrection be destroyed. This was  
 “ the unhappy Mistake of *Lewis XII.* King of *France*,  
 “ who in a very little time lost the Dutchy of *Millain*,  
 “ which he had before conquered. For the *Millanese*  
 “ being deceived in their Expectations of their new Prince,  
 “ in a little while shook of his Government. His great  
 “ Fault was, that he did not cut off all those to whom  
 “ the Revolution had been prejudicial, especially all the  
 “ Race of the *Sfortia*. But *Cesar Borgia* understood  
 “ better. For when he had taken Possession of *Fla-*  
 “ *minia*, and seized upon the Estates of the Nobility, he  
 “ put as many of them as he could get into his Power  
 “ to Death; tho’ some few fled from the Danger. Upon  
 “ the whole, therefore, ’tis better for a Prince to imitate  
 “ the Example of *Borgias*, than that of *Lewis*.

*Scripture*  
*Doctrine,*  
*that Princes*  
*ought*  
*to be mer-*  
*ciful in*  
*their Con-*  
*quests.*

*Eudem.* But in direct Opposition to your *Italian*  
 Master, our holy Religion teaches us a better Lesson;  
 the whole Tenour whereof, as it is displayed to us  
 in the New Testament, is directly contrary to this bar-  
 barous Spirit of Cruelty, which this ungodly Politician  
 does recommend. We are impowered to ask Forgiveness  
 of our Offences against Almighty God, upon  
 no other Conditions, than as we, those *that trespass*  
*against us*, Mal. vi. 12. *forgive, and ye shall be for-*  
*given*, Luk. vi. 37. We learn from thence, that *none*  
*but the merciful shall obtain Mercy*, Mal. v. 7. *that he*  
*shall have Judgment without Mercy, that hath shewed no*  
*Mercy*, Jam. ii. 13. We are commanded to *love our Ene-*  
*mies*, Mal. v. 44. and are told, if we shut up our *Bow-*  
*els of Compassion to our Brother, the Love of God dwel-*  
*leth not in us*, 1 Joh. iii. 17. And there are several Pas-  
 sages in the Old Testament, which do recommend to us,  
 if not an equal, yet a proportionate Degree of Tender-  
 nefs. Indeed it must be acknowledged, that as for the  
 seven



Seven Nations of *Canan*, whom for their Idolatry and incorrigible Wickedness, God Almighty by a special Order gave Commandment; that the *Israelites* should smite them till they had utterly destroyed them, and that they should make no Covenant with them, nor shew Mercy unto them, Deut. vii. 2. But then it must be considered that this was a particular Injunction of God Almighty, who has a sovereign Right over his Creatures, and may dispose of them at his good Will and Pleasure; and the ill Consequences of their sparing them is particularly given, for Fear of their making Marriages with them: *Thy Daughter thou shalt not give unto his Son, nor his Daughter shalt thou take unto thy Son: For they will turn away thy Son from following me, that they may serve other Gods*, Deut. vii. 3, 4. But as for other Nations and Cities, God Almighty commands his People the *Jews*, that they should shew a very considerable Degree of Mercy and Compassion. *When thou comest nigh to a City to fight against it, then proclaim Peace unto it: And it shall be if it make the answer of Peace, and open unto thee then it shall be, that all the People that is found therein shall be Tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no Peace with thee, but will make War against thee, then thou shalt besiege it, &c.* And when it is taken, he gives them Liberty indeed to destroy all the Men, but commands them to spare the Women, the little Ones, and the Cattle, &c. Deut. xx. 10, 11, &c. We find a remarkable Instance of the Compassions of the Victorious to the Conquered, in the *Israelites* to the Tribe of *Benjamin*, whom they had War with; that when by the Fate of War, almost all the Women were destroyed, they provided them Wives of the Women of *Zabesh Gilead*, Judg. xxi. 14. so the designed Severity to the Captives of the Tribe of *Judah*, which were taken by the *Israelites*, is represented by *Obed* the Prophet, 2 Chron. xxviii. 8. As again those Persons are commended who rose up and took the Captives, and with the Spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, anointed them, and carried all the Feeble of them upon Asses,

and brought them to Jericho to their Brethren, v. 15. Which Directions, if they be not more consonant to the best Reason of Mankind, as well as the Peace and Welfare of it, than those advanced by our *Florentine* Secretary, and others of his Followers; let it be judged from the ensuing Considerations.

Such Cru-  
elty unne-  
cessary.

II. For setting aside, that this Method, which these Infidel Politicians prescribe, does partake so much of brutish Cruelty, and would render a Prince so much a Salvage or a wild Beast, that it would be a very difficult Matter to persuade a Person of a generous Education to such a bowellefs Inhumanity, as in cold Blood to butcher all the People of a Province, to make way for new Inhabitants from his own Country: I say, tho' it be a hard Matter to bring a Prince to such a Barbarity, there is no manner of Occasion for the Exercise of this Cruelty. For the conquered People may be at first kept under by the Arms of the Victor, and afterwards they will come of Course to be reconciled to their new Prince, and his Government. For human Passions, tho' never so violent, are laid asleep in time, and Men enter into a Friendship and Familiarity with them, to whom they bore formerly the greatest Hatred. The Persuasion of Friends, the Company they converse with, the Bounty of the Conqueror, and the apparent Interest which they find in complying with the new Establishment, do tie People's Affections oftentimes so close to a Prince after his Conquest of a Country, that there is very little need of any considerable Force to keep them under, much less is it necessary to extirpate them. And we do not find, that the *Romans*, who understood the Nature of waging War better than any Nation, ever found themselves under a Necessity of taking such cruel Methods, as are before suggested, for a Security of their Conquests. They generally either thought it sufficient to maintain the conquered Country by strong Garrisons, or by sending Colonies of their own People to incorporate with the subdued Inhabitants. As they did to

*Ardea* \*

*Ardea*\*, *Frigellæ* †, *Velitra* ‖, *Puteoli* ‡, and other Places. Indeed as to *Luceria* †, it was debated in the Senate whether or no the City should not be destroyed, upon Consideration, that these Citizens had been perfidious in their Revolting, after their having given their Faith solemnly to the *Romans*, upon their first Reduction; and that it was too far to send the *Roman* Citizens among a faithless People: But however that Opinion was over-ruled, and a Colony of two thousand five hundred Persons were sent thither. *Carthage* alone was the great Instance of their Severity, which tho' the Senate, for Reasons of State, ordered to be destroyed, yet they shewed much more Mercy to this unfortunate City, than these Rules of *Machiavelian* Policy do allow. They destroy'd only the Houses of the City, but spared all the Inhabitants, which would surrender themselves; which were in Number, as *Appian* writes, fifty Thousand.

III. Besides, if victorious Princes or States, should barbarously destroy the People whom they had subdued, their Empires would be rather weakened than strengthened by their Conquests. For the Strength of a Kingdom does not consist in Extent of Dominions, and in spreading over vast Tracts of Ground, but in the Number of Subjects. And a Million of Subjects, closely united together by Vicinity of Habitation, are a much greater Force, than double the Number when scattered abroad throughout wide Territories. So that for a Prince to destroy the old Inhabitants of a conquered Province, and to send a new Drain out of his own Subjects at home, is only to place his People out of Call, and to put them in an Incapacity of being ready to serve him, when he has the most urgent Occasion for their Assistance. This was the Occasion of the great Decay of the *Spanish* Monarchy, which 200 Years ago looked formidable upon all *Europe*; but by their mighty Colonies sent into *Peru* and *Mexico*, and other Places of *America*, they so disunited

*This would  
weaken a  
Govern-  
ment.*

\* Liv. Hist. Lib. 4.

† Id. Lib. 8.

‖ Id. Lib. 9.

‡ Id. Lib. 34.

† Liv. Hist. Lib. 9.

the Force of their Kingdom, that for many Years last past, they have been forced to stand in need of their Neighbours, to preserve their Dominions from being a Prey to any Invader. There is no way for the Power of any Nation to increase, but only by the Numbers of their People, either thro' their natural Fruitfulness, or by incorporating of other People with their own. This affords Wealth and Strength to a Government, by supplying it, upon all Occasions, with Men and Money; whereas large Fields, with a few Inhabitants, afford no Assistance, and serve only to invite the Insults of a populous and more powerful Enemy. Therefore if there be any Advantage to be made by Conquest, it must be by winning the subdued People over into the Interest of the Victor, and to embody them among his own Subjects, and not by destroying them; that by this Means he may reign over more Men, and not enjoy only an airy Jurisdiction over Meadows and Forests.

The Conquer'd may in time come to love the Conqueror.

IV. It is to be considered further, that a kind and merciful Usage of a conquer'd Enemy, gains oftentimes so much upon that People, that they not only lay aside their Animosities and Resentments against the Victor, but sometimes come to love him with an Affection equal to that of their natural Prince. This was remarkably evident in the Example of *Alexander the Great*, who by his Indulgence to the conquered *Persians*, became so dear to them, that at his Death they shew'd all the Signs of the deepest Sorrow, cutting off their Hair, and putting on their mourning Garments: *Non ut Victorem* (says \* *Curtius*) *& modo hostem, sed ut Gentis suae justissimum Regem, vero desiderio lugebant.* They did not bewail him as a Conqueror, and as one lately an Enemy, but as their own lawful King, and with an unfeigned Sorrow.

Contrary Examples of Princes.

V. But if he, and other great Princes and States, had taken *Machiavel's* Method of destroying the conquered Inhabitants, they must have left no Body at home in their own Country; and in the Places whither they had

sent them, the Inhabitants would have been so thin, that Mountains and Rivers would have been as frequent as Men and Women in such a new Settlement. For what would the People of *Macedonia* have signified to have been spread over all the *Persian* Empire? What would the Inhabitants of the City of *Rome* have contributed to send Colonies to have stock'd all the Parts of that mighty Empire which they attained? If they had destroyed the old Inhabitants, to make way for new Occupiers, these must have been so widely dispersed from one another, that the greatest Part of the World must have become wild for want of Correspondence. But these wise Nations knew better what Use to make of their Conquests, than our atheistical Politician could have directed them. For they took the Methods of Mercy and Clemency to reconcile the Affections of the old Inhabitants to them, and not by cutting their Throats, to turn their Country into a Wilderness. It was better Advice, and mix'd with a great Degree of Wisdom and Tenderneſs, that which was given by poor King *Cræſus*, when he was taken Captive by *Cyrus*. When he saw the *Persians* advancing to sack his principal City, and *Cyrus* seem'd to insult him upon it. You do not (says he) destroy my City, but yours, and all the Wealth, and the People which your Soldiers destroy, is the Loss of you who are the Victor, and not of me who was the last Possessor of it \*. And with the same Argument *Belisarius* endeavour'd to persuade *Totila* the *Goth* from sacking of *Rome*†. The *Romans* were so far from destroying their captive Enemies, that when the || *Carthaginian* Embassadors came to *Rome* for the Redemption of their Prisoners, and offer'd a large Sum of Money for their Ransom; they sent them home 2740 Prisoners, without doing any Harm to them, or without a Farthing of Charge. They were so far from making away with ‡ *Syphax*, a conquered King of *Numidia*, who, tho' for Reasons of State, they were oblig'd to

\* Herod. Lib. 1.

† Procop. Lib. 3.

|| Val. Max. Lib. 50. Cap. 1.

‡ Id. ib.

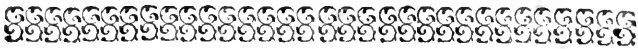
keep an honourable Prisoner, yet when he died, they made a noble Funeral for him at the publick Charge. Acts of Bravery of this kind, are so frequent in all the older History of *Rome*, that I could fill up my Treatise with them. It shall suffice me to produce only one more, in the Declension of that Empire. And that is of the Emperor *Aurelian*, as 'tis related by *Vopiscus*. When *Aurelian* came to enter into the City of *Thyana*, but finding it shut against him, to his great Disappointment, he said in his Anger, *I will not leave a Dog in this Town*. Upon this, by the Vigour of the Soldiers, who were spurred on by this Resolution of the Emperor, with Hopes of a Reward, and by the Treachery of one *Heraclammom*, who out of Fear of being put to Death, betray'd his Country, the City was taken. "But the Emperor at the same time gave too remarkable Instances, one of Justice, the other Lenity. For he commanded *Heraclammom* to be put to Death as a Betrayer of his Country. But when the Soldiers asked leave of him, that according to his Promise, they might have Liberty to plunder and destroy the Town: *I only said* (says he) *that I would not leave a Dog in the Town, therefore, Gentlemen, if you please, I give you liberty to kill all the Dogs therein.*" For this noble Act of Clemency, 'tis owing to the Memory of this Prince, to transcribe out of the same Historian, the Letter which he wrote upon this Occasion of the taking of *Thyana*.

*Aurelius* the Emperor, to *Mallius Chilo*.

"I have suffered him to be killed, by whose Assistance I have got Possession of *Thyana*. For I could not love a Traitor, and I was not sorry that the Soldiers killed him; for he could not be faithful to me, who was not so to his own Country. He was the only Man that was slain of the Besieged. I must own he was a very rich Man; but all his Estate I gave to his Children, lest any one should accuse me for having suffered the Man to be killed for his Money."

If

If all Conquests were managed with this Temper, the World would not have the same Reason to complain of the Cruelties of War, as it often has.



*Of the Duty of a PRINCE to his own*  
S U B J E C T S.

*Demob.* But tho' you Christian Statesmen will tie up a Prince to your conscientious Rules, when he acts with his Neighbours, I hope you will not pretend to maintain that he ought to do so with Relation to his Subjects; for he is under no Obligations to them, they being under his pure despotick Command, may be managed at his Pleasure. But however he ought to keep a severe Hand over them, and to make them, above all Things, to stand in Awe of them, or else the Beast will quickly be too many for him; for 'tis the readiest Way to be despised and trampled upon, to take the way of some Princes, to sneak and cringe to them, and so be their humble Servants; for by this Method, in a little time, they will be more so, then their Compliment designed. They had better take this Advice of a learned \* Writer. "Men  
" love out of their own Will, but fear out of the Will  
" of their Prince. Therefore if a Prince be wise, he  
" will rely upon that which does depend upon himself,  
" and not upon others. If a Prince indeed can attain,  
" viz. to be beloved and feared too, he should endea-  
" vour after that. But since to arrive at both of these  
" Ends, is too difficult a Matter; it is more safe to be  
" feared, than to be loved." And again, "Men are of a  
" mutable Nature, and deceitful, they are willing to a-  
" void Danger, and desirous of Gain. Therefore a Prince  
" who depends upon the Friendship of Men, will find  
" himself deceived upon every Shock. Nay, Men will  
" more readily offend him, who used to deal kindly with

\* Mach. Princ. Cap. 17.

“ him, than one whom they are afraid of. For Friend-  
 “ ship depends only upon Obligation, which can easily  
 “ be laid aside; but Danger of Punishment attends Fear,  
 “ which will never fail to work upon a Man.”

Scripture  
 Doctrine,  
 That a  
 Prince  
 ought to  
 be kind and  
 courteous to  
 his Subjects.

*Eudem.* But my Bible, *Demoborus*, teaches me a better Lesson; wherein all Persons, of what Condition soever, who profess the Faith of Christ, are commanded to *love one another*. For our blessed Lord makes this the distinguishing Mark of his Religion; *This is my Commandment, that ye love one another*, John xv. 12. And the Apostle teaches it as an universal Duty, *Let your Love be without Dissimulation*, Rom. xii. 9. *Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly Love in Honour preferring one another*, Rev. x. And that great Persons should *not mind high Things, but to condescend to Men of low Estate*, v. 16. The holy Scripture likewise lays it down, that *Rulers are not a Terror to good Works, but to the evil*, Rom. xiii. 3. *That Humility is the ready Way to Honour*, Prov. xv. 23. They also recommend the Examples of Princes, who have used kind and courteous Behaviour to their Subjects: As of *Hamor*, and *Sichem* his Son, *who came to the Gate of their City, and communed with the Men of their City*, Gen. xxxiv. 20. And of *David*, for his ready Admission of the Woman of *Tekoah*, whom *Joab* sent to persuade the King for the recalling *Abshalom*, 2 Sam. xiv. And we have in the same Books a lamentable Instance of the ill Consequences of the Roughness, and sowl Behaviour of a Prince to his Subjects, in that of *Rehoboam*, who, when the People sued to him for the Relaxion of some of their Grievances, which had grown up in his Father's Time; made answer, *That his little Finger should be as heavy as his Father's Corps; that if his Father chastized them with Whips, he would do it with Scorpions*, 1 Kings xii. 10. But then see the sad Event of this: *And when all Israel saw that the King hearkened not unto them, the People answered the King, saying, What Portion have we in David? To your Tents, O Israel!* v. 16. Hence proceeded the Rent of the ten Tribes from the Crown of *Judah*. Now that the Scripture is more reasonable than these wild Doctrines of the Irreligious, will appear from hence. II. Be-



II. Because a Prince receives the greatest Satisfaction from an humble, and kind, and courteous Behaviour to his Subjects, and in winning their Affections by doing them all the good he can. For there is nothing which affords such a Pleasure to the Mind, as the very act of doing good, and the after Reflexion upon it. And upon this Account, Princes who are placed in a Capacity of befriending Mankind in so high a manner, by the great Power which is lodged in their Hands, must excite in them such pleasurable Ideas, that none can have any Notion thereof, but those and good Persons whom Providence has vested with those Abilities. And there is likewise such an agreeable Relish excited in the Mind from Acts of Humility and Condescension in great Persons, as adds a greater Degree of Happiness to their high Fortune, than all that their Riches and Honour can possibly afford them. There are such delicious Sensations arising from the *Eulogiums* and Applauses of their Inferiors, for doing kind and grateful Offices to them; that all the other outward Pomp and Magnificence which Occasions only dread and awful Admiration, is, but flat and insignificant in Respect of it, and is the cause of so much Envy and Ill-will, as makes all their Glory to be but a torment to them; and instead of Pleasure and Satisfaction, fills their Souls only with a Number of uneasy and discontented Passions. What agreeable Thoughts must the Minds of those Persons be blessed with, to think at what an easy Expence they have purchased the good Opinions of such a Multitude of Persons, that have their Lives and Fortunes ready at their Devotion, oftentimes for little more than a few kind Words or gracious Actions. A remarkable Instance we have of this in History, in the Example of *Germanicus* the Heir-Apparent to the Empire of *Rome*; who, tho' he endeavoured by all Means to avoid Popularity, that he might not give Offence to that jealous Emperor *Tiberius*; yet the Bravery of his Virtue, and natural Goodness and Humility, rendered him so dear to all the Soldiers and *Roman* People; that once

walk-

*Satisfac-  
tion to a  
Prince to  
be beloved  
by his  
Subjects.*

walked in a Disguise through the Rounds of the Camps to discover some disorders of the Soldiers, or Neglects of the Officers. He found where-ever he came such loud Peals rung in his Commendation; that, as the Historian speaks, *fruebatur fama sui*, he did enjoy the Fame of himself.

*Princes  
Security,  
the Love  
of his  
Subjects.*

III. Nor is it only the greatest Satisfaction to Princes to have the Love of their Subjects, but the greatest Security likewise. Numerous Armies, and well-stor'd Magazines, are but a poor Defence of a Monarch who has lost the Hearts of his Subjects. For Pikes and Muskets will not Fight of their own selves, and a disobliged Soldiery wants only the Opportunity of going over to the adverse Side, and betraying their General into the Enemy's Hands. Nay, the faithfullest Army will not long protect a Prince, that is universally hated by his Subjects. For Armies, tho' they be great and formidable, yet they are not Immortal; and it must be owing to the Love of the People, that they are supplied with any Recruits, or otherways they must die away and dwindle to nothing. And the strongest Citadels, tho' they may for some time frighten the poor Inhabitants of a Neighbourhood, yet after a while they must be beholding to the same for a little Victuals and Drink. In short, that Prince that is so happy, as to have the Love of his Subjects, has every Thing at his command which may contribute to his Security or his Honour. Their Purfes are open, whenever his Necessities call for Supplies; their Persons are ready whenever Men are wanting for his Service; and he cannot stand in need of any Thing, which it is in their Power to furnish him with. But where this is wanting, the greatest Funds become useles, and for the most Part are made a Prey to the Enemy; or however both Men and Money must in time be exhausted, and can never be made good, but by the good Will of the Subject, which is the only perpetual Bank to support a Government. Now what Prince would not be at the Expence of a few gentle Words and good humour'd Looks, to gain the Hearts of their Subjects, whose Affections are very often purchased

chased at no dearer Rate. All Men have naturally such a value for worldly Greatness, that they are ready to Sacrifice their Blood for being kindly spoke to, or any other way taken Notice of by their Sovereign; nay, their very Families, for several successive Generations, are wont to value themselves for some ancient Marks of Princely Favour bestowed upon their Predecessors; and think they are more particularly obliged to be Loyal to the Royal Line, by which their Family has formerly been honoured.

IV. But the Life of a Prince according to the *Machiavelian* Institution, that does place all his Security in Guards and Citadels, and in the horror and dread which his Subjects had of him, must be the most dismal and disconsolate Thing in Nature. He can have no Peace, no Satisfaction in his Mind; but must be tortur'd with a continual Series of Fears and Suspicions. For Fear does naturally beget Fear; and those that endeavour to render themselves dreadful to others, are afraid of them again. For whom Men fear, they consequently hate; and therefore the Prince, that is so Unfortunate by his ill Government as to incur this, he must be fearful of all the insidious Practices which ill-affected Men are able to bring about. *Cicero* in his Offices speaks with a *Roman* Spirit upon this Head. "They that would be feared, are first  
 " afraid of those whom they are willing to frighten.  
 " What shall we think of old *Dionysius* the Tyrant?  
 " What racking Fears was he tormented with, who  
 " was afraid to suffer the *Barber's* Razor to come under  
 " his Throat, and therefore singed off his Beard with  
 " hot Embers? What shall we think of *Alexander Phe-*  
 " *rans*? What a mind did he live with, who, tho' be-  
 " ing extraordinarily Fond of his Wife *Thebe*, yet when-  
 " ever he came into her Bed-chamber, he would com-  
 " mand a barbarous Slave, that had been branded in  
 " his Body for some Roguery, to go before him with  
 " a naked Sword; making some others of his Guard  
 " to examine into all her Wardrobe, lest any Weapon  
 " should be hid among her Cloaths. Miserable Wretch!

*Princes,*  
*who desire*  
*only to be*  
*fear'd are*  
*miserable.*

" that

“ that could think a branded and barbarian Slave could  
 “ be more faithful to him than his own Wife. But  
 “ truly he was not mistaken in his Opinion, for he was  
 “ killed by her out of Suspicion of his keeping a Con-  
 “ cubine. Neither is here any Government so powerful,  
 “ that if it be supported by Fear, can be of long con-  
 “ tinuance. *Phalaris* is an Instance of this, whose Cru-  
 “ elty was remarkable above all the rest; he was not  
 “ kill'd by Assassines, nor as *Cesar* our late Tyrant of  
 “ *Rome*, by a few: But all the People of *Agrigentum*  
 “ made an Assault together upon him. What did the  
 “ *Macedonians* do? Did not they leave *Demetrius*, and all  
 “ fly over to *Pyrrhus*? When the *Lacedemonians* begun  
 “ to Rule tyrannically over their Neighbours, did not  
 “ all their Allies desert them, and only lookt on, when  
 “ they were beat at *Leuctra*?

But *Xenophon* in his Life of *Hiero* has given us the  
 most graphical Description of a Prince, who governs his  
 Subjects according to the Rules of *Machiavel's* Policy.  
*Τὸ δὲ φοβῆσθαι μὲν ὄχλον, &c.* He is afraid of a Crowd,  
 and afraid of Solitude: He is afraid if his Guards be away,  
 and afraid of them when present: He fears when he sees  
 none about him with Arms, and frightened to see Men arm-  
 ed. What a miserable Condition is this? To trust Stran-  
 gers rather than his own Citizens, Barbarians rather than  
 Greeks: To endeavour to make Gentlemen to be Slaves, and  
 Slaves to be Gentlemen. Are not all these the Signs of a  
 Mind stupified with Fear? For Fear is not only a painful  
 Thing it self; but it corrupts all other Enjoyments.

Now can any one without Indignation look upon the  
 hellish Advice of this Atheistical Politician; who would  
 persuade Princes to forsake the good which they might  
 do to their Subjects, and to forfeit the Happiness and  
 Satisfaction which they might enjoy themselves, only  
 to plague and disquiet their People, and to fill their own  
 Minds with continual Torment and Vexation?

*Demob.* Again, you Christians are for cramping your  
 Prince, with I know not what notional Laws of Con-  
 science, and pretended Rules of Justice to his own Sub-  
 jects.

jects. You are for having the sovereign Will to be contradicted by an upstart Patriot, who by making Speeches to the Mobs about Chimerical Notions of Liberty, puts them all in an Uproar; and yet you will not allow that such a Man must be made away without a formal Trial, and the dull way, *juxta allegata & probata*; which will make him but more popular, and the People more unquiet. Nor yet would I have Matters of this kind be too barefaced neither. *Machiavel* gives very good Caution in this Point. "When a Prince is willing to work any ones Destruction, and to make him away, he ought to cover this over with some pretence of Justice. But when he has destroyed him, he ought to refrain from confiscating his Estate to his own proper Use. For the Children of the Sufferer will sooner forget the Death of their Father, than the Loss of their Patrimony. For nothing raises more Hatred to a Prince, than to meddle with the Goods or Wives of his Subjects.

*Endem.* I am not a little startled at the prophane Doctrine of your Atheistical Politicks; which makes me have the greater Esteem for that of the Holy Scripture, which teaches the Magistrate to abhor all manner of Injustice, and to defend all innocent Persons from the Insults and Injuries of others. *Thou shalt not wrest the Judgment of thy Poor in his Cause. Keep thee far from a false Matter: And the Innocent and the Righteous slay thou not, for I will not justify the wicked,* Exod. xxiii. 67. Nay, this Justice is by the divine Order to be extended to Strangers and Sojourners; *Also thou shalt not oppress a Stranger, for ye know the Heart of a Stranger, seeing ye were Strangers in the Land of Egypt,* v. 9. So again, Deut. i. 16. *I charged your Judges at that time, saying, hear the Causes of your Brethren, and judge righteously between every Man and his Brother, and the Stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect Persons in Judgment, but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the Face of Man, for the Judgment is Gods. And the wise Man instructs, That the King that faithfully judg-*

*The Scripture Doctrine, that a Prince ought to do Justice to his Subjects.*

*eth the Poor, his Throne shall be Established in Righteousness, Prov. xxiv. 14. Princes are exhorted not to be a terror to good Works, but to the Evil, Rom. xiii. 3. and are said to be appointed Ministers of God for good, v. 14. From all which it is abundantly evident, that those Princes who would square their Lives according to the Directions of these holy Writings, must be so far from wronging and injuring their Subjects, either in taking away their Lives or Estates from them, that they ought to protect them in all these to the utmost of their Abilities. Nor does the Holy Scriptures alone assert this; but the justest Reason likewise does bear Witness to it.*

*Duty of  
a Prince  
to defend  
from Oppression.*

II. For 'tis but reasonable, that those who are possessed of the greatest Power, should make use of it for rescuing the weak and harmless from the Injuries of potent Oppressors. For where-ever God Almighty has lodged an extraordinary Degree of Power, he does not design that the Person, he has conferred it upon, should make use of it only for his own particular Advantage; For then all Men would have been vested with an equal Degree of Power: But when it has pleased the all-wise Goodness to afford a greater Share thereof to one than to another, it is a manifest Indication, that God designs that every Part thereof, which is more than is sufficient for such Persons own Security, he should be ready to lay it out, for procuring the Safety of others, who stand in Need of it. Besides, it is the chief End and Design of the princely Dignity, to defend innocent Persons from the Assaults of injurious Aggressors. For People do with Readiness pay them that extraordinary Honour; and part with a competent Portion of their Income in Taxes, chiefly in Consideration, that they expect Protection from them. So that when Princes do deny them this; in Case they stand in need of it, they betray the the high Trust which is repositied in their Hands, and do unjustly receive such Tributes from them, without doing, on their part, what, by a tacit Compact, they have covenanted to do. From hence it is plain; that every Prince ought to provide his Subjects with just and

and equal Judges, to determine the Differences which may arise among his People; and to Redress the Injuries of those, that suffer by any powerful or outrageous Hand. And he is further to take Care, that no Corruption do mix it self with their Determinations, and that wealthy Persons by their Riches, do not gain the Favour of the Judge on their side, to the Prejudice of poorer Litigants. Upon this account *Jethro*, the Father-in-Law of *Moses* persuades him; that he should choose Magistrates, *That were Men fearing God, loving Truth, and hating Covetousness*, Exod. xviii. And other good Princes have not failed to follow this Copy. The famous *Quintius Cincinnatus*, and *Cato Censorius*, gained that great Esteem, they lived and died with among the Roman People, by freeing innocent Persons, by the Justice of their Determinations from the Fraud and Injuries of opulent and powerful Men. *Augustus Caesar* was careful to have his Empire stocked, with good Magistrates, that were not only Men of exact Integrity, but of considerable Learning likewise. And therefore turned a Consular Legate out of his place, for mis-spelling the word *ipfi*\*, writing it *ixi*. And the Emperor *Vespasian*, when a young foppish Gentleman, to whom he had given the Government of a Province, came to thank him for it, but coming into the Emperor's Presence, with an extraordinary Smell of Perfume about him; I had rather (says † that wise Prince) thou shouldst smell of Garlick; and for that Reason ordered his Patent to be revoked. So *Domitian*, who was in other Matters an ill Prince, cast *Publius Cornelius* out of the Senate, for having Silver Dishes in his House of an hundred Pound value. And indeed in former times Princes esteemed this, to be such an indispensable Part of their Duty, that they thought they could not sufficiently discharge it, unless they sat personally themselves, oftentimes in the Courts of Judicature. Thus *Julius Caesar* †, in that short time which he enjoy'd after his Empire was settled, he spent the greatest Part of it in hear-

† Suet. in Aug.

† Idin. Vesp.

‡ Suet. in Julio.

ing Causes: And particularly applied himself to put the sumptuary Laws in Execution, which forbad Excess in Eating and Drinking, and in Apparel. \* *Augustus* gave himself to the same good Offices, with such an unwearied Diligence, that he frequently spent a great Part of the Night in them: And when he was indisposed, he had his Sedan placed in Fashion of a Tribunal, and heard Causes out of that. *Galba*, when he was seventy-two Years of Age, underwent the constant Fatigue of hearing the most difficult Causes. And *Domitian* himself was very diligent in this Affair, repeating oftentimes the Sentences of the inferior Judges, and setting Fines and Marks of Infamy upon those who had been guilty of Bribery. The like was done by *Trajan*, *Adrian*, the two *Antonines* and *Severus*, who did not think this Condescension any Disgrace to the Imperial Purple. Nay, this was then looked upon a Duty so necessarily Incumbent upon the *Cæsarean* Majesty, that when a Woman desired of *Adrian*, as he was passing by, and intent upon other Matters, to hear her Cause, but he answering he had not Leisure to do it; she cried out, that then he ought not to be Emperor. At her saying so †, the good Emperor stood still, and not at all provoked with such a Freedom of Speech, heard patiently what she had to say. Nay, our own Princes have formerly sat in Person in their Courts at *Westminster*. ‡ Thus *Henry III.* set together with his Justicaries in Trial upon *Peter de Rivallis*, and passed Sentence upon him. And at another time he joined himself with the Barons of the *Exchequer*, and made severe Orders against all Sheriffs and Bailiffs of Towns incorporate, who did not Yearly appear at the *Exchequer*, to pay such Money of the Kings as was come to their Hands. So King *Edward* the Fourth used to sit in Person certain Days together in his Court of *King's-Bench*, to see how his Laws proceeded with Justice, making several severe Decrees against excessive Pride in Apparel.

\* Suet. in Aug.

† Dion. in Aed.

‡ Mat. Par.  
III. But



III. But for a Prince to turn this high Power, which God has invested him with, as *Machiavel* advises, to the Oppression or Destruction of his Subjects, is the most horrible Degree of Injustice. For with what Conscience can he, that is intrusted to be the Father of his Country, and to protect and cherish all his Subjects as if they were his own Children, take away any of their Lives by Assassinations; or by raising any false Accusations against them, destroy them under the Pretext of those Laws which ought to defend them? Besides, this is a Pitifulness and a Cowardise which is beneath the Bravery of the princely Dignity. For every Prince, that unjustly takes away the Life of any one of his Subjects, does manifestly betray his Fear of him, and that he does not think himself secure without his Destruction. But this is so weak and ungenerous a Part, that no great Mind ought, or can submit to it. For why should a Person, who has the whole Power of a Kingdom at his command; be frighten'd at a single Man, who perhaps has no Will, or to be sure no Power to hurt him? The Case is different of Traitors, who may be numerous, and for that Reason formidable; and besides they have forfeited their Lives to the Laws, and therefore the Prince stands obliged to see them duly fulfilled. But for any other Person who has offended his Prince, only for want of some Respect, or some Neglect or Miscarriage in a Trust, a frown from such August Personages is as much as their Honour will allow: To go further is to make Majesty too cheap; but to enter into Confederacy with Ruffians and Informers to take away an innocent Life, debases a Prince who makes use of such wicked Means so low, and in a manner to set him upon a Level with those vile Wretches, whose Assistance he makes Use of for the Accomplishment of his Designs.

*Unjust and Base in a Prince to envy his Subject's Life.*

IV. As for the specious Pretences, which our Politician advises his Prince when he designs such Acts of Wickedness to make use of, they seldom are able to stand him in any Stead. They serve to make the Crime look more black, by adding Dissimulation to a guilt which

*The Pretence for easily seen through.*

was great enough before. Besides for the most part Men, in carrying on such hellish Designs, are so insatuated, that the Pretences they take up, to cover over such a Guilt, are as foolish as their Actions are abominable. A remarkable Instance of this we have in *Nero Caesar*\*, when he plotted that villainous Murder of his Mother *Agrippina*. The Pretence, which he and his Accomplices took up, was this: When *Agrippina* had sent a Messenger to the Emperor, a Dagger was slipped between his Feet, as if it had dropped from under his Clothes, and he had a Design therewith, by *Agrippina's* Order to have murder'd *Nero*. Upon this a Ruffian is sent to assassinate the unfortunate Lady, as if he was necessitated to do it in his own Defence. And yet this Excuse, as foolish as it is, was the best that could be contrived by *Nero* and his Council. And *Seneca*, who wrote a Letter to the Senate, in the Emperor's Name, to excuse the Murder, could think out no better an Argument than this ridiculous Story. For which, *Tacitus* says, that every Body jeer'd at that Master of the Imperial Eloquence, who, instead of an Apology, had made a Confession for his Scholar. Such a foolish excuse *Tiberius* made, to take away the Life of *Cremutius Cordus*; only, because, in a History of the Roman Affairs, he had called *Cassius* †, *Romanorum ultimum, the last Man of a Roman Spirit*. Such a pitiful Sort of a Defence was made by the Emperor *Caracalla*, when he had killed his Brother *Geta*, who was a fine Gentleman, and a Scholar, and recommended himself to the good Opinion of all Men, by the good Qualities he stood possessed of, whilst || *Caracalla* was universally hated for his Cruelty: He being nothing but a Butcher in the Purple, spending all the Time of his Empire, in murdering his Subjects. As soon as he came to the Empire, being jealous that his Brother's Vertues would recommend

\* Tac. An. Lib. 14.

† Tac. An. Lib. 4.

|| Aelius Spart. in Vita. Anf. Carac.

him to the Army, he ordered him to be murdered. And all the Excuse he was able to make for this Wickedness, was, that his Brother designed to murder him. And when some of his Creatures would have had him made a better Excuse for himself, by an Oration in the Senate; he is reported to have made answer, *'Tis an easier Matter to murder a Brother, than to defend it.*

V. Neither can a Prince reasonably expect any Happiness or Security, after he has been guilty of such a bloody Act, however he endeavours to recommend himself to the common People, or the Relations of the murdered, by Acts of Beneficence. For the Generality of Men have such an Abhorrence of Blood-guiltiness, that they can never reconcile their Affections to any Person, who has stained himself that way, altho' he be otherwise of the greatest Dignity. And those unhappy Princes, who have been tempted to take away the Lives of their Rivals or Adversaries wrongfully, in order to secure their Government, have found themselves most miserably mistaken in the Measures they have taken; and have generally lost their Crowns or their Lives by such Actions, instead of defending them: The Relations of the suffering Parties seldom failing to revenge the Deaths of their Friends. This was very handsomely alluded to, by the unfortunate young Prince, we were just now mentioning, *Geta* the younger Son of *Severus* the Emperor: who when his Father was giving Order to have all, that had been in Arms against him to be destroyed; his Son *Geta* asked the Question, *Whether they had any Friends or Relations?* Yes, a great many answered one. *Why then,* says he, *we shall have more People sad upon our Victory than joyful.* Which was as much, as with Security and good Manners, the wise and good young Prince could say to a stern Father; intimating, that it was not only very cruel, but very dangerous, to disoblige such a Number of the Relations and Dependants of the Persons he designed to make away with. And indeed this good Advice had taken Effect, but that *Plautianus* and *Juvencalis* two wicked Courtiers interposed, who hoped

*Such Princes unsecure and unfortunate.*

to enrich themselves by the Estates of the proscribed. But, if you please to make Remarks upon History, you shall seldom find any of those Princes, who founded their Governments upon Murder, but who have gone out of the World by the same violent Ends. It would be infinite to make a Collection of all Instances, which might be alleged upon this Head: It shall suffice to make an Observation or two, upon the Death of the Princes we have before instanced in. *Tiberius*, who was one of the most cruel and deceitful Princes that ever was in the World, who endeavoured to purchase his Security by murdering Men by Poisons, Assassinations, or false Accusations; yet, for all his great Cunning in these Matters, he came to be so universally hated for his Cruelty, that he could not think himself secure any where, but in a sad rocky Island called *Caprea*, which was not better than a Prison; to which there was but one way up into, and in which but one Man could go a Breast. Here the wicked timorous Emperor lay lurking all the latter Years of his Life, continually scar'd with Fears of Conspiracies, and torn with the Stings of his Conscience; as appears by the beginning of one of his Letters to the Senate. *What should I write to you, my Lords, or how should I write, or what should I not write? If I can tell, may all the Gods and Goddesses destroy me faster than I find my self every Day decaying already.* And tho' he liv'd to an old Age in this miserable Solitude, yet he did not go fairly out of the World after all; for in his last Fit of Sickness, because he did not die, as 'twas expected he would, he was stifled in his Bedclothes by his Servant *Macro*. *Nero* for his Cruelty was drove out of his Government, and killed himself in a dark Hole in which he hid himself. And *Caracalla*, after the Murder of his Brother, and so many of his Subjects, was killed by *Macrinus* the Captain of his Guards, and who succeed him after in the Empire.

*Demob.* There is another Thing which your People are very faulty in, when they get about a crown'd Head; for then they din into it Objects of Mercy, and Objects of Pity; that is, they get Money into their Pockets by it, or a Reputation among the Vulgar, and withal hazard their Prince's Security, when Justice ought to take place, and Offenders to suffer. \* "For it scarce ever happens, that Kindness and Indulgence, which a Prince may use towards his Subjects, when he is forced to make use of them upon account of a Rebellion, or any other Fear, is thankfully received by them. For the People never look upon such Actions to be Favours to them; they only account them to proceed from the Necessities of such a Prince's Circumstances. So that this only puts the People upon Projects of bringing their Sovereign into such Straights again. Wherefore a Prince ought never to suffer himself to come into that Condition, so as to be necessitated to use his Subjects with Kindness and Liberality; for then it will be ever out of his Power afterwards to use them worse. And again, it may be for a Prince's Interest to seem kind, and merciful, and liberal. But he ought to train himself up to be flexible and various in his Disposition; so that when Occasion requires, he may be able to act a contrary Part; for his Affairs will oftner require of him to be cruel, unmerciful, and tenacious.

*Eudem.* But we, God be thanked, are better instructed, when the holy Scriptures teaches us, That *the merciful only shall obtain Mercy*, Mat. v. 7. That *Mercy and Truth preserve the King*, Prov. xx. 28. And that *his Throne shall be established by Mercy*, Isa. xvi. 5. That *when the wicked Man is worthy to be beaten, the Judge shall cause him to lie down; and forty Stripes may he give him, and not exceed*, Deut. xv. 2, 3. The wise Man teaches, That *a merciful Man doeth good to his own Soul: But he that is cruel, troubleth his own Flesh*, Prov. xi. 17. That the *Light of the King's Countenance is Life, and his Favour as a Cloud of the*

*Scripture  
Doctrines of  
Mercy, &c*

\* Mach. Com. in Liv. Cap. 32.

*latter Rain*, Prov. xvi. 15. Besides, these holy Books afford us several very memorable Examples of Princes, who have been punished for their Cruelty; and others, who have been commended, or rewarded for their Clemency. It is said, that God rewarded the Wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his Father, in slaying his seventy Brethren, Judg. ix. 5, 6. And his Judgments upon that wicked Princess *Jezabel*, are remarkable, 2 Chron. xxiii. 17. As on the other side, the Clemency of *David* is set down for a memorable Pattern; when he said to two of his Courtiers, who were persuading him to take off the Head of *Shimei*, one of his notorious Rebels. *What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zerujah, that ye should be this Day Adversaries unto me? Shall there any Man be put to Death this Day in Israel? For do I not know that I am this Day King over Israel?* And now let impartial Reason judge, which of these two Sorts of Advice a Prince ought to take; the Cruelty which the Atheists, or the Clemency which the Scripture recommends. But in behalf of that Mercy which the Scripture recommends, I suppose the following Arguments which I shall advance, may be very convincing.

*Because there may be good Reasons for sparing.*

I. There may be sometimes very good Reasons for sparing Delinquents, which are very obnoxious to the Laws, or have committed such Faults to which the greatest Punishments are due. These may arise from natural Tenderness, or from Reasons of State, and the best Rules of Prudence. The tender Age of some young Offenders, is a great Plea for their Indemnity, it being to be presumed, that their Inexperience in the World, suffer'd them to be led into such precipitate Attempts, by the Craftiness of older Criminals: That since they have seen the Danger which Wickedness exposes them to, they will for the future pursue the better and safer Courses of Virtue. Old Age may sometimes be an Argument of Pity, their Weaknesses apologizing for their Faults; and because it is so sad and lamentable a Sight, to behold an aged Sufferer, and to see such an one violently sent out of the World, who is just going off of the Stage of Life

by

by the Course of Nature. Some are of too high a Dignity, with Safety, to demand Punishment from; and an overlooking of their Faults, or a gentle Rebuke, may make them, together with their Families and Dependants, out of Gratitude, espouse with Heartiness the Interest of a Prince, who so readily forgave their Injuries. Some are of too mean and low a Fortune for a Prince to extend his Severity to; for his Justice will grow too cheap, when it is reached out to such a Number of poor sorry Offenders, who are not of Figure enough to be of Example to others, and which were drawn into their Faults by the Countenance or Command of greater Persons. Now for a Prince to tie himself up to an inexorable Severity, when there are so many good and justifying Reasons for Clemency, is violently to transgress those Rules of Wisdom and Goodness, which are the chief Ornaments, as well as Duties, of the princely Dignity.

II. An obstinate Severity is contrary to all the true Ends of Government. It is the End of a Prince's Rule, to succour and defend his People, and not to destroy them; and when he is forced to take away the Lives of any, it should be only in order to make the Lives of the rest the more comfortable, by the removal out of the Way those incorrigible Persons. 'Tis to be his Study and constant Care, how to encrease the Security and Happiness of his Subjects, and not to be like a great wild Beast leaping out of his Den, ready to devour every one he can catch, and from whom all Men, with Dread and Horror, flie from; but one, whom all Persons with Joyfulness may apply to, for Succour and Relief. A Prince does sustain the like Office in the State, as a Father or Tutor in a Family. Now a Father will not execute upon his Son the greatest Severity at first; he will use gentle Admonitions when he begins to be faulty; and 'tis with great Reluctancy that ever he comes to Blows; but to cut him off from his Family, by disinheriting, will be the last Remedy he will have Recourse to. He is a bad Master, who is for slaying his Scholar upon every Neglect of his Lesson; and he is an ill Surgeon, who is fo

*Rigid Severity contrary to the Ends of Government.*

running to Amputation upon every Pain in a Member. And for the same Reasons, it is a Fault in a Prince to inflict upon any offending Subject capital Punishment, when he is reclaimable by any less Degree of Severity. Besides, to inflict the heaviest Punishment upon lesser Offenders, is to make the Authority too cheap, 'tis only to embolden Malefactors, and to make them despise the Penalties when they are grown common. And a Prince, who sets a value upon his Skill in well-governing, should, for his own Reputation sake, take Care that the Persons he animadverts upon by capital Censures, be very few: Because a Number of such incorrigible Offenders are a Reproach to his Government; which that they are so many, will be judged to be owing to some Fault in his Administration. But if he would keep up his Honour to the Height, he should be as much concerned to have a Subject executed under his Government, as a Physician is to have a Patient die under his Cure.

*Rigorous  
Severity  
most expedient  
for  
Observation  
of  
Laws.*

III. But farther; if a Prince, by inflicting Punishment upon his Subjects, designs only the Observation of his Laws, (as every good Prince can have no other Aim) rigorous Severity is but the worst Expedient to bring that End about by. For the Generality of Men are stubborn and cross-grain'd; they don't care to be drove, but led; and when they find one of the Company unmercifully treated for doing any thing, they will be inclined to do the same thing out of pure Opposition, tho' they had little or no liking to it before. For Subjects are like high-mettl'd Horses, the more you curb them in, the more eager they are to run out. Besides, a merciful and good-natur'd Governour takes such firm Possession of the Hearts of his Subjects, that they are ashamed to offend one who is unwilling to punish; and they cannot find in their Heart to do an Action, which their Prince is forced to punish with so much Reluctancy. Add to this, that whenever a mild and merciful Magistrate does punish, it carries the greater Weight and Authority with it, and the Sufferers are always more affected therewith. For, when Punishments are frequently and hastily inflicted,

they



they are look'd upon to proceed only from the Anger of the Magistrate, or his Affectation of Power : But, when they are extorted from a calm and gentle Mind, Offenders are thoroughly convinced, that their Fault has really deserved a Penalty, which was adjudged by a Nature so very averse to all Severity.

IV. There is such a vast Power which is lodged in a Prince's Hands, over the Lives and Liberties of Subjects, that if ever he should think fit to execute it to his full Extent, he would make a Solitude of his most populous Cities, and drive Men into Woods or Caves, or foreign Territories. If they should be prosecuted upon every Omission of a Duty ; and if they should have the full Extent of the Letter of each Law which they have transgressed, turned upon them, there would be no tolerable Living in the World. Therefore it is the Part of every wise and good Prince, to overlook subordinate Magistrates, that they be not over-busy in extending the Laws beyond their Design and Meaning, to the Detriment of their Subjects ; and if it shall happen that any well-designing, or not any other irreclaimable Person, should, by any Misfortune or Failure, incur the Lash of a very severe Law, he should extend the Plenitude of this his high Power, to exempt him from such Punishment.

*Princes executing Severity to the utmost would destroy his People.*

V. All Princes, who have spared their Subject's Lives or Estates, which were forfeited by Law, or have freed them from any great Punishment, do enjoy the Satisfaction of seeing such Persons to be living Monuments of their Praise, and to set forth the Commendation of their Clemency to the whole Nation. For what can a Prince get by sending a Man out of the World ? But when a Life is given back to one that had forfeited it, such a one lives ever after to the Glory of his Preserver ; every one that sees him, ascribing the Cause of his Living, and of his being a Comfort to his Friends and Relations, to the Goodness of that merciful Prince that has rescued him from a Sentence, which would have deprived him of all these Benefits. Nay, farther ; oftentimes

*Pardon'd Persons Monuments of the Prince's Clemency.*

tentimes a Prince by forgiving a Subject, has of an im-  
 bittered Enemy, procured himself a fast Friend. A re-  
 remarkable Instance whereof, we have in *Augustus Caesar*\*,  
 his forgiving *Lucius Cinna*, who was engaged in a Con-  
 spiracy against his Life. He was for some time in great  
 Perplexities, not being willing to condemn a Person of  
 an honourable Family, who had great Dependants, and  
 perhaps not less Accomplices of his Crime: Neither did  
 he think it safe to let a Person who was plotting against  
 his Life, go on with Security in so dangerous a Design.  
 Whilst he was fluctuating in these Thoughts, his Wife  
*Livia* interposed. Come (says she) will you admit  
 of a Woman's Counsel? Do, like the Physicians, when  
 common Remedies fail of their Success, try their Con-  
 traries. You see that your Severity has not hitherto pre-  
 vailed. You have caused to be executed *Salvidienus*,  
*Lepidus*, *Murena*, *Cepio*, *Egnatius*, with many others,  
 who were but just contriving a Plot against you. Now  
 try how your Clemency will succeed, and pardon *Cinna*:  
 For his Plot is discovered, and he being wholly in your  
 Power, can do you no harm; but your pardoning him  
 may get you Reputation. *Augustus* thanks *Livia* for her  
 good Counsel, sends for *Cinna*, orders him a Chair, and  
 puts all the other Company out of the Room. He tells  
 him how he had preserved his Life once before, and  
 gave him back his Estate, which was forfeited to him.  
 That he had freely given him one of the greatest Of-  
 fices of the Empire, when it was sued for to him by  
 some of the Sons of them who had fought in his Cause.  
 And yet (says he) *Cinna*, you have a Mind to take  
 away my Life. For what end, I pray? Do you think,  
 that you can protect the whole *Roman* Empire, that  
 can't defend your own Family-Affairs, against so poor  
 an Adversary? For the other Day you were cast, in a  
 Trial against the Son of a Slave. And yet you think,  
 you are able to Cope with *Caesar*. But, prithee, suppo-  
 sing that I were not able to oppose your Attempts: Do  
 you think, that the *Pauli* and *Cossi*, the *Fabii* and *Ser-*

\* Senee. de Clem.

*vili*, and all the antient Noble Families of *Rome* will submit to you? Come, *Cinna*, I give your Life to you once again; at first as to an Enemy, but now as to a Parricide and an Assassinator. From this Day let us have a Friendship begun between us, and let us strive to out do one another in Heartiness and Sincerity; let us try, whether I do the more willingly give you your Life, or you the more thankfully receive it. After this, he procured him the Consulship, when he had not the Confidence to Petition for it; and had him, during his whole Life-time, his constant and fast Friend: And the other was so far from engaging in any Designs against his Benefactor, that when he died he made *Cæsar* his Heir.



*That it is a Branch of the Duty of a Prince to be bountiful to his Subjects who stand in Need of it.*

*Demob.* But there is one thing which your Christian Statesmen are never to be excused in; and that is, you put your Prince upon squandering away his Money in Largesses to the People, which he ought to keep in Coffers for better Uses. “ For if a Prince will aim at Munificence, in a little Time he will bring himself to Beggary and Contempt. For if he shall endeavour to Recruit himself by drawing Money from his Subjects, he will from thence only gain their Hatred, and in all Probability get the Name, and perhaps the Fortune of a Tyrant. But if, on the other side, a Prince be Parsimonious, and he has always Money ready to supply the publick Necessities, he will find this will redound to his greatest Honour. For as for the Disgrace which may arise from his Illiberality, or Stinginess, there is nothing to be feared from thence, if he take Care to live so as to take nothing forcibly  
“ from

*Sordidness  
of the Machiavelian  
Prince.*

“ from his Subjects. For a Prince may afford to be  
 “ bountiful out of other Men’s Fortunes, which are  
 “ taken as Booty in War, as was the Custom of *Cyrus*,  
 “ *Alexander*, and *Cæsar*; but he ought to be very spa-  
 “ ring of his own Revenues. For nothing does more  
 “ exhaust a Prince than great Largeffes to his Subjects.  
 “ Neither have I seen any thing done confiderable by  
 “ any Prince of our Age, but who has been Parsimo-  
 “ nious; for all the rest have funk to nothing. Pope  
 “ *Julius* was very Munificent, till he arriv’d to the Pope-  
 “ dom; but when he got that, he bid farewell to his  
 “ Liberality, to enable him to carry on the War against  
 “ *Lewis XII.* King of *France*. And *Ferdinand* King  
 “ of *Spain* had never been so Successful in his Enterpri-  
 “ zes if he had affected the Glory of Liberality.

Bounty  
 which our  
 Religion  
 recom-  
 mends to  
 Princes.

*Endem.* But this stingy Principle which you Atheists  
 would endeavour to instill into the noblest Minds, is  
 so base a thing, that few Persons of that noble Extraction  
 will be fond of embracing it. But our inspired Books  
 lay down much better Maxims on this Head. For in  
 those Writings, Charity and Liberality, according to all  
 Men’s Abilities, are recommended as indispenfable Du-  
 ties for all Christians to perform. We are commanded  
 to *break our Bread unto the Hungry*, Isa. lviii. 7. And  
 to *give, if we expect it should be given unto us*, Luke vi.  
 38. And to *distribute to the Necessity of the Saints*, Rom.  
 xii. 13. To do good, and to communicate forget not:  
 And for an Encouragement to this we are told, *That*  
*with such Sacrifices God is well pleased*, Heb. xiii. 16. That  
 he that gives charitably but a *Cup of cold Water*, shall not lose  
 his Reward, Matt. x. 42. And we learn from our Savi-  
 our’s Discourse, that charitable Christians are first called  
 into everlasting Glory; *Come, ye blessed of my Father,*  
*enter into the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning*  
*of the World: I was hungred and ye gave me Meat, I was*  
*thirsty and ye gave me Drink*, Matt. xxv. 35. And be-  
 sides, there are in Scripture Examples of Princes recom-  
 mended, who have been remarkable for extraordinary  
 Acts of Charity and Munificence. As of *Job*, who is  
 reported

reported to have been *Eyes to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame, and a Father to the Poor*; that the *Blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him; and he caused the Widow's Heart to sing for Joy*, Job xxix. 13, &c. So *David gave the Spoil of the Amalckites to the Tribe of Judah, Behold a present for you (says he) of the Spoil of the Enemies of the Lord*, 1 Sam. xxx. 26. The Bounty of the same Prince was very remarkable to *Mephibosheth, to whom he restored all the Land of Saul his Father, and offered him the Favour of eating Bread at his Table continually*, 2 Sam. ix. 7. So is the Example of *Solomon* very conspicuous for his munificent Hospitality, *Whose Provision one Day was thirty Measures of fine Flower, and threescore Measures of Meal; ten fat Oxen, and twenty Oxen out of the Pastures, and an hundred Sheep, besides Harts and Roc-bucks, and Fallow-deer, and fatted Fowl*, 1 Kings iv. 22, 23. *And the Officers provided Victual for King Solomon, and for all that came to King Solomon's Table, every Man in his Month, they lacked nothing*, 1 Kings iv. 27. Remarkable likewise was the Munificence of *Artaxerxes*, who gave Commission to the *Jews* upon their Restoration, *To carry the Silver and Gold which the King and his Counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose Habitation is in Jerusalem*, Ezra vii. 15. And how famous Princes were in those Times, for Acts of Munificence, may be learnt from the Story of *Araunah the Jebusite*, who so freely gave his Threshing-floor, and all that belonged to it, to *King David*: For it is said, that all these things *Araunah gave as a King*, denoting that it was the part of a King to be extraordinary Munificent, 1 Kings xxiv. 23. And in the New Testament, Kings are called Benefactors, Luk. xxii. 25. From all which 'tis abundantly plain, that according to the Scripture Doctrine, Princes ought to signalize themselves for Acts of Munificence to their Subjects, and not to be guilty of a sordid Parsimony as the Atheists would advise.

II. For God Almighty has sent Men into the World, not to act separately for their own Interest, and to keep all the Happiness which they can engross singly to themselves;

*Princes are  
to be born-  
tiful, be-  
cause of  
their extra-  
ordinary  
Revenue.*

elves ; but has given them Reason and strong Inclinations to guide and inform them, how they ought to be serviceable to the rest of the World, and to let other People partake of those larger Communications of the divine Bounty which they are blessed with. Our Reason suggests to us, that when God, of his infinite Mercy, has been pleased to befriend us with the choicest of his Blessings ; that when we flow in Plenty, and can have a ready Enjoyment of all Things which our Appetites can wish for, we ought not sullenly to feed upon these delightful Entertainments only by our own selves, whilst there are so many of God's Creatures, and our Fellow-Servants in the World, which stand in need of the ordinary Supports of Life, and which to supply them with, would be an extraordinary Degree of Comfort, without any perceptible impairing of our own Satisfactions. Besides, the Wants of such poor distressed People, have an Advocate in our own Breasts, a strong Bent of Nature, which we call Pity or Commiseration, pleading for them : For God in his Wisdom has been so pleased to mould and compose our Constitutions, that whenever we have a pitiful Object before us, Nature will not let us be at quiet till we have redressed its Wants : There is such a yearning of our Bowels, and such a damp upon our Spirits, that we must in a manner, whether we will or no, give our Assistance towards their Relief. These are invincible Motives, besides what our holy Religion affords, to persuade all Persons of the more plentiful Fortunes, kindly to dispense out of their Abundance, something considerable towards the Maintenance of poor People. Now whereas the Revenues of Princes, do by vast Degrees, exceed those of private Persons, their Charity, and Beneficence, ought, by a like Degree of Proportion, to exceed that of their charitable Subjects. But still it must be supposed, that Allowance is to be made in this Case, for so much of the Revenue which is necessarily employ'd for the publick Use ; it not being reasonable to think that a Prince should be answerable for his Charity farther, than

than in Proportion to that Part of the Income which expends for the Maintenance of the Royal Port.

III. Besides, there is such a Glory arising from Acts of Bounty, and such a Pitifulness and Poorness of Spirit attends Avarice; that no Prince can maintain the Credit and Reputation, which is requisite to his high Dignity, without cultivating the one, and avoiding the other. For most of the princely Education have such generous Spirits, that they cannot forbear relieving any poor People which they behold in Want; they have naturally such tender Compassions for the Miseries of Mankind, such a Love of Glory, and such a generous Pride to rescue those who are under Affliction, that they are inclined to give Ease to any Sufferers, tho' at the same time they may be satisfied, they bereave themselves of many other outward Satisfaction. The greatest Error which most of these august Personages are apt to fall into, is, that they do not pursue the exactest Measures, in getting a Knowledge of those Persons who are fittest Objects of their Beneficence and Charity; but are ready to extend their Bounty to those, who first present themselves to them, as needing their Assistance. Hence, in all Ages, it has been too just a ground of Complaint; that several Court-Parasites have without sufficient Desert, made their way to their Prince's Favour, and have engrossed their Liberality to your own selves, to the Exclusion of those who have needed it more. Few Persons, of this great Rank, have found any thing in their Nature of that sordid Temper, which these irreligious Politicians recommend; it being too base a Degradation of their Princely Honour to stoop to so mean a Vice, and to all those sordid Arts which those sorry Dispositions must put them upon. Persons of that high Extraction are not liable to the Temptations which a lower Condition is Subject to, nor are pushed on by a greedy Desire of heaping up Riches to make themselves a Fortune; whereas Providence has been so kind to them, as to make them to be born to a more plentiful Condition, than other People by all their Carking and Caring, can possibly arrive

*Because  
of the Ho-  
nour and  
Bravery of  
Bounty.*

to. And therefore 'tis a needless Attempt, for them to be scanty and niggardly in their Expences, which they cannot have any possible Hopes of bettering their Condition by; tho' by an unhandsome Way of Living, and by foregoing all generous Actions which may recommend themselves to their Inferiors, they may in all Probability make it a great deal worse. An ordinary Man indeed, by saving and pinching, may have some Hopes of raising himself from a Citizen or Gentleman, to shine at last like Ermines: But a Prince is placed in the highest Degree of human Greatness at first, and upon that Account has no occasion to look out for Methods of raising himself to a higher Condition. Other People are uneasy; whilst they see some of their Neighbours in a superior Form of Riches and Honour; but 'tis perfectly Needless for him, to lay out any Endeavours to get above others, who is above all about him already. There is no Ambition of this kind left for such Persons to pursue, but only to Imitate and Copy from those above them, and that is God and his Holy Angels. And indeed, from hence they may excite in themselves a glorious Emulation worthy of their high Fortune, not to contract themselves within their own Happiness, and to enjoy all their great Satisfaction to their own selves; but, like the good and beneficent Spirits above; to be ready upon all Occasions, with their Power and Assistance to befriend Mankind with any Help, which they shall stand in need of; or, like the great God of Heaven and Earth, who out of his Infinite Satisfaction; is pleased to communicate to his Creatures as great a Share of Happiness, as their respective Natures are capable of.

*Liberality  
strength-  
ens a Go-  
vernment.*

IV. It is a further Argument to stir Princes up to Bounty and Liberality, that by these Acts their Government is extraordinarily supported and strengthened. For every Prince's Crown sits the faster upon his Head, by how much the more he enjoys the Love of his Subjects. But People's Affections are by nothing more strongly tied to their Governour, than by Acts of Beneficence. Persons run with Eagerness, not only to serve and assist,

but



but even to lay down their Lives, if occasion requires, for those who have rescued them from Poverty and Distress, and by bountiful Donations have made their Circumstances easy to them. But when these beneficent Grants come from a princely Hand, they take faster hold upon People's Hearts, by how much the more they carry a sort of Honour with the Bounty; Men pleasing themselves, that they are taken Notice of by Persons of that extraordinary Condition, and that they are vouchsafed the Honour of partaking of the Royal Munificence. The Thoughts of this makes the smallest Largess from the Crown, to be received with much Joy and Exultation; the People making an Estimate of the Gift, not from what they themselves receive, but from the Dignity and Kindness of the Donor. But when their charitable Acts are great and munificent, when they make their Subjects sensibly feel the blessed Effects of them, Men are rapt up with such Admiration and Gratitude, that they are ready to adore so gracious a Benefactor. What Subject could not be enamoured with so good a Prince as *Titus Vespasian*, who being admonished by some of his Friends, for promising some great Things which he must with Difficulty perform, made this Answer, that *a Prince ought not to let any go unsatisfied from him?* Who one Night, at Supper, calling to Mind, that he had conferred no Benefit on any one that Day; cried out, *I have lost a Day?* *Alexander the Great*, tho' he had a great many Faults, which disoblinded several of his Friends about him; yet, by his noble Generosity, he made himself dear to the Generality, both of his conquer'd and his native Subjects. And tho' his Bounty was often abused, yet so brave was his Temper, that he never repented of what he had done. As he was always a noble Benefactor to learned Men, so he having a particular Esteem for *Anaxarchus* the Philosopher, he commanded his Treasurer to pay him any Sum of Money which he should desire: The covetous Philosopher taking Advantage of so generous an offer, had the Confidence to ask no less than a hundred Talents,

that is more than ten Thousand Pounds in our *English* Money. The Treasurer demurs a little upon paying so great a Sum, and tells his Master of the unreasonableness of the Philosopher's Demand. The King shewing no manner of Displeasure, but contrariwise a great deal of Satisfaction; come, says he, the Man has done but as he should do: For he knew that he had a Friend that was both able and willing to give.

*Bounty  
never in-  
jurious to  
Princes.*

V. Neither is it to be thought, that Princes by their munificent Acts should so exhaust their Treasures, as to be in Straights for Monies to carry on the publick Business. For a generous Prince has always the Peoples Hearts at his Service, which are the best Key to their Coffers, and whenever they have Money in their keeping, he cannot want it. It was not only a very wise, but a very well-natur'd saying of *Constantius Chlorus*\*, mentioned by *Eutropius*: Who said he had rather have the publick Wealth to be lodged in private Mens Hands, than under the Locks of the *Exchequer*. Nor do I remember any where in History, to have read of a Prince who ruin'd his Affairs by being too liberal. Indeed, some Princes have wastefully spent their Revenues upon some odd Humours, and in enriching some sorry People who have done them no Credit, which Actions they mistook for Liberality. As *Nero Caesar*, who spent such an infinite Treasure upon Stage-Plays, and fencing Matches, and running Chariots; in building prodigious Houses, and cutting Canals: But then as he got the good Opinion only of some of the Mob by these whimsical Expences, so he lost the Affections of most of these, by some of his following Acts of Cruelty.

*Covetous-  
ness preju-  
dicial to  
Princes.*

VI. But it is rarely known, when a Prince has given himself over to Covetousness, that he makes any Figure in the World; but generally it happens, that he involves his Affairs by it in great Perplexities and Misfortunes. *Perseus*, King of *Macedonia* †, might have kept

\* Eutrop. Hist. Lib. 10.

† Liv. Hist. Lib. 44.

his Kingdom, if it had not been for his sordid Temper. For, when he was in War with the *Romans*, he, to make himself the stronger against that powerful Enemy, bargains for a considerable Sum of Money with the *Galls*, who had settled in *Illyricum*, to have lent him ten thousand Horse, and the like Number of Foot. The *Galls* are ready with their Forces, and demand the Payment of the Money. But *Perseus*, who knew how to keep his Money better than his Kingdom, shuffles about the Payment of it, and at last tells *Clondicus* their General, or King, that he had need but of half that Number of Soldiers; *Clondicus* asks if he would pay proportionably according to his Contract for that Number: To which Question, when he could not gain a satisfactory Answer, he returns back again to *Illyricum*, ravaging all the Country as he went. For want of this supply, *Perseus* lost the Battle to the *Romans* at *Pydna*, and afterwards had all the Wealth which he forfeited his Kingdom to save, taken by *Paulus Aemilius*, the Roman General, in his Palace at *Pella*.

*M. Crassus* was the richest Senator of *Rome*, and had an Estate, as appear'd by the *Census* \*, greater than any *Roman* ever had before; but being of a covetous Humour, and having a mind to increase it, tho' it was too big before; he got the *Parthick* War to be decreed by the Senate to him, judging by the Spoils which *Lucullus* brought Home formerly from that War, that it must turn to his great Profit. Upon this Expedition he goes, taking *Jerusalem* in his Way, and being invited by the Fame of the great Riches of the Temple, took away out of the publick Treasury, of the Monies of Orphans and Widows there repositèd, and which *Pompey* had spared, to the Value of 800000 *l.* He was presently after killed by the *Parthians*, and never lived to enjoy any thing of this Wealth, which he so sacrilegiously obtained.

† *Mauritus* the Emperour was as to other Matters a good Prince, but so intolerably covetous, that he minded nothing but filling his *Exchequer*: At last he grew so very griping, that he grutchèd the very Soldiers their

† Joseph. Antiqu. Lib. 14. c. 8. † Pompon. Læt. in Mar

Pay. Which gave Incouragement to his Lieutenant *Phocas*, to take away both his Life and his Empire from him. Neither did *Phocas*, warned by the Example of *Mauritius*, avoid splitting upon the same Rock; for he, whilst he was intent upon getting of Money, lost the most considerable Branches from off the *Roman Empire*. For in his Time, \* *Germany, Gaul, Spain*, a good Part of *Italy, Pannonia, Mesia*, and a great Part of *Africa* revolted; and in the East, *Armenia, Assyria, Arabia* and *Egypt*, were over-run by the *Persians*, and other barbarous Nations. Which Misfortunes were chiefly ascribed to the intolerable Covetousness of *Phocas*.

The Tenets  
of the Ir-  
religious.

*Demob.* I must add further, that by your Christian Maxims, you do a great deal of Mischief to Governments; particularly by that of Peaceableness, and mutual Concord. And your Divines, with their melting Harangues, upon this Head, do more harm than one is aware of. For Factions are the best Tools a cunning Prince can work with: Without these he is like a Ship in a Calm, he is forced either to lie by, or dully tide it along; but Factions are Wind and Sail to him; for some Times closing with this Party, and sometimes with the other, he can steer his Course to what Point, or with what Swiftnes he pleases. And concerning this my *Florentine* Tutor does excellently well Remark. “Our Ancestors the *Florentinians* †, especially  
“ those among them who were the most famous for Wis-  
“ dom, were of Opinion, that their Government was best  
“ established by fomenting intestine Divisions. Wherefore  
“ in the Towns which were subject to their Jurisdiction,  
“ they did all they could to create Differences and Broils  
“ among the Inhabitants. So the *Venetians*, led by the same  
“ Counsel, cherished the Factions of the *Guelfs* and *Gibel-*  
“ *lines*, that the Minds of their Subjects being taken up in  
“ the Prosecution of these Quarrels, might not be at  
“ leisure to form any Rebellion against their Govern-  
“ ment”. And elsewhere he lays down.

“ Contrary to the Opinion of many others, I affirm,  
“ that civil Dissentions and Seditions are good and profita-

\* Id in Phoc.

† Mach. Princ. cap. 20.

ble to a Government: And that it was by these that  
 “ the Common-wealth of *Rome*, raised it self to that  
 “ mighty Height to which it arrived. I know there  
 “ are some who pretend that it rose by their warlike  
 “ Vertue, and good Fortune: But these Persons do not  
 “ sufficiently consider that warlike Vertue is owing  
 “ chiefly to good Manners and strict Discipline, and  
 “ that without these, there is no such thing as good  
 “ Fortune. Nor is it certain that those good Man-  
 “ ners and Laws, which made the *Romans* so par-  
 “ ticularly famous, arose from Seditions. For brave Ac-  
 “ tions and excellent Examples proceed from a good  
 “ Education; a right Education from wholesome Laws  
 “ and Institutions: But Seditions and intestine Divisions  
 “ are the Cause of good Laws, and therefore they ought  
 “ not to be so rashly condemned by some, as they are.

*Eudem.* But in Opposition to this Doctrine of you  
 and your Tutor; I think every good Prince is obli-  
 ged as much as in him lies, to quiet all Animosities and  
 Quarrels, which may arise among his Subjects, and to  
 lay the Foundations of a firm Unity and Concord among  
 them. Which is the constant Doctrine of the Holy  
 Scriptures: Which oblige all of us who profess the Chri-  
 stian Religion, are obliged to *have Peace one with another*,  
 Mark ix. 50. and to *follow Peace with all Men*, 2 Tim.  
 ii. 22. We are told, that the *Fruits of the Spirit*, or  
 that holy spiritual Religion which we profess, *is Peace*,  
 Gal. v. 22. And we further learn from hence, that *Se-  
 dition is the Work of the Flesh*, Gal. v. 20. and the same  
 Apostle looks upon it as a thing unsuitable to the Per-  
 fection of the Christian Religion, to have Divisions  
 among the Professors of it. For *whereas there is among  
 you Envy, and Strife, and Divisions, are yet not carnal,  
 and walk as Men?* 1 Cor. iii. 3. And he in another  
 Place bids us set a particular Note of Distinction upon  
 those who disturb the publick Peace, for ill Men; *Mark  
 them which cause Divisions*, Rom. xvi. 17. We find like-  
 wise, under the Old Testament, that God Almighty  
 punished with the most Terrible of Judgments, the Se-

*Scripture  
 Doctrine,  
 that a  
 Prince  
 ought to  
 promote  
 Peace a-  
 mong hi  
 Subjects.*

dition which was raised by *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, whom the Earth swallowed up, *Numb.* xvi. 31. and the People who followed after these seditious Ringleaders, were destroyed by a devouring Plague, *v.* 49. So God punish'd *Miriam*, for seditious Speaking against *Moses*, with Leprosy, *Numb.* xii. 10. So almost the whole Tribe of *Ephraim* is destroyed by Sedition, *Jud.* xi. 12. And the Nation of the *Jews*, from being one considerable Monarchy, by the Sedition raised by *Jeroboam* and his Party, was split into two petty Kingdoms, *1 King.* xii. The Psalmist notes it as the most pleasant thing in the World, for Men to behold Brethren of the same Community, to dwell together in Unity, *Psal.* cxxxiii. 1. But above all, our Saviour's Judgment in this Matter, is most express and considerable: *Every Kingdom divided against it self, is brought to Desolation*, *Matt.* xii. 25. This is the Sum of the Scripture Doctrines concerning Animosities and Divisions in a Community; and that the same is supported by good Reasons likewise, the following Considerations may evince.

*Factions  
weaken the  
Power of a  
Kingdom.*

II. Princes ought to hinder Factions from arising within their Dominions, because this weakens the Strength and Power of a Nation. For every Kingdom, as a particular Body of Men, or Community of it self, is upheld by Union. For a Community without Unity, is a dead and lifeless Thing; 'tis this alone which gives it Life and Vigour; and so many Degrees as you take off from Union, a Government comes so much nigher to a Dissolution, and a perfect Anarchy. For when the Members of a Society are tied together, by a hearty Affection, and unanimous Concurrence of their Designs, they are like the numerous Threads of a Cable, twisted into a Cordage of an immense Strength; whilst the same disunited, or parcelled out into different Interests, are but like single Twine, subject to the Snap of the weakest Hand. But Faction is yet more prejudicial to a Community, than bare Negation or want of Union: For every single factious Person in a Nation, not only denies his own Assistance to the Community, but takes off like-

wife

wife an equal Force of his Adversary. So that a Nation which consists but of two Millions of People, is equal in Strength to a Nation of ten Millions, whereof eight Millions are engaged in two contrary Factions. For in this Supposition, the two remaining Millions, are the only effectual Persons to be depended upon for the Security of the Nation; the Strength of the other Parties being set, and at a stand, and wholly taken up in their mutual Opposition to each other. This is demonstrably true, where ever the contending Parties are steadily resolved upon each others Destruction, and will not be awakened into Concord by the Danger of a common Enemy: But when History has given us frequent Instances of this Infatuation and Madnes, so no Party, in the Heat of their Contention, can be assured either of their own Prudence, or of the Grace of God, that they shall not fall into the same desperate Folly.

We have a sad Instance of this in the History of the Siege of *Jerusalem*\*, when the People were divided into such desperate Factions, at the very Time when *Titus's* Army lay before the Town, and were destroying one another with the most miserable Outrages within, whilst the Enemies Forces were annoying them without; till at last they made an easy Way for the taking, and utter Extirpation of that City.

A like Instance is given us in *Livy*, of the Town of *Ardea*†, which was divided into two great Factions, the one of the Nobles, the other of the Commons, who destroyed one another with the greatest Violence, and at last called into each others Assistance, the *Volsci* on the Side of the People, and the *Romans* on the Nobilities Side; by which the City lost their Liberty, being made Tributary to the *Romans*, who were the Conquerors.

The like happened to the People of *Carthage*‡, from the two Factions of the *Barcins*, and the *Hannonians*; the *Barcins* beginning the War with the *Romans*, in Opposition

\* Joseph. de Bello Jud. Lib. 6.

† Liv. Hist. Lib. 4.

‡ Liv. Hist. Lib. 21

to the Party of *Hanno*. And all the Time of the War's Continuance, the Debates in the Senate of that City, were carried on, more out of Opposition to the Inclinations of the different Parties, than for the true Interest of the Commonwealth: Till at last they had weakened themselves to that Degree, that they became an easy Prey to the *Romans*.

*Factions perplex the Counsels and Designs of a Prince.*

III. Factions ought to be hindred by every Prince in his Dominions, as much as is in his Power, because these tend to perplex his Counsels and Designs. It is the highest Advantage for any Prince, to have his Affairs go on under the Influence of steady Counsels; when they are steered by the Direction of wise and faithful Men, who do with impartial Consideration, take a just View of Consequences, and advise him to his true Interest. But a Prince can enjoy this Advantage and Happiness, only when his Subjects are at Union with themselves, and there is no Faction reigning among them. For Faction quite poisons all publick Counsels, represents oftentimes Things honestly and wisely advanced, in the worst Colours, raises Suspicions of the most entire Proposals, and puts them upon Projects, which, in their Conscience, they believe to be less conducive to the publick Good, rather than to let their hated Adversaries, of the opposite Party, reap the Honour and Success but of a prudent Proposal. The Truth of this was notoriously evident in the Case of the *Barcians* and *Hannonians* of *Carthage*; and there are seldom any Countries where Faction does prevail, but it is in some Measure true.

*Factions make a Nation contemptible to its Adversaries.*

IV. A Prince ought to discourage, as much as can be, the Growth of Faction in his Country, because this lessens his Power in the Opinion of his Adversaries, and makes his Nation contemptible to them. The Power of a Nation does not always consist in the actual Strength of military Forces, or in the Abilities of a Ministry. There is oftentimes a great deal owing to Opinion; an Enemy frequently with-holding his Hand, not because a Country is insuperable, but because he thinks it so. Nay, where sufficient Strength is not wanting, if you lay a Nation open



open to Contempt, and make it vile in the Opinion of its Enemies, you have gone half way into the Conquest of it, before a Stroke is struck. For an Adversary then comes on a main, and pushes forwards with Alacrity and Courage, when he has poor and mean Thoughts of those who are to oppose him. Now no Nation can be pictured out in such wretched Colours, and be rendered so despicable in the Sight of their Enemies, as that People which is divided into great and spiteful Factions. How then do they load one another with all the opprobrious Language, which an envenomed Rage can suggest; upbraiding each other with Falseness and Treachery, Cruelty or Villany, or any other Crime, which is best suited to blacken the Character of their Opposites? A Court is represented as full of Flattery and Dissimulation, or intent only upon advancing private Fortunes, and crushing the publick Liberties: Some calumniated for endeavouring to introduce an arbitrary Power, and others as designing a democratical Licence: Some it may be traduced for Hypocrisy, and others for Profaneness: Some for Weakness, and others for Corruption: Some branded for Bigots, and others for Atheists. Now when ever national Distempers are risen to such Heights, what Advantages cannot the publick Enemy propose to themselves, when they have to do with a People, which, without the Expence of Intelligence, will trumpet out their own Failures themselves, and proclaim to the World, that they are already conquer'd by their own Vices?

V. It is a farther Reason why a Prince should discourage the Growth of Faction in his Country, because it may in time tend to the Ruin of his Kingdom, or the Loss of his Crown. There is no wise Man who will make Use of the Assistance of those Things to serve a present Turn by, which he has not in his Power to controul afterwards, and which when he has once given Motion to them, they will break in upon him with a Fury, that is not in his Power then to give a Stop to. There is no doubt, but a Man might sooner burn down a Part of his House which he might judge irregular, by

*Factions  
may make  
a Prince  
lose his  
Crown.*

setting

setting it on Fire, than to pull it down by a Mason; but then 'tis a thousand to one, but, by this odd Project, he lays the rest of the Tenement, and it may his whole Neighbourhood in Ashes. Neither would any prudent Man venture to let in the Sea, for the Conveniency of filling his Ditches with Water. These are too dangerous Things to be ventured upon to serve ordinary Ends by. And the Case is exactly the same with relation to Factions in the State. There is no doubt of it, but sometimes a designing Prince may serve some little Ends by them. But 'tis great odds, that when he has once sprung up these Devils, it will not be in his Power to lay them when he shall think fit. For when once Factions and Tumults are up, they will make their own Way, and drive on as their own Impulses shall carry them, oftentimes it may be to the Destruction of those very Persons who first encouraged them, and for whose Sake they spent their first Fury. It may be perhaps presumed, that the Factions which have been raised or fomented by the crafty Prince, may go on no further than a little Quarrelling: But from Words they too frequently proceed to Blows: And when once Subjects are engaged in Arms, the Prince has as much Command over them as the Lottery of War is pleased to allow him. For when once Subjects have got Force on their Side, the Royal Authority is very rarely sufficient to maintain an Obedience.

Nay, Factions are so prejudicial to a Community, that every wise Prince ought to be so far from introducing them into his State upon any Occasion, that he ought whenever he finds them growing therein, with the utmost Diligence to extirpate them. For Faction to the State, is what Sickness is to the Body; which tho' every Degree thereof be not mortal, yet it always carries with it some Degree of Danger, and tends to its final Dissolution. Therefore every Prince should fear 'em, as he would do Fevers and Plagues, which tho' one may possibly escape from, yet it is the greatest Madness and Folly to invite them.

VI. But

VI. But if it does not lie in the Power of a Prince to hinder Factions in his Dominions, he ought in Prudence not to side with any of them. For it is beneath the Dignity of a Prince to interest himself in any of his Subjects little Squabbles; because, for the most part, they are carried on for some poor sorry Ends, which a Prince has no Concern in, and which to have any Regard to, is below his Honour. For when Men are running against one another, with so much Eagerness to get themselves in, and other People out of great Offices and Places of Trust; the Prince has no more to do, than to pacify them, and make them quiet, and to wish that he had Preferment enough for them all. He has Opportunity sufficient to see into the several Pretences of the Ring-leaders of the Parties, to draw their Followers in; and ought to pity them, that they suffer themselves to be led away (ostentimes) by such silly Suggestions, and that so many well-meaning Men among his Subjects, should be blown up into Flames by mistaken Opinions of one another, and individuous Names of Distinction. The Authors indeed of these Party-Titles, find their particular Account in fixing them, because they serve them to be a sort of Drums and Trumpets, to give the Call to Sedition, and to draw their Followers unto their particular Squadrons; but the Prince has no other Interest, but that they should live in Love and Unity with one another, and study to promote their Sovereign's Honour, and the publick Good. As for those good Men who are pursuing these commendable Designs, a Prince may allow himself to be of their Party; but they have generally some few Persons on either Side, who have good Inclinations to Peace and Unity, or are not of the Faction at all: But the ordinary Crowd of a Faction on both Sides, are for the most part a noisy unthinking Crew, that a cunning Prince may sometimes, upon Occasion, make Fools of, but a wise one will never make Confidants. And as for those crafty Men, who by their Artifices, have blown up poor People into these Animosities, he can never have a good Opinion of them for making use

*Prince  
ought not  
to side with  
any Faction.*

*of*

of such indirect Methods : And he must look upon them always with a jealous Eye for getting away, as it were, his Subjects from him : For when they are acted only by the Springs which these cunning Persons afford them, and readily obey all their Commands and Motions, the Prince must understand that they are Subjects rather to these Managers of them, than to himself.

*Factions  
not the  
Occasion of  
good Laws.*

VII. As for what *Machiavel* says, that Seditions are frequently the Occasion of good Laws, instancing in the *Roman Commonwealth*; I confess his Politicks here are too deep for me to understand. If I understand any thing of the *Roman History*, it was quite otherwise; they squabbled more for Offices, and a Share in the Government, than for Laws. And by this Method the People got the Tribunes, those democratical Rabble-Drivers to be set up, and a Law to be pass'd, that any one of the common People might be Consul. The *Gracchi* indeed rais'd a Sedition for a Law, but a very bad one it was; the *Lex Agraria*, a Law for levelling and dividing the Gentlemens Estates among the common People; but they lost their Lives in this Attempt, as they well deserved. What good did the Factions in *Cæsar* and *Pompey's* Time do? They serv'd only to engage all the World almost on the Sides of these great Men, and to cut one another's Throats unmercifully; because, forsooth, *Cæsar* mist the Consulship, and *Pompey* could not engross the Hollows of the *Roman Mob* to himself. What good did our Forefathers get in *England* by their long Quarrels on the Sides of the white and red Roses? To bring in the Family of *Lancaster*, at a vast Expence of Blood and Treasure, and three or four Generations after to turn them out again at as dear a Rate? What did we get by the late Civil War, but to rid our selves of a small Tax not so legally assessed, and to lose a tenth Part of the Youth of the Nation, to bear a constant Tax for above twenty Years, and to suffer ten thousand Families to be begger'd: And lastly, out of some imaginary Fears of Popery, to fill the Nation full of Sectaries and Fanaticks? If Sedition and Faction be at any time the Occasion of a good Law,

Law, as our Politicks plead in its behalf, it is no more to be commended on that Head, than any other Sin or Wickedness. For is Clipping and Coining therefore any Benefit to the Nation, because it was the Occasion of such very good Laws being made against it? If Faction and Sedition were ever the Occasion of making a good Law, it is a Matter altogether as accidental as this. The same Law might have been enacted with Calmness and Quiet, and without any thing of that Disturbance which Faction must obtain it by.

But as for those Gentlemen who seem to be in Love with Faction, and are pleased to ascribe so many good Effects to it; I recommend to them the Description of it given by *Thucydides*, in the third Book of his History. *When Men are once engaged in the Faction, they change the common very Names of Things. A block-headed Boldness is called Bravery and Zeal for the Party; to take Time to consider, is a more specious Cowardise; to be moderate, is only to take up a Pretence for Dulness; to have Prudence, is to be slow and unfit for Business; to be hot and mad-headed, is to do as a Man should do; but to act with Safety, and to take Advice, is to desert ones Principles, and to fly of. To talk passionately, is to be true and honest; but to contradict such a Talker, is to be a dangerous Man. He is a wise Man that can trapan another in Discourse, or if he can foresee the Traps that are laid for him, he is yet a Shrewder. But if a Man endeavour to keep out of such Peoples Company, he is a Person unsociable, and afraid his Enemies should eat him. In short, he is the Man that deserves most Praise, who can do one of the contrary Party most Mischief, especially if he can do it un-awares, and when he does not think of it.*

*Demob.* I discover your Christian Statesmen, *Eudemius*, to be at a great Fault again, when they will be tying up their Princes to the Advice of Councils and Parliaments; who are to tire him out with long Speeches, and peevish Contentions, and spend more Time in consulting Matters, than they may be in doing. One who understood these Things best, says, "It is a certain Axiom, and a perpetual Rule, that good Counsel ought to proceed  
" from

*Doctrine of the Irreligious against Counsel, and for arbitrary Power.*

“ from the Mind, and Prudence of a Prince alone; not  
 “ on the other Side, that the Prudence of the Prince  
 “ should arise from good Counsel. For unless the Prince  
 “ be wise himself, he cannot make use of good Coun-  
 “ sel. For if the Prince commits the Care of his whole  
 “ Government to one alone, it will be very hard for  
 “ him to find a Person, whom it may be proper to en-  
 “ charge with his Secrets, and the other Parts of so  
 “ great a Trust. Or if he may perhaps find such an  
 “ one, he may be in Danger of being dethroned by  
 “ him; for the Desire of Rule can be restrained by no  
 “ Vertue. But if a Prince, who is not of Abili-  
 “ ties himself, shall call others into his Counsel, he  
 “ will most certainly be continually distracted by their  
 “ contrary Sentiments, which it will be impossible for  
 “ him to reconcile. In the mean Time, his Counsellors  
 “ minding more their private, than the publick Interest,  
 “ will be for working their own Advantage, from whence  
 “ Inconveniencies will arise; which the Prince will ei-  
 “ ther not be able to know, or not be in Capacity to  
 “ Redress

*Scripture  
 Doctrine,  
 that a  
 Prince  
 ought to  
 follow the  
 Advice  
 of good  
 Counsel.*

*Eudem.* But in Opposition to this your understand-  
 ing Writer, I maintain, that a Prince ought to follow  
 the Advice of good Counsel, and the same is advanced  
 by the Writers of the sacred Books. The wise  
 King Solomon says, *That where no Counsel is, the People  
 fall: But in the Multitude of Counsellors there is Safety,*  
 Prov. xi. 14. *That good Understanding giveth Favour,*  
 Prov. xiii. 15. *That every prudent Man dealeth with Know-  
 ledge,* v. 16. *That without Counsel, purposes are disap-  
 pointed, but in the Multitude of Counsellors they are esta-  
 blished,* Prov. xv. 22. And this wise King's Direction  
 elsewhere is, *By a wise Counsel to make War,* Prov.  
 xiv. 6. And the Scriptures likewise elsewhere recom-  
 mend to Princes the Government of their Subjects ac-  
 cording to the Tenor of old and wholesome Laws. Holy  
 David says, *that God's Testimonies, that is, the Law of  
 Moses, are his Delight, and his Counsellors,* Psal. cix. 24.  
 And it is given as a special Injunction to *Josiah,* who  
 was

was to govern *Israel*, that the *Book of the Law* should not depart out of his Mouth, but that he should meditate thereon Day and Night, that he might observe to do according to all that is written therein, *Jos. i. 8.* And we have in other Places, the Examples of good and wise Princes, who have not been resolute to follow the Inclinations of their own Will, but have readily complied with the good Advice of others. As of *Moses* who followed the Advice of his Father-in-law *Jethro* in instituting the subordinate Judges in *Israel*, *Exod. xviii. 19.* And *David* who was directed by *Jonathan* to the saving of his Life, *1 Sam. xx. 18.* and by *Abigail* to stay his Hand from the slaying *Nabal*, *1 Sam. xxv. 23.* And we read that the same good Prince had for Direction in State Affairs, several very able Ministers which are mentioned, *1 King. i. 8.* *Zadok* the Priest, and *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoiada*, and *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Shimei* and *Rei*, Men that were always firm to the Royal Interest, besides *Joab* and *Abiathar*, who were less constant in their Loyalty. And we likewise read here of the Misfortunes sustained by Princes who have neglected to follow the Advice given them by good Counsellors, as of *David* who would Number the People, contrary to the Advice of *Joab*, *2 Chron. xxi. 3.* and of *Rehoboam*, who would not give good Words to the mutinous People, according to the Directions given him by the old wise Counsellors, *1 King. xii. 6.* It is plain therefore, that the Holy Scriptures teach, that Princes should govern their Subjects by the Direction of good Laws, and with the Advice of able Counsellors. And for this there is more good Reason, than for that heady arbitrary Power, and lawless Rule, which the atheistical Politicians would recommend to Princes.

III. Arbitrary Power is a thing, which all wicked Flatterers, and Men of loose Principles, are for recommending to Princes; and there are such bewitching Charms, in an uncontrolable Authority, that few Princes have Resolution enough to resist the Proposals, which are made them for the enlarging their Power, and for

Unreasonableness of Arbitrary Power.

advan-

advancing an independent Exercife of their Will. Some thing of this Nature is fweet to Flefh and Blood, of every fort of Make. For ordinary Perfons find, that it goes much againft the Grain, to be contradicted and oppofed in their Determinations; and therefore Perfons of that high Birth; who have more Honour and Spirit; are lefs patient of having the Wifdom of their Inclinations called in Queftion. Therefore, to avoid any Inconvenience, which may arife from fuch frailty of Human Nature, every wife Prince ought, in the firft Place; to avoid, and to drive away from his Prefence, all fuch ill Advifers, and to fuffer them no more to be about him, than he would do Toads or Vipers in his Bofom. And in the next Place, he fhould have a Care of refolving upon any Matter of his own felf too precipitately, for fear his Honour fhould engage him to act to his own Prejudice.

But after all this Arbitrary Power, of which fo many Princes have been fo infinitely Fond, and which fo many have loft their Lives or Kingdoms in Purfuit of; is a thing, which, tho' a Prince might attain to it, is impoffible he could ever arrive to a compleat Exercife of. For tho' a Prince could engrofs the fupreme Power, in the Government of a Nation abfolutely to himfelf; if he could make Laws, raife Monies, judge, condemn, pardon, execute, according to his uncontroulable Pleafure; yet fuch a Prince would be as much influenced in the Determination of his Will, as one who can do nothing but under the Direction of Laws. For 'tis impoffible that fuch a Prince can difcharge all the Bufinefs of his Government himfelf; nineteen Parts in twenty muft be executed by his Minifters of State, and other inferiour Magiftrates under them. So that if there be any Sweetnefs in Arbitrary Power, the Prince enjoys but a fmall Share of it, the greateft Part of it being engroffed by his Miniftry, who, for the moft Part, act according to their own Pleafure, without confulting that of the Prince. But\*the Mifchief of it is, that thofe Princes who have struggled moft for Arbitrary Power,



Power, and thought they had got themselves into the most perfect Possession of it, have had really less thereof than those good Princes who have been contented to govern according to the Prescription of the Laws. After such Princes have ravished all the Liberties away from their Subjects, they have given these, together with their own Liberty, up to some Wife, or Miss, or Valet de Chambre, who have managed them at their Pleasure. *Augustus*, one of the wisest Princes, in his latter Years, was almost wholly under the Management of his Wife *Livia*.

*Tiberius* butchered almost the whole Senate, upon Stories carried him by a few roguish Informers, whom he maintained about him. *Caius* did nothing, but, as the mad drunken Rakes he kept Company with, advised him, *Claudius* was a mere Tool to his *Liberti*, he would do nothing without the Advice either of *Narcissus* or *Pallas*; and when the Emperor declared his Resolutions to marry, the great Ladies of *Rome* endeavoured to recommend themselves, thro' the favour of these sorry Rascals.

But as Arbitrary Power is a Thing which no Prince can Exercise, so it ought not to be in the Possession of any one, tho' he could. For an Arbitrary unaccountable Power, is fit only for God himself; and indeed he has intrusted it with no one else. For all the Parts of the Creation, from the highest to the lowest, are Subject to Laws. And indeed such a Power is safe only in God Almighty's Hands, who has infinite Goodness to qualify his Almighty Power, and infinite Wisdom to make a proper Use of it. But for any one single Man, tho' never so wise and good, to be vested with such a Plenitude of Power, must be attended with unsufferable Mischiefs. For all Men whatsoever, are liable to Passions, which are apt to misguide their Reason, and a Judgment made under the Possession of these, is as unlikely to be true, as if a Man should judge of Colours, by their Appearance to him in the Jaundice. And therefore, if a Prince were to govern according to his own Will, he might destroy in a hasty Fit of Anger, not

only one of the best Men, but one of his best Friends; as nothing is more common, where such despotick Power prevails, as is evident in the Example of *Clytus*, who was killed by *Alexander* the Great in a hot Fit. Bad sides, there is no one so wise, but he is liable to be imposed upon by false Suggestions and Insinuations: But Characters are given of good Men, and good ones of ill. So that if a Prince had the uncontrollable Power of punishing and rewarding, according to these Representations, he must oftentimes quite change the Course of Justice, and punish the Good, and reward the Bad. From hence it is evident, that every wise and good Prince, for his own Satisfaction, and for the Easiness of his Government, would be willing to have his Judgment directed in all difficult Matters, by wise and good Laws, which free him from a great deal of Trouble and Envy, which would otherwise attend his Office. And for other incident Cases which the Laws do not take Cognizance of, he will determine himself, according to the mature Consultation and Advice of a wise Counsel.

*The Advantages in a Government of Counsels and Parliament.*

IV. But these Counsels are things, which very much displease the *Machiavelian* Politicians, and which if kept up with their due Honour and Authority, it is impossible that ever the Tyrannies, which they are for advancing, should take place. But why should not a Counsel be a better Director of a Prince's Actions, than to spin all his Designs out of his own Brain? There is no one of tolerable Sense, but must allow, that Matters of State are much better transacted, with the Advice of a Number of wise and experienced Men, who have been long used to Affairs of that Nature; than by the green Head, it may be of one single Person, who is come to the Government of a Nation at eighteen or twenty. Such Counsels, as little as the *Machiavelian's* Esteem of them, seemed so necessary to the *Roman* Emperors, that after the Authoritative Power of the Senate was lost, they thought the Senate to be always the best Counsel they could make use of; and never any Design succeeded, but

but what was laid before them, and concluded on by their Advice. The Power of the Senate was almost entire in *Julius* and *Augustus's* Time. And in the former Part of *Tiberius's* Reign, that Emperor restored all the most considerable Matters of State, to be debated and concluded on by the Senate. And tho' two such mad Princes, as *Caligula* and *Nero*, had designed to abolish the Order; yet they were forced to make use of their Counsel, as long as they lived. But in the Reigns of wise and good Emperors, such as *Vespasian*, *Titus*, *Trajan*, *Adrian*, the two *Antonines*, &c. the Senate flourished in its full Power and Glory; the Princes referring to them every thing that was difficult in their Administration. And if there was any thing, that required quicker Dispatch, or more than ordinary Secrecy, they provided themselves of a wise Counsel, by whose Judgment those grand Affairs were determined. Thus *Augustus* had at first fifteen Senators, who were of his Counsel, to advise him upon putting out any of his Edicts; and afterwards twenty of the senatorian Order which were drawn by Lots; *Trebatius* the Lawyer, *Ayrippa*, and *Nice-cenas* being of the *Quorums*. And in latter Times, *Alexander Severus* is recorded to have published no Constitution, without the Advice and Consent of fifty wise and learned Men; to the end that every Edict should have as much Deliberation in the forming, as a Decree of the Senate: For every one of their Opinions was not only particularly asked, but they had Time allotted them before hand, to consider of the Case; the Reasons which they gave on either Side, being wrote down, and the Edict past at last in a full Debate, to the end that nothing should hastily be concluded upon. In the like manner, *Theodosius* the Emperor made an Order, that no new Law should be promulgated, which was not approved of as well by the Senate, as by the Lords of the *Cæsarean* Palace; and when the Majority of both these Orders had consented to it, he then confirmed it by the imperial Authority. In succeeding Times, the Convenience of Cortezes and Parliaments began,

which saved Princes a great deal of Trouble in the Administration of their Affairs; which suggested to them Grievances that were fit to be redressed, and these being deputed by the Subjects own free Consent, they raised Monies for the carrying on the Wars, or other publick Exigences, without any Regret. Under this happy Constitution, the greatest Part of Christendom, for some Ages, flourished, till the Pope and the Atheists by their damnable Opinions did poison both Church and State, and destroyed Men's Religion and Liberties in most of the Nations of *Europe*.

*The Wickedness and unfortunate Ends of Arbitrary Princes.*

V. But it ought to be a Consideration to Princes, to avoid the Affectation of an uncontrollable Power, and laying aside the Advice of the States and wise Counsel of their Country; that those Princes who have formerly set up for such an exorbitant Power, have been guilty of such mad Excesses, that they have been a Reproach to their high Dignity, and have generally come to very untimely and tragical Ends. *Caligula* indeed made Slaves of his Senators, he caused several of them, who had gone thro' the most honourable Offices, to run by his Coach side for many Miles together; and others to wait at his Table, with a Towel rucked about them, like his ordinary Servants. But all his other Actions were full of the like Extravagance and Wickedness. He committed Incest with all his three Sisters; lay with the greatest Ladies of Quality, before their Husband's Faces. He denied his own Legitimacy, because his Grandfather *Arippa* was not of the ancient Nobility; and gave out that his Mother was got by his Grandfather *Augustus*, in Incest with his own Daughter *Julia*. He condemned several Gentlemen to the Beasts, or to the Mines, having marked them as common Rogues, for no other Reason, than because they did not approve of the Games he had set forth, or had refused to swear by his Genius. He would order Men to be questioned upon the Rack before him, whilst he was at Dinner: He lov'd to be present at the Execution of Criminals himself, and when the Executioner was like to do his Office too soon, he would

would cry out, *Strike slowly, that they may feel themselves to Die.* Nay, he would make the Fathers come to see their Sons executed, and invite them to a Banquet afterwards; and once, when a poor old Man excused himself from such a terrible Sight, by reason of his Sickness; he sent his Chair to fetch him in, because (as he said) he should not take Cold. In another Fit of Cruelty, he order'd all the banisht Persons all over the *Roman* Empire to be put to Death, because they should not wish for his Death, in hopes of being recalled by his Successor. Into these monstrous Extravagancies did this unhappy Prince run, when once he broke loose from the Laws of his Country, and the Direction of sober Counsel. For such Actions, his Government became insufferable to all Men; God Almighty suffering him, after a short Reign of between three or four Years, to be stabbed by *Cheereas* and *Sabinus*, two of the Colonels of his Guard.

*Nero Caesar* was another Instance of a Prince's Misfortune, occasioned by the Affectation of Arbitrary Power. His Government was remarkably excellent for the first five Years after he was Emperor, all which time he was under the Direction of good Counsel, of which *Seneca* and *Burrus* were the principal; managing in the mean while Affairs of State with the Advice and Consent of his Senate. Which made *Trajan* a wise and understanding Prince, long after his Time, to make this Reflexion upon his Administration; that the best of us all have not come up to the Government of *Nero*, for his first five Years. But afterwards, when he gave himself over to his own Humours and Passions, and managed every thing by a despotick Rule; he became a most bloody Tyrant, and a very Monster in the Purple. To the Shame of the imperial Dignity, he turn'd a publick Fidler; and in the Theatre, in the Eyes of almost all the People of *Rome*, he had a Trial of Skill with some of the sorry Fellows of that Profession. He set Fire to, and burnt down that noble City, for no other Reason but to make the Streets larger, and to have an opportunity of getting room to enlarge his Palace; laying the

blame at last upon the poor Christians, whom he gave up to the Mob in their Rage, to make Bonfires of them every Night, to light People along. He poison'd his Brother *Britannicus*, and made away with his Wife *Octavia*; he murdered his Mother *Agrippina*, and for several Years together, made the City of *Rome* nothing else but Shambles; the Streets almost continually running down with senatorian Blood. But his End was as unfortunate, as his Life was wicked and tyrannical, as we have before-mention'd.

The Reign of \* *Domitian* affords us another Example, what an untimely End the Affectation of Arbitrary Power brought upon that Prince, and what Miseries it involv'd the World in.

*Cum jam semianimem laceraret Flavius orbem.  
Ultimus, & Calvo serviret Roma Neroni.* *Juv.*

But even this cruel Prince, for some Time, whilst he conformed himself to the Laws, and was under the Direction of good Counsellors; his Government was commendable enough. When he was young in the Empire, he was so very tender of Blood, that he could not endure to see a Bullock killed in Sacrifice, and thought it was a very inhumane Thing thus to butcher poor Animals; having often in his Mouth that of *Virgil*.

*Impia quam casis gens est epulata juvencis:*

And therefore had Thoughts of making an Edict against bloody Sacrifices. He seem'd likewise so averse from any thing, which look'd like Cruelty or Severity, that he forbid all Prosecutions to be made for Words spoke against the Emperor, inflicting a Punishment upon the Informers: It being one of his usual Sayings, *That the Prince who does not punish Informers, encourages them.* But afterwards,

\* *Domitian.*

as he became more inclined to a despotick Government, he gave himself over to all manner of Extravagance and Cruelty. He would have it one of his ordinary Titles, to be called *our Lord and God*. He kill'd one *Hermogenes Tarsensis*, for drawing some Figures in a Book of History, which he thought reflected upon him, and crucified every Scribe that had took a Copy of that Book. He threw a Master of a Family in *Rome* to the Dogs, to be torn in Pieces; only for reflecting upon a Player, whom *Domitian* had a Fondness for. He took away the Lives of an innumerable Company of the Senators, for as slight and ridiculous Causes. As that of *Junius Rusticus*, for writing a *Panegyrick* upon *Patus Thraseas*, and *Helvidius Priscus*, two brave *Roman* Patriots, and of *Melius Pomposianus*, for carrying the Map of the World about him, as if he designed, forsooth, thereby to be Emperor of it. For these and such like wicked Actions, he became abominated by all sober Men, and was murdered by a Conspiracy in his own Family; no one but the Army, whose force he made use of to support him in these Extravagancies, pitying his Death.

The Emperor \* *Commodus* split upon the same Rock with these forementioned Princes; notwithstanding the excellent Advice which his Father *Marcus* upon his Death-bed gave him. Which is worthy upon all Occasions to be remembred. *There is no Fund of Money (my Son) so large, as to be sufficient to satisfy the demands of a Tyrants Luxury; there are no Guards strong enough to defend a Prince who has not the good Will of his Subjects. For those Princes only Reign with safety all their Days, that have not implanted Fear in the Minds of their Subjects by their Cruelty, but good Will for their Kindness. Those are the only Men to be trusted who do not serve a Prince out of Compulsion, but out of their free Love, for such always will be ready at his command till he has ill used them.* This good Advice the young Prince followed, for some Time after his Father's Death, whilst he suffered himself to be directed in his

\* *Commodus*.

Affairs by his Father's Counsel, who, as the Historian says, were constantly attending upon him, giving him the best Advice, and keeping him to Business, allowing him only such Recreations as were necessary for his Health. But a young Fry of rakish Courtiers, and vicious Persons, quickly got him out of these good Hands, and plunged him into a thousand Extravagancies. Thus in a few Years he murdered all his Father's Friends and Privy-Council, except *Pertinax*, who succeeded him in the Empire. And after an innumerable Slaughter of the Nobility and Commonalty, he chanced to drop a Paper, wherein he had wrote down the Names of three Persons he designed to have murdered the next Day, *viz.* his Concubine *Marcia*, his General *Latius*, and his Chamberlain *Electus*, only for advising him not to set up his Court at a Fencing-School, which he resolved to do. The Writing was brought to these three Persons, who, by a secret Combination, agreed to dispatch him first; which Conspiracy having succeeded, they conferred the Empire on *Pertinax*.

I know not whether so much Love of despotick Power, or downright Foolishness, were the Occasion of the Extravagancies of *Heliogabalus's* Reign\*. For he was a poor silly Creature that the Army placed upon the imperial Throne, because he was of the Race of the *Antonines*. He was bred up among some of the Women that belong to the imperial Family, and who liv'd among the barbarous People in *Phœnicia*, and was by them made a Priest to one of their Country Gods. When he was called to the imperial Purple, instead of that Habit, he would never appear but in the taudry Coat he used to Sacrifice to his God. He fill'd his Court with a Pack of rascally People, Players, Charioteers, Barbers, &c. and by their Direction did a World of Mischief to the State, promoting these Fellows to the chiefest Employments. He made a Dancing-Master to be General of his Army. He made one Player the *Princeps Juventutis*, another the chief

\* *Heliogabalus*.



of the Senatorian Order; and a third, the chief of the Equestrian. In entertaining these sorry Company, he made a vast Profusion of the Wealth of the Empire; and by their Advice killed a great many noble Personages, over-ruling all the Laws according to his Humour and Caprice; but at last having a Design upon his Brother *Alexander's* Life, who was *Cesar* with him, he fell into the Displeasure of the Army, which alone supported him in these Extravagancies, and they in a Fury set upon him, and sent him out of the World without Mercy.

VI. But our irreligious Politicians, in order to promote arbitrary Rule among Princes, do pretend it is so difficult for a Prince to pick out wise Persons that are able to direct him in his Affairs, and honest Men who will not betray him; and that it is the safest Way for him to trust none but himself. But this is a foolish Pre-No great Difficulty for a Prince to find out a good Counsel.tence which these Men lay hold of: For there are few Princes of such weak Abilities, that they are not able to make a Judgment what Persons are raw and unexperienc'd in publick Business, and who have long applied themselves to it. And it can hardly happen that ever such a Monarch should sit upon a Throne, who, like *Heliogabalus*, should take his Privy-Counsellors out of the Playhouse. The far greatest Part of Princes have so excellently an Education, they have, from their Infancy, been so accustomed to Affairs of State, that those Matters become habitual to them, and that they seldom fail in their Judgment, in making Choice of a Minister of Abilities, at least, if not of Fidelity. But still there is no need of such an extraordinary Acuteness for making such a Choice: For a good Ministry once well chosen, will keep up it self, the Places of those who drop off, being supplied by the Direction of the Remainders. Neither will it plunge a new Prince in any Difficulties to chuse them out at first; for those who have been Counsellors in a former Reign, are always ready at hand upon a new Succession; Their long Experience in such Business, and their Fidelity to the Predecessors, being sufficient  
Vouchers

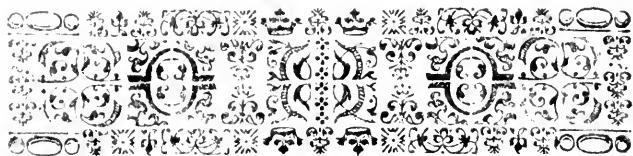
Voucliers both for their Abilities and Faithfulness. Such a good Counsel was ready provided, as we observed before, by *Marcus*, for his Son *Commodus*, which if he had vouchsafed to make use of, he might have been as good and happy a Prince, as he was cruel and unfortunate.

Variety of  
Opinions of  
Counsellors,  
no Impedi-  
ment of a  
Prince's  
Affairs.

VII. Another Argument of you *Machiavelians*, to frighten Princes from taking the Advice of good Counsellors, is, because of the Variety of their Opinions. But those Variety of Opinions being laid before any wise Prince, he has a very excellent Opportunity of considering them all throughly, which would not have otherwise come into his View: For 'tis absolutely certain, that more Arguments upon any Question will be suggested at an Assembly of wise Men, than can possibly enter into the unassisted Thoughtis of any one Person, tho' of the greatest Compass and Depth. And any Prince who would be confounded, as these Men pretend, by the contrary Opinions of Men in such a Counsel, would be in greater Confusion without the Assistance of their Debates. But after all, if a Prince shall determine himself by the Majority of his Counsel, all this pretended Confusion will vanish; and to do so, will not only be a sufficient Ground for the justification of his Prudence, but in all Probability, will be most for his Security and Honour.



T H E



T H E

## CONCLUSION.

*Demob.*

U T still, *Eudemius*, you seem to proceed all along upon a great Mistake, as if a Prince were obliged to govern his Actions according to the Rules of moral Vertue, or be what you call a good Christian; that is, one who discharges all the strict Duties which your Religion enjoins: Which if he did, would render him a poor sneaking Creature, much fitter for a Cloyster than a Throne. But as I am of Opinion, a Prince need not trouble himself with these moral Rules, so I think that the Business of their Calling is such, as will not suffer them to be fetter'd by these ethical Laws, which may be observed by Men of Leisure, and who live in a Shade, but not by those who are involved in such a Multiplicity of Business, and whose great Designs would be marred by the Performance of such nice Punctilio's.

*Eudem.* But in Despight of these atheistical Tenets, I doubt not but to make out to you, *That a Prince may not only conscientiously discharge the Parts of his Christian Duty, but in that Station has the Advantage of arriving to*

*an higher Pitch of Goodness than other Persons.* Which will be clear from these following Considerations.

*A good Prince more excellent because of Temptations.*

I. All Vertue is the more excellent, by how much with the more Difficulty the Acts thereof are performed; and by how much the more Good it conveys to Mankind. Now the Vertues of a Prince are ennobled by these two Improvements, beyond those of other Men. The Temptations which Persons of that high Fortune are subject to, whenever they are overcome by the Force of Religion, raise their Vertue to a higher than ordinary Pitch, and set them above the common Race of Christians. For the Christian Religion is a sort of spiritual Combat, wherein every Professor takes his Lot, to encounter with some Temptation or other; and those that are called out for the most difficult Conflicts, whenever they have gone through them victoriously, they have thereby made such Proof of the Strength of their Faith, and the Nobleness of their Resolutions, and arrived thereby to such a Firmitude of Vertue, that they are far beyond the ordinary Proficients in Christ's School; and whenever God comes to adjust the Rewards of another Life, they may reasonably expect that one of the highest Prizes of Heaven will fall to their Share.

Now the Royal Estate, above all other humane Conditions, is most exposed to Temptations; and therefore when these great Persons get clear of them, the greater is their Goodness, and the more glorious will be their Reward. 'Tis a more easy Matter for Persons of lower Rank to preserve their Innocence intire, and to make no Deviations into Vice, when the Temptations of transgressing their Duty, are weak and less frequent.

Persons of lower Condition have pleasurable Objects presented, but rarely to their View, and which oftentimes it is out of their Power to enjoy: But those in the other so exalted a Station, have every thing that is desirable continually laid before them; all the Glories of this World are continually in their Eyes: So that it must be an extraordinary Stock of Grace and Religion, which can keep

keep them within the Lines of their Duty, who have so many continual Invitations to go out of it.

Some Pleasures are too expensive to be purchased by any but those of the greatest Incomes; and some deny themselves the Satisfaction of them, because it will bear too hard upon their Circumstances to procure them. But when Persons of the Royal Dignity deny themselves such Pleasures which their plentiful Income might with Ease supply them with; this can be owing to the Force of Religion alone, and to a most noble and distinguishing Vertue, which for the Sake of Goodness, can overcome all the passionate Cravings of humane Nature.

Those of a lower Figure are oftentimes restrained from violating their Duties by the coercive Power of the Laws; and they dare not do what they have strong Inclinations to, for fear of being punish'd for it: But the princely Power is above all these Restraints; and when they exactly observe their Duty without any Force, but what is given by the Grace of God, and the peculiar Bent of their own Vertue; this gives their Religion a new, and a braver Turn; and shews that their Hearts are actuated with an uncommon Love of God, and a Sense of Goodness answerable to their great Dignity.

II. As the Religion of a Prince becomes the more excellent by conflicting with stronger Temptations than other Men; so likewise every Christian Vertue which they arrive to the Habit of, receives a peculiar Value and Excellency for the Circumstances which necessarily attend the Practice of it.

*All his  
virtuous  
Actions  
more im-  
proved.*

The Devotion which they pay to Almighty God, is more acceptable to him than that of other Persons. Not that God has any particular Fondness for the Pomp and Glory of their Condition; for he is no Respector of Persons, all good Men being equally dear to him. But God does accept the Prince's Devotion with a greater Degree of Complacency, because this recommends it self to him by a greater Degree of Goodness, than that of others: It is not so considerable a Point of Vertue to spend an  
Hour

Hour or two in a Day upon religious Exercise, and the Worship of God; in those who have little or no Business to do, whose Time hangs so uncomfortably upon their Hands, that their Devotions are but a Sort of Diversion to help them off with it. But when a Prince, every Minute of whose Time is crowded up with Business, who can seldom sequester to himself a little Time for necessary Refreshment; shall nevertheless constantly frequent the stated Hours of religious Worship, besides his private Addresses to God: This improves such an one's Piety to a greater Height, and sends his Petitions up to Heaven with a more effectual Force.

*Courteousness* and *Humility* are necessary Duties for every Christian, and they carry Charms with them wherever they appear. But when they display themselves from the Throne, they discover a Beauty of Religion, which is unimitable in a less Fortune. For Persons of a lower Estate to be courteous and humble, is only to be tolerably civil to their Fellow-Subjects; but however their Condition being nigher to that of their Inferiors, than their Prince's high Fortune is, their Humility cannot pretend to an equal Degree of Perfection. For that Person is the most humble, who makes the lowest Stoop to befriend his Inferiors: Therefore the Prince who is Master of this Vertue, must of Necessity have any others but his Seconds, at the best, in it.

The *Forgiving of Injuries* is a necessary Christian Duty, every one of our holy Profession being obliged to conquer all our Appetites of Hatred and Revenge. But no one is able to come up to so perfective a Degree of this Duty, as those of the princely Dignity. For this Vertue of Forgiveness, is so much the greater as the Offence which is forgiven rises in its Magnitude. Now an Offence against a Prince, is greater than the same committed against any other Person; upon which Account, the Goodness which is pleased to pardon it, is of a peculiar Superiority to that of others.

III. A Prince of a religious Disposition, is impower'd by the Height of his Fortune, and the abundant Plenty of his Circumstances, to display his Vertue by a more magnificent Bounty than other Persons can. The Scantiness of their Income does clip the Wings of their Charity; and though they have Hearts never so freely disposed, yet their Revenues will not permit them to act according to their good Desires. But the large Fortunes which Princes are blessed with, enable them to do all the Good which a charitable Disposition can suggest. They have Faculties sufficient to endow large and stately Hospitals, where a great Number of poor helpless Children, or sick or aged Persons, have the Convenience of comfortable Maintenance; where the first may have a vertuous and handsome Education, notwithstanding the Death or Poverty of their Parents; and the other after their Labour spent, or the Pressure of hard Misfortunes upon them, may live out their Life in Ease and tolerable Plenty, perfectly free from the Cares of the World, and may enjoy a happy Leisure to prepare themselves for a future State. The Riches which they are possessed of, afford them Ability to found great and magnificent Colleges, where a Number of brave and ingenious Youth may be bred up for the Service of the Church and State, who by their Learning and Accomplishments, may be a Honour to their Countries, and for all following Generations, will afford a Succession of good and learned Persons for the Praise of God, and the Benefit of Mankind. Their fair Revenues will allow them in the noble Charity of building and adorning Churches, and bettering the scanty Circumstances of some of those who serve at the Altar; that they may more chearfully go on with their Duty, and that the poorest of that Maintenance may not cast a Reflection upon their holy Office. The Happiness of such a Plenty, religiously made use of, renders Princes a sort of Gods upon Earth, when they bestow such noble Blessings upon their Subjects; they gaining thereby the most glorious Immortality which is to be had on this side Heaven, and so securing to themselves

*Princes  
have an  
Opportu-  
nity of being  
more boun-  
tiful than  
others.*

selves the Thanks, Praises, and Commendations of all the happy Partakers of their Bounty, to the End of the World.

*Princes may  
be more  
excellent in  
the Vertue  
of Justice  
than othe...*

IV. Princes have yet a further Advantage of improving their Religion and Vertue, beyond that of others of an inferiour Figure; and that is by a larger Extent of their Justice. They are impowered, not only in common with other Men, to exercise a conscientious Dealing in their Contracts with their Neighbours; but to befriend injured Persons; in the Recovery of their Rights, which are ravished from them by the superior Power of unjust Men. They have frequent Opportunities of rescuing the oppressed Innocence of some of their Subjects, from the Violence of others; and of maintaining the Authority of the Laws, by arming them against such outrageous Offenders; by taking the harmless Sufferers into their immediate Protection, or by quickening the Justice of the inferior Magistrates, when either they grow too remiss, or when Offenders become so mighty, or so numerous, as to o'er-run them. Nor have they only the Opportunity of exercising Justice in all its Branches, within their own Dominions, but they enjoy the Advantage likewise of defending their neighbouring Countries from the Outrages of ambitious *Nimrods*, that are not content with the large Dominions which they are already possessed of, but are for enslaving the rest of Mankind to the arbitrary Commands of their despotick Will and Power. By which glorious Capacity they are enabled to be Friends to all humane Kind, and to preserve to them those Liberties which Nature has bestow'd upon us; and which Men had rather lose their very Blood and Lives, than part with.

*Princes  
may do  
more good  
by their  
Example.*

V. Men of ordinary Condition, tho' by their vertuous Actions they may recommend themselves to Almighty God, for the Salvation of their Souls; yet they are not of Figure enough, to be Patterns for other Men to copy from. For Greatness of Condition gives such a particular Lustre to Vertue, as excites Men to Imitation; which if the same appears under the Circumstances of



leffer Quality, is apt to be over-looked and unminded. Therefore Princes, who are placed on the highest Pitch of worldly Glory, and on whom so many Eyes are continually fixed, with a Proneness to admire, and imitate, whatever they find practised by those great Persons; they by doing good and generous Actions, are the Occasion of all the Good which is done by their Dependants, who, out of Love and Respect to their Prince, become sober, and devout, and charitable, after their Example. And in the great Day of Recompence, when every one shall receive according to the Works which he has done, whether good or bad; a religious Prince shall have everlasting Blessings showered upon his Head for every single Person that he has reclaimed from a vicious Course, or excited to Bounty or Charity by the Pattern which he has set.

VI. But of all Examples which have been given by Princes to their Subjects, and by which they have distinguished themselves, from others of that high Dignity; I think, upon impartial Consideration, that none have come up to the Character of her present Majesty; for under her Government we enjoy all, and greater Conveniences and Satisfactions, than ever Subjects did partake of in the Reigns of the best Princes, such as *Constantine, Theodosius, Edward the VI. and Queen Elizabeth*; there being Blemishes in those Reigns which are not chargeable upon this, tho' I do not know of any one Advantage, which the Subjects of those Times or their neighbouring Nations did enjoy, with relation to the Promotion of Virtue, Religion, or Civil Rights, or any other Blessing which could proceed from a wise and good Government, but what we do receive from this which we are under. There is none of those Actions which the irreligious Politicians do recommend, but this excellent Princess has an Abhorrence and Detestation of; and there is no Virtue which Religion recommends to her, either in her private or her publick Capacity, but shines illustriously in her Royal Person. The Courses of her Devotion are so constant, her Conversation so strictly exemplary, and

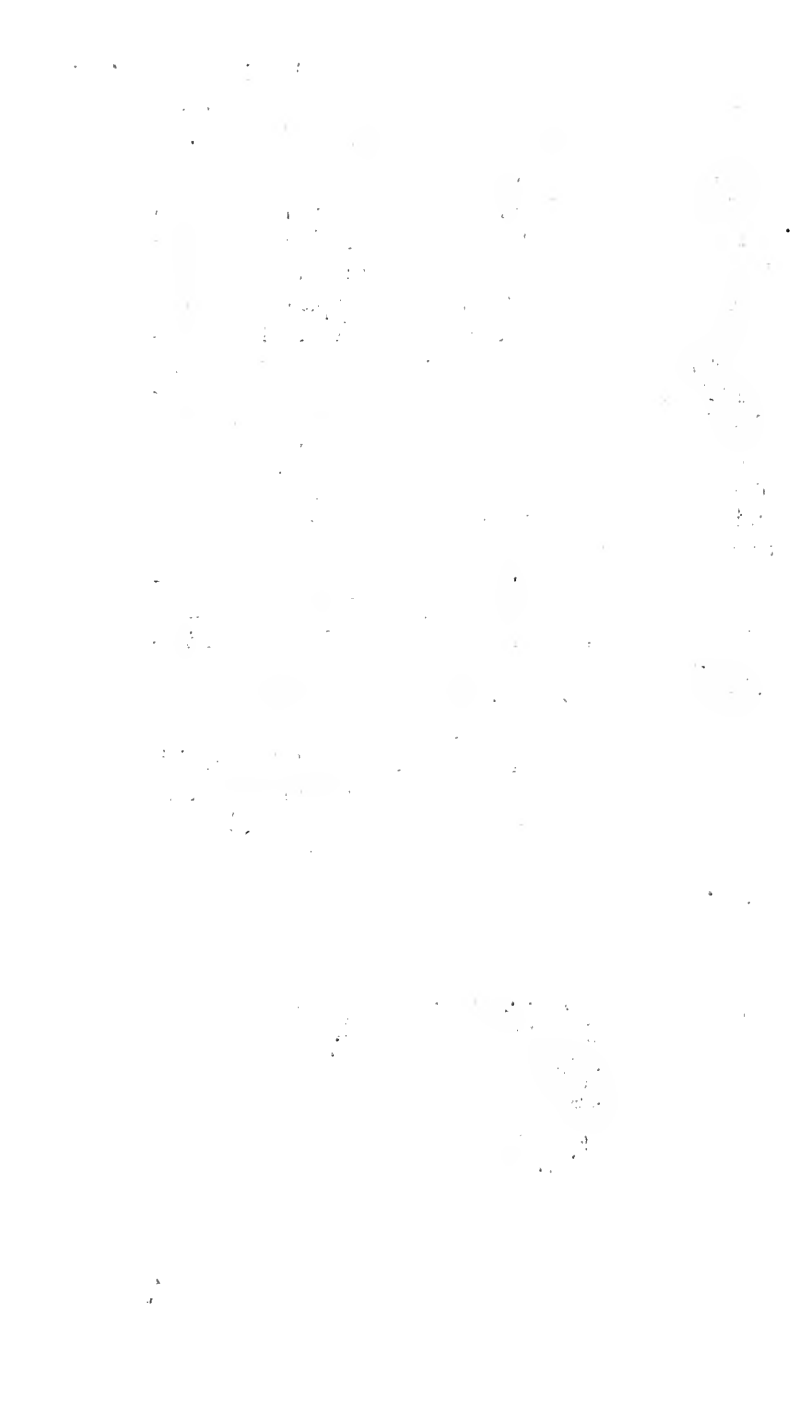
*Excellency  
of her  
Majesty's  
Example.*

all the *Christian Vertues* so remarkably bright in her, that notwithstanding the Multitude of Affairs which take up so much of her Time, she is a conspicuous Pattern to her Subjects for every single Branch of private Religion. The *Care of the Church* is continually upon her Thoughts, which in Time may produce greater Effects of her Goodness than we have seen; she having at this Time done more in order to the better Maintenance of the Ministers of our Religion, in a Reign of two Years, than all the Princes of our Country together, for 150 Years past. Whilst her Enemies have been perfidious in their Treaties most solemnly enter'd into of their own Motion, whilst they for a Series of many Years, have been ravaging the World by unjust and unnecessary Wars, and have been cruel to all, who have fallen under their Oppression; this glorious Princess has *religiously observed all the Alliances* ever made by her Predecessors; has never *prosecuted any other War*, than this present one, which was perhaps the most just that ever was in the World, taken up in Defence of the common Liberties of Mankind, and to chastise a more perfidious Violation of Human Faith, than the Memoirs of History have hitherto recorded; and tho' sufficiently provoked by the Cruelty of her Enemies to the Captives of her Country, she has maintained her *Prisoners of War* in more Plenty, and with more Kindness, than ever they were used to under their own Prince. She is surprisingly *courteous* to all such a Multitude of Appliers as address to her Throne, winning their Hearts by an Affability justly temper'd with Majesty, which renders her Royal Dignity neither too awful, nor too cheap. She has particularly distinguished herself by an extraordinary Exercise of *Justice*, not only by providing her Subjects with a Set of the most learned and intire Judges that ever sat upon the Bench, but also by a just and careful Discharge of all her Debts both publick and private, as fast as they arise. When some others of the best Reigns have flow'd with the Blood of Offenders suffering for their ill Affections to the Throne, the Government of our present gracious Queen has been so *merciful*, that I think

no Man ever yet died upon a State-Offence, Justice being done only upon the habitual Rogues and incorrigible Malefactors. Her bountiful Gift to the Nation at her Accession to the Crown, did infinitely exceed every Thing which has been done by any Predecessor in the Throne; and her late *Largess* to the Clergy, in giving up the *Tenths* and *First Fruits*, will be an astonishing Example of Liberality and Charity to all succeeding Generations. Her excellent Advice, and continual Endeavours to promote *Peace* and *Union* among ourselves, and compose our unhappy Divisions, add a new Glory to her Crown, and are a Shame to us, who, to the great Grief and Abuse of so much Goodness, do continue so unmercifully to spight and worry one another. Her particular Respect for her two Houses of Parliament, and laying before them all the material Acts of her Government; as also her vigorous Prosecution of this great War, for the Preservation of the common Liberties of *Europe*, do shew, that *Arbitrary Power* is a Thing which she would not only exclude out of her Country, but is acting to the utmost to drive it out of the World.

In short, the Character of the *Christian Prince*, which is set down in the foregoing Papers, is but such a Picture of our gracious Queen, as so unskilful an Artist as my self could draw. And so, *Demoborus*, I bid you good-night.







A  
CONFERENCE  
WITH AN  
ATHEIST.



CREDENTIUS. PHYSIUS.



*PHYSIUS*, a younger Brother, descended from a Family of some Distinction, had been bred up to a small Degree of *Literature*, tho' not equal to the Dignity of his *Birth*, yet sufficient to qualify him for some *creditable Employ*, for which he was designed. But in his younger Years indulging himself in some great Excesses of *Immorality*, he not only forsook his Studies, and abandoned all Application to *Business*; but partly by *Ill Company* which he kept, and partly by *worse Books* which he read, he was by Degrees impregnated with such *Hellish Principles*, that in time proceeding from bad to worse, he became at last a declar-

## A CONFERENCE

red and zealous Atheist. At his first setting out in *heretodoxical* Opinions, he was wonderfully fond of the *Socinian* Notions, and was used to please himself in rallying upon the *ancient Creeds* and their *Framers*, and to take great Liberties in blaspheming the *second and third Persons* in the ever-blessed *TRINITY*. From this he easily advanced to throw off the *Belief* of all *revealed Religion*; declaring only for *simple Morality*, and that Sort of *Religion* which has of late been called *Deism*. But he quickly found, that even these *Mongrel Principles* were too strait for him, curbing the unbounded Rovings of his *licentious* Appetites, with the *tyrannical* Imposition of the *Necessity* of a *good Life*, and the *Belief* of a *future State*. But *Phyſius*, now grown impatient of every Restraint, had no good Liking either to live the one, or to believe the other; and therefore was resolved to make a bold Sally into downright Atheism. To which Purpose he furnished himself, as well as the *Intervals* of his *Debaucheries* would give him leave, with the best *Arguments* he could pick out of the *Writings* of *Lucretius*, *Spinoza*, *Mr. Hobbes*, &c. under which *Masters* he in some time arrived at that Degree of Proficiency, which (in the *atheistical* Cant) they call *Stanch*; a *comprehensive* Word, which (if it may be interpreted by the usual *Qualities* of the Persons denoted by it) emphatically expresseth the odious *Composition* of *Pride*, *Malice*, *Ignorance*, and *Impudence*; and he had now got above the low *pedantick* Notions of *moral Good and Evil*, and had stifled all *Belief* of *God*, or *Devil*, or *future State*; allowing only an *eternal Something*, he cared not what, without any *Wisdom*, or *Goodness*, or *Providence*. These wicked *Principles* he endeavoured to propagate among his Acquaintance upon all Occasions, and often but too successfully among those whose *Vices* formed them for his Purpose, by preparing them for *Irreligion*, and making them more easily receptive of his *low* Impressions; whilst he grew troublesome to others of *pious* and *sober* Dispositions, who could not but look upon him as a *Pest* of *Society*, an *Enemy* to *Mankind*, and the *Blemish* of his *Species*.

This

This Man, hearing that † *Credentius*, who lived at no very remote Distance from him, had acquired some Reputation for having been instrumental in the Conversion of *Philologus*, a famous *Deist*, resolv'd to attack the Converter himself, and was sanguine enough to flatter himself with the Hopes of Success; and of making *Credentius* a *Profelyte* to his beloved Atheism. At least, he thought he should so daunt him with the *bold Cavils*, or so entangle him with the *laboured Subtilties* he had learnt from his late *Masters*, as would impair something of the Credit he had gained; which could not, he imagin'd, but in a good Degree prejudice People against that *Religion*, whose *Power* and *Influence* upon Men's Minds he beheld with *Envy*, and to which he had resolv'd the most virulent *Enmity* and *Opposition*.

In pursuance of his Design, he determines upon a Visit to *Credentius*, whom he had never seen before but once in a mixt Company; and now finding him at Home, he, with a Confidence peculiar to the Opinion he had of himself, thus attacks him.

*Phys.* I am come to see you, *Credentius*; to try if you can make me one of *your Fools*, as you have lately done *Philologus*. But he, a poor *Smatterer in Infidelity*, was half way of your Religion before he came to you; but I am a *thorough-paced Unbeliever*, who cannot consent to the very first Word of your *Credo in Deum*; for I do not believe any such Thing. And this I think is a Declaration as honest, as 'tis frank and open. I hate the hypocritical Cant of some of our Folks, who talk of *God*, and *God's Will*, and *God's Decrees*, when at the same time they believe no more of them, than I do of *Utopia*: This wraps up our *excellent Science* in such *Church-Fargon*, as makes you abject, slavish Believers to despise it. For my Part, I can't believe a God whom I can neither *hear* nor *see*; for as for what your *Bible-History* tells us of him, I believe no more of those Matters, than I do of *Tales of Witches and Apparitions*. Therefore, *Credentius*, unless

† Vid. Conference with a Theist.

you have a Mind to live a deluded, and to die a whining Fool, come over to my *Principles*, and then you may expect to live and die like a Man.

*Cred.* Your Principles, *Physius*! If a Man had any Thoughts of being *metamorphos'd* into a *Swine*, he would prepare himself for that filthy Condition by your *stupid Tenets*, which would not only make him live and die, but even think like a *Beast*, if one may use the Word *Think* in this Sense without Impropriety: For I am of Opinion, that *Beasts* and *Atheists* cannot properly be said to think. Can that Man be said to *think*, who won't believe a *God*, because he can't *hear* him, or *see* him? What a Notion is here of a Deity? But would you believe nothing, *Physius*, but what you can *hear* or *see*, or what can be rendered the Object of your gross *Senses*? Are there not a great many *just Conclusions* made by our *Reason*, which yet are no Objects of our outward *Sense*? Do our *Senses* tell us, that in the *Rectangular Triangle*, the Square of the *Hypothense* is equal to the Squares of the two Sides? Do our *Senses* tell us when *Eclipses* and *Conjunctions of the Planets* will happen? Does a Man ever *see* his *Soul*? And yet I suppose every Man *believes* he has one: For 'tis no Matter whether it be *Mind* or *thin Vapour*; the *Flatus* however is not so thick as to be *seen*. And yet every *Hobbist* and *Epicurean* thinks the *Soul* is *Something*, though he never *saw* it. And if you interrogate such kind of *Philosophers*, either about their *absolute Plenum*, or *infinite Matter*; or about the *Vacuum* or *Atoms* of others; they won't pretend, that they ever *saw* or *felt* these Things, or that they are any way the Objects of their *Senses*. Nay, your great Master *Hobbes*, who out of his profound Sagacity in philosophick Disquisitions, placed the Seat of the *Soul* in the *Stomach* (a proper Mansion for an *Atheist's Soul*) never, I dare say, *saw* his own *Panach*, much less that *Soul* of his which he supposed to inhabit it. Nay, if Men were to be guided only by their *Senses*, and to *believe* and *disbelieve* but just in Proportion to their Evidence, not only all *Literature*, but all *Civility* and *Commerce* would be destroyed. If a Man

were



were to *believe* just according to his *Senses*, the *Sun* would be no bigger than the *Bottom* of a *Bushel*, and every *fixed Star* not so big as a *Humble Bee*; the *Stars* would be fastened in the *Sky* like *Nails* in a *Coach*, and the *Sea* (as it appears to be) higher than the *dry Land*. If a *Man* was to *believe* nothing but what he *saw*, who would undertake a *Voyage* to *America*, or the *East-Indies*? The *History* of *Julius Caesar* would be as incredible as that of *Guy of Warwick*, and no *Man* could improve in any *Knowledge* or *Wisdom* beyond his own *Observation*, and that too to be confined to the *Narrow Compass* and *Imperfect Representations* of our weak short-sighted *Senses*. Therefore, I think, *Physius*, I may very well conclude, that if the *Being* of a *God* can be proved by any good and unexceptionable *Argument*, we may be as sure there is a *God*, as if we *saw* him, or *felt* him.

*Phys.* This would be something, *Credentius*, if you could prove a *God* by *Mathematical Demonstration*; we would not then pretend to call in our *Senses* to determine the *Controversy*. But instead of this, when you engage upon this *Subject*, you only entertain us with a little loose *Talk* and specious *Harangue* to shew the *Volubility* of your *Tongues*. But I am not to be wrought upon this *Way*; *Eyes* or *Demonstration* with *Physius*, and nothing else.

*Cred.* Why, you would not have an *infinite Mind* to be *demonstrated* the same way as the *Affections* and *mutual Relations* of the *Parts* of *finite Quantity* are, by *Lines* and *Angles*, &c. For that would be as gross a *Conception* of the *Deity*, as to *see* or *feel* him. But we can *demonstrate* there is a *God* by those *Proofs* which are proper to the *Nature* of the *Thing* to be proved, *viz.* by *Metaphysical Demonstration*, which is as cogent, in its *Way*, as the *Mathematical*. And this, I think, I may without *Arrogance* promise you I am able to do.

*Phys.* I should be glad to hear this: But I believe you are too sanguine in your *Promises* to make good all that you say.

*Cred.* I will spend a little Time for your Satisfaction in this Matter; and I hope I shall be able to *demonstrate* to you the *Being of a God*, and his principal *Attributes*.

Arg. I.  
From the  
Necessity  
of a first  
Cause.

Arg. I. By *God* I understand an *eternal Being infinitely Perfect*, i. e. infinitely powerful, Wise, and Good, the Maker of all Things, &c. Now that there is such a *Being*, I prove thus: I am most absolutely certain I have a *Being* my self, because I find at this time, whilst I am discoursing with you upon this Argument I am thinking and moving; but to be able to exert those Operations *demonstrates* a *Being* that has *Thought* or *Understanding*, and the Power of *Moving*. Therefore I make no Doubt, but that I have some Degree of these Faculties. Now either I *always* had these *Faculties*; or they were communicated to me by some other *Being* or *Cause*, different from my self, who was endued with them; or else there was a *Time* when there was no *Understanding*, *Power*, nor any *Being* at all. To assert this last is the greatest Contradiction in the World. For if there ever was a *Time* when there was no *Power* or *Being* at all, there never could have been such Things. For 'tis impossible that nothing should produce any Thing. Therefore 'tis a most *evident* Truth, since there is at present *Something*, there must have been *always Something*, which must have a *Necessity* of *Being*, and could not but *be*. Now that *necessary Being* is either my self, who I am sure have a *Being*, or some other *Being* which communicated this *Being* and *Power* to me. As for my self, I do not find that I had any *Being* 'till about forty Years ago, so that I am sure I could not *always be*; and therefore I must refer my *Being* (with the Power of Thinking and Moving, which ascertain to me its Reality) to some other Cause as the Fountain and Donor of it. Now from *what Being* I derived my own as the original and efficient Cause of it, is the Thing to be considered. My Father indeed begat me, having a like Power of *Understanding* and *Moving* as my self: But he could not be the prime *Original* Cause of *Thinking* or *Motion*, as not having any *Being* forty Years before me; and though he was the *instrumental*

tal Cause of my *Being*, yet he could no more *make* such a *Thinking, Moving Being* as I am, than he could make a World. My Grandfather was just in the same Circumstances with my Father; and if I should run Thousands of Generations backwards, 'till I had tired my Imagination, I could never find any Predecessor who could be an adequate Cause of my *Thinking, or Moving*; they being all but Men as I am, and unable by their own Power to produce such a *Being* as my self. Therefore I must come at last to some *Being* which has sufficient Power of it self to produce a Man endowed with *Reason and Motion*. Now this *Being* must of *Necessity be from all Eternity* without any Cause of its *Being*: And this necessary *Eternal Being* I call God. If I proceed by way of Induction throughout the whole *Course of Nature*, I must come to the same *Conclusion*. Take an Instance in any other Creature, a *Horse, a Tree, a Flower*, and after Millions of supposed precedent Generations, you must at last rest upon *one* and the same first *Self-existent* Cause which was from all *Eternity*. Now thus much is evinced by this Argument, That there is an *Eternal Self-existent Being*, the Cause of all other *Beings*; and that this *Eternal Self-existent Being* is endowed with *Understanding and Power*; for since he is the Cause of *Understanding, and the Power of Motion* in me, and all other Creatures of like Capacity, he must needs possess them himself in a much greater Degree. But I shall deduce the *Corollaries*, which may be drawn from this Argument, with greater Force by and by. In the mean Time I proceed to a second Argument, to prove the *Being of a God*.

Arg. II. When we see Things void of *Understanding* Arg. II.  
move as regularly to certain and designed Ends, as if From the  
they possessed that *Quality* in its utmost Perfection, we Direction of  
must needs conclude that these Things did not drop in- all Things  
to this *orderly Method* without the *Conduct* of a *most wise* to a proper  
*Author*, who perfectly well understood the *End* to which End.  
they were directed, and irresistibly prescribed the *Means*  
conducting to the Attainment of it. Now since there  
is such a *wise Contrivance* in the Frame of all the *Parts* of  
the

the *Universe*, which have no Power *inherent* in themselves of regulating such an infinite Variety of *Motions*, and conducting them all in such an harmonious Concurrence to their respective *Ends*, the *Power* that effects this is *God*. Suppose, for Instance, we should see a Rude heap of Wood and Stone all on a sudden to fall a polishing it self, fitting its Parts exactly to one another, and ranging into such Order and Symmetry as at last to form a noble and beautiful Palace; Would not any one upon Sight conclude, that there was some powerful invisible *Intelligence* that did move and direct these lumpish Parts of Matter to so surprizing an End, since they could have no Design of their own, and therefore must wholly owe their wondrous Frame and Contexture to the Power and Wisdom of *that invisible Architect*? This with much greater Reason must be concluded of the incomparably more wonderful and magnificent Structure of the material World, all whose Parts, though exceeding various, and void of all Understanding themselves, are yet directed to such excellent Ends, and so duly and exactly accomplish them, as must necessarily prove them to be under the unerring Conduct of *an all-wise and all-powerful Mind*. For what less than that could have effected, That the *Sun* should not only move in so regular an Order, but that its Motion should be so adapted to the Use of the World, that the least Change of its Course would greatly incommode and disturb, if not ruin and destroy it: That there should be such an over-ruling Direction influencing the several Kinds of Animals, exciting them to act for the Preservation of themselves and their Kinds, without Understanding it: That diverse Insects should provide for the Winter without ever knowing what it is: That Birds should hatch their Eggs without understanding what they are about, that they should adapt their Nests soft or hard, according to the Hardness or Tenderness of the Constitution of their young ones; that they should with such remarkable Constancy keep in them whilst they are hatching their young, as if they were able to give a *Philosophical* Account of their  
own

own Warmth, and its Aptness for *Animation*? Let us further turn our Eyes within our selves, and there observe how *fearfully and wonderfully* we are made; consider, not only the surprizing Beauty and exact Symmetry of the Whole but also, the involuntary Motions and strange Operations of each Part; how admirably every Thing is contrived for our Use and Benefit; how many different Organs excellently disposed, and all directed to as many Noble Ends; how our Digestion is performed by so many wonderful Alterations without any Concurrence of the Will; how exquisitely all our Senses are contrived for the Reception of their respective Objects; how busy they are in conveying external Ideas to our Minds without any preceding Volition of ours; and how extremely beneficial in representing to us according to their different *Faculties* the different *Qualities* of Things, of *Heat and Cold, Sounds and Colours, Smells and Tastes*, the Lack of any of which *Faculties* does, we find, make our Minds disconsolate, and our Lives uneasy. So that in our whole Body there is not the least Muscle or Sinew which is not contriv'd to some *wise End*, and designed for some *particular Use*. Now 'tis impossible that all these *Means* could be so wisely fitted to their respective *Ends*, without some *infallible Power* directing and contriving them; which *Infallible Directing Power* is what we call *God*.

Arg. III. The *Universal Consent* of Mankind in any *Notion or Proposition* has been always justly esteemed a strong Argument of its *Truth and Reality*: Now there is no Proposition in which the *Consent* of Mankind has been more strictly and unexceptionably *Universal* than this, *That there is a God*: There having not been any Age so Ignorant, or Nation so Barbarous, but what Acknowledged and Worshipped some Deity or other. Now 'tis impossible to suppose so *Perpetual and Universal* a Fallacy (if such it were) should be imposed upon the *united Reason* of Mankind. If some Crafty Politician (as some no less vainly than impiously pretend) had first devised this Chimerical Notion, as a Trick of State,

Arg. III.  
From the  
Universal  
Acknow-  
ledgement  
of a Deity.

or an Implement of Power; he could however only enforce it in his own Country, and it must remain confined within the Sphere of the Activity of the Power and Influence of the first Inventor; or if we should allow he might infect some adjacent Places with it, yet we could never suppose him able to impose it upon the whole World, none in the mean time appearing among such numerous Multitudes to detect the Imposture and disabuse Mankind, as well by exposing the Absurdity and Inconsistency of it, as by discovering its Origine, the Nature of its Progress, by what Arts it was propagated, by what Steps it advanced, 'till it spread it self through so many distant Countries, and at last rode Triumphant over the Judgements and Understandings of all Reasonable Creatures. All this he must be obliged to account for, who will undertake to shew us a *Period of Time* in which there was not an *universal Consent* in the Notion of a *Deity*; Nay, by the Nature of his Argument he is obliged to produce us the *Æra of an universal Atheism*, and shew us the *Time* when there was in the World no Notion of a *God* at all: 'Till he can do this, our Argument drawn from the *Universal Consent* of all Men of all Ages and Nations in the Belief of a *Deity* will remain in its full Strength, and be sufficient to enforce our Conclusion, *That there is a God*. As therefore the Pretence of attributing *this Notion* of a *Deity* to the *Politick Subtlety* of some *State-Engineer* is Impious and Vain, so neither is it possible to conceive that all Mankind should of themselves, without any previous Grounds enforcing or persuading it, fall into *this Notion*; Nay, on the contrary, 'tis impossible to account for this *universal Consent* any otherwise than by founding it either upon the *rational Evidence* of the Thing it self, or upon the *Authority* of a *Divine Revelation*. Either of which (and we have cogent and conclusive Arguments to prove both) is sufficient to evince to us *the Existence of a God*.

The Objection drawn from the extreme *Barbarity* of some Nations will not be of force sufficient to set aside what we now contend for. If there are any People so  
*Barbarous*

*Barbarous* that it cannot be made appear they have any *Notion of a God*; so neither can the contrary be easily made appear, such *Barbarity* rendring all Commerce and Correspondence with such a Nation very difficult, if not impracticable. And if it could be made appear, the Judgment of such a *rude Multitude* must needs be of little Weight in the Case, and especially ought not to be put in the Ballance against the *joint Consent* of all the far greatest and wisest Part of the World.

Arg. IV. Another Argument of the Being of a *God* may be drawn from the Force and Dictates of *Conscience*: A Faculty whose Power and Influence in some Measure or other all are sensible of, it being implanted in the Hearts of all Men, even of the most harden'd Sinners, nay, of those who strive and struggle most to throw it off. This *Internal Judge* erects a *Tribunal* in the Heart of every Man. This binds and looses, accuses and witnesses, absolves and condemns as *God's Vicegerent*, or a Kind of *Deity* within our own Breasts. 'Tis this which admonishes every Man of his Duty, and the indispenfable Necessity incumbent upon him of performing it. 'Tis this which applauds and encourages the Virtuous and Pious Man, giving him Peace, Serenity and Joy not to be ruffled by all the Frowns of the World, or the Storms of adverse Fortune. 'Tis this which tortures the Soul of the Sinner with a thousand bitter Reflections on his past Guilt, which sets his Crimes before his Face, with all their aggravating Horrors, and frightful Deformities, and thunders into his Ears that dreadful Sentence which awaits Iniquity; a Sentence, the Justice whereof he is forc'd to acknowledge and subscribe to, and which he is convinced, in spite of his forced Gaiety and pretended Indifference, shall certainly be executed upon his Impenitence. The Fear of Men cannot produce these Anxieties, since they have frequently been observ'd to be the Consequents of Crimes whose Secrecy skreen'd them from publick View, and thereby exempted them from the Cognizance of human Laws, and the Terror of their Inflictions: Nay, the Crimes of Persons whose State  
and

Arg. IV.  
From the  
Dictates of  
Conscience.

and Power set them above the Reach of all human Laws, have been remarkably attended with the greatest Horrors: Instances whereof we have in *Tiberius, Caligula, Nero*, and others, whose supreme Dominion left them nothing to apprehend from the Power of Magistrates; and therefore those Agonies which threw them into such Convulsions, and disorder'd them in so violent a manner, could have no other Cause than the *Conviction of Conscience*, and the dreadful Sentence of that *Internal Judge*, awarding them future Misery and Punishment as a just Recompence of their daring Impieties, and consigning them over to the Vengeance of Heaven. 'Twas some *superiour Judge*, whose uncontrollable Power those Fears confest. Now this *superiour Judge*, whom all wicked Men have ever dreaded, whom all wicked Men must ever stand in Awe of, can be no other than *God*.

These Arguments, *Physins*, are sufficient to prove that there is such a Being as *God*: And if they are well consider'd, they do afford us likewise an Opportunity of being let into the Knowledge of the Nature of this *excellent Being*, so far as the Shallowness of our Capacities will admit. Therefore to go back to the first Argument, whereby we prov'd that there must of Necessity be an *Eternal, Self-existent Being*, the *first Cause* of all Things;

God is Omnipotent.

Now since all Things are produc'd by this *first Cause*, all the *Power* which they are endued with, must be in him; because whatsoever *Power* he does impart to another (as dependent upon him) he must necessarily have more eminently in himself: And whatsoever *Power* is possible to be, must be inherent in him who is the Fountain of all *Power*: And therefore he must be *Omnipotent*. No *Power* is greater than his, on the contrary, his *Power* is superiour to all other. The Reason why a difficult Thing, though *Possible* in it self, becomes impossible to us, is, because there is more *Power* to resist in the Thing to be done, than we have *Power* and *Strength* to encounter it with; if we were assisted with a proportionate Addition of *Strength*, we could quickly conquer



conquer it, which in our present Degree of *Weakness* we are not able to do. But the *Power* of the Deity knows no *Impossibilities*; for whatsoever there is of *Force* and *Opposition* in any Thing, it came from him; be this *Opposition* therefore ever so great, he himself must have a greater *Power* able to controul it at his Pleasure, to which it must needs yield, as being superiour to all other *Power*, and the sole Fountain and Origine of all *Power* whatever.

And since *God* (as the *first Cause*) is a *Necessary Self-existent Being*, God is One. it follows, that he is but One. For if there were two *first Causes*, one of them could not be a *necessary Being*: For one of them might derive its Existence from the other, and so could not be (according to the *Supposition*) a *Necessary Being*. Besides, it is a just Consequence drawn from the *Nature of a Deity*, that he can be but One. For if *God* be *All-Powerful*, and the *Fountain of all Power*, (as we have proved he is,) then *all Power* must be in him; and can there be *all Power* in another too? Without which he cannot be *God*: Can there be any more than *All*? But as every Absurdity is pregnant with many others, so is this most absurd Notion of a *Plurality of Gods*. The Absurdities issuing from it are indeed numberless, but withal so gross and obvious as may justly supersede all Necessity of farther exposing or confuting it.

From what has been proved, we are led on further to acknowledge, That the *Deity* is endowed not only with a Vast, but an *Infinite Knowledge*, All-knowing. that is, not only of all Things that are, but all Things that shall and may be. For since *God* is the *Maker and Preserver* of all Things, he must *know* all Things, unless we can suppose him to *make* and *preserve* those Things which he does not *Understand*. Besides, all Things which as yet are not, but are hereafter to be, must be *known to God*; because they can be only by his *Will and Determination*; and he must needs know what himself *Wills* and *Decrees*. Nay, all other Things which neither are, nor perhaps ever shall be, but only have a Possibility of being in *actual Existence*, must be present to the *divine*

*Mind*; which, as they are *Eternal Truths*, must *Eternally* have had a *Being* in the *divine Mind*.

7th Inf-  
nity of  
God.

I proceed now to prove the *Infinity* of *God*: By which I understand the *Unlimitedness* and *Boundlessness* of his *Perfections*. So that *God* is *Infinite* in a fourfold Respect. *Infinite* in his *Power*, i. e. *Omnipotent*; *Infinite* in his *Knowledge*, i. e. *Omniscient*; *Infinite* in his *Duration*, i. e. *Eternal*, and *Infinite* in his *Presence*, i. e. *Immense* or *Omnipresent*. Of his *Infinity* of *Power* and *Knowledge* I have spoken before. I now go on to prove the *Infinity* of *God's Duration*, in that he is *Eternal*.

God is E-  
ternal.

Now *Eternity* looks two ways from us, backwards, and forwards. That *God* was from all *Eternity*, that he always had a *Being*, and never had a *Beginning*, we have already shew'd in proving him to be the *Cause* of all *Things*. I now proceed to prove that he is *Eternal* by an *Eternity forwards*, and that he will be, or continue, to all *Eternity*. This is demonstrated from what I before advanced and proved with respect to the *Necessity* of *God's Existence*. Now if *God's Being* be *Necessary* for all the *Time* before this, there is the same Reason that he should *Necessarily be* all the *Time* after this. One *Time* or another *Time* does not hinder the *Necessariness* of his *Being*; they being things perfectly extrinsecal to it: So that if it be *Necessary* for *God* to *be* now, it will be as *Necessary* a *Million* of *Ages* hence, and so on to all *Eternity*. Again, *God* must *be* to all *Eternity* from the *Simplicity* and *Spiritualness* of his *Nature*. The Reason why we see such *Vicissitudes* of *Flourish* and *Decay* in the *Things* about us, which from a *State* of *Strength* and *Beauty*, in *process* of *Time*, become *Ruinous* and *Deformed*, and at last sink into *Nothing*, is partly because of the *Compoundeness* of their *Natures*. They are made up of *Heterogeneous* and *contrary* Principles, which are still fighting and struggling with themselves; wherefore as the *Ingredient Parts* moulder away, the *Bodies* sink and die; as one Principle gets the *Mastery* and *Predominancy* over the rest, the *Compages* of those *Things* are weakened more and more, till the *Whole* is at last dissolved. But *God* is a

most

most *Simple* and *uncompounded Being*; there are no *Ingredients* in his *Nature*, no *Contrariety* in his *Essence*: So that he is capable of no *Alteration*, can never be otherwise than he now is; he has no *Parts* to be separated, to make way for a *Dissolution*, no jarring *Principles* to sollicit a *Change*: Therefore he always must continue as he now is, and thus he must be to all *Eternity*. Besides, 'tis evident that *God* must continue to all *Eternity*, because there is no *Power* greater than that of *God*. The Reason why all Things which we see, do decay or are destroy'd, is, because they are not endued with *Power* sufficient to hinder it: The Reason why *Combustibles* are destroyed by *Fire*, is, because they have not *Strength* enough to oppose and master its *Violence*: The Reason why *Men* must give way to a mortal *Disease*, is, because they have not *Strength* and *Power* to resist it. But *God*, who is the Fountain of all *Power*, from whom proceeded whatsoever is *Mighty* and *Powerful* in every thing, he, doubtless, has more *Power* or *Strength* than any of his *Creatures*; so that 'tis impossible that he who has by his *Power* given *Being* to every Thing in the World, should lose his *Being* by the *Predominancy* of the *Inferiour* and *Created Power* of any Thing else.

That the *Divine Nature* is *Omnipresent*, may be prov'd *Omnipres* from the same Topick of *Self-Existence* and *Necessity of* *sent.* *Being*. For, if the *Deity* be not *Omnipresent*, there is some Place where *he* is not *Present*; so that if it be not necessary for *him* to be in *this* or *that* Place, it is not necessary for *him* to be in any *other* assignable Place; and consequently it is not necessary for *him* to be *at all*. The Absurdity whereof sufficiently appears, in that it destroys the Supposition of *necessary Self-Existence*; which, as it has already fully demonstrated, so is it the most incontestable Principle in the World. Besides, the *Omnipresence* of *God* is a necessary Consequence of his *Creative* and *Conservative Power*. For wheresoever any Thing is created, preserv'd, or upheld, there *God* is; for wheresoever there is *real action*, there is *real Existence*. Therefore it follows, that where any Particle of the *material World* is,

God must be in that Place to conserve it; wherever any *intellectual Nature* is, he must be there to continue it in it's *Being*; And if the *infinite Space* be a *Being* (as some pretend) as having all the Properties and Affections of a *Being* to be demonstrated of it, it must be concluded, that *God* is there likewise to uphold it in it's *Being*; Or if it be only a *formal Conception* of the Mind, arising from the Idea of *Immensity*, the Foundation of such *conceived Immensity* must be an *Immense* or *Omnipresent Deity*.

*Phyſius*. And what a mighty Exploit have you been about all this Time, and how gloriously have you atchiev'd it? You have been proving that which no Body ever denied. For who must not own a *Self-Exiſting, Eternal and Infinite* Somewhat? But this does not prove a *GOD*; For *Matter* it self may be *Eternal*, &c. But how do you prove that this self-Exiſtent being is a Mind? That it is Intelligent, Holy, True, Juſt, Beneficent, Merciful, &c. with a great many other fine Qualities, which you *Believers* dress up your Notion of a Deity in? Here your Chain of Argument leaves you, and for the Proof of this you must fall to begging of Principles again.

*Cred*. If you will have a little Patience, *Phyſius*, I will dispatch this Matter to your *Satisfaction*, if Gentlemen of your Stamp can feel any in being *Convinced of the Truth*.

An intelli-  
gent Being.

To prove the *Intelligence* and *Wisdom* of the *Deity*, I might present you with a View of the Beautiful *Order* and *Oeconomy* of Nature; the wondrous *Variety* of the several Parts of *the Creation*, their *Exquisite Contrivance* for their respective Ends, with the *harmonious Concurrence* of each to the *Ornament and Use* of the Whole. But I shall wave this Method at present; chusing rather to demonstrate the *Intelligence* and *Wisdom* of the *Deity* by the same Argument, by which I prov'd his *Self-Exiſtence*. And here I must go back again to the Contemplation of my self: And as I have shewed before, That, since I was sure I had a *Being*, I must be as certain there was a *prime Cause* of my *Being*, which *Cause* had no *Cause* of it's *Being*, but was *Self-Exiſtent*; so, by the same Argument I prove, that *God* is an *Intelligent Being*. For I am as cer-  
tain

tain of my *Thinking*, as of my *Being*; nay, more certain, if possible. For I come to the Knowledge of my *Being* by my *Consciousness* of my having the Power of *Thinking*, which does by consequence infer *Being*. Whence the same Argument that proves, There is a *prime Cause* of *Being*, equally proves, there is a *prime Cause* of *Thinking*, which is likewise *Thoughtful* or *Intelligent*. For as 'tis impossible that *Nothing* should be the *Cause* of *Something*; and therefore there must be something *Eternal* and *Self-Existent*: So 'tis impossible that *Something Unthinking* or *Unintelligent* should produce any thing *Thinking* or *Intelligent*.

And as to all moral Perfections, such as *Holiness*, *Truth*, *Justice*, *Benevolence*, *Mercy*, &c. being in some degree Perfections in *human Nature*, they must be in a more Eminent manner found in the *Deity*, which is the *Cause* of such Perfections in us. But let us take a View of them singly, and we shall find that each of them is necessarily inherent in the *divine Nature*. To begin with *Holiness*.

By *Holiness* is understood a *Negation* of all *Sin*, *Wickedness* and *moral Turpitude*, and an *actual Habit* of and *Disposition* to every thing that is *Virtuous* and *Good*. Now we cannot conceive a *Deity* without such Qualifications. For 'tis shocking to our Minds to think of a *False*, a *Lewd* or an *impure God*. 'Tis perhaps more easy to imagine, that *God* is wanting in some degrees of *Wisdom* or *Power*, than that his Nature should admit of any degrees of *Vice* or *Wickedness*.

But farther, his *Holiness* may be inferr'd from those other *Attributes* which we have before demonstrated. Now we may come at this the more clearly, if we consider what *Sin* or *Wickedness* is, to which *Holiness* is opposed. *Sin* (as the Apostle well defines it) is the *Transgression* of a *Law*, whereby either the *Authority* of the *Legislator* is violated, or the *Reason* upon which the *Sanction* is grounded is rejected. Now 'tis impossible that *God* should be charg'd with any *Fault*, or *Immorality* upon either of these Accounts. For he being the *first Cause* or *Maker* of all things, hath an *absolute Autho-*

rity over them; but nothing can have any *Authority* over him: So that he can be bound by the *Authority* of no *Legislators*, they being so far from having any *Power* or *Jurisdiction* over him, that the *greatest Princes* in the World are his *Creatures* and *Vassals*. Neither can *God* be guilty of any *moral Obliquity*, as it implies a contradicting the *Reason* upon which any *Law* is grounded. That the *divine Nature* is subject to any *human Sanction*, tho' founded upon ever so great *Reason*, no one was ever so Extravagant as to imagine. But yet there are some *Obligations*, which we may in a *large Sense* call *Laws*, which even *God* himself is bound by; not upon account of any *Authority* superiour to his own, but upon account of the *essential Rectitude* and *Perfection* of his *Nature*: For tho' as *God's Power* is *Infinite*, and he might if he pleas'd do every thing that is conceivable to be done; yet he will not do any thing, but what his *Wisdom* shall judge *fit* to be done. And this *Fitness* does arise, partly from the *Nature* of *God* himself, and partly from the *different Relations* which things bear to one another. Now 'tis impossible that *God* should *act* either *unsuitably* to his *own Nature*, or *incongruously* with regard to the *Capacities* and *Powers* of the several Parts of the Creation. For a *Wise*, and a *powerful God* cannot be suppos'd to *act* *Injudiciously*, or *Weakly*, nor a *true God* (as he shall be hereafter prov'd to be) *Fallacionously*. And since 'it has pleas'd *God* to create such a World as this is, wherein all the different Parts are so contrived as to be conducive to the Good of the Whole; he cannot be suppos'd to break in upon his own Design, and to be a Patron of those Enormities, which disturb the publick Peace, and oppose the Good of the World he has created. Now since there is such a *Relative Fitness* and *Congruity* in the Nature of things with one another, as makes the acting agreeably thereto the most proper; it cannot be conceiv'd but that *God Almighty* should, in all his divine Proceedings, observe the most exact Conformity to it; for every *intelligent Being* whatsoever, does *act* according to these *Rules*, so far forth as he is not

hindred by some Defect either of *Power* or *Understanding*, or by a *Will* vitiated and deprav'd by ill Habits. Then certainly *Almighty God*, who is endu'd with an *infinite Wisdom* to know the most *fit* and *proper* Means conducing to every End, will never prosecute his Ends by *unfit* or *improper* ones. He that is vested with an *Omnipotent Power*, whereby he is able to make every thing bend to his Purpose, will never apply to Methods unequal to his Designs, or whose Efficacy can either be defeated or disputed: He that is *perfectly true and faithful*, will never have Recourse to Means destructive of his Creation, or injurious to it, and thereby contrary to the essential Properties of his own Nature. From all which, we may as firmly conclude the *Holiness* of God, as we do his *Existence*. Therefore the old Heathens were inexcusable, who attributed *lewd* and *vicious Actions* to their Gods: Nor is their Opinion less condemnable, who make God the *Author of Sin*, by saying that he positively decrees it. The former Opinion is vanish'd and gone out of the World, since the spreading of the Gospel; and the latter has no other Support or Defence but an Assertion equally contrary to Truth and Reason, *viz.* That God does not *will* Things, because they are antecedently *good*; but that they are therefore *good*, because he *wills* them. But this is as absurd as to say, that God *wills* his own *Nature*, and that *he is*, because he would *be*; which is to make him to *be* before he *is*. For since a great Part of the *Goodness* or *Illness* of Actions, does depend upon their *Suitableness* or *Unsuitableness* to the *divine Nature*, there must of Necessity have been, from all Eternity, a certain *Rectitude*, or *Pravity*, upon the Supposition of such Actions, which must be either *pleasing* or *displeasing* to the divine Mind; and therefore God could never *will* such Actions which he did from all Eternity foresee the least *Pravity* or *Obliquity* in.

I have been the longer, *Physius*, upon this Head, because the greatest Part of *Religion* is founded upon this *Attribute* of God, and unless Men have true Notions thereof, they cannot have such a just Sense of the Differ-

rence of *Good* and *Evil*, nor such reverential Conceptions of the *Deity*, as may enable them to pay him that reasonable Service which his *Excellency* and *Purity* require,

*True.* And now we further proceed to prove, that *God* is *True* or *Faithful*. By the *Truth* of *God*, we understand a Conformableness of his *Word* to his *Mind*, and of his *Mind* to the *Nature* of Things. So that *God* not only has a *perfect Knowledge* of all Things really as they are, which is grounded upon the *Infallibility* of his *Intellect*; but when he is pleased to make any Declaration thereof to us, his *Words* are agreeable to his *Mind*; and Things are, or shall be, just as he describes or pronounces of them. Therefore whenever *God* makes a Revelation of Things unknown before, they are exactly so as he represents them; when he expresses to us his Desire of any Thing he would have done by us, he does really take a Satisfaction in our doing it; when he forbids us the doing any Action, he certainly bears a Dislike thereto, or perceives some Inconvenience therein, which would render it prejudicial to us; whenever he predicts any Thing, it shall certainly come to pass, unless it be something that has a *Condition* annexed to it; in which Case, the *Condition* not being perform'd, the *Prophecy* is verify'd, tho' the Thing do not come to pass. Now that such *Truth* doth essentially belong to the *divine Nature*, may be demonstrated first from *God's Omniscience*: Because he that knows all Things, cannot be deceived in any Thing, so as to put a *Fallacy* upon his Creatures through *Ignorance* or *Mistake*: And since there is an *essential Rectitude and Holiness* in his *Nature*, he cannot be thought to put a *Cheat* upon his Creatures out of *Design*. Nay, all those *Weaknesses* and *Imperfections* which may tempt Creatures to *Fraud* and *insincere Dealing*, are not to be found in an *all-perfect* and *all-powerful Creator*. Men are incited to utter *Falsehoods* by the Prospect of Advantage, or scar'd into *Insincerity* by Fears of Danger or Disaster: But the *glorious and ever-bless'd God*, can have no farther Improvements of his *Felicity* in View, nor be under any Apprehensions of having *His Glory* diminished. Men we see will run counter to  
some



some *Promises* with the same *Precipitancy* with which they made them; they will violate others through *Forgetfulness*, *Fickleness*, or *Want of Ability* to make them good. But none of these Irregularities or Defects, can affect an *all-wise* and *all-powerful God*, who has *infinite Knowledge* and *Constancy* to guide him in making any *Promises*, and an *infinite Power* to enable him to perform them. In the next Place we proceed to the *Proofs* of the next *Attribute* ascribed to the *divine Mind*, viz. *Justice*.

*Justice* is the giving every one his Due: Therefore *just.* whatever with Reason can be said to be due from a *Creator* to his *Creatures*, or from *God* himself to the *infinite Dignity* of his own *Nature*, that *God Almighty* will certainly pay. For not to pay what is due to another, argues *Imperfection* and *Weakness*, and is contrary to that *Wisdom* and *Holiness* which we before demonstrated to be *essentially* inherent in the *divine Nature*. The only thing herein further to be proved, is, That *God* is obliged to maintain the *Honour* and *Dignity* of his own *Nature* from being insulted, and not to suffer one Part of Mankind to *injure* another. But we have the general Consent of all Mankind to vouch for the Truth of these Particulars, who have agreed to beg Pardon of *God*, and to deprecate the Punishment which they are persuaded his *Justice* would otherwise inflict upon our violating his *Commands*; and to appeal to the *Justice* and *Vengeance* of *God*, whenever they are *injur'd* by their Fellow-Creatures. Now this general Opinion of the World, in all Ages, is grounded upon very good Reason. For if *God* has given the World any *Laws* (as all Mankind almost believe, and I shall by and by prove he has) we must suppose that he, as well as other Legislators, must keep up these *Laws* by *Sanctions*, which alone will engage Men to the Observation of them: And the *Rewarding* and *Punishing* according to the Tenour of these *Sanctions*, is what we call the *divine Justice*. Besides, without this he could not maintain the Character of a Creator, which would very ill consist with permitting one Part of his *Creatures*, with absolute Impunity, to injure the other.

The

Good, or  
beneficent.

The *Goodness* or *Benevolence* of God, may be easily inferred from the foregoing *Attributes* and *Properties* of the *divine Nature*. As a *Creator* of so  *pompous* and  *magnificent* a *Structure* as the *World* is, he has given us a no less  *illustrious Testimony* of his *Goodness*, than of his *Wisdom* and *Power*; the *intellectual Part* whereof especially, must needs by their very *Frame*, appear designed as no other than *Objects* of his *Benevolence*. Inasmuch as this *amiable Attribute* may justly be esteemed one chief *Motive* to his exerting his *Omnipotence* in the surprising *Works* of the *Creation*. For he could have no *View* in it to any *new Increase*, either of his *own Happiness* or *Glory*. For what could a thousand *Worlds* contribute towards enhancing that *essential* and *consummate Felicity* which he had from all *Eternity* enjoy'd? Or what *new Accessions* to his *Glory* could he derive from the *Praises* and *Hallelujahs* of ten thousand *Choirs* of *Men* or *Angels*? Not that this *Goodness* does flow from him by the *blind Laws* of *fatal Necessity*, but is governed by the *wise Determinations* of the *divine Will*, to be exhibited at such *Times*, and in such *Manner*, as his *infinite Wisdom* shall direct and appoint; which naturally leads me to the *Consideration* of another *Property* or *essential Quality* of the *divine Nature*, which you did not mention, *viz.*

A Free  
Agent.

An *entire Liberty* and *Freedom of Action*; which we shall also prove to be an *inseparable Property* of the *divine Essence*. Whatsoever is the *prime Cause* of all *Things*, must be *free*: For whatsoever is a *necessary Cause*, must be an *instrumental Cause*, at least a *secondary* one: For a *Cause* which is under any *Degrees* of *Necessity*, cannot be said to *act* so much, as to be *acted upon*; and consequently is subject to the *Causality* of some *prior Cause*, which destroys the *Supposition* of its being the *prime Cause*. So that if *God* be the *prime Cause*, (as we have already prov'd him to be) he is a *free Agent*. Again, if *God* be not a *free Agent*, there is nothing in the *World* that now is, that could *not have been*, or have been *any otherwise* than it now is; and nothing in the whole *Course* of *Nature* could admit of any *Variation*. There must of

*Necessity*

*Necessity* be just such a Number of Men, and such a Number and Species of other Animals and Vegetables: The Earth could not have been an Inch bigger or less than it is: The Planets could not have mov'd in either greater or lesser Circles, or in Planes more or less parallel to the Plane of the Ecliptick, than they do now. But it is not in the least repugnant to Reason, to suppose that there might have been a thousand Diversifications in these Particulars (if the *divine Wisdom* had so determined) without any Prejudice to the Nature of Things. The daring Assertion of that philosophical Prince, who was so bold as to say, *If God had consulted him when he made the World, he would have told him how to have made it better*; tho' a flagrant Instance of the highest Presumption and Arrogance in arraigning the *divine Wisdom*, yet manifestly implies this other Quality, and allows the Creation to be entirely free, in supposing he might have disposed Things in another Order than what we see them: And tho' we must in Humility and Truth, acknowledge our selves incapable of contriving Things better than they are, yet this does not shew, that *God* is not a *free Being*, but that he is an *infinitely wise* one. Lastly, if *God* were not a *free Agent*, all the *Causalities* proceeding from him would be *infinite*: For an *infinite Cause* acting *necessarily*, must produce an *infinite Effect*; for the *Effect* must be of the *same Nature* with the *Cause*, unless there were a *free Will* in the *Cause* disposing it to produce *Effects* different from its *own Nature*. So that if *God* be of *Necessity* the *Cause* of Men, Trees, Horses, &c. he must produce an *infinite* Number of Men, Trees, Horses, &c. which is both false and absurd. Therefore we may justly conclude, that since *God* was the *efficient Cause* of the World, and might either have made it at this Time, or that Time, or not at all; that since he might have contriv'd the Frame of the several Parts of the Universe (if he had pleas'd) in different Manners from what it is: And lastly, since we are certain that many of the *Effects* of the *divine Nature* are *finite*, which could not proceed from a *Cause* that is *infinite*, were it not also *free*: I say, we may from all this justly conclude, that *God* is a *free Agent*, and endu'd with the most abso-

lute Degree of *Liberty*. I now go on to the Proofs of the last excellent *Quality* you mentioned, our attributing which to the *Deity*, is so offensive to you, *viz.* Mercy.

*Merciful.*

That this *Attribute* is equally *essential* to the *divine Nature* with the rest, will sufficiently appear from this Consideration, *viz.* That *God* has been pleased to give Mankind a System of *moral Laws* to govern their Actions by, and that all of them do find that they do frequently, notwithstanding their most earnest Endeavours, make some Slips in their Duty, by which they are rendered obnoxious to *God's Justice*, who, if he pleased, might infinitely punish them for it: But then this would involve all Mankind, without Exception, in endless Destruction. Therefore it is highly reasonable, and very consonant to his other *Attributes*, to suppose that there should be some Quality or Affection in the *divine Nature* which might qualify the Rigour of that *Justice*, and make some Abatement of its Severity. Now though by *natural Reason* it may easily be discovered that there is such a tender Disposition in the *Deity*; yet *natural Reason* could never find out the Methods *infinite Wisdom* would make use of in exerting the gracious Influence of this endearing *Attribute*, and what Means it would contrive at once to satisfy *infinite Justice*, and yet pardon sinful Men, and reinstate them in his Favour. A *Mystery* only revealed to us by the *Gospel*, in the Doctrine of the Satisfaction paid by *Jesus Christ*, the eternal Son of God, *God manifest in the Flesh*, the Mediator of the new Covenant.

This, *Phyſius*, I hope, will suffice to prove to you that there is a *God*, *viz.* One First Cause, Eternal, Omniscient, Omnipresent; that he is an intelligent Being, Holy, True, Just, Good, and Merciful. This great Being is the Object of my Contemplation and Worship, him I adore, and him I serve, and through his Mercy I hope to be eternally happy in another World.

*Phyf.* But methinks, good *Credentius*, you run away with your Arguments too fast; for you infer a great deal more in your Conclusions, than your Premises will bear. You prove very well that there is a *first Cause*; but

but your Conclusion is precarious, when you infer from thence, that there is a *God*. Every *Atheist* in the World, that is not a very *Coxcomb* indeed, must own an *infinite eternal Somewhat*; because (as you well observe) *Nothing* can never be the Cause of *Something*. But whether this *eternal Somewhat* be a *God*, or a *wise Creator and Governour of the World*, or no, is the Question. And I maintain the Negative of this, asserting that *the World* was made by *Chance*; which, as silly as you *religious People* fancy it to be, is more *reasonable*, than to imagine that such a *clumsy Piece of Work* as this, should be the Issue of a *divine Mind*, or the Workmanship of a *God*. How solidly to this Purpose does the *great Secretary of Nature*, and *Oracle of Reason*, argue in his *immortal Poem* on this Subject? And with what *Politeness and Modesty* does he introduce it?

*Nam quamvis Rerum ignorem Frimordia quæ sint ;  
Hoc tamen ex ipsis Cæli Rationibus ausim  
Confirmare, aliisque ex Rebus reddere multis,  
Nequaquam nobis Divinitus esse Creatam  
Naturam Mundi, quæ tanta est prædita Culpa.*

Lucr. lib. 2.

For were I ignorant whence *Things* arise;  
Yet many *Reasons* from the *Earth* and *Skies*,  
From ev'ry *Thing* deduc'd, will plainly prove,  
That this *imperfect World* ———  
Was never made by the *wise Powers* above. Creech.

It may be at first sight a little shocking to consider how mere *Chance* should ever produce a Work in which there was the least *Regularity* or *Convenience*. But if you please to join the Supposition of *Eternity* with that of *Chance*, it will reconcile this seeming *Inconsistency*, and render the Production of the most surprizing Events, both *possible* and *obvious*. For if you allow *Matter in Motion* to be the *first Cause*, or *necessary Eternal*, 'tis natural to conceive that this *Matter* must have been, during such an inconceivable *Space of Time*, in all manner of *Positions*. Whilst  
it

it was in *irregular Positions*, it was a *Chaos*; when through various *Frisks* and *Bounces*, it had once jump'd into *regular ones*, and the Frame wherein we now see it, 'tis what we call a *World*. This is likewise curiously and emphatically argued by the forementioned most excellent Author, where he says;

*Nam certe neq; Consilio Trimordia Rerum  
Ordine se quæq; atq; sagaci Mente locarunt,  
Nec quos quæq; darent Motus, pepigere profectò:  
Sed quia multimodis, multis mutata, per omne  
Ex infinito vexantur percita plagis,  
Omne genus Motus, & Cætus experiundo  
Tandem deveniunt in talcis Disposituras  
Qualibus hæc Rebus consistit summa creata;  
Et multos etiam magnos servata per annos,  
Ut semel in Motus conjecta est Convenienceis, &c. Lib. 1.*

For sure *unthinking Seeds* did ne'er dispose  
Themselves by *Counsel*, nor their Order *chose*,  
Nor any *Compact* made how each should move,  
But *from Eternal* through the *Vacuum* strove;  
Variously *mov'd* and *turn'd*, until at last,  
Most Sorts of *Motion*, and of *Union* past,  
By *Chance* to that *convenient Order* hurl'd,  
Which frames the *Beings* that compose the *World*;  
And these same *Seeds* now orderly maintain'd  
In those *convenient Motions* they have gain'd, &c. *Creech*.

*Cred.* One would have thought that the antient Philosophers, the *Platonists* and *Stoicks*, had so solidly confuted this *Atomick Atheism* of the *Epicureans*, that it would never have been able to have held up its Head again: But there is nothing so stupid or absurd, but, if their Lusts and Passions can be thereby gratify'd, will find Abettors in a licentious Age.

But in answer to these *Epicurean Arguments*, I shall shew you,

I. That

1. That the *Frame* and *Contexture* of the *Universe*, is so far from deserving the *Reproach* of those *Defects* and *Imperfections* your *Cavils* would charge it with, that every Part of it manifestly discovers as a *most noble* and *magnificent Design*, so a *most exquisite Wisdom* and *Sagacity* in the *Contrivance*.

2. That *Matter* and *Motion* could not only not make this admirable *Collection* of so vast a Number of *regularly form'd Beings* which compose the *Universe*, but they of themselves are not able to produce one single Animal.

Before I proceed to which, I will beg Leave to recite to you a Piece of *Cicero's* Reasoning upon this Head, in his Book *de Nat. Deor.* *Hic ego non mirer esse quenquam,* &c. “How can I but admire there should be any Man  
“ in the World who could persuade himself, that certain  
“ solid and indivisible Bodies, endow'd with no Quality  
“ but their *Motion* and *Gravity*, should be able by their  
“ fortuitous Concourse, to frame this noble and beautiful  
“ World? A Man that can think this, I don't see but  
“ he may be brought to believe, that if a vast Number of  
“ the Figures of the one and twenty Letters should be  
“ cast in Gold, or any other Metal, and at random  
“ thrown upon the Ground, they should fall into the  
“ Order of the *Annals of Ennius*, so as to be distinctly  
“ read; tho' I believe it to be above the Power of *Chance*  
“ to make one Verse.

“ Then how do these Men positively assert, that a  
“ whole World is compos'd of little *Corpuscles* without  
“ Colour, without Quality, *casually* meeting together,  
“ without the least *Forecast* or *Design* of any one? Nay,  
“ that innumerable *Worlds* are continually made by this  
“ Means, whereof some are always rising up, and others  
“ decaying? But if a *Concourse of Atoms* be able to make  
“ a *World*, why cannot it make a *Horse*, a *Temple*, a  
“ *Piazza*, or a *City*? These Things have much less *La-*  
“ *bour* in them, and are much easier to be done. And  
“ indeed these People talk so sillily about the *World*, that  
“ they do not seem ever to have given themselves the  
“ Trouble of considering the admirable Furniture of the  
“ Heavens.

“Heavens. 'Tis excellently well said of *Aristotle*, If  
 “there were (says he) any *Inhabitants* under the Earth who  
 “should live in fine Houses there, all furnish'd (as the Hou-  
 “ses of great *Athen* use to be) with Statues, Pictures, and  
 “other rich Moveables; who should have heard from Fame  
 “and Report, that there was a divine Power or Deity, and  
 “if after this, the Caverns of the Earth being laid open,  
 “these Persons should issue from their dark Abodes, and  
 “mounting these upper Parts of the Earth, should view the  
 “Brightness, and taste the Refreshments of our *Aether*;  
 “when on a suddain they should have a View of the Earth,  
 “the Seas, and the Heavens; when they should consider the  
 “Greatness of the Clouds, and the Force of the Winds; when  
 “they should behold the Sun, and come to understand his  
 “Greatness, Beauty, and Influence, that to his genial Rays  
 “we owe a thousand Productions of Nature, as well as to  
 “his diffus'd Lustre the Splendour of the Day; and when,  
 “to recompense his Absence, and qualify the gloomy Horrors  
 “of the Night, they should see all the Heavens deckt and  
 “bespangled with Stars; when they should observe the va-  
 “rious Phases of the Moon, sometimes increasing, and some-  
 “times decreasing, together with the Rising and Setting of  
 “all these in so fix'd and unchangeable Courses, as not to be  
 “in the least alter'd in the longest Space of Time: When they  
 “should behold these Things, they would then think there  
 “were Gods indeed, and that all this was the Workmanship  
 “and Contrivance of such excellent Beings, as before they  
 “had heard of.”

The *Latin* Orator pursues this Argument; “Now  
 “(continues he) as in that temporary Darkness once  
 “occasioned by a sulphureous Eruption of Mount  
 “*Aetna*, whereby the neighbouring Countries are said  
 “to have been obscur'd to that Degree, that for two  
 “Days together no Man could know another; when at  
 “last the Sun had prevail'd, and dispersed the dark  
 “Cloud, had restor'd his chearing Light to the Eyes of  
 “those bewildred Inhabitants; how could it but ap-  
 “pear to them a kind of Return from the Shades of  
 “Death? So could we suppose our selves from a pre-  
 “cedent



“cedent eternal Darkneſs, to be on a ſudden ſurpriz’d  
 “with the dazling Brightneſs of this great Luminary of  
 “the World, what a glorious Figure would that of the  
 “Heavens appear to be? But Men’s Eyes being accuſ-  
 “tom’d to this Sight, it grows ordinary and familiar to  
 “their Minds; ſo that they don’t admire, nor are ſolli-  
 “citous to know the Cauſes of what they always ſee; as  
 “if the Novelty of Things ought more to excite our  
 “Curioſity than their Beauty, Uſe, or Greatneſs.

“But who can eſteem him a Man, who when he be-  
 “holds the regular Motions of the Heavens, the eſta-  
 “bliſh’d Orders of the Stars, ſo excellently connected  
 “and fitted among themſelves, ſhall deny that theſe  
 “Things were formed by Reaſon, but aſſert them to be  
 “the Products of blind Chance? When yet the moſt  
 “ſagacious Reaſon in the World cannot penetrate into  
 “the Wiſdom by which they were created.

“When we obſerve the Motion of a Machine, *e. g.*  
 “A Sphere, or a Clock, or ſeveral other Things of the  
 “like Nature, we make no doubt to ſay theſe are the  
 “Works of Reaſon: But when we behold the rapid  
 “Motions of the heavenly Bodies, which, tho’ whirl’d  
 “about with ſuch incredible Celerity, yet perform their  
 “periodical Revolutions with the utmoſt Exactneſs for  
 “the Happineſs and Conſervation of all Things; can  
 “we entertain any Doubt that theſe Things are brought  
 “about by Reaſon; nay, that they are the Effects of  
 “the moſt excellent and divine Reaſon?”

By this Way of Reaſoning, *Phyſius*, we may eaſily  
 perceive in what Eſteem this *wild Notion* of the *Epicure-  
 ans* was amongſt the wiſeſt and moſt learned of the An-  
 tients: And ſurely the extreme *Stupidity* and *Absurdity* of  
 ſuppoſing the *World* (a prodigious Collection of *Parts*, as  
*various* in their *Nature*, as *regular* and *beautiful* in their  
*Diſpoſition*) to be the *Effect* of *Chance*, is ſo evident to  
*common Senſe*, as ſhould not only make our *fine Gentlemen*  
 aſham’d of it, but ſhould baniſh it out of the *Thoughts*  
 and *Converſation* of all *rational Creatures*.

*Phys.* Here is a little Misrepresentation, *Credentius*, and we have Reason to complain of unfair Dealing. We do not say that *all the Parts* of the *World* are void of *Beauty* and *Elegance*, but that *a great Part* of them are so. And then we suppose that the *Defects* and *Irregularities* of so many *Parts* of the *Universe*, are a stronger Argument against that sublime Wisdom and Power which you contend for, than all the fine beautiful Things you have, or may mention, can possibly be for it: And therefore we conclude, that it is much more agreeable to *Reason*, to attribute all these Things to *Chance*, which from such an *infinite Variety* of *Matter*, and in an *infinite Space* of *Time*, may produce many Things *orderly* and *regular*; than to ascribe that *Effect*, wherein the least *Inconsistency* appears, to an *eternal all-wise Mind*, whose very *Idea* excludes *all Error*, *all Defect*, *all Imperfection*. It would be tedious and superfluous to recount all the *Irregularities* of the *Universe*, which as they are numerous, so are they obvious to the most cursory Observer. *Lucretius* has touch'd upon several of them with his usual Justness and Elegance.

*Principio quantum Celi tegit impetus ingens ?  
Inde avidam partem Montes, Sylvasq; ferarum  
Possidere, tenent Rapes, vastaq; Eandem,  
Et Mare quod late Terrarum distinet oras :  
Inde duas porrò prope partes fervilus Ardor  
Assiduusq; Celi casus Mortalibus aufert. Lib. 5.*

For first, the heav'nly Tracts what Creatures fill?  
Why Beasts in ev'ry Grove and shady Hill?  
Pools take up Part, and Part the Ocean's Tide,  
Whose spreading Waves the distant Shores divide:  
Two Parts in three the Torrid Zone doth burn,  
Or Frigid chill, and all to Defarts turn.

He goes on and tells you, that the *few remaining Parts* of the *Earth*, capable of affording any Reception to their *visible Lord*, and admitting of *human Inhabitants*, are all  
so

so barbarous, rude, and unfruitful, that 'tis impossible they should proceed from that *Liberality* and *diffusive Goodness* which is inherent in the *Deity*, especially from that darling *Attribute*, his *Philanthropy*, and *benevolent Concern* for his *Kindred Man*, not only the *Issue* of his *Power*, but the *Transcript* of his *Perfections*, the *Charge* of *Providence*, and the *peculiar Care* of *Heaven*.

*Quod super est Arvi, tamen id Natura sua vi  
Sentibus obducatur, ni vis Humana resistat,  
Vitae causa, valido consueta bidenti  
Ingerere, et Terram pressis proscindere aratri. Ibid.*

And all the other Fields what would they breed  
If let alone, but Briars, Thorns, or Weed?  
These are their proper Fruits, this Nature wou'd,  
Did not laborious Mortals toil for Food,  
And tear, and plough, and force them to be good: }  
Did they not tear the Clods with crooked Share,  
By frequent Torments forcing them to bear.

My Author proceeds, and shews you, that even when through indefatigable Industry, and the *lucky Concurrence* of kindly Seasons, and other *accidental Causes*, every Thing seems to favour the Labourer's Wishes, and to promise a plentiful Return to his Pains and Toil; all at last by some *unlucky Hit* or other is defeated, his Hopes are nipp'd, and his promis'd Harvest blasted by too much Heat, or Wet, or Wind.

*Et tamen interdum magno quaesita labore,  
Cum jam per terras frondent, atq; omnia florent;  
Aut nimis torret fervoribus Aetherius Sol,  
Aut subiti perimunt Imbres, gelidæq; Pruinae,  
Flabraq; Ventorum violento turbine vexant.*

Nay often too, when Man with Pains and Toil  
Has got the better of th' unwilling Soil,

## A CONFERENCE

When Flow'rs put forth, and budding Branches shoot,  
 Look gay, and promise the desired Fruit;  
 The scorching Sun with his too busy Beams  
 Dryes up the Fruits, or Clouds drown with their Streams,  
 Or chill'd with too much Snow they soon decay,  
 Or Storms blow them and all our Hopes away.

And may we not justly expostulate with him, how such a monstrous Brood of wild Beasts and noxious Animals, the Rage of Diseases, and undistinguishing Death, should be suffer'd to infest the Earth, to blemish the Face of Things, make Nature hideous, and deform the Work of an *all-perfect Mind*?

*Præterea genus horrificum Natura Ferarum  
 Humanæ Genti infestum, terraq; mariq;  
 Cur alit atq; auget? cur Aani tempora morbos  
 Apportant? quare Mors inæmatura vagatur?*

But farther, why should *Parent Nature* breed Such hurtful Animals? Why should she feed Destructive Beasts? how could such Monsters grow, Did the *kind Gods* dispose of Things below? Why Plagues t' all Seasons of the Year belong? And why should hasty Death destroy the Young?

Add to this that *partial* Distribution which is so visible in the Disposal of the Condition and Circumstances of Life allotted to the *pretended* Favourite of *Nature*, *Man*; in all her Dispensations towards him, we may observe more of the Severity of a *cruel Mistress*, at least the Indifference of a *Stepmother*, than the Affection and Tenderness of an *indulgent Parent* to her *darling* Offspring. He issues from the Womb with Cries and Lamentations, is a long Time wholly *insensible* of his *Being*, and equally *incapable* of procuring the least of the *Necessaries* for the Support of it: In a Word, he is wretched and helpless to a Degree beyond all other Creatures. 'Tis surely highly irrational, as well as indecent, to charge *infinite*  
*Wisdom,*

*Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness, with such strange Inequality, unworthy the Weakness of vain corrupt Man.*

*Tum porrò Puer, ut sævis projectus ab Undis  
 Navita, nudus humi jacet, Infans, indigus omni  
 Vitali Auxilio, quum primum in luminis oras  
 Nixibus ex Alvo Matris Natura profudit,  
 Vagituq; locum lugubri complet; ut æquum est  
 Cui tantum in Vitâ restet transire malorum.  
 At varie crescunt Pecudes, Armenta, Feraq;  
 Nec Crepitacula eis opu' sunt, nec cuiq; adhibenda est  
 Alma Nutricis blanda atq; infracta loquela;  
 Nec varias quærent Vestes, pro tempore Cæli;  
 Deniq; non Armis opus est, non Mœnibus altis,  
 Quæ sua tutentur, quando omnibus omnia largè  
 Tellus ipsa parit, naturaq; Dædala Rerum.*

A Man when first he leaves his prim'tive Night,  
 Breaks from his Mother's Womb to view the Light,  
 Like a poor Carcass tumbled by the Flood,  
 Lies naked, weak, and destitute of Food;  
 With tender Cries the pitying Air he fills,  
 A fit Prefage to all his coming Ills:  
 Whilst Beasts are born, and grow with greater Ease,  
 No need of sounding Rattles these to please;  
 No need of tattling Nurser's busy Care;  
 They want no Change of Garments, but can wear }  
 The same at any Season of the Year:  
 They need no Arms, no Garrison, or Town,  
 No strong-built Castles to defend their own:  
 Nature supplies what they can want or crave,  
 She gave them Life, she saves the Life she gave.

*Cred.* I hope, *Physius*, I have given you no Cause to complain of my *Over-hastiness*, or *Impatience* to see my self engag'd with so doughty a *Champion*; nor can you, I hope, charge me with any *Malice* in too suddenly interrupting the *delectable Amusements* of your *atheistical Vision*, or rudely disturbing you in your *Enjoyment* of your

*Fools Paradise.* Nay, were it possible for you, in your present *Circumstances*, to have the same Notion with me of the *Arguments* you have produc'd, and the wretched *Vain of Thinking* they discover, you would certainly have an extraordinary Opinion of my *Patience*, and be apt to believe it the *predominant Quality* in my *Composition*. You have had free Scope to draw out all your *atheistical Artillery* upon this Head, to display your *fine Parts* and *profound Reading*, as well as the *Justice* of the *glorious Cause* you are engag'd in; and the *Task* you have cut out for me, with your *Confidence* of my being unequal to it, is highly worthy of the *Ingenuity* and *Generosity* of an Adversary of your *Sense* and *Principles*.

Objections considered.

1st. From the Scarcity of Living Creatures.

'Tis, it seems, a powerful *Objection* to the *World's* being fram'd by an *all-wise Mind*, that every Part of it is not throng'd with Inhabitants; that some Parts thereof lie waste, or are not of that considerable Use which a *wise Creator* would doubtless have assigned them. Besides, the *Levny* of this Argument, and its manifest *Incompetency* (even supposing the Truth of what it insinuates) to prove what 'tis brought for, it wholly turns upon a Mistake; and had *Lucretius* had the Advantage of those *Discoveries* which *experimental Philosophy* has since his Time made to the World, he would scarce have made use of such an *Objection*; and therefore the *Ignorance*, or *Impudence* of those who urge it now, is so much the more astonishing and inexcusable. By the Assistance of *Microscopes* there is a vast deal more of *Life* discover'd in *Nature*, than the *Ancients* were acquainted with. In a small Quantity of *stagnating Water*, of *putrify'd Flesh*, *over-ripe Fruit*, &c. there are more *Animals* to be discerned, than the *Philosophers* of those *early Times* imagin'd there were in the whole *Creation*: And that there are *Myriads* of *living Creatures* yet undiscovered, whose *Minuteness* may escape the *Scrutiny* of the most exquisite *Opticks* both of *Nature* and *Art*, may be not improbably conjectur'd. So that from objecting the *Scarcity* of *Inhabitants*, we should rather fall to *admiring* and *adoring* the *diffusive Goodness*, and *stupendous Fecundity* of the *divine*

*vine Nature*, so illustriously display'd in such *numerous Orders of living Creatures*, which in their several Ways cease not most effectually to proclaim the *Being*; to celebrate the Praises, and confess the Bounty of their munificent Creator.

And how ridiculous is the Complaint that this great *Expansum* of the Air, or Sky, is nothing else but a *vast empty Space*? How are you sure it is so? And if it were, where would be the Hurt of it? Dogmatically to assert or deny any thing of that which we are so little acquainted with, is certainly a great Piece of Arrogance. For any thing you or I know, *Physiuss*, *vast Shoals of Animalcules* may be swimming about in the *liquid Aether*, as Fishes do in the Sea. Nay, the Body of the *solar Flame* itself, and every *Planet*, may have their respective Complement of *Inhabitants*. But were it otherwise, where would be the Mischief? Where would be either the Reproach to the *divine Wisdom and Goodness*, or the Prejudice to *other Beings*? Would you think the *Air* more wholesome for being thickened with Swarms of Flies? Nay, when *God*, to serve the Ends of his own Providence, has rais'd up vast Multitudes of those Animalcules, and sent them in Floats through the Air, have not Sicknesses and Plagues generally follow'd upon them? At least, have they not prov'd so vexatious and troublesome, that People have been willing to compound with the Loss of several other Conveniencies of Life, to be rid of the great Uneasiness? And where is the *Absurdity*, or the *Inconsistency with the Divine Wisdom*, to suppose this *spacious Vault* over our Heads, to be wholly void of Inhabitants? Must these *vast Spaces* be therefore deemed *useless*, the Author a *Being* without *Thought* or *Design*, and the *whole Work* no other than the *Effect* of the *fortuitous* Jumbings of *stupid Matter*? Be pleas'd only to reflect how necessary 'tis that there should be a convenient Distance between each of the *Planets*, for the more *regular and uninterrupted* Performance of their *several Motions and Revolutions*. The *Intervals* between the *Sun and Moon*, and other *Planets*, are *vastly extensive*; true;

and the *Bodies* that move therein are also of a *prodigious Magnitude*, and require a *proportionate Space* to perform their *Motions* in. To find fault with all that *Matter* which makes up the *Compages* of these great *Bodies*, and represent the *vast Space* which is required for them freely to revolve in, as an *empty, useless Desert*, is as absurd as to quarrel with the *Bulk and Figure* of the several *Bodies* of *Men, Horses, and Elephants*, that they differ amongst themselves, and that there is a profuse Waste of Materials, because the *Bodies* of these Animals are made bigger than those of *Flies and Mites*. If *God Almighty*, out of his *infinite Wisdom and Sagacity*, has determined to form *diverse Classes of Beings*, of a *subordinate Bulk*, one under another, he must, by the *same Rules of Wisdom*, contrive such *convenient Methods* for their *Subsistence and Operations*, as are agreeable to their *respective Natures*.

2d. From  
the Usefulness  
of Hills  
and Mountains,  
and  
Rocks.

Your next Quarrel is with the *Hills, Mountains, and Rocks*, which you would represent as *monstrous Excrescences*, as *Blemishes of Nature*, and *Deformities of the Universe*; whose *steep Precipices, and rugged Cliffs*, give Horror to the Sight, whose *capacious Wombs* perpetually teem with *roaring Winds*, which ever and anon they discharge in *dreadful Hurricanes*, hurling *wild Desolation* all about, and whose *towering Summits*, lodg'd in *Clouds*, become the *hideous Mansions of eternal Storms*.

Is this the Language of a *Philosopher, a Considerer of Nature*, and a *Reasoner upon Causes*? That *unconfin'd Variety* which entertains our Eyes which Way soever we look, shews the *Gaiety of Nature*, the *Riches* of her *Thought*, and the *unbounded Invention* of her *Mind*. Those Spectacles which you suppose give *Horror*, strike us rather with an *awful Reverence*; appear, methinks, like *stately Monuments* of the *Magnificence and Grandour* of their *Author*, and the *weary Traveller* himself at once *pants and admires*. And had your *Infidelity* a Power equal to that ascrib'd to *Faith*, so as you could level these *Hills*, or remove these *Mountains*, and bury their *lofty Heads* in the *Sea*, what would you gain thereby but the *dull cloying View* of one *uniform Flat*? In vain  
would



would you roam over the extended Plain in quest of Novelty; the same Objects would still salute you, and every Day present you with the languid Prospect of the same unvary'd Level, whose distant Bounds indeed would seem to reach the Skies, whilst you should in vain pursue the *fleeting Summit*, which, like the *Squirrel's Wheel*, would elude your Toil, and still you must sweat and wander in the *Bottom*. Nay, whatever of *Beauty* the most variegated *Plains* afford, we must owe the Discovery of it to these *Eminencies*, themselves remaining confess'd no small Part of the *Beauty and Ornament* of the whole,

But the *Magnificence* and *Beauty* of these *Structures* is not a Consideration of so much Merit and Importance, as the *noble and excellent Purposes* for which their *all-wise Architect* has design'd them. These lofty *Eminencies* break the *Winds*, and skreen us from their Fury, without which we should be expos'd to the *Rage of Tempests* in a more fatal Degree at Land, than they are at Sea, and to such violent *Hurricanes*, not only at the *Equinoxes*, but at other Seasons of the Year, as would create us incredible *Mischiefs*. If these did not stop the *Clouds* in their Passage to the *North* or *South*, the *diurnal Motion* of the Earth would force most of them to the *Poles*, before they discharg'd the *Rain*, whereby vast *Tracts of Land* between the *two Tropicks*, would be parch'd with *Drought*, and rendred *unfruitful*. We owe to the *Hills* the Benefit of *Brooks* and *Rivers*: And to the *Rocks* we owe those fruitful Beds of *Stones* and *Minerals*, which supply us with *Materials* for building and adorning our Houses, and for making those *Utensils* which serve so many Purposes and Conveniencies of Human Life.

To reproach the *Fabrick* of the *World*, on account of that great *Mass of Waters* which compose the *Ocean*, that it is *superfluous and useless*, is equally *unphilosophical* with the rest of your *Objections*, springing from the same dark Fountain of *Ignorance*, or *Want of Attention* to the *Ends and Uses* to which those *vast liquid Treasures* are appointed. Were there no *Sea* at all, or did it not bear the

3d. From  
the Usefulness  
of the  
Sea.

same

same Proportion it does to the *Bulk of the Earth*, there must needs follow a considerable *Diminution* of the *Vapours*, which being exhaled from it, descend in *refreshing Dew*s and *Showers*; and consequently the *Earth* must be depriv'd of a great Portion of that *Moisture* which is necessary to feed her *Juices*, and nourish her *Plants* and *Fruits*: The *Rivers* (which are, as it were, the *vital Blood* of this great *Body*) must in all Places run very shallow, and some by this Means must have their Channels quite dry.

4th. From  
the Useles-  
ness of  
Woods, and  
the Variety  
of noxious  
Animals,  
&c.

The Woods, which you think so great a Blemish to the Creation, are indeed not only Ornaments thereof, but wonderfully useful to Mankind. How convenient and refreshing a Shade do they afford in the hotter Climates, and warmer Seasons of the Year! And what Art and Labour is used in the Gardens of great Men, to form a faint Imitation of the same Convenience! Hence we are supplied with Fuel for our domestick Uses, and Timber for the building our Ships and Houses. And so wisely has Providence ordered it, that Woods grow generally in such Places, where other Plants will not so conveniently flourish; some on Morasses, and others on the Tops of craggy Hills: Nay, it is observable, that the Firs and Cedars, the most useful and beautiful of the *Sylvan* Race, take Root in the Summits of cold Mountains, and extract Nourishment from such rocky Stones, as no Tool can enter, no Labourer can pierce.

Your other Objections against the Wisdom of the Creation, are taken from the Variety of venomous and noxious Animals, and the many Labours and Calamities to which our mortal Condition is exposed; but these are all built on a false Supposition, *viz.* That the present State of the World is the same with that in which it was originally created; whereas I have in my Conference with your Friend *Philologus*, clearly demonstrated the contrary, and proved that the Earth has, for the Sin of our First Parents, been subjected to a Curse, and divested of its primæval Beauty and Perfection: And all the Calamities to which Mankind are exposed, are the fatal,

but

but just Effects of the Transgression of that most easy Law given to the *Protoplast* in Paradise, and therefore cannot be urged as Objections against the Wisdom or Goodness of our Creator.

Indeed all the *Objections* I have ever met with against the *divine Contrivance of the World*, from Gentlemen of your *Complexion* and *Kidney*, appear to proceed from no other than either a Principle of Arrogance and Presumption, (a haughty Disdain of Talking or Thinking like other Men, a wild Ambition of being the Authors or Leaders of a Sect;) or from the foul, impure Source of their Lusts and Passions; which receive some Encouragement from this *Chance-medley Work* which they would make of the *Creation*; whilst the Pursuit of them must meet with many Checks and Interruption from the contrary *Notion* of a *supreme all-wise Being*, who, as the *Author* and *Maker* of all these Things, must govern them by certain *Laws* and *Rules*, consonant to their respective *Qualities* and *Natures*, and consequently with Regard to all *voluntary rational Agents*, must be a strict *Observer* and *Avenger* of all *Impiety* and *Sin*.

Were our Minds defæcated and freed from the base Tincture of these *corrupt Appetites* and *Passions*, instead of *cavilling* at the *Frame of Nature*, we should rather *admire* the excellent *Order* and *Contrivance* of it, and *adore* that *infinite Wisdom* which alone could produce a Work so exquisitely perfect.

How can we but with Reverence and Wonder contemplate the illustrious *Splendour*, the unaccountable *Variety*, and the harmonious *Order* of the *heavenly Bodies*? What can give us a more *exalted Idea*, either of the *Magnificence* or *Wisdom* of that *Design* which form'd these *shining Orbs*, than to view and consider them in that *Site* and *Aspect* in which the more improv'd Discoveries of modern Astronomy have represented them? For Example, to observe this System in which we live, the beautiful and orderly Distribution of the several Planets, with the Constancy and Regularity of their respective Motions.

*The Sun.*

In the *Center* is placed the *Body of the Sun*, a prodigious *Globe of Fire*, above 494,000 *Miles* in *Diameter*, which is near 70,000 times as big as the *Earth*.

*Mercury.*

Next to the *Sun*, in a little *Circle* comparatively to the rest, moves the *Planet Mercury*, being distant therefrom about 21,000,000 of *Miles*. It revolves about the *Sun* in 88 *Days*; so that the *Year* to the *Inhabitants* of that *Planet* (if it has any) is not longer than 3 *Months*, or about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of ours; and probably their *Days* are proportionably shorter, tho' the precise *Length* thereof, on account of this *Planet's* near *Vicinity* to the *Sun*, often preventing it's being seen, has not been yet determin'd.

*Venus.*

Next to this, in a larger *Circle*, moves the *Planet Venus*, whose *Diameter* is computed at 4941 *Miles*; its *Distance* from the *Sun* at near 40,000,000 of *Miles*, about which it makes it's *periodical Circuit* in 224 *Days*, 18 *Hours*, the *Year* there being 7 *Months* and  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

*Earth and Moon.*

At a farther *Distance* from the *Sun*, in a still larger *Circle*, moves the *Earth*, the *Planet* which we inhabit. Its *Diameter* is about 8000 *Miles*; it revolves about the *Sun* in 365 *Days*, 6 *Hours*, which is the *Length* of our *Year*. It turns about its own *Centre* in 24 *Hours*, which makes our *Day*, and is distant from the *Sun* about 54,000,000 of *Miles*. This *Planet* has another of lesser *Magnitude* (about a 26th *Part* of its own *Bigness*) hovering over it, and never forsaking it during its long *Passage* round the *Sun*; which little *Planet* we call the *Moon*, of about 200,000 *Miles* *Distance* from the *Earth*.

*Mars.*

If we go farther from the *Sun*, we have the *Planet Mars*, about half as big again as the *Earth*, distant from the *Sun* about 82,242,000 *Miles*. Its *Day*, or *Revolution* about its *Centre*, is much the same with ours, viz. about 24 *Hours*; its *Year*, or *Revolution* about the *Sun*, is 687 *Days*, or almost 2 of ours. The *Earth* of this *Planet* seems to be of a blacker *Colour* than the rest, which makes the *Light* reflected from it, look of that dusky *Red*. The *Light* and *Heat* which it receives from the *Sun*, is not above half as much as ours, nor has it any *Moon*, or *secondary Planet* revolving about it.

In another Circle, tho' far larger, and at a very great *Jupiter.* Distance, moves the noblest and largest Planet of all the rest, called *Jupiter*. It is upon the smallest Computation 60 times as big as the *Earth*, distant from the *Sun* almost 3 Hundred Millions of Miles. This great Planet whirls along with it in its Circuit four Moons, commonly call'd *Satellites*, or *Life-Guards* to this princely Planet, some of which are not less than the *Earth*. The first, or highest to the Planet, performs its Circuit in something more than one Day 18 Hours. The second *Satelles* in something more than 3 Days 13 Hours. The third, in 7 Days almost 4 Hours. The fourth, in 16 Days, and something more than 18 Hours. The diurnal Revolution of this great Planet about its *Axis*, is but 10 Hours; tho' its Revolution about the *Sun* be 11 of our Years. Tho' the *Sun* must strike this Planet, at so great a Distance, with a much fainter and more languid Ray than it does our *Earth*, yet the shining of so many Moons, must needs give a bright as well as an agreeable Lustre.

But in a still larger Circle, and vastly distant from the *Saturn.* rest, moves the Planet *Saturn*, of a strange and surprising Figure. It is not only a round Ball, like the other Planets, but it has a Hoop of a prodigious Circumference quite round it, at a Distance from its Globe of  $\frac{1}{3}$  of its Diameter. So that this Planet's Inhabitants who live within its Tropicks (for the polar Parts seem uninhabitable) have always over their Heads a bright shining Arch of Light reaching from one Part of the Heaven to the other; which as it must make the Nights very glorious, so in the Day-time, tho' its Splendour, like that of our Moon, be much abated, yet it imbibes such a Portion of Warmth, as to reflect a comfortable Heat upon the Inhabitants, whereby the Defect of so remote a Distance from the Solar Rays, is in some measure supply'd, and an additional Occasion given of magnifying the stupendous Wisdom of the divine Contrivance. The Days of *Saturn* are much about the same Length with those of *Jupiter*, viz. 10 Hours: But his annual Circuit round the *Sun*, is

no less than 30 Years. He has five Moons, or secondary Planets, revolving about him; which when they are all at once in the Full (as they are at the Equinoxes of this Planet) they, together with the lucid Arch which incircles him, must make such a glorious Appearance as to us is inconceivable.

If there were nothing else remarkable in this wondrous Structure of the Universe, but the framing these Planets so orderly and exactly, and disposing them so as to derive all their Light and Heat from the same Sun; there were enough to extort the Tribute of our Thanks and Praise for such illustrious Instances of the divine Wisdom, Goodness, and Power. But when we also consider those excellent Laws of Motion which he has subjected them to, and the proper Distances he has placed them in, the least Deviation from which, would disturb the Oeconomy of the whole, if not involve it in utter Confusion; it is enough to drown all our Thoughts in Wonder and Astonishment.

The mutual  
Attraction  
of the several  
Parts  
of Matter,  
or their  
Gravitation  
on each  
other.

Another Instance of wise Design we have in that Principle of Gravitation, or mutual Attraction, which the Author of Nature has planted in all Matter or Body; whereby not only the smaller Bodies should move towards the greater, but the lesser also should in some Measure, and in Proportion to their Bigness, attract the greater. That this in Fact is so, does clearly appear, not only from the Motion of Stones, and other heavy Bodies towards the Earth, which is the greatest Mass of Matter in this Part of the Universe, and consequently draws all other Bodies to it; but from the Tendency of the Moon towards the Earth, which would be perfectly suck'd in, or drawn to it, if the Rapidity of its Motion did not keep it up, hovering over it, and attending it through all its annual Courses round the Sun; the like is proved from the Gravitation of the several Moons about Jupiter and Saturn, which would not attend the great Globes of those Planets in their Revolutions about the Sun, if they were not so attracted by them, that they cannot separate from them. This mutual Attraction, or Gravitation of the several Parts  
of

of the *Creation* upon each other, may therefore be justly esteem'd a most excellent *Instance* of the *divine Wisdom* and *Sagacity*; since without it, 'tis impossible to conceive how the *Universe* could subsist, how it could preserve that *Symmetry*, and maintain that *Order* and *Regularity* which in all its *Parts* we behold and admire.

Of *Affinity* to this, is another *Instance* of the *divine Wisdom*, observable in the *Circumvolution* of the *Planets* about the *Body of the Sun*. They had but *one simple Motion* in the *Beginning* of the *Creation* impress'd upon them, whereby they were propell'd in a *straight Line*; but it was by the *divine Wisdom* so prudently contriv'd, that these *simple Motions* should receive such considerable *Alterations* in their *Determinations* by the *Attraction* of the *Sun*, as to be bent into *Curves*: And tho' every *Minute* they are endeavouring to go off, according to the *Direction* of their *first-impress'd Motions* in the *Tangents* of the several *Circles* they move in, yet they are still brought back again by the *Attraction* of the *Sun*, (or other *central Bodies*) and forced to move in a *Circle* round it. And since by the *Improvements* made in the *modern Astronomy*, the true *System* of the *Planetary World* is discovered, there are such surprizing *Marks* of the profoundest *Wisdom* in adapting the respective *Degrees* of *Motion* and *Attraction* in the *Planets*, which do appear, as afford us most astonishing *Instances* of that *infinite Foresight* which so excellently dispos'd them, and must oblige us to pronounce of the whole, 'Tis *God's* doing, *He* alone hath made it, *He* hath form'd it.

*Phys.* I begin to be sensible, *Credentius*, of my *Folly* and *Rashness* in attributing the *Formation* of so wondrous and harmonious a *System*, to a fortuitous *Concourse* of dull and senseless *Atoms*; and am convinced, that *Chance*, which never yet was able to produce so much as a mean humble *Cottage*, could not give *Existence* to the glorious *Fabrick* of the *Earth* and *Heavens*. I shall therefore excuse your enlarging on this *Head*, and readily allow, that so excellent a *Creation* could never be the *Effect* of  
mere

mere Matter and Motion : But still I have one Difficulty behind, to which you have as yet made no Reply ; and that is the unequal Distribution of Good and Evil among Mankind. If there be a God, he must doubtless be just ; but how can we reconcile it to our common Notions of Justice, that those who obey the divine Will with the strictest Exactness, should be exposed to so many Calamities, Injuries, and Afflictions ; while those which despise God, and trample on his Laws, are strong and mighty, and enjoy an uninterrupted Tide of Felicity and Voluptuousness ! Such a moral Defect is a far stronger Objection against the Existence of a Deity, than any Arguments we can draw from the natural Frame of this World. For I confess ingenuously, that those are often to be ascribed to our own Ignorance, rather than any real Blemish in the Creation ; but this Plea cannot be admitted in the present Case ; for if we know any thing, we undoubtedly know what is just and what unjust, and we cannot be more certain of any thing, than we are, that a Being of infinite Goodness can never act in so unjust a manner, as to grieve and continually afflict the Righteous, and crown the daring Transgressor with the choicest of his Blessings. Clear me this Difficulty, *Credentius* ; this is my principal Scruple, and if you can give me a satisfactory Solution, you will more than almost persuade me to be a Believer.

*Phyfius's  
last Objec-  
tion answer-  
ed.*

*Cred.* I bless God, *Phyfius*, that so little is wanting to make you a perfect Convert from Infidelity : I say, so little ; for nothing can be easier than to give an unanswerable Solution to this pretended formidable Objection, and to vindicate the divine Majesty from all Imputations of Injustice, on account of the Prosperity of the Wicked, and the Afflictions of the Righteous in this World. And this I shall do, by proving clearly to your Conviction these two Things : *First*, That the Objection is for the most part false and groundless. And *Secondly*, That so far as it is true, it is no Argument at all against the Existence or Providence of God.

First



First then, I say, this Objection is in great measure false and groundless; for if we make an exact Scrutiny, we shall find, that in the ordinary Course of Things, good Men are more prosperous even in this World than the Bad. The Ax, the Gibbet, and the Rack, are appointed by God's Vicegerents, *Who bear not the Sword in vain*, for the Punishment of the Evil-Doer; and those secret Sins which escape the Cognizance of the Magistrate, are often punished with such loathsome Diseases, such extreme Penury, or such agonizing Pangs of Conscience, as make Life a Burthen to the Soul, and as it were anticipate the Horrors of Hell in this World. The Good and Virtuous, on the contrary, generally enjoy Health of Body, and Peace of Mind, which are the chief Felicity of Life, and without which all the Pleasures of this World are tasteless and insipid: And even in those calamitous Times, when Religion is under Persecution, or a prosperous Usurpation triumphs, under all their Sufferings for their Duty to God and the King, they can comfort themselves with the Prospect of that Crown of Glory which is laid up for them in Heaven.

*Good Men  
not often  
afflicted, nor  
bad Men  
prosperous.*

Besides, our Passions and Prejudices often mislead us into a wrong Judgement concerning the Persons and Actions of Men: Those whom we love, we are always inclined to think well of, and those whom we hate we generally censure with the utmost Severity; and then because God does not reward and punish Men according to the Sentence which our foolish Forwardness, and blind Envy passes upon them, we rashly dispute the divine Justice, and arraign the Decrees of Providence. The Hypocrisy also of Mankind is so great, that even where there is the greatest Shew and Ostentation of Virtue and Piety, we are liable to be most mistaken; and many whose Conduct in the Eye of the World seems fair and unblemished, indulge themselves secretly in the Practice of such heinous and crying Sins, as if known to the World, would extort from them an humble Confession of the Righteousness of all the Judgements with which

God in his infinite Wisdom is pleased to visit them. Since therefore we are so incompetent Judges of the Goodness or Badness of Men's Lives, since we are so easily deceived by the Artifices of the designing Hypocrite, and so frequently misguided by our own Passions and Prejudices; we ought to leave off our profane Murmurings against Providence, and to resign our fallible Judgements to the all-knowing Wisdom of him, who alone seeth what is in the Heart of Man, and who will render righteously to every Man according to his Works.

*Reasons why the Sufferings of good Men, and the Prosperity of the Wicked, are no Objections against a God or Providence.*

*Secondly*, Tho' it must be acknowledged, that in many Instances the Way of the Wicked is seen to prosper, and Power is in the Hands of the Oppressor, while the Righteous perisheth, and no Man layeth it to Heart, and when he crieth out in the Bitterness of his Soul, he findeth no Comforter; yet this is no Objection against the Existence or Providence of God, for the following Reasons: *First*, Because many of the good and evil Things of this World happen to us, not as Rewards and Punishments, but as necessary Effects of the ordinary Course of Second Causes. *Secondly*, Because this Life is only a State of Trial and Probation, not of final Retribution. *Thirdly*, Because we are not to esteem our Condition in this World good or evil, by its present Satisfaction or Uneasiness, but by its ultimate Effects and Consequences. And *lastly*, Because such a promiscuous Distribution of Good and Evil in this World, is requisite and useful to confirm our Belief of a future Judgement. I shall enlarge a little on each of these Particulars, for your farther Satisfaction.

My first Observation was, that many of the good and evil Things of this World happen to us, not as Rewards and Punishments, but as necessary Effects of the ordinary Course of second Causes. In this Life good and bad Men are so mingled together, that in Cases of common Calamities, whatever happens to the one, must happen also to the other, without an immediate and miraculous Interposal of the divine Providence. Thus while God permits

permits Second Causes to proceed in their natural Course, how is it possible that War, or Pestilence, or Fire, or Tempests, or Famine, should distinguish between the Good and the Bad? And so long as free Agents are left to act freely, wicked Parents will, by the repeated Excess of their Riot and Lewdness, entail Diseases, Poverty, and Ignominy, on their righteous as well as unrighteous Posterity. Neither can we reasonably expect that God should, by a miraculous Interposition, avert all these Calamities from all good Men; for this cannot be done without giving a perpetual Disturbance to the Course of Nature; which being, when considered in the whole, so orderly and regular, so full of exquisite Beauty, and admirable Contrivance, ought not to be continually check'd and inverted for the particular Benefit of some few Men, how good and righteous soever. The Justice of which Assertion you will with much greater Willingness acknowledge, when you have consider'd,

*Secondly*, That this Life is only a State of Trial and Probation, not of final Retribution. The all-wise Decrees of Providence have placed us here as Candidates for Eternity; and it is the Will of God, to try and exercise us in all those Virtues, as well passive as active, that are proper to our Nature, that improving from one Degree of Perfection to another, we may be fitted and prepar'd for the final Reward of our Steadfastness, the unspeakable Enjoyments of celestial Glory and Pleasure. And can we then wonder at the Afflictions wherewith the Righteous are tried and purified? or doubt of the Justice of God, when their light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, shall be recompens'd with so bright a Crown, such an exceeding Weight of eternal Glory? Adversity is the proper Season for the Exercise of Faith, Patience, Fortitude, and Resignation to the divine Will; and without it we should have no Opportunity to bring those Virtues into Act. Nay, if the Righteous were always prosperous, and the Wicked always visited with some Judgement proportionable to their Guilt, all Virtue

would be at an end ; for the Freedom of the Will would be entirely thereby destroyed ; and where there is no Freedom of Choice, there is no Virtue. Such a Procedure would by its constant Influence on our Hopes and Fears, violently compel us to obey the divine Commands ; for who would dare to be a Traytor, while the Ax is lifted up, and aimed at his Neck, ready for his immediate Execution, upon the Commission of the first Offence ? The Fear of instantaneous Punishment would then compel us to abstain from Evil ; and the Prospect of a speedy and certain Reward would irresistibly incite us to do Good : And what Excellency, or what Praise, or what Virtue is there in such a constrained Obedience ?

*Thirdly*, We are not to esteem our Condition in this World good or bad, by its present Satisfaction or Uneasiness, but by its ultimate Effects and Consequences. The divine Providence hath disposed and connected all Things into such a Series and Order, that there is no single Event or Accident, unless purely miraculous, but what depends on the whole System, and hath innumerable Causes antecedent to it, and innumerable Consequences attending it. Now what those Consequences will be, whether good or bad, is beyond our Skill to prognosticate : So that tho' our present Circumstances be ever so bad, consider'd singly and by themselves ; yet if we had a clear and distinct View of all those Consequences in which they are to terminate, we should often find that Event which at first seems most calamitous and afflictive, to be most beneficial and prosperous in the final Result of Things. To judge of the Happiness or Misery of good or bad Men, from a transitory View of their Condition, without having a due Regard to the future Consequences of the Prosperity of the one, and Adversity of the other, is extremely rash and imprudent ; and we daily see Cause to repent of such a foolish and hasty Judgement, and to acknowledge the Afflictions of the Righteous to be a great Blessing, and the short-lived Felicity of the Unrighteous, a most grievous and fatal Curse.

Curse. Of this we have frequent Instances, even in the World; and as to all those Cases, which seem not to admit of this Solution here, they will be clear'd up by my last Reason, which was,

*Fourthly*, That such a promiscuous Distribution of Good and Evil in this Life, is requisite and useful to confirm our Belief of a future Judgement. If the good and evil Things of the World were disposed with that Equality, as to bear an exact Proportion to the Merits or Demerits of every individual Member of human Society, we might be tempted to think, that because Rewards and Punishments were so accurately balanced and adjust'd here, therefore there was to be no future Judgement, no other Life after this, nor any Heaven or Hell. Whereas now, the Sufferings of the Virtuous, and the Triumphs of the Ungodly, supply us with an invincible Argument of the Certainty of a future State, in which oppress'd Piety shall receive its Crown, and triumphant Wickedness shall be overwhelm'd with everlasting Confusion. And now, *Phyſius*, I hope you are satisfied, and will allow that to be excellent Advice, which the Apostle gives, 1 Cor. iv. 5. *Therefore judge nothing before the Time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden Things of Darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the Counſels of the Heart*; for as the same Apostle says, Rom. ii. 5, 6, 7, &c. *In the Day of Wrath and Revelation of the righteous Judgement of God, he will render to every Man according to his Deeds; to them who by patient Continuance in Well-doing, ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, Eternal Life; but unto them who obey Unrighteouſneſs, Indignation, and Wrath, Tribulation, and Anguiſh, upon every Soul of Man that doeth Evil.*

*Phyſ.* I am quite confounded, my good Friend, at my own Folly and Impiety; spare, I beseech you, my Shame, and turn away those piercing Eyes, that I may recover my self from that shocking Hurricane which my Soul labours under. Merciful God! how have I blasphemed and denied thee! and yet I live! What a Mo-

numment of infinite Mercy and Patience am I ! And how dreadful must my future State be, if such amazing Goodness does not lead me to a speedy and perfect Repentance? *Credentius*, I find my Heart too full to suffer me to hold any longer Conference with you, but assure your self I am your sincere and perpetual Convert : I thank you for your Charity to my unhappy Soul, and intreat you, now I am retiring to my Closet to unburthen all its Sorrows to my offended Creator, to recommend me in your Devotions to the Throne of Grace; for *the fervent Prayer of such righteous Men availeth much.*

*Cred.* My Prayers, and all other charitable Assurances to the Advancement of your spiritual Welfare, shall be always at your Command: *God prosper the good Work which is begun in you, and perfect it more and more unto the Day of Salvation.*

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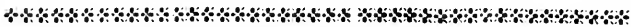
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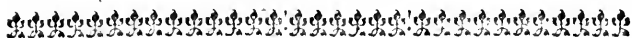
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