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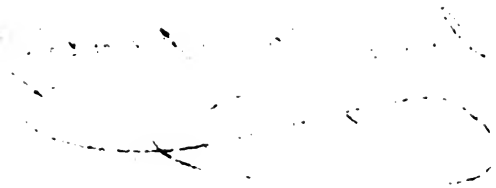
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The Scholar armed against
the errors of the time

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John Breckinridge

THE
SCHOLAR ARMED

AGAINST THE

Errors of the Time;

OR, A

COLLECTION OF TRACTS

ON THE

PRINCIPLES AND EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY,

THE

CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH;

AND THE

AUTHORITY OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

William Jones

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

THE WHOLE INTENDED FOR THE INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE
OF YOUNG STUDENTS IN OUR SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES;
AND PUBLISHED BY A
SOCIETY FOR THE REFORMATION OF PRINCIPLES.

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AN
ESSAY
ON THE
CHURCH.



PREFACE.

THE three great subjects with which a Christian minister is concerned, are the word of God, the church of God, and the Christian life. Circumstances and occasions will sometimes direct his thoughts to one of these, and sometimes to another: but so long as any of the three are before him, he is within the circle of his duty.

I WAS led to the subject of the following Essay, by an accident. I am a curate in a country parish; who make it my business, and have found it my pleasure, to teach the children of my people privately in my own house, and publicly in the church; and I am, for the present, the only Sunday Schoolmaster of the place. In the course of my instructions, I had occasion to observe, that the catechism of the church of England, though a most excellent summary of the Christian doctrine, is deficient in one point, viz. the constitution of the church of Christ; the knowledge of which, in a certain degree, is necessary to the preservation of that charity which is the end of the commandment; and, for the want of which, so many are drawn away from the church, who would certainly have remained with it, if they had known what it is. Yet is our catechism not so deficient, but that it includes the grand distinction betwixt the world and the church; which distinction being explained, I found we were possessed of a leading idea, which gave so much light to my young pupils, that I determined to go through the subject.

As I have been persuaded, ever since I began to think on these things, of the great importance of uniformity in worship amongst Christians, so have I been led to observe, on the other hand, the many evil consequences of non-conformity, with the dangerous delusions of the mind, arising from the harangues of preachers pretending to extraordinary gifts, while they are but half learned in the Gospel, which they undertake to publish, and are greatly mistaken in the spirit of it. I see how some men are cheated with the appearance of being converted to godliness, when they are only converted from one sin to another; from loving the world, to hating their neighbours; from the coldness of church devotion, to an uncharitable heat against the church itself; from the moral philosophy of some of our pulpits, to the Antinomian faith, which gives men a license to sin; from the drunkenness of the body, to the intoxication of the mind, with spiritual pride and false doctrine.

I AM well assured, that if this subject of the church, now so much neglected, and almost forgotten by those who are most concerned to understand it, should come to be better considered; there would be more true piety, and more peace, more of those virtues which will be required in Heaven, and which must therefore be first learned upon earth.

SOME amongst us err, because they know not the Scriptures; and others, because they never considered the nature of the church. Some think they can make their own religion, and so they despise the word of God, and fall into infidelity. Others think they can make their own church, or even be a church unto

themselves; and so they fall into the delusions of enthusiasm, or the uncharitableness of schism. But, as there is nothing to enlighten the minds of men in the doctrines of salvation, but the word of God, so is there nothing that can unite their hearts and affections, but the church of God. "Ye are one bread, and one body," saith the Apostle; one body by partaking of one bread; and that can only be in the same communion.

IN the weighing of these things, the prevailing spirit of the times, and the sanction which it may have given either to the profligate sinner, or to the presumptuous saint, are of no account upon the scale. In the settling of principles, we are never to consider how the world hath practised, but how God hath taught. The practice of the multitude, how great soever that multitude may be, hath no influence upon truth: yet it will stagger the minds of many, and carry them away, as with an overbearing torrent. Happy are they who have a better rule to direct them. They know that man applauds, highly applauds, what God abominates: and the higher the applause, the more room there is for suspicion. They know that the voice of the multitude was against Jesus Christ, when but few were for him; and they had hid themselves, and dared not to speak their minds. When Noah followed the direction of God in building the ark, for the saving of his house, the world was against him. To them no ark was necessary, because they had determined amongst themselves that there would be no flood; and consequently, that Noah was a bigot, whose undertaking, while it exposed himself, was an invidious reflection upon the age. When the father of the faithful followed the calling of God, there were none to stand by him

and encourage him; he was separated from his nearest relations; and wheresoever he went, he was under fears and dangers from people of a false persuasion. When Jesus Christ brought with him from Heaven, that light which was to be the glory of his people, one ruler of the Jews came to him by stealth in the night, to consult him as a teacher, come from God. So great was the authority of a blinded multitude, that a ruler of the people was afraid of being brought into disgrace, by conversing personally with the Saviour of the world!

THE times, therefore, and the people who live in them, are never to be considered by us, when we are seeking or following the truth, on the ground of its own proper evidence. When it was asked, with a design to perplex the people, who, of the rulers, or of the pharisees, had believed? Our Saviour gave them a different rule: why do ye not of yourselves, said he, judge what is right; without going first to consult those who are blinded by false learning, and, with an appearance of great sanctity, have imposed upon the people? "See," saith one, "how fast our doctrine is increasing! all the learned are going after it; and you must all submit to it in a very short time." And who are they that thus reason with us? The very same persons who declaim so loudly on the fallibility of all men; and yet hold themselves to be little less than infallible in the choice of their own opinions. Let error rise as high as it can; and let truth sink as low as a wicked world can reduce it; the difference betwixt them is the same as ever; and we shall still find it wiser and better to follow the setting sun, as Columbus did when he discovered the Indies. The meteor of heresy, which blazes and dazzles us for a while with its appearance,

will burn out, and leave not a spark behind; while the sun sets to rise again. Such will be the fate of the church, and of the doctrines of truth by which it is supported.

THERE never was a time from the beginning of the world, when there was not a party against the church of God; and our Israel must have its enemies, as that church had which came out of Egypt. In the first age of the Gospel, the Apostle St. Jude spoke experimentally of those whom he then saw, or prophetically of those whom we should see, that they go in the way of Cain, and run after the error of Balaam, and perish in the gainsaying of Corah. If our governors were as cruel as Pharaoh, some would rejoice at it, and upbraid us with every disadvantage we might be under from hard usage; as a sign that the church is a thing of no consequence, and that all those who belong to it are the vassals of the state. If the church were as pure as Abel, the envy and jealousy of Cain would hate its offerings and sacrifices. If its order and œconomy were as perfect as in that church which covered the face of the earth in its passage to Canaan, the self-interested spirit of the mercenary Balaam would endeavour to bring a curse upon it, and blast its greatness. If its governors were as manifestly supported in their commission as Moses and Aaron, the spiritual pride of Corah would set up the holiness of the congregation against its priesthood, and the power of the people against the civil magistrate, who gives it protection. But none of these things ought to stagger or surprize a reader of the Scripture: they are all to be expected: these things were our examples; and the church would not be the church of God, if there were none to rise up against it.

WITH these considerations in his mind, and not without them, a reader will be prepared to examine what I have written upon the church. If any of our dissenting brethren should look into this little piece, and find the matter so represented as to engage their attention; my prayer shall be with them, that God may give them the grace to cast out the bitter leaven of a party-spirit; to lay aside all temporal motives and interests, and consider the church (as I have done) only so far as it is related to the other world. To any particular or national church, all temporal alliances are but momentary considerations, which pass away with the fashion of this world; and the church may be either with them, or without them, as it was in the first ages: for the church itself, under the relation it bears to Jesus Christ, abideth for ever.

ESSAY

ON THE

CHURCH.



CHAP. I.

OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE WORLD AND THE CHURCH; WITH THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF BOTH SOCIETIES.

TWO things of a contrary nature are best understood when they are placed near to one another, or compared together in the mind. The summer is better understood, and more to be valued, when we compare it with the winter; a season in which so many comforts are wanting, which the summer affords us. The blessings of government are more acceptable, when compared with the miseries of anarchy. We have the like advantage when we compare together the *church* and the *world*, those two societies of which we are members: of the world by our natural birth; of the church by our spiritual birth in baptism. When we are admitted into the Christian covenant, we renounce this world as a wicked world, and become members of the church, which is called the holy church. Both these societies are influential on those who belong to them; the one corrupts, the other sanctifies: therefore it is of the last importance to mankind to consider and understand the difference between them.

If we ask, why the world is called wicked, we shall find it to be such from the nature and manners of its inhabitants: for the world, as it means the system of the visible creation, can have no harm in it. There can be no wickedness, where there is no moral agency nor freedom of action.

From the sin of Adam, and the effects of his fall, the state of man by nature is a state of sin. The Scripture is so express in this, that it is not necessary to insist upon it. A disposition to evil comes into the world with every man, and is as a seed, which brings forth its fruit throughout the course of his life. Many evil passions disturb and agitate his mind; and from the ignorance or darkness which prevails in him, he knows not that he is to resist them in order to his peace and happiness; nor hath he ability so to do, if he did know it. The worst and the most violent of all his passions is pride, which affects superiority, and delights in vain shew, and pompous distinction; whether it be that of wealth, or honour, or wisdom. Covetousness disposes him to take all he can to himself, and pay no regard to the wants of others; whence the state of nature is a state of war, in which men plunder and destroy one another; not knowing the way of peace, which consists only with restraint, and must be taught them from above; "the way of peace have they not known;" saith the Scripture.

Man knows all things by education, but nothing by nature, except, as the Apostle saith, what "he knoweth naturally as a brute beast." The world, as we see it now, is under the restraint of laws, which in some countries are better in themselves, and better executed than in others: but if there were no laws and no governments to execute them, then we should see what a scene of destruction and misery this world would be, through the sinfulness of man's nature. Fraud, rapine, and cruelty, those three dreadful monsters, make strange havoc amongst us, notwithstanding the laws and regulations of society: what then would this world be without them?

With respect to God, the state of man is a state of rebellion, alienation, and condemnation. His ways are so opposite to the will of God, that he is said to be at enmity with him. He has no alliance with his Maker, either as a child, a subject, or a servant; but being under a general law of disobedience, can inherit nothing from God but wrath and punishment.

You will see this account verified by the plainest declarations of the Scripture.—First, as to the enmity of the world against God. “If the world hate you,” saith our Lord when he came to save it, “ye know that it hated me before it hated you.” Secondly, as to their alienation or departure from all alliance with him—“you that were some time alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works;” saith St. Paul, Col. i. 21: and again, speaking of the natural state of the Ephesians before their conversion, he describes them as “aliens and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” In which passage, there is something farther than appears from the sound of the words; for when we read, “without God in the world,” the words “in the world,” are emphatical, and denote this wicked world, such as we have been describing it, of which they that are members, must of course be without God, and without hope: they belong to a society which knows him not.

Then, thirdly, that the world is under condemnation; “we are chastened of the Lord,” saith St. Paul, “that we should not be condemned with the world:” whence it is evident, that the world, as such, is under condemnation, and can expect nothing of God but punishment for sin.

We are now prepared to take a review of this society called the world. It is composed of men lost by the fall; disposed to all manner of evil; ignorant of the way of peace; at enmity with God, and with one another; delighting themselves in the pride of appearance, and the vanity of distinction. In a word, “the whole world lieth in wickedness,” and they that are condemned for sin, will be condemned with the world, whose condemnation, therefore, is a thing of course. What human philosophy may say of this description of the world, we are not to regard: if it is the description which stands in the Holy Scripture, we are not to consider what men may say of it. A proud world will never be pleased to see an humiliating description of itself.

Such then is the world, and such are we all, so far as we are members of it. God therefore of his infinite mercy takes us out of this wicked society, and translates us into another. He “delivers us from the power of darkness, and translates us into the kingdom of his dear Son;” and without this translation we are inevitably lost. You are here to observe, that the kingdom of Christ is one of the names of his church; and they that are in it,

as it is distinguished from the world, are called "children of the kingdom." Its nature is totally different from the kingdoms of this world (of which we shall see more hereafter;) for as the world is called wicked, so the church is called holy; and all the holiness that can be in man, must be derived from thence. If we enquire how, and in what respects, the church is holy, we find it must be so from its relation to God. It is called the "church of God;" and he being holy, every thing that belongs to him must be so of course. And further, it is a society, or body, of which the Holy Spirit is the life; and this life being communicated to those who are taken into the church, they are thereby made partakers of an holy life, which is elsewhere called "the life of God;" from which life they are alienated who are out of this society. It is holy in its sacraments; our baptism is an holy baptism, from the holy spirit of God; the Lord's supper is an holy sacrifice; the ordinance of absolution is for the forgiveness of past sin, that the members of the church may be recovered from sin to a state of holiness, and peace with God. The church is holy in its priesthood; all the offices of which are for the sanctification of the people.

The contrary nature of the two societies I have been speaking of, will now be better understood, when they are compared together. In the one, men are in a lost condition; in the other, they are in a state of salvation: for as the world is alienated from God, the church is in alliance and covenant with him, and partaker of his promises. As the world is under condemnation, the church is under grace and pardon of sin; its baptism washes away original sin, and gives a new birth to purity and righteousness; its other sacrament of the Lord's supper maintains that spiritual life which is begun at baptism, as meat and drink support the life we receive at our natural birth. As the world is without hope, the Christian hath hope in death, through the resurrection of Christ, and is assured, that he who is united to the life of God, can never die: for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. While the wicked are to perish with the world which they inhabit, the children of God are "heirs with Christ of an eternal kingdom."

The church is also holy, when by the word church, we understand the building or place in which the people assemble to accomplish the service of God. As the world on the other hand, hath always had its unholy places of assembly, its theatres, its idol tem-

ples, &c. which unsanctify and pollute those who frequent them. Under the Jewish state of the church, the temple is called the "holy temple," or "holy place;" (Heb.) and a part of it was called the "most holy place." Our Saviour allows that the temple sanctified the gold which was offered in it, and consequently all other offerings and sacrifices there made. Now, if that temple was holy, whose glory was to be done away; certainly the place of Christian worship, called the church, must be holy also. For why was the temple at Jerusalem holy, but because the presence of God attended it? And has he not promised to be in the midst of us? And must not our churches therefore be holy upon the same account? And are they not guilty of a great sin, who treat any church with irreverence? Much more if they despise or defile it? For it is said, "he that defileth the temple of God, him shall God destroy."

But nothing will shew us the difference between the world and the church so effectually as when we consider who is at the head of each society. Christ is the head of the church, and the devil is the prince of this world, who is also called the "god of this world." They who are in the church, are in the kingdom of Christ; which, though not *of* this world, as not deriving its power from thence, is yet *in* this world. They who are of this world, are in the kingdom of Satan, and under his power; as the heathens are said to have been before they were redeemed from it, and brought over to the kingdom of God; which translation was signified by the redemption of the Hebrews, from under the power of Pharaoh.

If we enquire into the respective characters of the head of the church, and the prince of this world, as they are described under a variety of names, the opposition is wonderful; and it will be found very instructive, because there is the same opposition betwixt the children of each.

The head of the church is called Jesus the Saviour: the head of this world is a destroyer; in Hebrew, Abaddon; in Greek, Apollyon.

The one is the true light; that is, a spiritual light to the soul of man; the other is the prince of darkness.

The one is a shepherd, gathering the lambs with his arm, and feeding his flock; the other is a lion who goeth to and fro in the earth, seeking whom he may devour.

The one is a lamb ; meek, innocent, and spotless ; the other is a serpent ; deceitful, subtle, and with poison under his lips.

The one is the physician of souls, who went about healing the sick, and raising the dead : the other is the inflicter of diseases, bowing men down with infirmities ; binding them with the bonds of affliction ; and was a murderer from the beginning ; for he brought death into the world by the temptation of man in paradise. Men murder individuals ; but Satan murders a whole world at once ; and is the prince of murderers.

The one delivers men who are under temptation to sin ; the other is the tempter, who leads them into it. And as the one is the advocate of sinners, interceding for them as their priest and mediator, the other is the grand accuser, who is therefore called the devil, which signifies an accuser.

And lastly, (for I think we need go no farther at present) the one is the truth, the other is a liar, and the father of lies.

The like difference is found in the children of this world, and the children of the kingdom of God ; that is, between the wicked world, who are under the power of Satan, and the holy church, which is the flock of Christ, and takes him for its pattern. It cannot be otherwise ; the spirit of the head must be diffused through the members ; and you will see it to be true : first, with respect to the holy church of Christ ; whose disciples are taught to relieve one another in their wants, and save one another in their distress ; rejoicing and suffering together, as the members of the same body ; and doing good unto all men. His ministers are shepherds ; his followers from the first ages of Christianity, were accounted and treated as sheep for the slaughter, and were patient and unresisting. They exhort and encourage one another to good works ; and being united together under a bond of peace, their charity covereth a multitude of sins ; that is, it hideth and concealeth the many failings of their brethren for the love of Christ, instead of aggravating their offences, and judging them unmercifully. They are children of light, who derive the light of wisdom from the word of God ; and walk openly and honestly, as in the day. In their conversation they are true and faithful, and give you a direct answer, without disguise or subterfuge.

Such ought to be the members of the holy church of Christ : this is the character intended for them, though many fall short

of it, and some totally depart from it. But the visible church membership of men does not depend upon their manners and opinions, nor indeed upon any thing they can do for themselves; because it the gift of God, by his ministers; so that a man in a holy church may be an unholy man; for the kingdom of heaven, or church of Christ, is like a net cast into the sea, which gathers of every kind, both bad and good; and an effectual separation is never made between them, till the angels drag this net to the shore, to gather the good into vessels, and cast the bad away. If we bear this case in mind, it will deliver us from a great deal of perplexity. It is truly a sorrowful fact, that the children of God, in too many instances, depart from their proper character: but the character proper to the world is, in all respects, like that of Satan, wicked and miserable.

As the devil is the prince of this world, his children set their affections upon it; and it is the main purpose of their lives to obtain and enjoy it at any rate. For this they sell their souls, and if they get the world in exchange, they think they are gainers by the bargain.

As he is the prince of darkness, so do they fall into ignorance, and blindness of heart, and love darkness rather than light, that their deeds may not be reprov'd. They hate the word of God, as owls and bats hate the day-light; and dispute fiercely for their errors, lest information and conviction should bring them to repentance.

As the devil is a destroyer, so do the children of this world destroy one another. Their wise politics produce war and desolation; their error and delusion of mind stir them up to the persecution of the servants of God: and wherever we see oppression, and cruelty, and persecution, there we see the spirit of the devil, the father of persecution, who, by violence, will terrify and compel, where he cannot persuade.

As he is a serpent, so his children are a generation of vipers, double-tongued and deceitful; smooth and flattering on some occasions, but waiting to give a deadly bite when they are offended and provok'd. Their way is crooked and uncertain, like the path of a serpent. An honest man, whose path is direct and plain, can never tell what to make of them, because they pretend to be going one way, while they are going another; and they often gain their end by it, as the twistings of the serpent carry him to the point he aims at.

As Lucifer fell from heaven for rebellion, all his children are impatient under authority; and in this capacity they are called sons of Belial; which means, that they can bear no superior. Patience, and obedience, and submission, are essential to the Christian character. Christ himself is our pattern, who allowed that the power of Pilate, so unjustly exercised, was given him from above, and submitted to his sentence, when he could have struck him dead upon his bench. But resistance is the devil's doctrine, and the world's practice. The Gospel teaches us, that the things which are highly esteemed among men, are an abomination in the sight of God, and here we see it verified; nothing is more detestable to the God of peace, than the sin of rebellion; and nothing is more magnified and applauded by the children of this world; who have set what they call the power of the people, above the power of God almighty. He ordains government, and kings are his ministers; but the people are told, that they have power to overthrow his ordinance, and judge his vicegerents*.

As the devil is a tempter, his children act under him in that capacity: most wicked men have a strange desire to make all others as wicked as themselves. The world is full of seducers, who tempt men to false principles, and immorality of life. Some get their livelihood by the corruption of other people; and most infidels and heretics are so diligent in spreading their opinions, that if the friends of truth were equally zealous, the world would not be able to stand against them.

As the devil is the grand accuser, so doth the world delight itself in evil-speaking. Railing and slandering is their great amusement. Evil words are not pointed against evil things. The world delights to asperse those who are unlike to themselves. There never was a good man, nor ever will be, who was not evil spoken of, and depreciated in the judgment of the public; and the rule is so universal, that our Saviour saith to all Christians, "Woe be unto you, when all men speak well of you." False prophets were well spoken of by the people; and there must be something false and spurious, some "evil with the appearance of good †," in every popular character that pleases the world.

* From several passages in this treatise, the reader may suspect that the revolution in France is alluded to; but it was in print two years before that event.

As the devil is the father of lies, so all they that are of the devil are liars, who will never make a scruple of a lie to hurt others, or serve themselves. The whole Heathen religion was one great lie, in opposition to the truth of the divine law. Much evil is threatened to those who put evil for good, and good for evil; who make the heart of the righteous sad, by predicting evil to them, and by promising happiness and prosperity to the wicked. Thus did they speak of old, who were called false prophets; and it would be happy for us, if there were none of them amongst us: but, wherever they are found, they are the ministers of Satan: and how fair and fine soever they may speak on some occasions, it is no proof of their goodness; for Satan is sometimes, as it serves his purpose, transformed into an angel of light, and affects an holy and heavenly character; and then he is most a devil, because he can most deceive.

CHAP. II.

OF THE MEANS OF GRACE, AND THE MARKS BY WHICH THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS TO BE KNOWN.

HAVING explained the nature of these two societies, the holy church, and the wicked world, we must consider the use of the church, and the marks by which it is to be known. It is promised, "that he who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." But how shall we have this baptism, unless we have it from those whom God hath appointed to baptize? It is also promised, "he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life:" and how shall we receive the body and blood of Christ, but from the church, to whom he said, when he instituted the Lord's supper, "Do this in remembrance of me?" This being the commemorative sacrifice of the New Testament, it can be offered only by a priest; and all the world cannot make a priest. The ministers of the Old Testament were ordained to their office by an immediate commission from God to Moses, the mediator of that time betwixt God and the people. The ministers of the New Testament were ordained by Christ himself; from

whom the authority descended to others, and shall reach, through a variety of hands, to the end of the world.

This is the way God hath been pleased to take to make men oly, and bring them to himself, through this dangerous world, as he brought Noah and his family out of the old world into the new, by means of an ark, which was a figure of his church. It is therefore of infinite consequence that we should be able to know, with certainty, whether we are in the church, or out of it. If we are out of it, we are in the world. If we had been out of the ark, we should have been drowned. It is true, we may be in the church, and yet be lost; for was not Ham in the ark, who was a reprobate? But if we are out of the church, how can we be saved?

I would not, for the whole world, unworthy as I am; I say I would not, for the whole world, and all the kingdoms of it, be in doubt whether I was translated, or not, into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. I would not be in doubt, whether I have the sacraments, or whether I have them not. But how can I be sure in this case, unless I know what the kingdom of Christ is; where it is to be found; and what are the marks by which it may be known? Many strange abuses in religion have arisen on occasion, and under the specious name of reformation; a very good word; but it hath been applied to a great many bad things, even to madness and blasphemy. We are fallen into times when some say, "lo, here is Christ," or, "lo, there;" in the "desert," or in the "secret chambers;" and are bid to take heed that no man deceive us. What a terrible case should we be in, if we had no sufficient warnings given to us, and no rule to go by! But as the lightning which cometh from the east shineth unto the west, so plain and notorious was the establishment of Christ's kingdom in this world, together with the form of its constitution, and the orders of its ministry, in all the countries wherever it was planted. It would be unreasonable: indeed it would be lamentable; it would seem as if God had mocked us, contrary to the nature of his mercy, that he should publish a way of salvation, and leave it uncertain where it is to be found.

From what is said of it in the Gospel, it is impossible that the church should be a society obscure and hard to be distinguished. "Ye are the light of the world," said Christ to his disciples; "a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." Light is sure to shew itself; and it comes in strait lines, which direct us to his

source. A city placed upon a mountain is so elevated above other objects, that it cannot be difficult to find it; rather, it is impossible to miss it; it cannot be hid: and Christian people in all ages seem to have agreed, that it shall be hid: for when we approach a city in any part of Christendom, the churches are generally first seen towering over all other buildings.

Christ hath given us a precept, that, under certain circumstances, we should tell our case to the church: but unless it be known what and where the church is, this cannot be done. The precept therefore supposes, that the church must be known to us. The same must follow from the injunction of St. Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews.—“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.” Chap. xiii. 17. The rulers of the church must therefore be known to us; for it is impossible we should do our duty, and submit ourselves to them, unless we are sure who they are.

The church then must, in its nature, be a society manifest to all men. Some may slight it, and despise it, and refuse to hear it; but they cannot do even this, unless they know where it is to be found.

When we enquire more particularly what the church is, it may be best to proceed as we are obliged to do in some other cases; first, to learn what it is not: that we may go upon right ground, and understand with more certainty what it is.

The church then, as a society, is not the work of man; nor can it possibly be so. I have laid the foundation of all my reasonings upon this subject, in the distinction betwixt the church and the world, as two separate parties. The church is so named*, because it is called or chosen out of the world. 'Till it is so called out of the world, it hath no being: but it cannot call itself, any more than a man can bring himself into the world.

Our Christian calling is as truly the work of God, and as much independent of ourselves, as our natural birth. The church must have orders in it for the work of the ministry: but no man can ordain himself, neither can he (of himself) ordain another, because no man can give what he hath not. “How shall they preach,” saith the Scripture, “unless they be sent?” And again, “no man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of

* In Greek *ἐκκλησία*.

God, as was Aaron." Nay, even "Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest, but he that said unto him, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." The church must have promises; without which, it can have no reason or encouragement to act: but no man can give it those promises; which are "exceeding great and precious." The church must have power, without which it can do nothing to any effect: but there is "no power but of God." It must have power to forgive sins; the forgiveness of sins in the holy catholic church, being an article of the Apostles creed: but "who can forgive sins, but God only?" It must act in the name of God, or not at all; because it acts for the salvation of man: but no man can act in the name of God, but by God's appointment. No ambassador ever sent himself, or took upon him to sign and seal treaties and covenants (such as the sacraments of the church are) without being sent; that is, without receiving authority so to do, from an higher power. The act would be so far from beneficial, that it would be treasonable. If an army were to raise itself without commissions, what would such an army be, but a company of banditti, leagued together to plunder and destroy the honest subjects of an established community.

Nothing therefore is plainer, on these considerations, than that the church neither is, nor can be from man. It is no human institution; and as it acts under God, if it acts at all, it must act by his authority and appointment. It is properly called, the church of God, (of the living God, in opposition to the profane societies, self-erected for the worship of dead idols) and mankind might as reasonably presume to make God's world, as to make God's church.

Farther enquiry will shew us, that the church is no confused multitude of people, independent of one another, and subject to no common rules; but a regular society, like to other societies, in some respects, and unlike them all in others. It is called a body, a family, a city, a kingdom. A body is a regular structure, the limbs of which being joined together, are subordinate and subservient to one another, and are animated by the same soul or spirit. So saith the Apostle, "for by one spirit we are all baptized into one body." 1 Cor. xii. 13. It being also called a family, the members of it must have some common relation to one another: being called a city, it must be incorporated under some common laws; and being a kingdom, it must have some

form of government and magistracy. Families, cities, and kingdoms, are societies; and the church, being represented by them, must be a regular society. But in this the church differs from all other societies, because they belong to this world, and their rights and privileges are confined to it: whereas the church extends to both worlds, the visible and the invisible, and is partly on earth, and partly in heaven. In its earthly members it is visible; in its rulers, it is visible; in its worship, it is visible; in its sacraments, it is visible. But being also a spiritual society, it hath a life which is hidden, and in the inward and spiritual grace of all its outward ordinances, it is invisible. As a kingdom in which God is Judge, and Christ is a Mediator, and angels and saints departed, are members, it takes in the heaven itself, and is the "heavenly Jerusalem," which is "the mother of us all;" in-somuch, that when we are admitted into it, our "conversation * is in heaven," and the angels of heaven are our fellow-servants; all making one great family under Jesus Christ, in whom "all things are gathered together in one, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth:" on which consideration, what is rightly done in the church on earth, stands good in heaven, as if it had been done there; and the Apostles of Christ received from him, the "keys of the kingdom of heaven," with a power of binding and loosing, which extends to heaven itself: and when Christians go to heaven, they are not carried into a new society, for they are already, by the grace of God, translated into it by baptism; whence the Apostle speaks of their translation, not as a thing expected, but even now brought to pass. He "hath translated us," &c. Col. i. 13.

The church doth also differ from other societies, in that it is catholic or universal; it extends to all places, and all times, and is not confined to the people of any nation, or condition of life, but takes in Jews, Greeks, and Barbarians, the rich and the poor, the bond and the free; and is therefore properly signified in one of our Saviour's parables by an inn, where all that offer themselves are accepted. The commission of Christ to his Apostles, was to "teach and baptize all nations."

The church being a kingdom, not of this world, is of a spiritual nature, and in that capacity it is invisible; but as a kingdom in this world, it is visible, and must have a visible administration.

* Gr. Πολίτευμα, or citizenship.

To know what this is, and whence its authority is derived, we must go back to the Gospel itself.

Jesus Christ was sent from heaven by the Father, and invested with the glory of the Priesthood by an actual consecration, when the spirit descended upon him. As the Father sent him, “so did he send his disciples,” and gave them authority to send others: so that the church which followed, derived its authority from the church which Christ first planted in the world; and the church at this day must derive its authority after the same manner, by succession from the church which went before; the line extending from Christ himself, to the end of the world: “lo,” said he, “I am with you always, unto the end of the world:” certainly, not with those very persons, who all soon died, but with those who should succeed, and be accounted for the same; for a body corporate never dies, till its succession is extinct*.

Our Saviour at first ordained his twelve Apostles according to the number of the tribes of the church of Israel. Afterwards he ordained other seventy, according to the number of the elders, whom Moses appointed as his assistants. When the church in Jerusalem was multiplied, seven deacons were ordained, by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, to preach, and baptize, and minister, in distributing the alms of the church. Here then we have three orders of men, each distinct from the other; the twelve Apostles, the seventy disciples, and the seven deacons; and by these the first Christian church in Jerusalem was governed and administered. The Apostles were superior in office to the disciples; because, when Judas fell from the apostleship, one was chosen by lot out of the disciples into the apostleship: the deacons were inferior to both; and it appears that they were appointed by the laying on of the hands of the twelve Apostles; for it is said, Acts vi. 2, “the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them,” &c. That the Apostles appointed others to succeed to their own order, is evident from the case of Timothy; who in

* “Take away this succession, and the clergy may as well be ordained by one person as another: a number of women may as well give them a divine commission;—but they are no more priests of God, than those who pretend to make them so. If we had lost the Scriptures, it would be very well to make as good books as we could, and come as near them as possible: but then it would not only be folly, but presumption, to call them the word of God.” See the second Letter to the Bishop of Bangor. Postscript.

the antient superscription, at the end of the second Epistle, is said to have been “ ordained the first bishop of the church of the “ Ephesians.” He is admonished to “ lay hands suddenly on no “ man,” therefore he had power to ordain: and he is likewise admonished not to “ receive an accusation against an elder, (or “ presbyter) but before two or three witnesses:” therefore he had a judicial authority over that order. Directions are given with respect to the deacons of the same church; therefore, in the first church of the Ephesians, there was a bishop, with elders and deacons under him; as in the church which began at Jerusalem, there was the order of the Apostles, of the disciples, and of the deacons. In the Christian church, throughout the world, we find these three orders of ministers for fifteen hundred years, without interruption. The fact therefore is undeniable, that the church has been governed by bishops, priests, and deacons, from the Apostles downwards; and where we find these orders of ministers duly appointed, the word preached, and the sacraments administered, there we find the church of Christ, with its form, and its authority.

The wisdom of God is here very evident, in appointing the orders of the Christian ministry after the pattern of the Jewish church, which was of his own appointment so long before. That there might be no uncertainty in a case of such consequence to the souls of men, there was no novelty, but a continuation of the like administration with that which had all along been known and acknowledged in the church. Aaron was an high priest, with a ministry peculiar to himself; under him there was an order of priests, twenty-four in number, who served by course in the daily sacrifices and devotions of the tabernacle and temple; and these were assisted by the whole tribe of the Levites. As the law had its passover, its baptisms, its incense, its sacrifices, its consecrations, its benedictions, all to be realized under the sacraments and offerings of the Gospel; so its ministry was but a pattern of the ministry which is now amongst us; and we cannot mistake the one, if we have an eye to the other; such is the goodness of God in directing and keeping us, through all the confusions of the latter days, by a rule of such great antiquity, to the way of truth, and keeping us in it.

The great use of the church is to receive and minister to the salvation of those who are taken out of the world: but this it cannot do without the truth of the Christian doctrine; the church is

therefore as an instrument, or candlestick, for the holding and preserving of this sacred light. It is called the "pillar and ground of the truth;" not as if it had any right of making or imposing doctrines of its own; for the ground and the pillar do not make the roof, they only support it; nor doth the candlestick make the light, it only holds the light. And these similitudes will be found just, if we pursue them farther; for as when the pillars are removed, the building must fall; and when the lamp or the candlestick is broken, the light will be extinct; so if the church be taken away, the truth falls along with it; as we have seen, and do see, in this country. Our Quakers, who are farthest from the church, are totally departed from the truth of Christian doctrine; and many of those separate congregations, who were Puritans and Believers in the last age, are Socinians and Infidels in this: a consideration which should prevail upon sincere people of all persuasions, who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, to lay aside their animosity, and unite against the Socinians, who are the common enemies of all Christian people, and are now endeavouring to overthrow the faith of our creeds and articles.

When we speak of the use of the church, we should never forget the great benefit and information which arises from the fasts and festivals of the church; (totally neglected by the sectaries) by the course of which, the piety of Christians is directed to all the great subjects of the Gospel; some of which might otherwise never be revived in our thoughts during the whole year. But the church spends its year with Jesus Christ, and follows him in faith, through all the great works of his mediatorial office, from his advent to the sending down of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. On this ground, the work of Mr. Nelson is of great value to all Christian families; and we have reason to hope it will never fall into disuse: though all persons, fanatically inclined, are very cold to the merits of it, and the sectaries, it is to be supposed, must totally reject it on their own principles.

Here I must add, that the wisdom of God is farther manifest, in appointing a provision for his ministers, independent of the people. The maintenance of the Jewish priesthood was from God; for the tythes and offerings, on which they lived, were first dedicated to God, and from him transferred for the support of his ministry. So doth he himself state the case by the prophet;

“Ye have robbed me,” saith he, “in tythes and offerings;” as if they were his own property : and so they were; for being dedicated to God, the first proprietor of all things, they belong to him before they belong to his church. The wisdom and piety of Christian states followed the rule of the Scripture from the earliest times ; and it still obtains in this country. And what would be the consequence if it were not so ? While the minister depends only upon the God to whom he is accountable, he dares speak the truth : but where he is dependent on the people, and the people are corrupt, then he must accommodate himself to their fancy. For this reason, if the people of a congregation, who chuse their own minister, fall into heresy, they rarely or never get out of it, because they will bear no teacher, but one who is of their own persuasion, and will flatter them in their errors.

I have nothing more to say upon the nature of the church, but to shew the extent of its authority. Every society must have power over its own members, to admit or exclude as the case requires : it cannot otherwise subsist. The church, from the days of the Apostles, always exercised the power of excommunicating notorious offenders, and of absolving and restoring true penitents. Excommunication is an exclusion from the church ; and they who have authority to baptize, must have authority to excommunicate. The church must also have authority in directing its own worship and services, as to time, place, ceremonies. “ Let all things be done decently and in order :” but what is decency, and what is order, is not specified, and must be left to the discretion of the rulers of the church. The church has no authority to ordain any thing contrary to the law of God ; nor doth the law of God depend upon the authority of the church. There are three sorts of things about which the church is conversant ; good, bad, and indifferent : the good oblige by their own nature ; the bad cannot be enforced by any authority : therefore the authority of the church must extend to things indifferent, that is, to order and discipline, to circumstances of time, place, forms of worship, ceremonies, and such like : and to disobey because they are indifferent is to deny that God hath given power to his church to regulate any one thing whatsoever.

Ought we not, on the foregoing considerations, to magnify the goodness and wisdom of God, who hath provided a church for the reception of lost mankind, and given to it the light of truth, and the means of grace ? No subject can be plainer than this of the

nature and constitution of the church : and the necessity of its ministry and ordinances to the salvation of man, and the preservation of truth, charity, peace, and godliness, is as clear as the sun. What a blessed thing it would be for us, if all people could see this ! What temptations, corruptions, tumults, and miseries, would it prevent amongst mankind ! But, alas, they are ever ingenious in defeating the purposes of God for their own good. They have ways and expedients, not only of making themselves easy without the benefits of the Christian church, but of actually casting them all off with a high hand, as needless, superstitious, dangerous, and even sinful, and anti-christian ; not helps to salvation, but hindrances. How this matter is, and with what reasonings they deceive themselves, we shall discover with very little inquiry.

CHAP. III.

THE ERRORS WHICH TEMPT MEN TO LEAVE THE CHURCH,
AND MAKE THEM EASY WHEN THEY ARE SEPARATED
FROM IT.

THE means of grace, and the promises of God, being with his church, they who would be made partakers of them, must apply to the church : and who would not ? Who would not willingly flee from Sodom on fire to take refuge in Zoar ? When the storm is abroad, the beasts have sense to fly to a place of shelter : and as the wrath of God is denounced against this world, men must be enemies to themselves, if they refuse to be delivered in the way which God hath appointed. But we know nothing of this world, if we think all men are friends to their own spiritual interest. Many will rather have recourse to their own imaginations : and when pride hath got possession of them, they are above being directed.

The example of Naaman is very instructive on this part of our subject. When he was ordered to seek the cure of his leprosy, by washing seven times in Jordan, the proud Syrian refused to comply with the ceremony, because he could not see how it should have any effect. Nevertheless, when he had thought better

of it, that ceremony, unaccountable and useless as it might seem to his carnal reason, cured him of his distemper. By the church and its ordinances, every Christian is put to the same trial; whether he will submit to such things as reason cannot account for? Whether he will look for an effect, to which the cause is not adequate, without the interposition of an invisible power? The children of God are still exercised by this trial. Some accept the terms proposed; they believe the promises of God, and are saved. Of the rest, some do not see how they can be saved in this manner; and others spend their lives in vanity, and never think whether they can or cannot. Men are influenced by two principles totally opposite, sight and faith: the Christian walks by faith and not by sight; the disputer of this world believes nothing but what he sees, and so is incapable of the benefits of Christianity. It does not appear to him how power can come from heaven, and be delivered down in succession by the imposition of hands; how water which washes the body, can wash away sins; how bread can be made the vehicle of a spiritual life; so he lives and dies the dupe of a dead philosophy, which admits of nothing spiritual in a religion whose benefits are all of a spiritual kind.

From the nature of the church, we see how necessary it is, that men should be taken into it out of this wicked world. We see how the promises of God are confined to the ordinances of the church; and that there can be no assurance of salvation without them. If we reflect on these things, we cannot but consider it as an inestimable blessing, that God hath appointed such a plain and certain way of leading us through the means of grace, to the hope of glory. We may perhaps wonder why men should endeavour to deprive themselves of these benefits; and how Christian people, so called, can satisfy themselves under a causeless departure from the great law of peace and charity. I will therefore proceed to shew how they deceive themselves. There are three false principles, which, if admitted, would supersede the necessity of any church.

The first of these is the doctrine of an absolute unconditional election to salvation. For if God, by a mere act of his sovereign will, and according to an irreversible decree, elects men to eternal salvation, without regard to conditions and circumstances, then no visible ordinances are necessary as means of grace; they are

all superseded, and we are as safe without them as with them. This doctrine is so convenient to all the irregular classes of Christian people, who have cast off the church and its authority, that it has been much insisted upon almost from the beginning of the Reformation, and has done infinite mischief. For he who is divided from his brethren, with this doctrine in his mind, is thereby confirmed and fortified in his errors. In vain shall we recommend the benefits of church communion to him, who is saved in consequence of a decree, made before the church or the world had a being. God hath elected him, without any regard to outward ordinances; and so the want of these ordinances can never render his election of no effect. And supposing his doctrine to be true, who can deny the consequence? But the doctrine is false. Thus much of it is true; that, according to the Scripture, man is chosen, or elected, "out of the world," by the free grace of God, without any respect to his own works, (of which he can have none till he is called; being in the state of an unborn infant) and brought into God's church, where he is placed in a state of salvation. But he may fall from this state, or be cast out of it by the authority which brought him into it, and forfeit all the privileges of his election; therefore the Apostle gives us this warning; "let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall:" and St. Peter bids us "give diligence to make our calling and election sure." How can that be, if we are elected to salvation, by an irreversible decree? We need take no pains to make that sure, which in its nature is irreversible. Paul was a vessel chosen of God; and yet this same Paul supposes it possible for him to fall from the grace of God, and become a castaway. Election therefore, as it is spoken of in the Scripture, hath been grossly misunderstood: for there is no such thing there as any election of individuals to final salvation, independent of the ordinances of the church. Election is an inward and spiritual grace; but there is no such thing administered to man without some outward sign. A man might tell us that he is ordained to preach the Gospel: but we know this can never be without the laying on of hands. He may tell us he is one of God's elect; and if the reality of his election were to depend upon his own report, how should we confute him, although he were guilty of all manner of wickedness? If we believe him on his own authority, we may be tempted to be as wicked as he is:

and multitudes have by this doctrine corrupted one another, and fallen into what is called antinomianism; a neglect of God's commandments, as not necessary to those who are elected independent of works and sacraments. To secure us from all such delusions, God hath affixed some outward sign or pledge to all his inward gifts, to assure us of their reality, and prevent imposture. Therefore, where there is an inward calling, there is an outward calling with it; where there is regeneration, there is the sacrament of baptism; and the Gospel knows of no regeneration without it. I might shew how this doctrine of absolute election is dishonourable to God, and contrary to his most express declarations. How it encourages some to presumption, pride, and ungodly living*; and how it drives others to despair and distraction †, who have not, nor can bring themselves to an assurance of their own personal election to the favour of God: but my business in this place is only to remark, how convenient this doctrine is to all those who do not come to God in the ordinary way of his institutions, nor can prove themselves to be members of his church.

A second doctrine, on the ground of which men place themselves above the church, is that of immediate inspiration. For if men are now receiving new direction from heaven, and God speaks in them as he did in Moses and the Prophets, and the Apostles, they have no need to consult either the Scriptures or the church: for they are independent of both, and have an higher rule. This is the reason why no impression can ever be made upon a Quaker, by

* I remember a woman in a country parish, who used to boast much of her own experiences, and insult the people of the church as reprobates; goats who were to be placed on the left hand, at the day of judgment; while she and her party were the true elect, the sheep who were to be placed on the right hand. Such was the usual strain of her conversation. But after a time, I heard that this elect lady was gone off with the husband of another woman. She was a severe critic on the clergyman of the parish, as one who had many popish actions, because he made a practice of turning to the east when he repeated the creed; and though he was much attended to as a preacher, she said it all signified no more than the barking of a dog.

† When Dr. Sparrow was bishop of Exeter, there rarely passed a day, without a note or notes brought to priest, vicar, or reader, for the prayers of the congregation, for persons troubled in mind, or possessed; which, as some judicious persons conjectured, was occasioned by the frequent preaching up of the rigid predestination doctrines in some places in that city.

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arguments from the Scripture. He answers, that the Scriptures (as applied by us who do not understand them) cannot be brought in evidence against him; because (to speak in the Quaker language) he has within himself the same spirit that gave forth the Scriptures; and the revelation which is past, must give place to that which is present. Nothing blinds the eyes of men so effectually as pride; whence he who is vain enough to believe, that he is under the direction of immediate inspiration, must believe many other strange things. Such people therefore never fail to despise the ministry and worship of the church, and make light of all its institutions. The Apostles of Jesus Christ foreseeing by a true revelation, that there would be false pretensions to inspiration in the Christian church, as there were false prophets among the people of the Jews, give us warning not to "believe every spirit," (that is, not to believe all those who pretend to speak by the spirit) but to try them whether they speak by the spirit of truth or the spirit of error. There are many good rules to direct us on this occasion: but there is one which every body can understand. The spirit of truth is the spirit of love, and peace, and unity: the spirit of error is the spirit of hatred, and contention, and discord. The former tends to unite men into one body; the latter sets them at variance, and divides them into parties. "Beloved," saith St. John, "let us love one another; for every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God." When the great rule of charity is broken, and men lay claim to the spirit of God, while they have no title to it, then they are open to the delusions of evil spirits: and accordingly many have uttered hideous blasphemies, under a persuasion that they were speaking by the spirit of God. Some have proceeded so far as to personate God himself*. Certain it is, that the sects who have departed farthest from the church and its ordinances, are the most forward in their pretensions to imme-

* In the beginning of this century, there was a sect of *Camisat Quakers* in London, in whose assemblies persons of both sexes, particularly young girls, pretended to deliver prophecies, with strange screamings and distortions. One of these people, (horrible to relate) was seen to take another by the arm, and looking him broad in the face, said, "Do you not acknowledge me to be the eternal and unchangeable God?" To which the other, falling down and trembling, answered, "I do acknowledge thee, &c." Many fine people from the court end of the town, who would have paid but little respect to the benediction of a bishop, were seen bending their knees for a blessing, to these frantic females. See *View of the Times*, Vol. IV. p. 235.

ciate inspiration; and even where this is pretended to in a lesser degree, a contempt for the church and its ministry, seldom or never fails to attend upon it in the same proportion*.

A third doctrine which makes the church of no effect, is the sufficiency of moral virtue; and a perilous doctrine it is. It comes forward with a more sober face, but this error hath less of the Gospel than that of enthusiasm or predestination. For on this ground, a man need be of no church, of no sect, nor even a Christian believer; because moral honesty, which forbears thieving and cheating, may be found in a Turk or an Heathen. When people would appear to be what they are not, and endeavour to supply their defects by fine words and plausible pretences, we call them hypocrites: and I will assure the reader, there is a great deal of cant in the world, beside that of fanaticism and affected devotion. Impiety can act the hypocrite upon occasion, and magnify moral virtue when it is set in opposition to the love of God. It is not unusual for persons to praise a man's character; not because they love his virtues, but because they hate his rival. So do some bad men praise morality, because they hate devotion. This is too frequently the case with those who make a false estimate of what they call a good life; leaving out the duties most essential to the life of a good Christian; and these are a very large party. Heresy and schism, till they turn into profligacy, never fail to descant upon the sufficiency of moral duties; and in this they are joined by the whole tribe of Deists, Infidels, and moral Philosophers, who are glad to hear of a rule of morality, (such, by the way, as themselves are to define and determine) which will serve them as a substitute for the Christian life, and all the forms of church devotion. Here also we find those Christians, who live in the habitual neglect of the means of grace. I have heard people who never were at the altar, and perhaps never intended it, comforting themselves with this consideration, that they never did any harm to any body: when they should rather have asked themselves, what good they ever did to themselves, or to any body else, for the love of God? Without which, all the virtues of man are nothing; and if he places any dependance upon them, they are worse than nothing. If a man is to be

* The author of the "Snake in the Grass," prefixed a most excellent preface to that work, on the enthusiasm of Antonia Bourignon; shewing the original and tendency of hers and every other delusion of the same kind: which preface the reader will do well to consult.

saved by the Christian religion, he must be a Christian in his life: but simple morality is not Christian: it has neither faith, hope, charity, prayer, fasting, nor alms, which are the duties of the Christian life. If we mean to serve God, we must serve him in his church, and conform to its ordinances. If we do good to our neighbours, we must do it on a principle of faith; and a cup of cold water given on this principle, is of more value in the sight of God, than all the treasures of the Indies, if they are distributed from the proud heart of unbelief: and he is certainly in unbelief, who doth not direct himself by the rules, and act upon the principles, which God hath delivered to the church in the holy Scriptures.

Nearly related to the sufficiency of moral virtue, is the principle of sincerity, which was set up in the last age, as sufficient of itself to justify man in the sight of God, independent of the authority and benefits of his church: so that if a man be not a hypocrite, it matters not what religion he is of. If sincerity, as such, independent of any particular way of worship, can recommend man to the favour of God, then there can be no difference as to merit between a sincere martyr, and a sincere persecutor; and he that burns a Christian, if he be but in earnest, hath the same title to God's favour, as he that is burnt for believing in Jesus Christ. This position, (in the sense of it) absurd and monstrous as it must appear, was the support of a controversy in this kingdom, in which a bishop led the way*, and was followed and applauded by all the libertines and loose thinkers of the nation, who foresaw that the argument would end in the dissolution of the church as a society: and therefore they made him a thousand compliments.

If we consider how the mind of man is influenced by custom and education, and that his conscience and self-approbation will be according to his principles, then we shall see that sincerity, if

* Thus did the famous bishop Hoadley comfort all the sectaries and enthusiasts of his time: "When you are secure of your integrity before God—this will lead you not to be afraid of the terrors of men, or the vain words of regular and uninterrupted succession, authoritative benedictions, excommunications—nullity, or validity of ordinances to the people on account of niceties and trifles, or any other the like dreams." I can venture to say, there never was a cause more effectually baffled and exposed upon earth, than this of bishop Hoadley against the church, and church communion, in the two Letters, and the Reply of Mr. William Law, which every clergyman of the church of England ought to read, that he may know what ground he stands upon, and against what enemies he may be called forth to maintain it.

admitted, would sanctify all the wickedness under heaven. St. Paul, as a zealous Jew, verily thought (that is, he was sincere in his opinion), that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth; so he persecuted the Christians furiously, and breathed out threatenings and slaughter. Now, as he had a good meaning in all he did, to what end was he converted, when his sincerity would have saved him in his former way? After his mind was better enlightened, he pronounced himself to have been the greatest of sinners, for what he had thus done in the sincerity of his heart.

Thus it would be in all other cases; he that acts sincerely upon bad principles, must be a bad man: a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit: and, “not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.” Upon the whole, he that will be saved, must be saved in the way which God hath appointed, and not in any way of his own. We shall be judged at last according to God’s word, not according to any persuasions we may have taken up, through the prejudices of education, or the perverseness of our own hearts; all of which are indeed no better than dreams, having no foundation but on that loose bottom of human imagination, on which are built all the visions of the night, and all the heresies in the world.

If these doctrines of absolute election, immediate inspiration, the sufficiency of moral virtue, and justification from sincerity, were true, it would follow, that God is unwise, inconsistent and improvident. For if he appoints a visible church, and its ordinances, as necessary to make us members of the kingdom of heaven; and if he began the way of salvation by “adding to the church such as were to be saved;” and yet, with all this, has another private way of saving men, by a secret decree which has no regard to any outward means, he is inconsistent in ordaining them. And also, as the doctrine of immediate inspiration, or new revelation, without any signs or credentials from heaven, opens a way to every possible delusion of the mind, either from its own vain conceits, or the suggestions of evil spirits, God must be improvident in not securing us against such dangerous impositions, which may introduce all kinds of wickedness into the world, under the sanction of a divine authority: an impostor having nothing to do, but to persuade himself, as any madman may do, that he acts by immediate inspiration. With this per-

suasion, men have butchered one another to make bloody baptisms; have set themselves up as kings and rulers of the new Jerusalem; have taken plurality of wives, and blasphemously personated God himself*. All the disorders of the last century were committed by fanatics, who assumed a privilege of seeking the Lord, and consulting, and receiving answers from him; while their minds were bent upon the most horrible crimes of rebellion, robbery, sacrilege, persecution, and murder.

Then as to moral virtue; if that can save those who are not added to the church, it must follow, that man never was lost, and that Christ need not have come into the world. If sincerity in any persuasion good or bad, will recommend us to the favour of God, then will lies, if we do but believe them, answer all the purposes of truth: then is there no difference between good and evil; and it cannot be worth while to convert Jews, Turks, or Heathens, to the Gospel, because they are as safe in their own way. Such are the pleas by which some men of necessity, and some of malignity, seek to justify themselves, when they leave the church, or despise, or neglect its ordinances. But "the foundation of God standeth sure."

After what has been said few words will be wanting to convince any thinking person of the dangers and evil consequences which must attend the sin of causeless separation.

If men for salvation are brought out of the world into the church, they cannot possibly forsake it, without hazard to their salvation. If the promises of God, and the means of grace are committed to the church, we lose them when we leave the church: at least it will be very hard to prove that we carry them away with us: and who would chuse to be under any uncertainty in a case of such importance?

Another evil is that of breaking the great rule of charity in our worship. We are commanded to glorify God with one mind and one mouth, and all to speak the same thing. How contrary to this is the practice of following different ways of worship; some totally disagreeing with others; and some not deserving the name of any worship at all; for in some of our assemblies,

* See Ross's View of all Religions; particularly the Account of the Anabaptists of Germany. There was a treatise published under the name of a History of Modern Enthusiasm, between the years 1750 and 1760. We wish it were re-published. It gives a curious prospect of the effects of enthusiasm.

people meet to no purpose but to hear one another talk. There is no praying, no confession of sins, no absolution, no thanksgiving, no litany, no sacraments! We read that the Apostles, when the Holy Ghost descended, were "all with one accord in one place;" and so ought Christians to be, if they would preserve the presence of the spirit amongst them, who is the spirit of unity. And as the spirit of unity in worship disposes men to a more peaceable and charitable temper, so the spirit of division and fanaticism is attended with violence and bitterness of language, and an intolerant persecuting humour toward all who are not fanatics; especially toward the members of the church of England, which is deservedly placed at the head of the Protestant reformation*.

* An author who put out a Syllabus of Lectures, in the year 1778, on the Principles of Non-conformity, speaks in the person of Jesus Christ, upon the tribunal of judgment at the last day, and supposes him presenting to the world, on that tremendous occasion, his faithful servants, the Non-conformist ministers, as the great objects of his favour; and at the same time sending off those holy tyrants, the bishops of the church of England, into everlasting fire, with that dreadful sentence—DEPART! And what are they to be damned for? Because they could not approve of non-conformity! a religion of negatives! They saw enough of its fruits to dislike it in former times, from its first appearance in this kingdom: but they did not see, as we do now, that its end is infidelity: to which it hath been tending for many years past, and hath now attained it in the writings of Dr. Priestley, and the Unitarian association. These lectures, with this dreadful sentence of damnation to the bishops, by Brother Robinson, were approved by the Easter Association of Essex, at Harlow, and recommended to the sister-churches by order of all. June 18, 1778. Of what character must these sister-churches be, if they are of the same spirit with Brother Robinson? Surely they are not chaste virgins, presentable to a meek and merciful Saviour, who prayed for his murderers; but unmerciful harlots, cursing and damning the established church for retaining episcopacy. Had there been no non-conformity, the poor bishops might have escaped like other men, and have been entitled to their chance of mercy through the merits of their Redeemer, who died for them, and for all men, and sent forth the first bishops by his own immediate authority. What would such non-conformists do, if they had it in their power, who are provoked to such uncharitable ravings under the present most mild and moderate state of the church of England? The Lectures of Brother Robinson, we are informed, were produced in the House of Commons when the test act was in question.

But the most superlative instance of fanatic malignity I ever yet saw, is to be found in the works of Milton, whose malignity was rendered more malignant by the depressed and afflicted condition to which the church was then reduced. He was a man of a bright and perfect imagination, and gifted with a wonderful choice of beautiful and descriptive expressions. But the weapon is the worse for its sharpness, when malice hath the handling of it: and imagination is a mirror which can reflect the fires of hell as well as the lights of heaven; of which, I think, we have an example in the following invective against the bishops of the church of England: 'But they—that by

There is also great hazard of losing the doctrines, when we leave the worship of the church. When the ten tribes revolted from the worship at Jerusalem, they soon lost the truth of their law, and fell into an idolatrous worshipping of the calves they had set up in Dan and Bethel. Their government was troubled with great disorders, and their confusion ended in their utter dispersion. When men leave the worship of the church, it is very natural for them to become disaffected to its doctrines: and they who hate the Christian faith, will take part with those who are against the church; because they foresee, that if the church be destroyed, the faith will be lost; as the light goes out when the lamp is broken. One of the most malicious books that ever was written in this country against the Christian faith, was all of it apparently directed against the church: on which consideration, many, who then believed the Christian doctrines, were drawn in by a disaffection to the church, to take part with an infidel.

2. I am to remark farther, that with those who are ignorant and ill-instructed in the nature and use of the church, there is a perverse prejudice in favour of preaching; and consequently a shocking neglect of those duties which belong to the people. It is a fine easy way for people with itching ears, to hear a preacher talk them into heaven; while they neglect all the more essential parts of divine worship. Many hear a sermon with the same vain curiosity as people hear a speech upon a stage, and consult nothing but their own amusement. And while the whole of the ministerial duty is supposed to consist in preaching, a man, who can bawl and rant, is tempted to take himself for a minister of Jesus Christ, without any regular mission; of which sort we have multitudes in this kingdom at this time: and it is to be feared they

the impairing and diminution of the true faith, the distresses and servitude of their country, aspire to high dignity, rule, and promotion here, after a shameful end in this life (which God grant them!) shall be thrown down eternally into the darkest and deepest gulph of hell; where under the spiteful control, the trample and spurn of all the other damned, who, in the anguish of their torture, shall have no other ease than to exercise a raving and beastial tyranny over them, as their slaves and negroes, they shall remain in that plight for ever, the basest, the lowermost, the most dejected, most underfoot, and down trodden vassals of perdition."—Conclusion of Milton's Treatise on Reformation: Vol. I. p. 274. If it were put to my option, whether I would be an idiot, without a single faculty of mind, or a single sense of the body; or whether I would have Milton's imagination, attended with this fiery spirit of fanaticism, I should not hesitate one moment to determine.

are increasing. It is no uncommon thing for persons of all persuasions to meet in the same church to hear the same preacher; many of whom have no communion with one another at any other time: how is a preacher to please such a mixt multitude of hearers, but by leaving the church of Christ out of the question, and preaching a loose sort of religion, which will fit them all? Perhaps, if he were to speak the plain truth, and, from a sincere regard to their souls, give them such information as they stand most in need of, many of them would leave him with indignation: as there were those who would walk no longer with Jesus Christ, because they were not able to bear the things that were spoken by him. There is a fashion of inviting people to come to Christ, without telling them where and how he is to be found. Besides, it is a great mistake to suppose, that the whole of religion consists in our taking of Christ; it is beginning at the wrong end: for Christ is to take us, as he took the little children in his arms, and gave them his blessing*. He said to his disciples, "ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." There is a covenant between us and God, into which God, of his infinite grace, takes us; we do not take him, neither can we: and this confines us to the ordinances of the church, which are not of us, but are the gifts of God's free grace to us miserable sinners: and Christians are united to God, and to one another, by the services of prayer, and the participation of the sacraments, more than by the hearing of the word of God without them; which many hear for reasons of vanity and uncharitableness. Who are the best friends every minister hath in his parish? They who attend the prayers and sacraments with him; who are edified by his priesthood as well as by his preaching; and are active in the great work of their own salvation.

3. As the latter times of the Jewish church were very corrupt, and the doctrines of God were rendered of none effect by the inventions of men, it is agreeable to the prophecies of the New Testament, that offences must come amongst us; that men must

* Mr. Locke, in his Reasonableness of Christianity, (a strange piece of divinity) is in the same mistake. He makes baptism a visible act, whereby those, who believed Christ to be the Messiah, received him as their king. So again in the same style, he says, that by baptism men enroll themselves in the kingdom of Jesus; which is but to say in other words, that they write their own names in heaven. From such language as this, it is too apparent that Mr. Locke's ideas of the Christian priesthood and sacraments, were exceedingly low.

arise, out of the church, “ speaking perverse things, to draw away “ disciples after them:” also that many will not “ endure sound “ doctrine, but heap up to themselves teachers, having itching “ ears.”

These, and many other like passages, give us notice that there must be a falling off from the faith, with confusion and disagreement in the Christian society. If we look at our own church, we have but a melancholy prospect; and cannot help observing, that it approaches too near to the state of the Jewish church before its destruction. As they had corrupted the doctrines of Moses and the prophets, and in consequence of it were divided into sects, (for as truth unites, error always divides men) so have we corrupted the doctrines of the Gospel, and are miserably divided in consequence of it. I could name some doctrines, which if our Saviour were now to deliver in the metropolis of London, with the same freedom and authority as he did at Jerusalem, I verily believe he would be persecuted and put to death by people called Christians, as he was of old by those who were called Jews. The church of Jerusalem was infested with temporising and philosophising Jews, who were farthest of all others from the faith, while they affected to be wiser than all the rest of the people. The Sadducees believed neither angel nor spirit, and said there was no resurrection. The Herodians were politicians, and men of the world, who flattered Herod that he was the Messiah. The Pharisees were a proud sanctified sect, very godly in outward shew, but full of hypocrisy within. They justified themselves, and despised others, as not good enough to stand near them, or belong to the same church with them. Of the sect of the Essenes, we have no particular account in the New Testament; but from all we can learn, I take them to have been the Quakers of that time, who had thrown off all external rites of worship, and affected a religion perfectly pure and philosophical. The Sadducees were the Socinians of Judaism; who had nothing spiritual belonging to them, and had reduced their law to an empty form. The venality and avarice of the Jews of our Saviour’s time, were notorious, and provoked his indignation. Their temple, filled with buyers and sellers, was turned into a den of thieves: and, God knows, there is too much of a worldly traffick amongst us; which is too far gone to be reformed, and too bold to be censured—*venduntur omnia* *!

* “ CHURCH LIVING.

“ Two thousand pounds ready for the next presentation to a rectory of adequate

4. But whatever abuses there may be in the church, it is our duty to make the best of it. The church is our spiritual mother; and we may apply those words of the wise man, "despise not thy mother when she is old;" not even if she should be in rags and dotage. The doctrine of the church of England is, by profession, still pure and apostolical; and, whatever faults it may have contracted, it cannot be worse than the church which our Saviour found at Jerusalem: yet he still recommended to the congregation the duty of obedience to their spiritual rulers. "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do." Bad as the church then was, our Saviour never forsook it, but "taught daily in the Temple;" and his Apostles attended upon its worship at the hours of prayer; and probably continued so to do, till they were dispersed. Neither Christ nor his disciples ever considered the doctrines of church authority, and succession, and conformity, as vain words and idle dreams, as our Socinians have done of late years; and after what hath been said, their views want no explanation.

5. In our behaviour toward those who have departed from us, let not us, who honour the church, fall into the error of those who despise it. Let us not betray any symptoms of pride in censuring with severity, but rather, with hearts full of sorrow and compassion, lament the differences and divisions which expose the Christian religion to the scorn of its enemies. Infidels are delighted to see that Christians cannot understand one another; from thence they are ready to report, that there is no sense amongst them all, nor any reason in their religion; for that, if there were, they would agree about it. In this also the Papists triumph; they boast of their advantage over the reformed, in that they are preserved in peace and unity, while we are torn to pieces with factions and divisions. Hence they reflect upon the whole reformation, as a natural source of confusion; that they belong to Jerusalem, and we to Babel; that when we leave their church, the city upon the hill, we never know where to stop, till we get

value, with immediate resignation.—The advertiser is sixty-five years of age. Apply to Mr. —, Attorney, Holborn."

Perjury, which is now in a very growing state, may, in time, come to market with as much boldness as her sister Simony hath done for many years past.

to the bottom: that is, till we have run either into the madness of enthusiasm, or the profaneness of infidelity. How shall we stop this wide mouth of scandal, while appearances are so much against us? However this reproach doth not reach us of the church of England; who, in doctrine and profession, are where we were two hundred years ago. Let those who have left us, try if they can answer the Papists upon this head: it is their business to account for the confusion which they only have introduced.

If the clergy of this church have any desire to preserve it, they must consider for what end the church is appointed. A Christian church is a candlestick, to hold forth the light of the Gospel. When it ceases to answer that end, it is of no use as a church; and the world may do as well without it. Great things have been attributed of late times to moral preaching: but there is no such thing as telling people what they are to do, without telling them what they are to believe; because the Christian morality is built upon the Christian faith, and is totally different from the morality of Heathens. Deism, so called, is a religion without Christianity; it has neither the Father, the Son, nor the Holy Ghost, into whose name Christians are baptized. It has no sacraments, no redemption, no atonement, no church communion, and consequently no charity; for charity is the love and unity of Christians as such. Natural religion is but another name for Deism; it is the same thing in all respects; and I may challenge all the philosophers in Europe to shew the difference. Therefore, to recommend moral duties on the ground of natural religion, is to preach Deism from a pulpit: and we should ask ourselves whether God, who upholds his church, to declare salvation by Jesus Christ alone, will preserve a church, when it has left the Gospel, and holds forth the light of Deism in the candlestick which was made, and is supported in the world, only to hold forth the light of Christianity? What else is it that hath made way for the enthusiastic rant of the Tabernacle? When the wise forsake the Gospel, then is the time for the unwise to take it up; but with such a mixture of error and indiscretion, as gives the world a pretence for never returning to it any more: and then the case is desperate.

‘Deism, properly so called,’ (saith a certain writer) ‘is the religion essential to man, the true original religion of reason and nature.—It is in Deism, properly so called, that our more dis-

cerning and rational divines have constantly placed the alone excellency and true glory of the Christian institution.'—'The Gospel' (says Dr. Sherlock) 'was a republication of the law of nature, and its precepts declarative of that original religion which was as old as the creation.'—'If natural religion' (says Mr. Chandler) 'be not a part of the religion of Christ, it is scarce worth while to enquire at all what his religion is: from whence it seems very natural to infer, that the other parts of the religion of Christ are scarce worth any thing at all of our notice.' [Deism fairly stated by a moral philosopher: p. 5, 6, 7.] See the whole book, which proceeds on this principle; that natural religion being admitted, it must be a perfect scheme, a compleat structure; and that Christianity, as a superstructure, is unnecessary: and it is lamentable to see what advantage this author takes of the unguarded concessions of some celebrated Christian preachers and controversialists of the church of England, who did not foresee, or did not consider, the consequences of their doctrines.

The Bishop of Llandaff's Collection of Tracts, in six volumes, opens with the Theological Lectures of Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, a Dissenting teacher; which shews his lordship's great candour toward that party. In the first chapter of which Lectures, I find a rule of interpretation repugnant to the rule given us by the Scripture itself, which directs us to "compare spiritual things with spiritual;" that is, to compare the Scripture with the Scripture, that we may keep to the true sense of it. But here it is laid down as a fundamental rule, that we should always interpret the Scripture in a sense "consistent with the laws of natural religion; for that the law of nature, as it is founded in the unchangeable nature of things, must be the basis and ground-work of every constitution of religion which God hath erected*." Now, with all due deference to his lordship's judgement in collecting properly for the edification of the clergy, and the people committed to their charge, this rule of Dr. Taylor prejudices the Scripture before we come to it, and inculcates into inexperienced students of divinity, the very principle that hath ruined us, and given us up as a prey to the Deists; it allows them the advantage they have contended for against the peculiar doctrines of revelation, as scarce worth any thing at all of our notice, in comparison of natural

* See Theologic. Tracts, vol. i. p. 5.

religion. For here, I say, before we descend to the Scripture, we are possessed of a system founded in the unchangeable nature of things; from which, whatsoever the Bible may seem to reveal, we are never to depart. Let us then suppose, that our Christian baptism teaches us to believe in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: What have we to do? Natural religion hath already determined, from the “unchangeable nature of things, that God is but one person*.” Therefore we must interpret the form of baptism to such a sense, as will still leave this doctrine of nature in possession; either by teaching that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are in reality but one Person, or that Jesus Christ is no person in the Godhead, but a mere man, like ourselves; or, that Christianity is not true, &c. So in like manner, by another anticipation, natural religion makes every man his own priest and his own temple: therefore it cannot possibly admit the true and proper priesthood of Jesus Christ, but must reject the whole doctrine of atonement, and the corruption of man’s nature; for this is incompatible with the idea of a natural religion, inasmuch as corrupt nature must produce a corrupt religion. If we say that nature is not corrupt, we overturn the foundations of the Gospel; which teaches us, that “the natural man receiveth not the things “ of the spirit of God, neither can he know them.”—Man, it seems, is so far from knowing the spiritual things revealed to him in the Scripture, that, as he now is by nature, he is not in a condition to receive them (they will be foolishness to him) till he is enabled so to do by a new faculty of discernment, which is supernatural and spiritual. It is therefore easy to foresee what must be the consequence, when Dr. Taylor’s rule is admitted; and the younger clergy of this church, presented (as I hear some of them are) with a copy of his lordship’s collection, study divinity upon this ground. They will take the doctrines of nature, and work them up with the doctrines of the Scripture: that is, they will throw natural religion into the Scripture, as Aaron threw the gold of Egypt into the fire: and what will come out? Not the Christian religion, but the philosophical calf of Socinus.

Mr. Locke’s Reasonableness of Christianity may be read with safety by those who are already well learned in the Scripture: but

* “This, (says Dr. Clarke) is the first principle of natural religion.” See Mr. Jones’s Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity; p. 15, of the sixth edition; where this is considered more at large.

if I had been of his lordship's counsel, I should have thought it my duty to remonstrate against the admission of it into such a collection. For what a perilous situation must that poor young man be in, who, perhaps, when he can but just construe the Greek Testament, or before, is turned over to be handled and tutored by this renowned veteran; who, with a shew of reasonableness, and some occasional sneers at orthodoxy, and affecting the piety and power of inspiration itself, has partly overlooked, and partly explained away, the first and greatest principles of Christianity, and reduced it to a single proposition, consistent with Heresy, Schism, Calvinism, Arianism, Socinianism, and Quakerism.

His lordship hath introduced many other tracts of the Dissenters, besides the lectures of Dr. Taylor, for the use of the clergy of the church of England; and gives such a reason for it, as hath a very fair and liberal appearance. But in order to make a right estimate of this measure, and prove it in the balance of truth and equity, let us change the scales. Let us suppose, that some Doctor in a Dissenting, or peradventure (for such it may be in this age) a Socinian Academy, had compiled a miscellaneous book for the use of the students, and opened his collection with a course of institution by some true and zealous divine of the church of England; I rather think the party would consider him as a suspicious character; who, under the mask of candour and liberality, was slyly endeavouring to bring them all round about to orthodoxy and uniformity.

C H A P. IV.

ON THE ABUSE OF THE REFORMATION, &c.

TO the doctrines which are pleaded in defence of separation, I might have added the use which has been made of the historical event of our reformation from the errors of the church of Rome. Here the Dissenters are in confederacy with the Papists against us. The Papists object, that by the fact of our separation from their church, the principle of separation is admitted; and being once admitted, it will multiply sects and divi-

sions amongst us, and justify them all, as much as it justifies us. This is the very argument which the Dissenters have repeated an hundred times; and they borrowed it originally from Rome, whose emissaries were detected among the Puritans in the days of Elizabeth, feeding them with reasons and objections for the multiplying of schism, and the weakening of the episcopal church of England: and God knows, they succeeded but too well. However, the link which unites these two parties, may easily be broken. They both agree, that the reformation of the church of England was a separation from the church of Rome, of the same kind, and on the same principles, with the separation of our Dissenters. But to say this, is to assert that the Pope had a legal authority over the church of England, when in fact it was an usurped authority; and the church of England reformed itself, as a national episcopal church, on the ground of its original independence of the see of Rome. Therefore, till our sectaries have given up this point to the Papists, and made the church of England legally dependent on the authority of Rome, the case of our reformation affords no precedent for their separation. This Bishop Hoadley knew; therefore he allowed the authority of the church of Rome, and made the reformation of this church a forcible separation, or schism, that all the sectaries might be justified by our example. But he goes to a greater length; he maintains that we did not reform, because the doctrines of the church of Rome were actually corrupt, but because we thought them so; putting our reformation on the foot of opinion, not of reasonable right, and actual knowledge: and opinion being once admitted as a rule of reformation, will hold as good against us, as against the Papists: nay, it will stop no where, till it make every man a church to himself, with such doctrines as he likes, and without any one Christian ordinance whatsoever. When we descend to reason and authority, a weak cause may soon be overthrown; but if opinion is to justify, the Quakers may stand their ground; and so may Socinians, Mahometans, Jews, and Heathens; because the opinions of men, from the force of custom and habit, will go with the persuasion in which they have been educated. The Papists wish to put all reformation from their church on such a foot, that the principle may be ruined by its own absurdity: and in this our sectaries, with Bishop Hoadley for their advocate, have given them all the advantage they can desire.

Popular power is another engine which hath been turned against the church; that is, against the authority of God and his ministers; and if this is admitted, then must that be right which the people set up, whatever it may be. All unlawful authority affects to ride in upon the backs of the people: and the patriots of Pagan Rome, while they trampled upon captive kings, and looked upon all nations as made to be their slaves, were always flattering the people of their own commonwealth, with the conceit of their own majesty. The Geneva discipline went upon this principle; and they were followed therein by our Puritans and Independents. But the Scripture is so expressly against it, that its friends were tempted to corrupt the text of the New Testament, to give it countenance. In the history of the ordaining the seven deacons, in the sixth chapter of the Acts, the text says—"whom we may appoint over this business"—giving the appointment to the Apostles. But the words were altered into—"whom ye may appoint"—giving the appointment to the people. One of the largest and the most numerous folio editions of the Bible ever printed in this country, which is that of Field, 1660, several copies of which are still to be seen upon the reading-desks in our churches, has this corruption; as many others had from the years 1640 to 1660. Field's edition was worked off in the time of the usurpation, and was to have been published under the authority of the parliament; but not coming forth till after the restoration, the title page was changed, and it made its appearance *cum privilegio*.

From this falsification of the apostolical history, it is easy to foresee (and every young reader should be aware of it) how the English history, particularly that of the last century, must have suffered under the hands of the same party; what falsities and forgeries must have been propagated, to conceal the truth, to defame and blacken the best characters, and to justify the worst. Sometimes these bold experiments brought the authors of them into great embarrassment. Mr. Baxter, in two editions of his Saint's Everlasting Rest, printed before the year 1660, instead of the "kingdom of heaven," as it is in the Scripture, calls it the "parliament of heaven" (and, if like their own, it must have been a parliament without a king) and into this parliament he puts some of the regicides, and other like saints, who were then dead. But in the editions after the restoration, he drops them all out of heaven again, and restores the kingdom of God to its place.

Lord Brook was one of the saints whom Baxter thus disanonized: of whose remarkable end Lord Clarendon gives an account; Vol. II. chap. VI. p. 114.

But to return to the subject of popular election. I have an author before me, a declaimer against priestcraft, who finds the right of the people in the history of the election of Matthias to the apostleship. "Matthias is elected," says he "to testify that ordination might be valid by the votes of the people only, without the immediate interposition of heaven." He calls the assembly of Apostles and Disciples, who were an hundred and twenty in number, "the people;" of whom we know that eleven were Apostles; that seventy more were ordained ministers; and nothing appears, but that (the women excepted) all the rest of the assembly were of the ministry likewise. But supposing them to be the people, how does it appear, that ordination was valid by their votes? Where is the account of this voting? The election is referred to God in the determination of a lot.—"Thou, Lord, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen." Here the immediate interposition of heaven is applied for; but our orator says, this ordination was from the votes of the people only, without any such interposition of heaven*. These two examples may be sufficient to shew the wretched shifts, and bold experiments, to which men are driven in the handling of the Scripture, to uphold the anti-christian doctrine of a church derived from the authority of the people.

* See the *Axe laid to the Root of Priestcraft*, in four Discourses. See Disc. iv, p. 5.

A
SHORT VIEW
OF THE
PRESENT STATE
OF THE
ARGUMENT
BETWEEN THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
AND THE
DISSENTERS.

SHORT VIEW, &c.



THE excellent Hooker, in the preface to his Ecclesiastical Polity, gives us a curious and clear account of the zeal and artifice with which the first Puritans maintained and recommended their schism against the church of England. But every member of this church should see, within as short a compass as may be, how the same cause (allowing for the difference of times and fashions) is maintained now.

A worthy divine distinguished himself some forty years ago, in Three Letters to a Gentleman dissenting from the Church of England; which letters were much attended to at the time, and procured the author the notice and encouragement of Archbishop Secker. He afterwards reduced the substance of them into a small manual, addressed to a Dissenting parishioner, with the pious desire of guiding him to the Church of England: and an excellent little piece it is. But as the zeal of our Dissenters permits nothing of this kind to pass, without the appearance of an answer, it is probable they set one of their best hands upon the work of writing a short reply to it; that the Dissenting parishioner might not be guided to the church of England. This reply, which was printed at Birmingham, I have, with some difficulty, procured; and I shall produce, in their order, such arguments as I have found in it; from which it will be seen, how the Dissenters of the present age defend their separation.

1. They make very light of the sin of schism, as a thing which has nothing frightful to wise people; although it be dressed up by us in a frightful form, to terrify the ignorant, and such as are children in understanding.

Such is schism, when it is committed against us; but when it comes home to themselves, they have entertained a very different opinion of it, and have carried the principle of unity as high as the most zealous of the church of England. Liberty of conscience, when it operated against themselves, was called, "cursed toleration, that hideous monster toleration," in a book subscribed by the ministers of the province of London, Dec. 14, 1647*. We are then agreed, that schism must be of pernicious consequence, and that it is a grievous affliction to the Christian society; though we are not rightly agreed as to the objects of schism. If considered in itself, it is the opposite to St. Paul's virtue of charity; as any intelligent person may see, who reads the 15th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, as a continuation of the 12th chapter. And if charity is the greatest of all virtues, its contrary, which is schism, must be the greatest of all sins; therefore, we justly pray against it in the Litany. Whether the Dissenters ever follow our example, is more than I know; though it can scarcely be expected that they should pray against, while they continue in it, and think it hath nothing frightful to wise people. But if we may judge of it by its fruits, (and there is no better rule) what envy and hatred, what disputings and railings, what cruelty and persecution, what rebellion and sacrilege, hath it not produced in this kingdom? And they who acted these things were so far from taking shame to themselves, that they laid all the guilt of them upon the church, which they persecuted and plundered! We should be glad to forget these things, but that there are some amongst us who delight in the memory of those unhappy times, and chew all the murder and the mischief of them over again, which is the case with the author of the Confessional, and other writers of the same spirit. As to the corruption of doctrine, which follows upon schism, it was so apparent to the actors in the schism of the last century, that it forced from them, that testimony above-mentioned, against the cursed nature of toleration. Threescore different sects, some holding monstrous and blasphemous opinions, rose out of the Presbyterians of that time. Now, to make light of all these things, as if schism, which is a root of bitterness, *i. e.* an active principle of mischief in the mind, were but a slight offence, a mere scarecrow to wise people, is to deceive men, and bring their consciences and souls into a fatal

* See a Friendly Debate between a Conformist and a Non-conformist, Edit. 2. p. 76.

snare. Nay, it is not only to deceive them, simply, but with the very deception which brought death into the world. The tempter suggested to our first parents, that they should not surely die; and that their apprehensions of danger arose from the ignorance and childishness of their understandings.

2. They plead next, that their schism, with respect to the church of England, is no more than a separation from an human establishment; for that the church of England has no foundation but upon the king and the parliament; whereas the church of Christ is founded upon the doctrines taught by the Apostles.

If our church has no foundation but upon the king and parliament, then certainly it is not founded upon the authority of Christ, and consequently it is no church of Christ. But will any man say, that a national church, being a member of the catholic church of Christ, ceases to be such, when adopted as a part of the constitution, and established by the civil power? Suppose it were persecuted by the civil power; and its ministers and worship were proscribed; would it therefore cease to be a church of Christ? Certainly not: for the church of the Hebrews in Egypt, was still the church of God, though the people were under a cruel edict not to serve him; and God owned it as such, and delivered it at last. Do the powers of this world unmake the church by their reception of it, when they do not by their persecuting of it? Do its bishops and priests cease to be bishops and priests? Do its sacraments cease to be sacraments? Doth its discipline cease to be Christian discipline, and lose its authority, because the state admits of it, and establishes it? I say, suppose they were to declare against all these things, as the Heathens and Jews did in the first ages of the Gospel, their declaration would signify nothing: because the church, in its priesthood and sacraments, derives its authority only from Jesus Christ, which the persecution of the civil powers cannot reach; much less can their allowance turn it into an human authority, and render it of none effect. But we shall see hereafter, how all this is overthrown, by another plea which the Dissenters (forgetting this) have made use of to defend their separation from the church of England.

To say, that the church of Christ is founded upon the doctrines taught by the Apostles, is a gross mistake. Doctrines can no more confer authority of office to church ministers, than the statute book in England can make a justice of the peace; whose power must come to him by personal deputation. A written law does nothing,

till there comes an executive power, lawfully ordained, to administer and bring it to effect. Let any Dissenter shew us the text or doctrine that will make a priest. We can soon shew him one which tells us how priests must be made.—“ No man taketh
“ this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was
“ Aaron ;” who was called by an outward consecration, from a person whom God had commissioned to consecrate : and the power thus given descended by succession to his posterity. The power of absolution was given by Christ to the Christian ministry, and without this power there can be no such thing as a church of Christ. The priesthood had the power of absolution under the law of Moses ; and even the priests of Heathenism were never considered as the representatives of the people, but of the God to whom they belong ; to pronounce blessings, and forgive sins in his name. But the Presbyterians are so far from claiming this power to themselves, (though supposed to be in all the priests of the world) that they mock at it in us, and call it popery and juggling ; and a church so rejecting a power essential to the nature of priesthood, is in a state of abjuration against its own existence.

3. They say the church of England hath imposed such articles of faith, as the Gospel hath not imposed ; for which imposition Christ hath given no authority.

This objection extends to every church upon earth, that requires any articles of faith, as terms of church communion ; and it proves too much if it proves any thing. The Gospel, it is true, imposes nothing but baptism and its faith in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost : all other articles are intended for the defence and security of this one in its proper extent. And such articles will be more or less, according to times and occasions, as the adversaries of the faith assault it on different sides, and with different principles of offence. The Gospel does not require that we should renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil ; nor set down the Apostles' creed, as a condition of communion : and, if we had a mind to be perverse and captious, we might argue that a man may come to Christian baptism with his mouth shut, and not say one word for himself, because the Gospel hath not set down the form, nor specified the terms of the baptismal covenant ; though the intention or sense of it (what we are to renounce, and what we are to believe) is clear throughout the New Testament. The church of England hath articles expressly against popery : but the Gospel hath imposed no such articles ; it knew nothing of

popery, and the principle of the Dissenters would leave us defenceless against the Papists, as well as all our other enemies, and is contrary to the fundamental principle of all society, and even of nature itself. We have no occasion here to enquire, what the articles of the church of England are; because the objection extends to all articles whatsoever, except such as are set down in the Scripture, which sets down nothing but baptism; and is so brief in its accounts, that every true principle of the Christian faith might be evaded, if we were to lay hold of some short expressions, and make them exclusive, contrary to common rules of reasoning, the plainest facts, and the nature of the case, as some have done; particularly the celebrated Mr. Locke, who contends, that the Christian Gospel has but one article, namely, "that Jesus Christ is the Messiah;" whereas the one great condition of salvation, in the Gospel, is baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; therefore the great and fundamental article of the Gospel, is that of faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It is plain the church was under some particular rules beside the expressions of the New Testament, from the words of St. Paul, where he mentions the *παράδοσις*, traditions or ordinances, delivered to the church of Corinth, to be religiously kept or observed. See 1 Cor. xi. 2.

4. From the preceding article, which asserts, that the church of England hath imposed articles which Christ hath not imposed; it is argued, that in opposing the church of England, they oppose "an invasion of the kingly authority of Jesus Christ."

Jesus Christ doth not act in person, but hath commissioned his church to act for him, and hath promised to be with it, and support its authority, to the end of the world. Therefore, to argue for Jesus Christ against his church, is to set up Jesus Christ against himself; and the like objection may be made against all the churches in the world: which, so far as they act for their own just rights, under Jesus Christ, may be said to act against him. Every true church is bound to assert and defend the faith it hath received: but its enemies will call this necessary defence an imposition, and then contend, that they are free from all obligation. But with what grace doth this argument come from the party, who imposed their own solemn league and covenant on men's consciences in this kingdom, at the peril of their lives and fortunes, and proscribed them as malignants if they refused to take it; for

which there certainly is neither precedent nor precept in the Gospel? How marvellously do the opinions of men change, when they argue for themselves, and when they argue against us.

5. To explain away the offence of schism, it is farther argued, that as there were schisms among the Corinthians, when it does not appear that there was any separation; so there may be a separation where there is no schism: because Christians may still be united in heart and affection, though they perform the offices of religion in different places and in different ways.

The history of facts in this country give us a different prospect of things; and indeed it is preposterous to suppose, that if we sow in schism, we shall reap in unity: or in other words, that if we murder and mangle the body of the church, we shall preserve charity, which is the life and soul of it. It is true, we shall not dispute much about any thing, if we are indifferent to every thing: but misguided religious zeal is not of this insipid character. The ordinance of parliament of the 11th of Aug. 1645, for putting in execution the directory, has these words—"If any person or persons whatsoever, shall, at any time or times hereafter, use, or cause the aforesaid Book of Common Prayer to be used in any church, chapel, or public place of worship, or in any private place, or family, within the kingdom of England, or the dominion of Wales, or port and town of Berwick; every person so offending herein, shall, for the first offence, pay the sum of five pounds of lawful English money; for the second offence, ten pounds; and for the third, shall suffer one whole year's imprisonment, without bail or mainprize." This law was one of the fruits of schism; and there never was a law more severe and cruel. The king was then living, and the private worship of his family is not excepted. But these were days of religious madness; we know better now. So it is said; but I fear with very little truth. What would not that persecuting spirit do, if it had power, which is so conspicuous in the Syllabus of Mr. Robinson's Lectures, a Dissenting teacher at Cambridge? How fresh is the remembrance (or ought to be) of the riots in London, which shook the kingdom, and brought us so nearly to ruin in a few days; all conducted by a fanatic Presbyterian, with a rout of forty thousand disorderly people at his heels? And if the principles of fanaticism can perform such wonders here, even in a man without learning, without parts, without morals, without sense: how dreadful may their effects be upon a future occasion! and who can

tell how soon that occasion may happen? especially as Dr. Priestley, another Dissenting teacher, is now threatening us with impending ruin, from himself and his party; who give us warning, that they have long been, and are now, conveying gunpowder under our foundation, to blow up the old rotten fabric of the church of England? But our Dissenting apologists assure us, Christians may still be united in heart and affection, though they worship God in different places: and that there may be separation without schism, as there was schism at Corinth without separation. But these smaller schisms of the Corinthians, which did not actually separate them into different communions, were yet, according to the Apostle, very reprehensible, and of bad tendency: therefore, actual separation, being schism in the extreme, must be more reprehensible. To suppose it less, is to contradict the reason of things; as if it should be argued, that because we may hurt a man without killing him, therefore we may kill a man without hurting him.

6. However, if there should be any schism betwixt the church of England and the Dissenters, they say the guilt of it is with the church, who will not “yield to weak brethren in things which are confessed to be indifferent and of small moment.”

With what propriety can things of small moment be introduced, as objections to our communion, after it has been asserted, that the church of England is “no church of Christ?” If that objection be good, all things of small moment are superfluous. For who can be obliged, or who indeed will consent, to be a member of a church, which is no church of Christ? “Leave things indifferent (saith this reply) as they are in their own nature, and as Christ hath left them, and the separation is over.” So then, if these indifferent things were removed, the Dissenters would communicate with a church, which is no church of Christ! Who can believe this? Is it not much more probable, that the Dissenters do not mean to throw up the separation for any concessions that can be made by a church, which, in their opinion, is itself separated from the communion of Jesus Christ? These objections are so inconsistent, that they leave small hopes of the possibility of a reconciliation. For if all these small things were removed, still there will remain the insuperable (and we trust, uncharitable and groundless) objection, that the church of England is no church of Christ; and that Dissenters cannot upon any principle communicate with a false church. The case between

us is very bad under this representation of it ; but it becomes, if possible, more hopeless in what follows.

7. For the Reply tells us, that the Dissenters do not stand out for the value of the things required, which are matters of indifference ; but stand up in defence of that liberty, wherewith Christ hath made them free, and will not be brought into bondage.

Do they think then, that Christ hath given them liberty to break the peace of the church, for matters indifferent ? That is, to destroy peace, essential to salvation ; to save liberty, the creature of human pride ? Another apologist of the dissenters, the author of *The independent Whig*, puts this matter out of question ; and affirms without reserve, that schism is so necessary to the preservation of liberty, that there can be “ no liberty without schism.” What would the Christian world be, if this principle were universally followed ? No two of us could consent together ; because the one must lose his liberty, till he goes off into schism ; so it would break all Christian societies into individuals. Liberty and bondage are words of strange significations in this land, which it would be tedious to display. Only let us distinguish, that there is no bondage in dutiful submission ; for that is the service of God which is perfect freedom : nor any liberty in unreasonable disobedience ; for that is the bondage of Satan, who works in the children of disobedience, and puts them to a great deal of trouble ; making them restless and impatient, and leading them such a wearisome life, that, if it were not called liberty, they would wish themselves out of the world.

8. The church of England is accused of taking away the bread and the cup, unless people will receive kneeling ; and Christ hath not made kneeling a necessary term of communion.

Nor is it necessary with us ; because we administer the sacrament to the sick or the infirm, either sitting, kneeling, or lying. Kneeling is proper to an act of devotion ; such the sacrament of the Lord's supper is now, and not a social act of eating, as at the passover, when it was first instituted. Kneeling may admit of a bad construction, because the Papists kneel and worship the host ; but charity will give it a good construction, and then all the difficulty is over. However, let us call it an imposition : yet why should the enjoining of it be objected to by the very people, who imposed on all that took their solemn league and covenant, the posture of standing, with the ceremony of lifting up the right hand

bare? But, what is still more to the purpose, one of their apologists assures us, they make no scruple of giving their sacrament to all those who chuse to kneel in a meeting-house*. Therefore it is not the thing, (though that is sometimes highly exclaimed against) but the enjoining of the thing that renders it offensive; and it appears from this case, that Dissenters will do that to please themselves, which they will not do to please God; who hath enjoined us all to be at peace with one another, and to agree in his worship.

Sponsors in baptism, and the signature of the cross, are objected to. But the first is only a prudent provision, as a farther security for the child, if the parents should die, or be of such characters as renders them unfit for sponsors; which the child cannot help. The signature of the cross can give no offence (as one should think) to any person who delights in the memory of the cross itself. The purest ages of the church used it on all occasions, particularly in exorcisms, which were antiently a part of baptism; and there are some pretty clear intimations in the Scripture for the use of some signature on the forehead; and the first of all signatures is that of the cross. For motives of worldly traffic, the Dutch, instead of preferring it to a place in their foreheads, trample it under their feet: and our Dissenters reject it from an affection to their schism. If the Papists are superabundant and superstitious in the use of the cross, what is that to us? If they repeat the Lord's prayer twenty times in an hour, are we not to repeat it all †?

9. It is farther objected to our church, that the people have a right, an analienable right, to chuse their own ministers; which with us they are not permitted to do.

As for the patriotic term unalienable, it is applied to rights of nature, which are unalienable because they are inherent. But here, it can only mean, that the Dissenters claim it, and are resolved not to part with it. On this part of the subject, I must lament with tears in my eyes, the great abuses in the church of

* "In some of our churches, there are some who receive standing, some kneeling.—Nor is there, I believe, amongst our ministers, one in five hundred, who would refuse to give the sacrament either standing or kneeling, to any one who thought either of these the fittest posture of receiving." *Dissenting Gentleman's Answer to the Rev. Mr. White's Three Letters*, p. 21.

† See the use of the Signature of the Cross in Baptism, fully and learnedly vindicated in *Bennet's Abridgment of the London Cases*, chap. vi.

England, in respect to patronage and admission into church-livings. But in bad times, no regulations are sufficient to secure us from corruption; and even the very means appointed to keep out bad men, will let them in: for there are times, when persons of no conscience or character may act with impunity; and the worst of men are the most ready to play with all religious securities. That this case would be mended, if the choice of ministers were always with the people, is by no means clear. For nothing is so common as for people to be divided in interests and affections on very unworthy motives; and hence many great and scandalous disturbances arise; and a parish is so divided into parties, that perhaps they do not come into humour again for some years. Besides; suppose a Socinian should have got possession of a pulpit, and preach the people (or a few of the most active, noisy and cunning, who overbear all the rest) into heresy: whom would they chuse, but a Socinian, at the next vacancy? And would it not be much better that an orthodox minister should be put upon them? If the people have this right, then all the people have it, and consequently, a Socinian congregation have a right to chuse a Socinian minister. How the Scripture hath been handled, as to this affair of popular election, was noted in the postscript to the *Essay on the Church*.

10. Though the Dissenters have no ministry by succession, they make light of this defect, and think they are as well off as we are, because they say, our "right of ordaining came down to us through the channel of popery."

Bishops, priests, and deacons, in a church, were no invention of popery, nor is our succession any more affected by popery, than the Apostle's creed, which is also come down to us through the channel of popery; and so is the canon of the Scripture itself: yet we take the old creed and the old Scriptures, and think them as good as ever. The church of Rome is under such an opprobrium with Protestants, that it is a convenient bugbear, brought forward upon all occasions by those who want better argument, to frighten us out of our church principles, and cover the weakness of their own innovations. But the succession of church offices is no more affected by the errors of popery, than a man's pedigree is affected by his bodily distemper, or the distempers of his parents; and if the man, by alteratives and restoratives, is cured with the blessing of God, he returns to the state of his puer ancestors of a remote generation. A self-originated upstart, who

has been railing at him for things past, in which he had no share, may take his name, and claim his inheritance; but when his title comes to be examined, the true right will appear, and justice will take place.

If we trace the pedigree of the church of England far enough backwards, we find a Christian church of the episcopal form in Britain, with an independent right and authority of its own, before Austin set his foot in this country, as the messenger of Rome. At the reformation, this church did but return to its original rights, with an episcopacy independent of the Pope, and enjoyed it for some years, with the general approbation of the people, and there was no such thing as a Presbyterian in the nation. It was approved and congratulated for its felicity by the reformed of other countries: and even Calvin and Beza then little thought that they should have any followers so mad (I use their own word) as to reject such an episcopacy as ours, which had freed itself from the usurpation of the papacy. Calvin, in his Epistle to Cardinal Sadolet, said of those who should reject such an hierarchy, that he should think them *nullo non anathemate dignos*, i. e. "that no curse could be too bad for them." Beza would not believe that any could reject the order of bishops in a reformed church. "If there be such," said he, "God forbid that any man in his wits should assent to the madness of those men*." And in the same book †, speaking of the hierarchy of England and her bishops, he says, "Let her enjoy that singular blessing of God, which I wish may be perpetual to her." Such at that time were the sentiments of Beza and Calvin, who afterwards found it convenient to change their style; and, when the war was carried on against episcopacy itself, the expurgatorial authority of their editors in later editions expunged those charitable attestations out of their works; which hath a very guilty appearance.

11. The Dissenters plead, that what is called the act of toleration, has given a sanction to their separation, and taken away the sin of it. They are "not chargeable with schism, since they who have the power of continuing or altering our church at their pleasure, have given them liberty to withdraw, and have taken their places of worship under their protection as well as ours."

If I understand this plea right, it is a mill-stone about the neck of all the rest; because it shews, that the apologist of the

* Ad Tract. de Minis. Evang. ab Hadr. Sarav. Edit. Belg. c. 1.

† Cap. 18.

Dissenters hath argued without principles, and so hath fallen into a manifest contradiction. He began with mocking at the church of England, as having no foundation but upon the king and parliament: or, as another Dissenter hath expressed it, in the like insulting strain, as “built upon the foundation of the lords and commons, the king himself being the chief corner-stone.” And they have argued, that it even ceases to be a church of Christ, because it acts under the allowance of the civil power. Yet in their own case, the king and parliament, by an act of grace, can make schism to be no schism! The protection we have from the civil government is cast in our teeth, as a disadvantage, which extends even to the unchurching of us, and throwing us out of the kingdom of Christ; but the same thing (supposing them to have it) takes away from them the guilt of their separation! And thus they give to the king and parliament the privilege of God himself, who only can forgive sin: which is more than we ever allowed them.

It is a very false suggestion, that our civil government can alter the church at their pleasure. There is, indeed, a sense, in which it may be said, that a man has power to do whatever he can do by force and violence: but still there is an essential difference between the power of force, and the power of right and authority. The church of England can never be altered legally, without the consent and act of the convocation, who are a part of the constitution: and if it were otherwise done, it must be done by an act of violence, against the rights of Englishmen; for Englishmen do not lose their rights by being Christians and churchmen, as their enemies are inclined to have it. There can be no power of authority in laymen to make or unmake a church, any more than there can be a power in the church to make or unmake the civil constitution; and nothing can confound these powers but an overbearing principle of infidelity, from which may God deliver us; who hath promised that the gates of hell (the judicial power of the adversaries of Jesus Christ) shall not prevail against us. Suppose the civil power should make an act that the king shall ordain priests, or that priests shall not baptize children, nor consecrate the sacrament; what would such an act signify? Therefore, they have not the power to alter the church at their pleasure; for this might be their pleasure, if their wits, or the grace of God, were to forsake them. Such a power, if it were claimed, was never exercised even by Heathen persecutors. However, the Dissenters

do not seem unwilling that such a tyrannical power should be exercised, and appear to relish the idea of it, if it be but turned against the church of England. No one spiritual act can be exercised, nor is it claimed by the civil power in this country; which can neither baptize, nor ordain, nor absolve, nor consecrate, nor excommunicate; although the Dissenters, in the heat of their zeal, have given the state a spiritual power, and even more, over us, and themselves too. But the state can say, who shall or shall not partake of temporalities: and this every state will say, some more, some less, as long as the church accepts of their protection, and enjoys a legal maintenance and support under them. Worldly politics in such a case will be sure to interfere, and abuses will arise. Churchmen will be apt to accommodate themselves to the views and inclinations of the state, or some of the acting members of the state, who are their friends: their doctrines will change with the times; their consciences will become too flexible and easy, and the people whom they teach will be in danger from them. There is no convenience in this world without its inconvenience. When the state was schismatical in the days of the grand usurpation, the church of that time could find no such sin as sacrilege in the Scripture, for the fear of giving offence to their patrons, who were deep in the guilt of it: and the assembly of divines (as it was remarked long ago by Bishop Patrick) avoided all mention of it in their annotations.

12. The Dissenters hold themselves blameless, because many persons of the church of England, and some of great and popular character, have justified and even applauded their separation.

I find great stress laid upon this circumstance, which is blazoned out with pompous words and splendid quotations, as well of what hath been spoken (or so reported) as written. But the fear or favour of men, especially of men too attentive to the interests of this world, (as some of their friends have certainly been) is a very unsound bottom for the Dissenters to rest upon: and so they esteem it themselves, when it is on our side. But if any false brethren amongst us take part with them, all such are excellent men, ornaments of the establishment, and of unanswerable authority. Sometimes the Dissenters are all for the Scripture; Jesus Christ is their only king, and to him they appeal for the rectitude of their proceedings: but if they find a flatterer amongst us, they make the most of him: and some such are always to be found; for all are not Israel that are of Israel; and it doth not follow,

that a man must be true to the church of England, because it hath introduced him to a seat in the house of lords. Temporal considerations bring some men into the church, whose hearts and affections never were, nor ever will be with it. Of such no honest man can approve: and therefore the approbation of such, with all their testimonies and certificates, is but of little value at last. Bishop Hoadley was of this character: a Socinian in principle: who, while he was celebrated by the enemies of the church of England, (and perhaps assisted towards his advancement) for having banished all mitres and lordships, and spiritual courts, out of the kingdom of Christ, was, himself, an answer to every thing he had written; who scrupled not to adorn himself with a mitre and a lordship in one of the first preferments in this church; while he was a greater favourer of those who were out of it, than of those who were in it, unless they were in it upon his own principles.

Amongst other bright ornaments of the church, who applaud the separation of the Dissenters, the authors of the Free and Candid Disquisitions are brought in. These are not only tender to the Dissenters, but they rather think we shall never do well without them; that they are necessary to preserve the virtue of the nation; to save our religious liberty; to prevent the return of slavery; and to serve as a check, lest we should cast a favourable aspect toward Rome. These things are fairly said, but not truly; and if we consider a little farther from whence they came, little honour will accrue to the Dissenters from the testimony of these authors. For it is by no means clear that they were members of our own church, though they most solemnly and repeatedly professed themselves so to be in their work. It was suspected very early, that they were not such as they called themselves, but enemies under the disguise of friends. Of this their work itself carries some internal marks, which seem to have escaped them unawares.—*Ficta c'ito ad naturam reciderint suam.* The author of Free and impartial Considerations on the Free and candid Disquisitions, pressed them with this (Anno 1751) and with great appearance of reason. He told them farther, “It begins now to be reported, and I partly believe it, that an eminent Dissenter, well known by his writings, has had a hand more or less in the Disquisitions*.” But, some few years after, in 1758, when this

secret had been searched a little farther, or had transpired of itself, I find an author, and I believe a very honest one, asserting in the plainest terms, that those authors were actually Dissenters; and taxing the party very roundly with their prevarication, in these words: "Amidst the greatest indulgence, and in open defiance of the laws, they impugned and libelled our liturgy, and our constitution—without the least proof or foundation: they charged our liturgy with all the defects, with all the faults, improprieties, and corruptions, which had been suggested by Papists, Heretics, Enthusiasts, and the most inveterate enemies of our constitution. And for fear the people should say that an enemy had done this, they, by the most solemn and repeated insinuations, declared themselves to be true and dutiful sons of the established church*." If, after such professions, these writers were Dissenters, their Disquisitions exhibit such a scene of treachery, prevarication, self-adulation, and ingratitude, to the government under which, and the established church with which they live, as is scarcely to be paralleled in history.

On this supposition, all the fine things those authors thought fit to say of the Dissenters, and their virtues, and the nature and merits of their separation, are of no authority; for, that Dissenters should praise Dissenters, is nothing wonderful; but, if Dissenters did this, under the name of true and dutiful sons of the church, then such praise is against them in every word of it. What sort of principles they must be, which can reconcile men's consciences to such jesuitical frauds and disguises, they who practise them are bound to consider.

If the Dissenters think they can justify their separation by the praise of men, let them proceed fairly, and take it, such as it is, all together. They should remember, and estimate properly, how much of it comes from the bench of our bishops, and how much from the seat of the scornful: how universally they are befriended and admired by Deists, Free-thinkers, Socinian philosophers, and loose livers; who, delighting to see the church opposed, and Christian people divided, are exactly of the same opinion with some of those great ornaments of the establishment, of whose testimony our apologist hath so loudly boasted. "I heartily thank God," says the author of *The Independent Whig*,

* *Case of the Royal Martyr considered with Candour*, p. 333, 334.

“ that we have Dissenters, and I hope we shall never be without them *.”

13. The last and the most general argument on which the Dissenters depend, and which, if it were just, would render all other arguments superfluous, is this; that all men “ have a right to judge and chuse for themselves in matters of religion.”

This is an extensive principle, which justifies all sects, and supersedes all institutions and sacraments whatsoever. It also shews the Dissenters of this day, who have recourse to it, to be quite a different class of men from the Puritans in the days of Elizabeth; for here they extend their claims from schism up to heresy, and beyond it, even into the privileges and immunities of infidelity itself. The Puritans formerly judged against us in our discipline; but the Dissenters and their friends now judge against us in our doctrines. For thus saith the author of the Independent Whig, another apologist of the Dissenters:—“ No man ought to pay any submission to that doctrine or discipline which he does not like:” and the war, which was once carried on against prelacy and ceremonies, is now turned against articles and creeds.

If the Dissenters at large have this right of chusing what they like, and rejecting what they dislike, then the Quakers have it: and why not the Jews and the Mahometans? For I desire to know what there is betwixt us and them, but matters of religion?

As to this affair of chusing, especially in matters of religion, there are strange examples of human perverseness and wickedness. How often did the people chuse new gods? Heresy is so called, because it is a doctrine which a man doth not receive, but chuse for himself; and if his choice is of right, there can be no such thing as heresy in the world. But heresy is reckoned among the works of the flesh; and they that heap up teachers to themselves, are said to do it of their own lusts. Thus every case becomes desperate: for lust being an irrational, brutal principle, hears no reason; and nothing but disorder and confusion can follow, when this principle takes the lead in religion. When men took wives of such as they chose, and had no rule but this rule of choice, the earth was soon filled with violence: and if men may take what they chuse in religion, sects and divisions, strife and envying, rebellion and sacrilege, without end, must be the consequence; and so it is already recorded in the annals of this kingdom.

* Vol. iii. p. 223.

P O S T S C R I P T.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST SEPARATION OF THE DISSENTERS
FROM THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THE preceding short View of the Argument betwixt the Church and the Dissenters, having brought the authors of Free and Candid Disquisitions on the Liturgy of the Church of England under our consideration, I cannot help mentioning on this occasion, that I have a manuscript in my possession of seventy-two sheets, containing remarks on that work, written immediately after its publication, by one of the first scholars, and best divines of this century.

The public never did, and probably never will, receive any information from these papers; but to me they have been very entertaining and instructive. In one of the author's notes upon a large quotation from the epistles of St. Cyprian, I find the following account of the rise and progress of the schism, which hath troubled the state of the church, more or less, ever since the reformation; and as this little work may fall into the hands of some readers, who never heard whether our Dissenters originally divided from us, or we from them, it may be useful to shew how the case stands. The fact is this; they went out from us, after the full establishment of this church.

“ For, in the year 1548, 2 Ed. 6. the archbishop of Canterbury, and twelve of the other principal bishops and divines, joined in a committee, drew up the form of celebrating the Lord's supper; and, after that, of the rest of the common prayer, chiefly from the best primitive formularies of public prayer they could find: which was soon after confirmed by authority of parliament, with this testimony subjoined, viz. that “ none could doubt but that the authors were inspired, and assisted therein by the Holy Ghost.” At the same time (as Nichols, in his *Defensio Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, observes) it was the peculiar happiness of our reformation, that as it had been established by the concurrent authority of the church and state, so we enjoyed the most perfect agreement and unanimity of all orders of men among us; the

very name of those swarms of sectarists (the filthy pollutions whereof have, since, infected so far and wide) being then not so much as heard of in our land. Neither did any one, either at home or abroad, (the envy, ill-nature, and heterodoxy of Calvin, only excepted) charge us, in the least, with any remains of popish leaven, as mixt with our services and orders, or any thing that looked that way: but all men honoured our church, as the most holy mother of the people of God committed to her, as well as the most strenuous opposer of antichrist, and the chief bulwark of the reformation. And so matters continued; not a dog moving his tongue, or sowing the least seed of schism, or dissention, to corrupt her: till under the persecution in queen Mary's time, when many flying (as it was to be expected) into the Protestant states abroad, there settled themselves into little chapelries, or churches, by permission of the magistrates, according to the order of the common prayer, and service of the church of England. Only, at Frankfort, one Fox, a man of a turbulent innovating spirit, with others associated to him, were drawn into fondness for Calvin's plan, (schismatical, as it was, from all Christian churches since the Apostles) and made themselves a new farrago of public prayers, as opposite to the English, and consequently to those of all the primitive churches, as they could devise: which, upon queen Mary's death, they brought home with them; and, in preaching and writing, endeavoured to force, or palm upon the people, but yet without any direct and open schism; till one Cartwright, in a theological disputation held at Cambridge before the queen [Elizabeth], being rebuked by her for his unreasonable and turbulent manner of conducting himself in it, thereupon went off, full fraught with spleen and spite, to Calvin: from whence returning, with new ulcers added to his old sores, and causing fresh disturbances, he was expelled his college, and deprived of the Margaret professorship, by Dr. Whitgift, who was head of the same college [Trinity], and vice-chancellor of the university. Whereupon, with others of his own Calvinistical cast, he began to set up his novo-puritanical schism, with classes, conventicles, &c. in avowed contempt, and rebellion against the church. The smoking brands of which fire of schism being blown up by the tainted breath of his followers, broke out, in half an age, into a flame that once set three kingdoms into a blaze, brought one of the best of kings to the block, extirpated episcopacy, and the peerage, so as without the visible

interposition of Providence, there appeared no more hopes of their restoration for ever. Neither are the coals of the old brands yet quenched, but they burn still under the embers of sedition, wherewith they are raked up, and threaten yet new and worse fires, perhaps to the civil, but certainly to the religious state of things among us; which God avert!"

This good man did not live to see the dismembering of the British empire, by the separation of the American colonies, begun and carried on by the same party both here and there, to the loss of so many thousand lives, and the oppressing of the people with new and endless burthens of taxes. So notorious was the case, that even the gentlemen of the army, who had an opportunity of making proper observations, and were properly disposed to make them, brought home this report with them to the mother country, that if the church of England had but obtained that timely support in the colonies, for which it had so often petitioned, the American rebellion had never happened: and if this government shall be as remiss toward itself, in the mother country, as it has been towards the colonies, the same evils will soon break out at home.

AN
ACCOUNT
OF
REASON AND FAITH:
IN RELATION TO THE
MYSTERIES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY JOHN NORRIS, M.A.
RECTOR OF BEMERTON, NEAR SARUM.

ACCOUNT

OF

REASON AND FAITH, &c.



CHAP. X.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE, WITH AN ADDRESS TO
THE SOCINIANS.

1. **A**ND thus I have led my reader through a long course of various reasoning, and perhaps as far as he is willing to follow me, though I hope his journey has not been without some pleasure that may deceive, and some profit that may in part reward the labour of it. I have shewn him what reason is, and what faith is, that so he may see from the absolute natures of each what habitude and relation they have to one another, and how the darkness and obscurity of the latter may consist with the light and evidence of the former. I have also considered the distinction of things above reason and things contrary to reason, and shewn it to be real and well grounded, and to have all that is requisite to a good distinction. And for the further confirmation of it, I have also shewn that human reason is not the measure of truth. From which great principle (which I was the more willing to discourse at large and thoroughly to settle and establish because of its moment and consequence to the concern in hand) I have deduced that weighty inference, that therefore the incomprehensibility of a thing is no concluding argument of its not being true, which consequence, for the greater security of it, because it is so con-

siderable in the present controversy, I have also proved backwards, by shewing that if the incomprehensibility of a thing were an argument of its not being true, then human reason (contrary to what was before demonstrated) would be the measure of truth. Whence I infer again *ex absurdo*, that therefore the incomprehensibility of a thing is no argument of its not being true. From this last consequence, I infer another of no less moment and consideration, viz. That therefore the incomprehensibility of a thing is no argument against the belief of it neither, where also I consider that seemingly opposite maxim of Des Cartes, that we are to assent to nothing but what is clear and evident, and reconcile it to the other position. Whence my next step was to state the true use of reason in believing, which I shewed to consist not in examining the credibility of the object, but in taking account of the certainty of the revelation, which when once resolved of we are no longer to dispute, but believe. In fine, I have made an application of these considerations to the mysteries of the Christian faith, by shewing that they are never the less to be believed for being mysteries, supposing them otherwise sufficiently revealed, against which also I have shewn their incomprehensibility to be no objection. So that every way the great argument against the mysteries of the Christian faith taken from the incomprehensibility of them vanishes and sinks into nothing. In all which I think I have effectually overthrown the general and fundamental ground of Socinianism, and truly in great measure that of Deism too, whose best argument against revealed religion in general, is, because the Christian, upon all accounts the most preferable of those that pretend to be revealed, contains so many things in it which transcend the comprehension of human understanding. But whether this best argument be really a good one or no, the whole procedure of this discourse may sufficiently shew, and whoever knows how to distinguish sophistry from good reasoning, may easily judge.

2. And now you gentlemen, for whose sakes I have been at the pains to write this treatise, give me leave, in a few words, to address myself a little more particularly to you, and to expostulate with you. Whether it be the good opinion you have of your cause, or the present opportunity you have to appear in the behalf of it, that invites you so freely to come abroad as you have done of late, you have certainly (to give your courage its due) taken a very rational and polite age for it, and I hope the wise conduct of Providence may turn this juncture to the advantage

of the truth, and that the light to which you have adventured to expose your novel opinions, may serve to make you see their absurdities, if you do not too obstinately shut your eyes against it. Some of you are considerable masters of reason (otherwise truly I should not think it worth while to argue with you) and you all profess great devotion to it (I wish you do not make it an idol) and to be very zealous and affectionate disciples of it. Reason is the great measure by which you pretend to go, and the judge to whom, in all things, you appeal. Now I accept of your measure, and do not refuse to be tried in the court of your own choosing. Accordingly you see I have dealt with you all along upon the ground of logic, and in a rational way, being very confident that reason alone will discover to you your undue elevations of it, and the errors you have been misled into by that occasion, if you do but consult even this oracle of yours as you ought, and make a right use of its sacred light.

3. But I am afraid you do not. Instead of employing your reason in the first place to examine the certainty of the revelation, whether such a thing be truly revealed, and if so, to believe it notwithstanding its being incomprehensible, your method is to begin with the quality of the object, to consider whether it be comprehensible or no, and accordingly to proceed in your belief or disbelief of its being revealed. It is true indeed you are not so gross as to argue thus, this is comprehensible, therefore it is revealed. But you cannot deny but that you argue thus, this is incomprehensible, therefore it is not revealed, proceeding upon this general principle, that though whatever is comprehensible is not therefore presently revealed, yet whatever is revealed must be comprehensible. But now judge you whether this be not to make your reason the rule and measure of divine revelation, that is, that God can reveal nothing to you but what you can comprehend, or, that you are able to comprehend all that God can possibly reveal (for otherwise how is your not being able to comprehend any thing an argument of its not being revealed) I say consider whether this be not to set up your reason as the rule of revelation, and consider again whether this does not resolve either into a very low opinion you have of God and his infinite perfections, or an extravagantly high one you have of yourselves and your own rational endowments.

4. And yet as if this were not presumption enough, do you not also make your reason the rule of faith, as well as of reve-

lation? To be the rule of faith is a very great thing, and yet so far it is plain that you make your reason the rule of faith, that you will allow nothing to be believed but whose bottom you can sound by that line; this being an avowed principle with you, that you are to believe nothing but what you can comprehend. But hold a little, before your reason can be the measure of faith, must it not be the measure of truth? And I pray consider seriously, and tell me truly, do you verily think in your consciences that your reason is the measure of truth? Do you think your rational faculties proportioned to every intelligible object, and that you are able to comprehend all the things that are, and that there is nothing in the whole extent of science too high, too difficult, or too abstruse for you; no one part of this vast intellectual sea but what you can wade through? If you say yes, besides the blasphemous presumption and luciferian arrogance of the assertion, and how little it falls on this side of *similis ero altissimo*, which banished the vain-glorious angel from the court of heaven, because nothing less would content his aspiring ambition than to be as God there (though by the way there is more sense and congruity of reason in pretending to be a God in heaven, than to be a God upon earth) I say besides this, I would put it to your more sober thought to consider whether it be not every whit as great an extremity in the way of rational speculation to dogmatize so far as to pretend to comprehend every thing, as to say with the Sceptics and Pnyrrhonians, that we know nothing: the latter of which, however, in regard to its moral consequences, may be more innocently and safely affirmed than the former, since in that we only humbly degrade ourselves, and are content to sink down into the level of brutes, whereas in this we aspire to what is infinitely above us, and advance ourselves into the seat of God. And you know an excess of self-dejection is of the two the more tolerable extreme. But if you say that your reason is not the measure of truth (as upon this, and the other considerations, there lies a necessity upon you to confess) how then, I pray, comes it to be the measure of your faith, and how come you to lay down this for a maxim, that you will believe nothing but what you can comprehend? Why, if your reason be not the measure of truth (and you yourselves care not, and I believe are ashamed in terms to say that it is) then do you not evidently discern that there is no consequence from the incomprehensibility of a thing to the incredibility of it, and that you have no reason to deny your belief to a thing as true, merely upon the

account of its incomprehensibility. And do you not then plainly see that your great maxim falls to the ground, that you are to believe nothing but what you can comprehend? But if yet, notwithstanding this, you will still adhere to your beloved maxim, and resolve to believe nothing but what you can adjust and clear up to your reason, then I pray consider whether this will not necessarily lead you back to that absurd, and withal odious and invidious principle, and which therefore you yourselves care not to own, viz. That your reason is the measure of truth.

5. But why do you not care to own it? Do you not see at the first cast of your eye, that you are unavoidably driven upon it by your professed maxim? Or if you do not think fit to own it (as indeed it is a good handsome morsel to swallow) why do you not then renounce that maxim of yours which is the immediate consequence of it, and necessarily resolves into it? Why will you, whose pretensions are so high to reason, act so directly against the laws of it, as to own that, implicitly and by consequence, which neither your head nor your heart will serve you to acknowledge in broad and express terms? Be a little more consistent with your own sentiments at least, if not with truth, and be not yourselves a mystery, while you pretend not to believe any. If you do not care to own the principle, then deny the consequence, or if you will not let go the consequence, then stand by and own the principle. Either speak out boldly and roundly, that your reason is the measure of truth, or if you think that too gross a defiance to sense, experience, religion, and reason too, to be professedly maintained, then be so ingenuous to us, and so consistent with yourselves, as to renounce your maxim of believing nothing but what you can comprehend, since you cannot hold it but with that absurd principle; and which is therefore a certain argument that you ought not to hold it.

6. And are you sure that you always do, I mean so as to act by it, that you hold it *in hypothesi* as well as *in thesi*? Do you never assent to any thing but what you can comprehend? Are there not many things in the sciences which you find a pressing necessity to subscribe to, though at the same time you cannot conceive their modus, or account for their possibility? But you will say, perhaps, these are things of a physical and philosophical consideration, and such as have no relation to religion. True, they are so, but then besides that this visibly betrays the weakness of your ground, since if the incomprehensibility of a thing were a good argument against

assenting to the truth of it, it would be so throughout, in the things of nature, as well as in the things of religion: I would here further demand of you, why you are so particularly shy of admitting incomprehensible things in religion, why is it there only that you seem so stiffly and zealously to adhere to your maxim of believing nothing but what you can comprehend? Since there are so many inconceivable things, or, if you please, mysteries, in the works of nature and of Providence, why not in religion? Nay, where should one expect to find mysteries if not there, where all the things that are revealed are revealed by God himself, and many of them concerning himself and his own infinite perfections? And what deference do we pay to God more than man, if either we suppose that he cannot reveal truths to us which we cannot comprehend, or if we will not believe them if he does? Nay, may it not be rather said that we do not pay him so much, since we think it adviseable to receive many things from our tutors and masters upon their authority only, though we do not comprehend them ourselves; and justify our doing so by that well known, and in many cases very reasonable maxim, *discentem oportet credere*. But as there is no authority like the divine, so if that motto become any school, it is that of Christ.

7. Now it is in this school that you profess to be scholars, and why then will you be such opiniative and uncompliant disciples as to refuse to receive the sublime lectures read to you by your divine and infallible Master, merely because they are too high for you, and you cannot conceive them, when at the same time any one of you that is not a mathematician (pardon the supposition) would, I doubt not, take it upon the word of him that is so, that the diameter of a square is incommensurable to the side, though he did not know how to demonstrate, or so much as conceive it himself. Since then you would express such implicit regard to the authority of a fallible, though learned man, shall not the divine weigh infinitely heavier with you; and since you would not stick to assent to things above your conception in human and natural sciences, why are you so violently set against mysteries in religion, whereof God is not only the author, but in great measure the object too?

8. You know very well that in the great problem of the divisibility of quantity, there are incomprehensibilities on both sides, it being inconceivable that quantity should, and it being also inconceivable that it should not be divided infinitely. And yet you know again, that, as being parts of a contradiction, one of them

must necessarily be true. Possibly you may not be able with the utmost certainty, and without all hesitation, to determine which that is; but however you know in the general, that one of them, indeterminately, must be true; (which by the way is enough to convince you, that the incomprehensibility of a thing is no argument against the truth of it) and you must also further grant, that God, whose understanding is infinite, does precisely and determinately know which of them is so. Now suppose God should reveal this, and make it an article of faith. It is not indeed likely that he will, it being so much beneath the Majesty, and besides the end and intention of revelation, whose great design is the direction of our life and manners, and not the improvement of our speculation. But suppose, I say, he should, would you not believe it? If not, then you must suppose either that there is no necessity that either of the two parts (which yet are contradictory) should be true, or that though one of them be true, yet that God does not know which is so, or that though he does know which is so, yet he does not deal faithfully in revealing that which is the right, all which are extravagant suppositions, and such as men of your sense and reason can never allow. But then if you say (as you must) that you would believe it, then I pray what becomes of your maxim of believing nothing but what you can comprehend, and why do you so stiffly plead the incomprehensibility of an article of faith against the belief of it, and why must there be no mysteries in religion? I say in religion, where if any where our reason might expect to find things above its measure, unreachable heights, and unfathomable depths, and where God is not only the revealer (as in the case now supposed) but also the object revealed. For is it not reasonable to suppose that there are things more incomprehensible in God than in nature, and if you would receive an incomprehensible revelation of his concerning his works, how much rather ought you to admit the same concerning himself?

9. And this gives me occasion to say something to you concerning the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. This great article of the Christian faith you have a particular prejudice against, and will not believe, and that because it so utterly transcends the force of reason to conceive how the same undivided and numerically One simple essence of God should be communicated to Three really distinct Persons, so as that there should be both a Unity in Trinity, and a Trinity in Unity. This however, as inconceivable as it seems, some will not yield to be so far above reason

but that a rational and intelligible account may be given of it, which accordingly they have essayed to do by several hypotheses. But I decline at present all advantage that may be had from them, or any other that may be invented to render this an intelligible article. You know I reason all along upon the contrary supposition, that those articles of the Christian faith which we call mysteries, are really incomprehensible, and only go to invalidate the consequence that is drawn from thence in prejudice of their belief. Well then for once we will give you what you stand for, that the doctrine of the Trinity is indeed utterly above reason. You have our leave to suppose it as incomprehensible as you please. But then you are to consider (besides what has hitherto been discoursed concerning the nullity of the consequence from the incomprehensibility of a thing to its incredibility) that this is a revelation of God concerning himself, and do you pretend to comprehend the nature and essence of God? If you do, then your understanding is as infinite as the divine. But if you do not, then the incomprehensibility of this mysterious article ought to be no objection with you against the belief of it, since if it be, you must be driven to say that you comprehend the nature of God, which I hope you have too much religion as well as reason to affirm.

10. And indeed if we meet with so many insuperable difficulties in the search of nature, much more may we in the contemplation of its author; if the works of God do so puzzle and baffle our understandings, much more may they confess their deficiency when God himself is their object; and if we are not able to explain creation, or give an account how the material world issued in time from the great Fountain of being, much less may we be supposed able to explain the eternal and ineffable generation of his divine and consubstantial word. But what then, shall we not believe it? Or rather shall we not say upon this occasion, with the pious and ingenious Mr. Wesley *,

“ Ineffable the way, for who

“ Th’ Almighty to perfection ever knew?

“ But he himself has said it, and it must be true.”

Nay, to go lower yet, if there be so many things relating to extension, motion, and figure (of all which we have clear ideas) which we cannot comprehend, and there result from them. propo-

* *Life of Christ*, p. 184.

sitions which we know not what to make of, with how much greater reason may we expect to find what we cannot understand in the nature of an infinite Being, whereof we have no adequate idea. And indeed we meet with so many incomprehensibles in the school of nature, and one would think we should be too much familiarized to them to think them strange in that of religion, and God seems on purpose to exercise and discipline our understandings with what is above them in natural things, that so we might be the less surprized to find what passes our conception in his own infinite essence. Here then at least you may confess your ignorance, and that without any reproach to your understandings, which were indeed intended for the contemplation, but not for the comprehension of an infinite object. You need not therefore here be backward to own, that you meet with what you cannot comprehend (it would indeed be a mystery if you should not) nor think it any disgrace to have your eyes dazzled with that light at the insupportable glory of which even the seraphin veil and cover theirs.

11. You may perceive by this that your denial of the doctrine of the Trinity, because of the incomprehensibility of it, proceeds upon no good consequence; but you are also further desired to consider the very bad one that it naturally leads to. You refuse to receive this article, because you cannot comprehend it; but besides that your reason for this your refusal is not good unless you could be supposed to comprehend every thing, even "the deep things of God." Pray consider what the consequence will be if you pursue your principle to the utmost, and conduct yourselves entirely by its measures. Will it not inevitably lead you to the denial of all religion? This, perhaps, may startle you, but think again. Will not this necessarily lead you to the denial of God, the foundation of all religion? For if you will not believe the trinal distinction of persons in the divine essence, because you cannot conceive how such a thing can be, then may you not for the same reason refuse as well to believe the divine essence itself, some of whose incommunicable attributes, such as his self-existence, eternity, immensity, &c. are as incomprehensible as any thing in the notion of the Trinity can be. So that if you will but follow your measure from the denial of three, you may be quickly brought to deny even one. So directly does your principle of believing nothing but what you can comprehend lead to Atheism, and that with such swift and wide strides, that were

it not for the assistance of the same expedient, your friends the Deists would be hardly able to follow you.

12. And now, Sirs, what do you think of your principle? Is it not a goodly one, and richly worth all the passion and zeal you have expressed for it? You know very well that M. Abbadie, in his excellent treatise of the divinity of Christ, has shewn you that upon one of your grounds (*viz.* the denial of that article) the Mahometan religion is preferable to the Christian, and indeed that you are obliged by it to renounce Christianity, and turn Mahometans. This truly was a home-thrust. But yet you see the consequence of your general principle reaches further, as leading you not only out of Christianity, but out of all religion, whether natural or revealed, even beyond deism, even into atheism itself. If it does not actually lead you thither, the fault is not in the principle, whose connexion with that consequence is natural enough; but it is because you are not so consistent with yourselves as to follow it. And indeed it is a great happiness that you do not, (since if you were here better logicians, you would be worse men) though it would be a much greater, if for the danger of being more consistent with it, you would be persuaded to lay it down.

13. And that you may be so, be pleased further to consider, that though this principle of yours does not eventually carry you as far as Atheism, because perhaps the horridness of the conclusion may be a counterweight against the force of the premises, (though you see it naturally tends that way) yet there is very great danger of its leading you effectually into Deism, that not being accounted now-a-days such a very frightful thing. For as long as you hold, that what is above human reason is not to be believed, and upon that account reject the Christian mysteries, because they are above reason; you lie at the mercy of that argument that shall prove to you that these mysteries are indeed revealed, and that the genuine and natural sense of the sacred text declares for them. For if you once come to be convinced of that, you will then be obliged, in consequence of your principle, to renounce that religion which reveals such incredible things that is the Christian, which will be a shrewd (indeed an invincible) temptation to you to throw up all revealed religion, and so to turn perfect Deists. And I pray God it may not have that effect upon you.

14. But as to the parting with Christianity, that you will be further tempted to do upon another account. For when you

have by your principle stript it, or I may say rather unbowelled it of its great and adorable mysteries, it will appear such a poor, lank, slender thing to you, that you will hardly think it considerable enough to be revealed as a new and more perfect institution by God, or to be received as such by thinking and considering men. For what will such find so considerable in Christianity, (especially as a new institution) what so visibly peculiar and assuredly distinguishing, what that may infallibly set it above an human institution, if it be once robbed of its mysteries? They may indeed think it a good plain piece of morals, and such as exceeds any other of a known human composure, but how are they sure but that the invention of man may be able to rise so high, as to compose such a system as this, if you set aside its mysteries? Which therefore I cannot but look upon of all the things that are intrinsic to it, (for I do not here consider miracles) as the greatest characters of its divinity. And some, perhaps, would be apt to think them such as without which it would be hardly thought worthy of reception (especially as a new institution) even with the help of miracles, which men are always ready, and not without reason, to suspect, when the matters for whose sake they are wrought bear not sufficient proportion to them. Which they would also perhaps be inclined to think to be the present case. For what (would they say) is there in the Christian religion that deserves so great ado, what that should engage an omnipotent arm to introduce it into the world by such mighty signs and wondets, if there be indeed nothing wonderful in it; that is, if you take away its mysteries. What cannot a good system of morality (especially if only a second, and a little more correct edition of a former) be communicated to the world without alarming heaven and earth, and giving disturbance to the course of nature? And if Christianity be no more, what proportion (say they) will it bear to its miraculous introduction? And what will it be found to have so very considerable as either to deserve or justify such an apparatus? It must indeed be allowed by all to be a good wholesome institution for the direction of manners, but what is there so very great and admirable in it, what that either deserves or answers to so many types, and figures, and prophetic predictions, what that so copiously sets forth the manifold wisdom of God, and the glory of his attributes, and the nothingness of the creature? And where are those "deep things of God," that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor

“ have entered into the heart of man*,” (a place which the Apostle applies out of the prophet Isaiah to the revelations of the Gospel;) where, I say, are those profound things which the spirit of God only that “ searcheth all things” could reveal, and which even now they are revealed, “ the angels desire to look “ into †.” You will hardly find any thing of so raised a character in Christianity, if you divest it of its mysteries, which therefore may justly be reckoned as the main pillars of it, without which it will have much ado to support itself. So that in short Christianity not Mysterious, (how fond soever a certain author is of such a religion) will make but a very little figure in proportion to its pomp and external splendor, and indeed will almost dwindle down into nothing.

15. It may indeed even without the mysteries make a shift to subsist as a mere system of precepts, and rule of life, though even thus considered it will be greatly impaired, and suffer much disadvantage (as wanting those convincing demonstrations of God’s hatred of sin, and of his love towards mankind, and withal those endearing and persuasive arguments for their returns of love, gratitude, and obedience towards him, which can only be derived from the redemption of the world by the death and satisfaction of its divine undertaker) but as a covenant of grace established betwixt God and his offending and estranged creature it cannot possibly stand, but must fall to the ground. So that though the moral or legal part (as I may call it) of Christianity may at a hard rate continue after the downfall of its mysteries, yet its federal part, and all that is properly Gospel in it, must needs be involved in the ruin, and fall with them, that being all built upon the satisfaction of Christ, as that again upon his divinity, which is therefore the very foundation of the Christian religion, as M. Abbadie has by variety of demonstration proved it to be. If then you would have that divine institution stand, and if you would stand fast in it, (both which I am willing to suppose) have a care how you remove its mysteries, considering how fundamental they are to the building, and how great a share of its sacred weight rests upon them. But endeavour rather to remove your own prejudices, to mortify your understandings, to study humility, and to restrain the too free sallies of your too curious and over-venturous reason, by still and silent reflections upon God’s infinite

* 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

† 1 Pet. i. 12.

greatness, and your own almost as great infirmities, by which one thought well pursued, you will (by the grace of God) come to a better understanding of yourselves than to reject any of his plain revelations merely because you cannot conceive them, and so leaving light and vision to the other life, will be content with other good Christians, humbly to believe and adore in this.

16. Gentlemen, I beseech you seriously to consider what with Christian charity and all due civil respect I have here laid before you; and if upon consideration of it you find any weight in it, to let it have its full force and effect upon you. Which if you do, I hope it may serve, by the blessing of God, (to whom for that end I humbly devote this labour) to convince you, or at least to put you upon such better considerations of your own as may. For I pretend not here to have said all, but to have left many things to the enlargement and improvement of your own meditation, considering the impropriety of doing otherwise to persons of your parts and learning, which I pray God to sanctify and increase to you. Whereby you may perceive that I am not against your making use of your reason. No; I would only have you reason rightly, and that you may do so, would have you by all human methods to improve and cultivate your reason as much as you can, being well persuaded that as a half-view of things makes men opinionative, disputatious, and dogmatical, so a clear and thorough light makes them humble, and distrustful of themselves; and that the more cultivated and improved any man's natural reason is, the easier it will be for him to captivate it to the obedience of faith.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the committing of these papers to the press, I have had the pleasure to peruse Mr. Whiston's New Theory of the Earth, for which extraordinary and truly great performance I return him all due thanks, and am very glad to see so great a master of reason and philosophy express so awful and reverential a regard to religion in general, and in particular to the sacred mysteries of it, against which both human reason and natural philosophy have been of late so abusively and profanely employed. How far this ingenious and learned author makes good his great undertaking, or whether this or the former theorist be most likely to be in the right, I shall not take upon me to examine: I only make this observation from both their wonderful attempts, that whether they are in the right or no, as to their respective accounts of things, yet they have at least gone so far, and offered so fairly towards a true explanation of them, as to convince any competent and indifferent reader that the Mosaic records concerning the greater phenomena of creation and providence, are not really of so desperate a nature as they were once presumed to be, but are in themselves capable of, and may perhaps in time actually have (if they have not already) a true natural solution. And for instance, a universal flood without a miracle, or that the world should be wholly drowned in a natural way, or according to the laws of motion already settled, and by a train of causes already laid in nature, has been hitherto thought an incomprehensible, and accordingly an impossible thing. But now if these two mighty geniuses who have undertaken to give a natural account of this stupendous revolution, have neither of them pitched upon the very precise way and manner whereby it was brought to pass, yet I think it cannot be denied but that they have said enough between them to convince that the thing was naturally possible, and that a true natural account may be given of it, though they should be supposed not to have hit directly upon that which is so. That is, I mean, they have represented it at least as a conceivable thing, whether they themselves have had the good fortune to conceive of it exactly as it was or no. Upon

which it is very natural, and no less pertinent to the concern in hand to make this further reflection, that we should not be overhasty to pronounce any thing (even of a physical, much less of a religious nature,) to be impossible, only because it appears to us to be incomprehensible. For besides that the incomprehensibility of a thing is (as this whole discourse shews) no certain argument of its impossibility, and that appears incomprehensible to *our* understandings may at the same time be well comprehended by those of angels, not to say of wiser men, perhaps that which appears to us at present to be above all comprehension, may in process of time, and upon further reflection and experience, so brighten and clear up to our minds, as to be comprehended, or at least to be thought of a comprehensible and possible nature even by our more improved selves. For the incomprehensibility of a thing as such being no absolute affection or intrinsic denomination of the thing itself from its own nature, but only such as affects it from without, and in relation to the present capacity of our understandings, there needs no alteration in the nature of the thing to make that comprehensible which was before incomprehensible, a change in our understandings is sufficient, upon whose greater improvement alone an incomprehensible may become a comprehensible object. So that besides the nullity of the consequence from the incomprehensibility of a thing to its impossibility, even the principle itself from which that consequence is pretended to be drawn may be removed, by the present comprehension of what passed before with us for an incomprehensible proposition. Upon both which considerations we are admonished to be very cautious how we conclude any thing in nature, much more in Scripture, to be impossible, because to us incomprehensible. And it is the very use Mr. Whiston himself makes of the latter of them in the conclusion of his excellent work, from which I think it worth while to transcribe a passage both for the advantage of the present argument, and the greater conviction of the reader, to whom, as well as to myself, it must be no little satisfaction to see the sentiments of so great an author concur with mine.

“ The measure of our present knowledge *,” says he, “ ought not to be esteemed the *κριτήριον*, or test of truth, (the very proposition almost in terms of my fourth chapter) or to be opposed

to the accounts received from prophane antiquity, much less to the inspired writings. For notwithstanding that several particulars relating to the eldest condition of the world and its great catastrophes, examined and compared with so much philosophy as was till lately known, were plainly unaccountable, and, naturally speaking, impossible; yet we see now nature is more fully, more certainly, and more substantially understood, that the same things approve themselves to be plain, easy, and rational. It is therefore folly in the highest degree to reject the truth or divine authority of the holy Scriptures, because we cannot give our minds particular satisfaction as to the manner, nay, or even possibility of some things therein asserted. Since we have seen so many of those things which seemed the most incredible in the whole Bible, and gave the greatest scruple and scandal to philosophic minds, so fully and particularly attested, and next to demonstrated from certain principles of astronomy and natural knowledge, it is but reasonable to expect in due time a like solution of the other difficulties. It is but just sure to depend upon the veracity of those holy writers in other assertions, whose fidelity is so entirely established in these hitherto equally unaccountable ones. The obvious, plain, or literal sense of the sacred Scriptures ought not without great reason to be eluded, or laid aside: several of those very places which seemed very much to require the same hitherto, appearing now to the minutest circumstances true and rational, according to the strictest and most literal interpretation of them. We may be under an obligation to believe such things on the authority of the holy Scriptures as are properly mysteries; that is, though not really contradictory, yet plainly unaccountable to our (present degree of) knowledge and reason. Thus the sacred histories of the original constitution, and great catastrophes of the world, have been in the past ages the objects of the faith of Jews and Christians, though the divine Providence had not afforded so much light as that they could otherwise satisfy themselves in the credibility of them, till the new improvements in philosophy. And this is but just and reasonable: for sure the ignorance or incapacity of the creature does by no means afford sufficient ground for incredulity, or justify men in their rejecting divine revelation and impeaching the veracity or providence of the creator." With which weighty, and to the present purpose very pertinent words of this worthy author I seal up my own, and leave them both to the consideration of the reader,

A
PRESERVATIVE

AGAINST THE

PUBLICATIONS

DISPERSED BY

MODERN SOCINIANS:

IN WHICH

THE IMPIETY AND ABSURDITY OF THEIR PRINCIPLES
ARE CLEARLY SHEWN.

ADDRESSED

BY A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN

TO

HIS PARISHIONERS.

A

PRESERVATIVE

AGAINST

SOCINIANISM.



MY DEAR BRETHREN,

YOU live in an age, and in a country, in which many think they have a right to do, and say, what they please. Thus far, indeed, we are still under the protection of the law, that one man cannot shoot another through the head, without being hanged for it; unless he does it upon a principle of honour. But he may asperse characters, accuse the innocent, put darkness for light, and light for darkness, blaspheme God, dishonour the king, and expose the nakedness of his country, without being called to any account. He may erect a literary star-chamber, wherein all works, in defence of true religion, and the polity of the church of England, are misrepresented, and mangled, without justice or mercy, for five-and-thirty years together; their ears cropped, their noses slit, and thus disfigured they are turned out into the streets, to be scorned by the public; who are hence to collect, that our faith is defenceless, and our writers ridiculous.

Before the flood of Noah, the earth was filled with violence, God was despised, all goodness was trampled under foot, and men were too far gone to take any warning. The Gospel tells us it shall be so again: and all good people, who are not imposed upon by empty sounds, can plainly see that licentiousness, so loudly glorified under the name of liberty in these latter days, will be the grand instrument in bringing the new world up to that degree of corruption, which destroyed the old.

That the influence of Christianity, which is now so much decayed, may be less and less every day, books and pamphlets are industriously handed about, among the common people, to turn away their hearts from Christian truth to the fables of infidelity. I do not mean that these publications abound with oaths, curses, and obscenity; (though the press is daily delivered of them also) but that they give God the lie in all the doctrines, by which our holy religion is distinguished; and if they should be attended to, and received, must provoke him to transplant the Christian faith to some other quarter of the earth, which has not so much neglected his goodness.

Some may promise themselves, that when this shall happen, a state of perfect freedom will take place; but, let them know, that how freely soever men may offend against one another, God is not to be intimidated by the claims of licentiousness. The God of Christians is, and will be, the ruler of the world, whether libertines consent to his dominion or not: and they may assure themselves, that the departure of the Christian religion will be no peaceable event. When the Founder of our faith expired, the heavens were darkened, the earth shook, and the minds of men were troubled, and confounded. When God departed from the Jewish nation, discord, pestilence, and famine, all the horrors of war, and all the miseries of sedition and slavery succeeded. The destruction of the world by the flood, the burning of Sodom, the captivity of Jerusalem, and other like visitations, are to be understood as so many warnings of that fate, which all apostates will meet with in another world, and as examples of what will most probably befall them in this world.

My brethren, I am one of those who, with God's help, would willingly make a stand against that torrent of heresy, and impiety, which threatens to break in upon us: but there is no chance of doing this, to any purpose, unless we can remove one fatal mistake, which most ignorant people now labour under, and of which the enemies of our faith never fail to take advantage. The mistake is this; that Christians may reckon themselves secure of the favour of God, if they are not guilty of cheating, whoring, drinking, robbing, and murdering. This is the error of the ignorant: and the artful flatter them in it; telling them, that if they do but lead what they call good lives, articles of faith are but matters of opinion, and therefore they need not be nice about their creed. To make this plausible notion the more agreeable, one of our

most elegant writers, who was a better poet than a divine, has put it into rhyme :

“ For modes of faith let senseless zealots fight,
 “ His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.”

But a right life can no more grow upon a wrong faith, than grapes can grow upon thistles. This is true, for more reasons than one ; but chiefly, because the worst sort of wickedness is the wickedness of the mind against God ; upon which, I shall beg leave to offer you some considerations, in the following chapter.

CHAP. I.

OF SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS.

THE Christian life comprehends two great branches of duty : the first towards God, the second towards our neighbour. God has an undoubted claim to the first place ; our neighbour has the next ; and we are to love him, and help him, from a sense of our duty to God, who hath commanded us so to do. But if I stumble in the beginning of my duty, and offend against God himself, what reason have I to expect his favour for what I do to any body ? Will acts of kindness towards a fellow subject excuse me for an act of rebellion against my prince, or stop the execution of a statute against treason ? What was the offence which brought death into the world ? Not an offence against society, for there was none ; but only against a positive command of God. It was revealed, that to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree, would be attended with a deadly effect.—This revelation was disputed ; the truth of God was called in question ; the lust of pride prevailed, and the sentence of death followed. Therefore if Adam destroyed the whole world by sinning against the truth of God, certainly any single man may destroy himself by the same means ; though he should give all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burned for the good of society.

There is another short way of exposing the same mistake. Consider the character of the devil. He is no member of society ; and, being a spirit, cannot commit the sins of the body. He is no glutton, no drunkard, no miser, no adulterer ; his wickedness is all of a spiritual kind ; or, in other words, it is the wickedness, not of the body, but of the spirit. It consists in opposing

the wisdom of God, perverting his word, misrepresenting his justice, despising his incarnation, suggesting evil thoughts to men, promoting heresies, and dividing the church of Christ: in a word, it is the business of the apostate spirit to counter-work the ways of the Divine Spirit by all the efforts of subtilty, falsehood, pride, malice, and contradiction. Therefore, he who opposes God, as the devil doth, must be the disciple and minister of the devil; and if he do the same work, what can be expected but that he will receive the same wages? The character most acceptable to the devil, because the fittest for his purposes, is that which most nearly resembles his own: and, for the forming of such a character, he employs the most refined of all his temptations. The stupid sot, the profane swearer, and the rotten debauchee, are low-lived examples of vice; the meanest of the devil's scholars. Besides, these are sometimes known to be weary of their vices, and to forsake his party. But the speculative and philosophical sinner, is a man of figure, whose pride will never admit of his reformation. The Scribes and Pharisees, men conceited of their learning, found ways of eluding the divine law: they therefore adhered to the interests of Satan, and were immoveable in their errors; while the publican was wrought upon to renounce his extortion, and the harlot washed away her stains, with the tears of repentance. The extortioner is drawn away by the love of money, which "answereth all things;" Eccles. x. 19; and the harlot is frequently the victim of treachery, poverty, and a bad education: but the sinner, who errs upon principle, hath set himself in opposition to the will of God. Meaner sinners transgress the law, but he judges it: and where pride is entwined with error, a man sinks with a weight at his heels, which will never let him rise any more.

What are we then to think, but that he who is most like the devil, in his wickedness, is most hateful to God? And this is the case with the spiritual seducer. Hence, the Gospel gives us warning, that the "wisdom of this world is foolishness with God;" that every thought is to be "brought into captivity;" that "imagination is to be cast down;" that Satan hath his "depths," his "mysteries of iniquity," as well as his more gross and shallow deceits; that he has agents to recommend his principles, "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ," and solemnly preaching

down the Gospel, under the outward profession of preaching it up in a purer manner.

These, my brethren, are dangers, of which few Christians are now aware; and therefore the work of every deceiver, who understands his trade, is more easy and more successful than it used to be. The cant of liberty of conscience, and the authority of private judgment, (both of which are extended to an unlimited freedom of disputing the whole revelation of God to man) have been repeated in people's ears till they are intoxicated with the sounds, and can see no criminals left in the nation, but such as are condemned at the Old Bailey.—When a felon is convicted, and sentence is passed upon him, nobody arraigns the law of cruelty, the judges of partiality, or the jury of persecution. But when the blaspheming Socinian goes about to raise divisions in the church, and to rob Christians of their faith, the most valuable property they have upon earth, an outcry is raised if you offer to interrupt him. Popery persecutes the truth: therefore Protestant blasphemy must escape without censure; than which, there can be no greater scandal to the Protestant profession, nor greater matter of triumph to the Papists, who wish to see all Protestants go a round-about way, through Socinianism, into Popery.

Upon the Christian plan then, however bad carnal wickedness may be, spiritual wickedness is worse: for the mind is better than the body in itself, and consequently, according to an established proverb, worse in its corruption. Therefore no obedience can be acceptable to God, without that which is the best of all, the obedience of the understanding; no courage is comparable to that which contends earnestly for “the faith delivered to the saints;” no temperance is like that which refrains from high thoughts, and presumptuous imaginations. Let us then be no longer stunned with the affected good lives of such as fail in this sort of obedience, whose minds are at variance with the revealed wisdom of God: for there is wickedness blacker than that of common immorality: and moral virtues are something, or nothing, or worse than nothing, according to the principles from which they proceed. If a man, who has made a practice of being drunk every day of his life, should keep himself sober for one day, only that he may have an opportunity of picking his neighbour's pocket, or over-reaching him in a bargain; of what value is such sobriety? Is it not worse than drunkenness? for his drunkenness is beastly, and that is the worst you can say of it; but his

sobriety is diabolical. You may apply this to other cases: and, let me tell you, that if spiritual wickedness were but rightly understood, as it subsists in the devil, the original of it all, men could never be cheated, as they now are, with the plausible speeches of those, who lie in wait to deceive them: and, I verily believe, one good discourse upon the character of Satan, stripping that wolf of his philosopher's coat, and his sheep's cloathing, would have more effect toward keeping many people steady to the truth, than an hundred treatises upon particular points of doctrine. —And this leads me naturally to shew what arts are practised, to propagate heresy and infidelity.

CHAP. II.

OF THE METHOD OF THOSE WHO SPREAD FALSE DOCTRINE.

AS there were false prophets against the Law of Moses, so we are told there shall be false prophets against the Gospel; and as the dignity and value of our law is above that of the Jews, we are bound to look more sharply after those who would corrupt it. The church never was, nor ever will be, without them; and the Apostle informs us, that as the church grows older, they shall “wax worse and worse.” Our blessed Master has given us one rule for detecting them, which will seldom fail us: “Beware,” says he, “of false prophets, which shall come to you in sheep's clothing.” Here their outward appearance is described; they make their approach to you, not as wolves, but as sheep; not as infidels, but as Christians; not as false prophets, but as the only true prophets you ever met with. Indeed, my brethren, it is very weak and childish to imagine, that nothing is sin but that which calls itself so. Does not every bad thing give itself a good name? Therefore, when a seducer makes an attempt upon your faith, you must not expect that he will give you notice of his intention at the market-cross, like a common cryer, and say, “Now, good people, look to yourselves, for I am about to deny all the doctrines of the Gospel, and am persuaded I can make a better religion than that of the Bible.” If he should make such a gross mistake as this, his master would either discard him as a

traitor, or give him up as an instrument unfit for all the purposes of seduction. Satan himself, when engaged in the sublimest of his undertakings, never works in the odious character of an enemy to God and man; but begins with "transforming himself into an angel of light:" and his assistants, instead of avowing their wickedness, are generally more pompous and plausible in their professions than other men.—Conscience, reason, charity, piety, purity, and a love of truth, are all their own, and others are no better than counterfeits. Therefore, when a false teacher makes an attempt upon your faith, you may expect him to accost you in words to this effect:—"My Christian brethren, I am a sincere lover of the Gospel, and having the deepest concern for its honour, I would guard you against those who decry human reason, and forbid you to make use of it, that they may obtrude such doctrines as are agreeable neither to reason nor the word of God. Religion is the most valuable inheritance of the human race; and if, by God's blessing, I can bring you to entertain the same views of it with myself, we shall rejoice together. Though Popery is reformed, yet many errors still remain, which, by the use of reason, may be driven out. Reason is the gift of God, and so is the Scripture, and they cannot be contrary to one another. There is a spirit of censoriousness, which many professing Christians indulge with too little restraint; but the true Christian beareth all things. My brethren, be not moved with the rash censures and reproaches of men: if you will live godly in Christ Jesus, you must suffer persecution." These expressions are taken from a small canting Socinian tract, sold for ONE PENNY, and dispersed in great numbers, to poison the minds of the common people. You would take the author for a sincere believer of the holy Scripture, perfect in his charity, and fortified with the spirit of a martyr. But be not deceived: all is not gold that glitters. Let me, therefore, beg your attention, while I make some remarks on these extracts, to shew you that his attempts are quite contrary to his declarations, and his doctrines subversive of the whole plan of Christianity; and then you will see what a vast difference there is between the sound of words and the sense of them.

In the first place then, all sensible people reckon it a very suspicious circumstance, when a man opens a cause with a panegyric upon himself. If a stranger, when you enter his shop, were to salute you with the praises of his own honesty, his strict regard to the honour of trade, and his love to all his customers, past, pre-

sent, and to come, you would look upon all this as a bait, and be certain he intended to cheat you. So our Socinian pamphleteer, in his title, calls himself a "Lover of the Gospel:" he dare not leave you to find out this by his book; but hopes you will be blinded towards the mischief of it, by a good opinion of his character, before you enter upon it. He professes the deepest concern for the honour of the Gospel; but, as he denies all its saving doctrines, who can take his word, even though he should confirm it with an hundred oaths?

Then he exhorts you to make use of your own reason, that is, to see things with your own eyes, and not be imposed upon by what you are taught; which is very excellent advice; but he has not followed it himself, neither does he intend that you shall follow it. His notions are borrowed from Socinus, and his Deistical followers, particularly from Chubb, whose writings contain all the secrets of the present reforming divinity. So that he cannot justly pretend to the merit of having used his own reason. And as to you, he writes his pamphlet with the hopes of bringing you to entertain the same views of Christianity with himself; therefore his compliments to your reason are nothing but the flattery of one, who is all the while supplanting your reason, that he may draw you away into his own point of view: in which you will see no more of Christianity than he does: and this he tells you will be a great blessing. For this he helps you to some interpretations of texts of Scripture, so very much out of the way, that your own reason would never have hit upon them: neither would his, if he had not been told of them.

The imperfection of the reformation is a topic much declaimed upon of late years; and this author is of opinion, that though popery is gone, many errors are still remaining. In answer to which, we have this to say for our divines at the reformation, that we are sure they believed the Scripture; and their writings shew that they understood it: but as to the Reformers of this present time, we are not sure they do either the one, or the other. The lovers of the Gospel, in Luther's days, took off the superstitious dress of Christianity, but left the body of it secure. If we go to work now, we must reform it to the bone; and even then some nice judges may be offended with the skeleton, and never rest, till they have set up the idol of heathenism, as some attempted to do about fifty years ago: and their officiating minister was Mr. John Toland, who composed a form of divine service to the infinite

and eternal universe; the *το παν*; from the worship of which they have called themselves Pantheists.

The author proceeds to assure us, that as reason and the Scripture are each of them “the gift of God, they cannot be contrary to one another.” Right reason (when we have found out what that is) cannot possibly be contrary to the Scripture, because the Scripture contains the reason of God: but the reason of any particular man may be very contrary to it. Dean Swift observed, very justly, that “reason itself is a very different thing from reason in particular men.” So that we want a distinction here; for when we speak of reason in itself, every man makes himself the compliment to think that his reason is the thing intended. But it is one thing to have the gift of reason as a human creature, and another thing to have the right use of it. The first we have by nature; the second is the work of grace: and if a writer put one of these for the other, or imagine them to be the same thing, he will soon talk very absurdly. Voltaire had the gift of reason, but he had not the gift of using it; for on every subject that relates to Christianity, he reasoned like an idiot: yet with a mischievous vein of wit, which easily catches people of corrupt minds. The philosophising Greeks, to whom “Christ crucified” was “foolishness,” had their reason, like other men; but education had perverted it, and rendered it contradictory to the reason of God; so that it was of no use to them in divine subjects, but rather an hindrance. A similar train of education will have just the same effect now: and you must not expect that any person, who abuses his reason, will confess that he does so. He will go on to boast of reason in general, and make no exceptions to the disadvantage of his own reason in particular. When human reason sees things as the wisdom of God sees them, then it performs its proper office; but when it sees them otherwise, then it takes the name of philosophy, and becomes foolishness, like the boasted reason of the Greeks, who, “professing themselves to be wise, became fools.” The world has always been full enough of this sort of reason. How common is it for people to talk about conscience; and yet how few are they who consider what it is!—For conscience is an agreement or coincidence of the judgment of man with the judgment of God.—When conscience condemns what God approves, or approves what God condemns, it is no longer conscience, but conceit and delusion. The conscience of the Socinian scruples the worship of the church of England as

idolatry; but there is no more reason in it, than in that conscience of the Musselmen, which sends them two thousand miles on a pilgrimage to the tomb of their false prophet. Our author has been very free in delivering his opinion about reason, but what reason is, and what is the proper use of it; how it may be improved and strengthened, and how it may be so weakened as to judge falsely of every thing, like the jaundiced eye, are questions for which he seems very much unprepared. The mind undoubtedly hath its distempers, like the body. The pride of philosophy was the distemper of the Greeks; the love of this world was the distemper of the Jews; and neither of these could make sense of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

It will be worth our while to enquire, why he guards his readers so particularly against censoriousness. He finds, by experience, that his own doctrines and writings are odious to all sincere believers, whether Churchmen or Dissenters; and therefore wishes, as any other person would in his circumstances, to escape untouched, because his principles of religion are too unsound to bear any severe examination. But he who has used the word of God so freely, and has not scrupled to accuse the church of error, absurdity, and the utmost impiety, because it does not agree with his fancy, must not expect to be commended, till we have renounced our faith, or lost our understanding. I grant we ought to be charitable and merciful to those who offend, either through ignorance, or infirmity; but neither of these will be pleaded by one, who tells us he is guided by reason, in every step he has taken.

Every Christian, who has not been imposed upon by self-interested counsellors, must know that zeal towards God is a duty as necessary and laudable as charity towards men. The church of Ephesus is praised in the Scripture, for "not bearing them that are evil, and for trying them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and finding them liars." Rev. ii. 2. Without doubt these lying Apostles, in the church of Ephesus, whose cause would not endure the probe, had many things to say against the censoriousness of those who detected them. But we are taught by this, and many other examples, that the censoriousness of faith is more acceptable to God, than the affected moderation of infidelity: and therefore every good man will wish to be called censorious by those, whom it is the duty of every true Christian to censure.

The author, however, has fortified himself, and endeavours to fortify his readers, against every thing that may happen in this way. “Be not moved,” says he, “with the rash censures of men:” that is, go on boldly in your errors, contradicting the Gospel with an apostolical freedom of speech; and, if you are confronted with the Scriptures, and convicted of blasphemy, persevere unto the end. Such is the advice which Pride (the most mischievous of all counsellors) whispers into the ear: “If thou hast erred, persist, and justify it; for it is possible thou mayest get the victory by this means; and victory is oftentimes of more moment than truth. Perhaps thou art a leading man, and the esteem of thy wisdom will influence the conduct of others; and if so, one base retraction may pull down all thou hast built. Be sure, then, that it is honourable, it is edifying, it is for the glory of God, that thou shouldest be obstinate.” Pride communicates this advice in a whisper, but the author speaks it out; and, what is very wonderful, it seems never once to have entered into his head that he may be mistaken. If any man should be enticed to follow him, he, too, is thenceforward to commence infallible; never to be turned, never to be moved, never to hear any thing that is advanced in opposition to his impiety.—How great and noble would this constancy be in a better cause! But here it is lamentable to see the delusion to which the human heart is exposed. Conceit, obstinacy, and contradiction, when sitting in judgment upon themselves, claim all the honours due to persecuted truth, candour, and wisdom.

CHAP. III.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE SOCINIAN ERRORS.

NOW we have considered the nature of spiritual wickedness, and the disguises under which false teachers recommend themselves, we are prepared to take a view of the doctrines they are labouring to introduce. These are to be found in a small publication above-mentioned, which calls itself “An Appeal to the serious and candid Professors of Christianity.” I call them *doctrines*, for want of a better word; but they are in reality no-

thing more than so many negatives put upon the doctrines of the Gospel.

You will not so readily understand what it is to deny the Christian faith, till you have recollected, in the first place, what the Christian faith is: you will therefore give me leave to remind you of it in as few words as possible.

The Christian is one who lives by faith. He knows that of himself he has no ability to do the will of God, and therefore applies for the assistance of that blessed Spirit who is called the Comforter; and, according to Christ's promise, is to be in us, and abide with us for ever. He knows that man is fallen into sin, and death, which are the works of the devil; and that Christ came into the world for no other purpose but to destroy them: to purge away sin and to prevail over death.—That as we are in a forfeited state, our redemption is the work of God's free grace, to which we have no claim by nature. That he who effected this redemption, was the divine Person to whom the prophet Isaiah spake, saying, "Behold, your God will come, and save you." That he fulfilled all the sacrifices of the law, by the offering of himself once for all, and tasting of death for every man: so that in him we have now received that atonement which the law described, but could not accomplish.

You have here a short draught of the Christian religion, with its principal, or leading doctrines. The rainbow, when its colours are most splendid, is not more visible in the sky, than these doctrines are in the Bible: and therefore good and wise men have preached, and written, and pleaded for them, and suffered for them, even unto death, in almost every age, and every kingdom of the world; and we shall at last see them crowned, in heaven, for a faithful adherence to them. What think you then of an author, who, being wiser than his neighbours, offers himself to you as a "lover of the Gospel, deeply concerned for its honour," and denies them every one; who instructs us, in other words, that human reason is to furnish a man with all his religious notions, and that the Scripture is to give them countenance; that man has power enough of himself to do the will of God; that he is not born in sin, nor elected by the divine grace; that our Redeemer is no Redeemer, but a good moral example; that he is not God, and that he hath made no atonement for our sins?

I desire to know how the wit of man, when it has got this new religion, can put it into a creed? You cannot begin in the com-

mon form, "I believe, &c." you must say, "I do *not* believe—that any thing more than the religion of human reason is necessary to professors of Christianity; I have no need of faith; I want not the grace of God; I need not be called, nor elected, by the divine favour; I do not own Jesus Christ for my God; neither do I desire him to pay any price for my redemption." This negative confession, fitter surely for a necromancer than a professor of Christianity, is the favourite object, for the interests of which a clamorous party assembled, contributed, petitioned, and blotted tons of paper. For this, an unhappy gentleman left his ministry in the church of England, to preach up the God of Mahometans, in a chamber; and calls this "confessing Christ before men!" For this, their pamphlets are dispersed by thousands, to turn the affections of the ignorant from the inestimable truths of the Gospel, and inflame their fancies with a set of opinions, which can only lead them to perdition. To draw men from the light of the Gospel, into Socinian darkness, is like the traffic of those who go about and deceive the minds of the British poor with lying representations, to draw them from their native land to some barren colony, where they find nothing but disappointments, hard labour, poverty, and putrid distempers. The change from Christianity to Socinianism is as little to be envied, as the transmigration of those who should leave the scenery of paradise, and the plenty of Canaan, to associate with the savages of the South, on a weather-beaten rock in the Magellanic ocean, where enjoyment could be nothing but infatuation, and a true sense of their condition, whenever they should return to it, could end in nothing but horror and despair.

I shall now beg your attention, while I shew you, more particularly, the false opinions of our Socinian author, together with the dangerous advice he gives you concerning the chief doctrines of Christianity:—and I persuade myself you will immediately know how to judge of these things, when they are stripped of his plausible recommendations.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE USE OF REASON IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

HE bids you, "distrust all those who decry human reason." But, if you take his advice, you must distrust the Bible, which informs us, in the beginning of Genesis, that "every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually;" and such is the doctrine of St. Paul, who has taught us, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." So that he who uses only his natural reason, without some higher principle of discernment, which is the gift of God, cannot understand the matters of the Christian religion. This poor man forgets that Adam and all his posterity are fallen into sin and infirmity, and hopes you will distrust those whose duty it is to put you in mind of it: as indeed the Bible itself does, from one end of it to the other. We read in the last chapter of the Revelation, that whosoever "loveth and maketh a lie," will be excluded from the kingdom of heaven. What! Is it possible to love a lie? And are not the affections miserably depraved, which are capable of such a love; especially, if that lie is pointed against the veracity of God, and the truth of his religion; which is the sort of lie here intended? And what faculty is it that makes such a lie? Is it not human reason? No, says the Socinian; it is the abuse of reason. True; and this is the very thing he has forgotten; for man fell from reason into the abuse of reason. Here lies the danger; not in the use of reason, as such, but in the abuse of it, and in the power of such affections as are subject to love lies better than truth, and which therefore make a tool and a drudge of reason, to serve their own bad ends. This is the danger, of which we warn you; and this is our manner of decrying human reason. We do not mean to decry a man's legs, when we warn him against leaping down a precipice, to break his neck. Is it not our duty to warn him? Especially, if he is so blind as not to see the danger, and at the same time so conceited, as to think he sees better than we do? Does not the Gospel itself give us sufficient warning from that deplorable case of the blind pharisees, whose sin was fixed in them past recovery, because they said, we

see? So that upon these considerations I venture to say to you, in words directly opposite to those of your Socinian counsellor, “Distrust all those who magnify human reason:” the devil did it in paradise; the blind pharisees did it; and our Deists and Socinians do it, at this day, to the infinite prejudice of those who are weak enough to listen to them. Besides, it is proper to advertise to you, in most of our modern discourses about reason, there is an ambiguity, which it is of the utmost consequence to remove. Reason has two meanings: it signifies the intuitive faculty, or power of reason, in the human mind; and it also signifies truth of argument, independent of the mind. These two differ from each other as a man’s feet differ from the road that he travels upon: the road may be a good road, lying straight before him; and this is what we call right reason; but if he is lame, he cannot get forward; if the road is rough, and he is tender-footed, he will dislike it; and if he is whimsical or obstinate, he will go another way, to shew people that he understands the road better than you do.

How very wrong is it to affirm, as this author does, “that there is no possibility of replying to the Papists, in their doctrine of transubstantiation, but by appealing to reason.” What! shall we be so rash as to allow the Papists the authority of the Scripture, out of a compliment to our own reason? And shall we be so ignorant as to do this, in a matter where the Scripture expressly confutes them? Christ informed the Jews, that they must “eat his flesh, and drink his blood.” They were shocked at this, as a thing unnatural; and our Saviour proved it to be impossible, by observing to them, that they should see him ascend into heaven, where his person should be out of their reach. Therefore to reconcile all this, and shew the meaning, he added, “The flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” So that the Papists are inexcusable for following the example of the blinded Jews, and taking his expressions in a bodily sense. Thus then we may reply to the Papists out of that Scripture which they allow; and it is better than to appeal to reason; for if by reason we mean human reason, as this man does, then our reason is no rule to theirs: but if by reason we mean right reason, or truth of argument, then that truth, in scriptural subjects, is to be laid down from the Scripture: and, in my opinion, this author has acted neither wisely, nor like a Protestant, in giving it up to the Papists.

He sets out to argue with a Mahometan, in the same absurd manner. You must bid the Mahometan use his reason, and then he cannot but see that our religion is better than his. This is a very easy method to convert the Mahometan: we can bid him use his reason with very little trouble to ourselves: but, I pray, who must enable him to do it? For he is in blindness, and bondage of mind, under the corrupting doctrines in which he has been educated. It was foretold of the Jews, that they should be "smitten with blindness," and should "grope, at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness." They are now in this state, the slaves of passion, prejudice, interest, and disaffection: and what are we to do with them? We must send our author to them, and he will bid them use their reason. But if we send a Christian to them, who has read his Bible, he will bid them pray to God for that faith which is his gift, and resign themselves to be directed by him, as St. Paul, their pattern, did, before the scales of Jewish blindness fell from his eyes. When Paul was under the prejudices of a Jew, God did not bid him use his reason, but struck him to the earth by the force of a light from heaven, which brought him to a sense of his own blindness; and that brought him to his prayers; and then another miracle opened his eyes; which all the reasoning in the world would never have effected, without the interposition of divine grace; and yet it is Paul never was so far from the Gospel as the Socinian is: These things are sufficient to shew that reason, in the state it now is, cannot lead us to God; and that, by itself, it is no sufficient guide in matters of religion. You will ask, how then am I to judge of the sense of Scripture? Am I not to depend upon my reason? The Apostle says not; for that the Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation "through faith that is in Christ Jesus." Of this faith our author says not a single word: he does not seem to know of such a principle; though the just live by it, and the Scriptures are full of it. How does it happen that the Jew knows nothing of the Scripture, but because he is destitute of this principle? Though the Socinians are of opinion that the Jews have always been right in the first and great commandment, and the Christian church always wrong, in the same, from the beginning. Such is the persuasion of these men of reason!

CHAP. V.

OF THE POWER OF MAN TO DO THE WILL OF GOD.

THIS proposition, that man has power of himself to do the will of God, is repugnant to the whole Gospel; and especially to that declaration of Christ, "Without me ye can do nothing:" yet, for this proposition, our Socinian has soberly pleaded; attempting to prove it from those words of the Scripture, where God saith to the people, "Turn ye from your evil ways; why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Hence he argues, that the people had power to turn themselves, otherwise God would not have required it. But unless we are to take the Scripture by halves, we shall find it said by the people, and by their prophets, "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned," Lam. v. 21. and Jer. xxxi. 18. So that if both these passages are laid together, it follows, that in the great work of conversion, there is a part for man, and a part for God; as in that exhortation of the Apostle, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." Phil. ii. 12, 13. There was a man who came to our Saviour with a withered hand, of which he had lost the use: yet Christ said unto him, "Stretch forth thine hand." On this occasion our author might argue, that Christ did not heal this man, for that he must have had the use of his hand, otherwise he would not have been commanded to stretch it out. But this would be very superficial reasoning; for the man, in faith and obedience to the word of Christ, attempted to stretch forth his hand, and in the attempt received that power which was necessary to effect it. It is just so with us; and, without question, the miracle was designed to illustrate our own case. God commands us, with our withered faculties, to do his will: we endeavour to do it; and, in the attempt, receive that ability which is necessary to accomplish it. In all these cases the will of man, and the power of God, operate together. We turn ourselves, and God turneth us; the man stretched out his hand, and Christ stretched it out for him: we work out our salvation, and God worketh in us at the same time. This is what appears, when we lay the Scripture together: and you see how dangerous it is to listen to

those who argue from a scrap of the Bible, misunderstood and perverted, so as to render the grace of God of none effect.

“Power in man to do the will of God,” says the author, “is no foundation for pride; for what have we that we have not received?” The question really is, whether we have this power by nature, independent of the Gospel, or whether it is given to us in consequence of the Gospel? Certainly not by nature; God having purposely so ordered things, “that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” 2 Cor. iv. 7. If all is right in us by nature, and we have within ourselves the power by which we are to be saved, then there are no works of the devil to be destroyed, and Christ need not have come into the world. But then it is objected, that if God help us by the miraculous powers of his grace, this doctrine must encourage us to presumption, and to put off our reformation in hope of some future sudden conversion. To be sure it may do this: and so may all the doctrines of the Gospel be abused, when they fall into bad hands. Some were so perverse as to argue in favour of an abundance of sin, that the grace of God might abound in forgiving it: but the Apostle did not therefore withdraw his doctrine of justification by faith in Christ: he stated the case, corrected the abuse, and left his doctrine in possession, as before. So must we do now: if any ill use be made of the Gospel, we must not give the Gospel up, but demonstrate the abuse, and correct it, from the Gospel itself.

CHAP. VI.

OF ORIGINAL SIN.

IN this chapter, the author allows that we suffer by the sin of Adam, but says it is impossible we should have sinned in him. Whether we have sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, and how far his individual offence may be ours, is a nice question: but the doctrine of original sin may be settled without it.—If, in consequence of Adam's transgression, we have derived from him a constitution, of which sin is the natural fruit, then sin is original in human nature, and comes into the world with us; as the leprosy or gout may be original in those who derive it from their parents, and bring the seeds of these distempers into

the world with them. If nothing but death had entered into the world by means of Adam's offence, the doctrine might have been doubtful: but the Apostle teaches us, that when death entered into the world, sin entered with it; and that "death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" the effect is permanent in our suffering, as the cause is permanent in our constitution. The Apostle therefore persists to speak of mankind as being under the law of sin and death; not of death only, but of sin also; and that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from both. The name given to the sinful nature of man is that of flesh, in opposition to the renewed spirit of a Christian. "I know," says the Apostle, "that in me" (that is, in my flesh) "dwelleth no good thing:" and in the verse before, he speaks of sin dwelling in him. At last he exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This flesh, this body of sin, this body of death, which is also called the old man, and is pronounced to be corrupt, are so many expressions, affirming that sin is original in man's nature. And if there were no other proof of it in the Bible, this consideration alone would be sufficient, that none can enter into the kingdom of God, unless he is born again: for there can be no occasion to save us by a new birth, unless we are lost by the old.

CHAP. VII.

OF ELECTION AND REPROBATION:

HOW far the decrees of God are arbitrary, is a question, about which we might multiply words to little purpose: and, if we should calculate how many of the human race will be saved, and how many will be lost, we should employ ourselves to as little effect. There is only one thing here to be observed. Our author affirms, that "as surely as we derive our being from a just and merciful God, the terms on which we come into the world are advantageous to us." This must undoubtedly be true, so far as the Creator himself is the cause of our present state: but it is very mean logic which argues, that because God is just and merciful, man is on the same terms now, as when he was first created: for

this is but to say, in other words, that because God is just and merciful, therefore he hath lied to us, in his account of the fall and its consequences. Neither do these give us any ground of complaint against the justice and mercy of God: for, he removed from himself the beginning of all evil and vanity into the liberty of the creature: as he hath reserved in himself the beginning of all restitution to the liberty of his grace; in virtue of which liberty, he calleth whom he pleases, at what time he pleases, and “divideth
“to every man severally as he will.” This liberty of calling, and distributing, our author disputes with him; affirming, that we certainly (as sure as God is just) come into the world on advantageous terms, and enjoy these terms without being called to them. But, the Scripture, which is of better authority, informs us, that God “added to his church such as should be saved;” and that all the members of it are elected to the divine privilege of being fellow-heirs with Jesus Christ; to which they certainly have no right by nature. The gifts and callings of God are mentioned together; because it is merely of his free gift that we Gentiles have been called to the terms of his holy religion. The God, who called Abraham from his country and kindred, and afterwards called the Gentiles, throughout the world, by the ministry of his Apostles, granting them repentance unto life, hath, by the same act of grace, entitled us to the benefits of the evangelical charter: and when we are no longer worthy of our vocation, he may disfranchise us: or, to use the language of the Apostle, he that grafted us into his church, may cut us off from it, and reject us, as he hath actually rejected the Jews, for an example to us. It is now as possible for a man to forfeit his station under the Gospel, as it was for Adam to forfeit Paradise: and the ready way to this is proudly to arrogate such rights as we have not; for thus the Jews did. They boasted that they had “Abraham for their father,” and were “never in
“bondage.” So the Socinian boasts, that he is born to terms of advantage, and denies that he is under the bondage of sin: and therefore, by his own account of himself, he has no need of the Gospel: for the Gospel offers itself as a light to the blind, a help to the weak, a medicine to the sick, and life to the dead.

CHAP. VIII.

OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

IT would take up too much room to examine and settle all the texts our author has perverted; neither is there any occasion for it. His doctrine will very soon be overturned. "If you ask," says he, "Who then is Jesus Christ, if he be not God? I answer in the words of St. Peter, addressed to the Jews, after his resurrection and ascension, that Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God, &c. and man must mean the same kind of being with ourselves." The task therefore which he imposes upon you, is only this; that when you find Jesus of Nazareth called "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, Jehovah our righteousness, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the Sun of Righteousness, the Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory, by whom all things in heaven and earth were created, and by whom they now consist, in whose person there was God reconciling the world to himself, even all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" I say, when you read these, and numberless other expressions to the same effect, you are to find ways of bringing them down to such a sense, as to leave nothing in them all, but Jesus of Nazareth, a being of the same kind with yourselves. My brethren, if you think this can be done, then you are too far gone for me to reclaim you. If you think it cannot, then you see the grand error of Socinianism, and I need give you no farther trouble on this part of our subject.

CHAP. IX.

OF ATONEMENT FOR SIN BY THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

AS the Socinians deny the fall of man, they cannot be consistent, without denying all its consequences; of which, the doctrine of atonement is one of the most considerable. And a

doctrine it is, so plain and striking, that all mankind, who have had any notion of God's purity, and their own guilt, have joined in the practice of offering sacrifices, to avert the wrath of invisible powers; thus giving universal testimony to that great principle of the Law and the Gospel, that without shedding of blood there is no remission. And this general attachment to the notion of expiation disposed the Gentiles to embrace the sacrifice of Christ, in whom they found that atonement, which they had all desired; and therefore the prophet scrupled not to call him "the desire of all nations." But, in this capacity, he is not desirable to the Socinians, who have found out another way of acceptance. They hold, that nothing is necessary, but mere repentance and moral reformation, on the part of sinners; and that God, on his part, is bound by his goodness, to forgive them, for nothing. But now, what are we to do with all those declarations of the Scripture, which speak of Jesus Christ as a "sacrifice for sin?" In answer to which, I may venture to assure you, that the same ingenuity, which proves Jesus Christ to be "no more than a man," can as easily prove, that he was no sacrifice. It is true, say they, he is called a sacrifice, but only in a figurative expression, as our prayers and praises are called sacrifices. His death was no sin-offering, but only an example of patient suffering for his religion; an example to us to suffer in like manner, if we are called upon; and this, says our author, in his canting way, "was a noble sacrifice indeed." So that a noble sacrifice is no sacrifice at all. And now, my brethren, is not this a noble way of interpreting the Scripture? Christ died for our sins: and what does it mean? Nothing at all, but that he died for his own religion! And, if we die in like manner, then we are as truly a sacrifice for him, as he was for us:—and so saith the Quaker, that "the blood of Christ was no more than the blood of any other saint*." But what saith the Scripture? "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." Did not the Passover and its blood stop the execution of that vengeance, which fell upon the Egyptians? If Christ then is our Passover, it must follow, that his blood now does for us, what the blood of the paschal lamb did for the Hebrews in Egypt; but that blood was expiatory, and carried redemption from death with it: and therefore so is his; according to that of St. Paul, "We have

* G. Keith quoted these words from Solomon Eccles, a great preacher and prophet of the Quakers. See Leslie's Works, folio, Vol. II. p. 195.

“redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins.” Was the Passover an example to the Hebrews? Did it die for its own religion? No; its blood was accepted for the saving of the people of God, when the unbelieving were destroyed; and therefore Christ’s blood, as the great antitype before referred to, is accepted for the same end: otherwise he can be no Passover. Indeed, so false is it that Christ’s sacrifice was figurative, that there never was any true and proper sacrifice, but his only. The “blood of bulls, and of goats, and of lambs,” which were offered daily under the Law, and had the appearance of real sacrifices, could not accomplish what it aimed at: it could not purge the conscience from a sense of guilt: and to shew that it had not done so, those sacrifices were offered repeatedly, day by day, and year by year: but Christ offered himself “once for all,” and by that offering, “perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” With the merits of this sacrifice, he now appears, as our High Priest, in the presence of God for us, as the High Priest of the Jews went into the most holy place of the temple, once a year, with the blood of the yearly sacrifice. We are far from denying, that Christ was an example to us in his death, as well as in his life: but he was not only an example, as the Socinian falsely asserts: he was an “Intercessor, a Mediator, a temple, a Priest, “a sacrifice, a ransom, a price of redemption, a propitiation, “an atonement, a lamb slain for the sins of the world* :” he was, in short, all that the Law exhibited: and instead of being a sacrifice only in figure, all the sacrifices that had been before him, from the beginning of the world, were the figures, of which he himself, once for all, in the end of the world, was the substance and reality.

If you wish to see the whole doctrine of atonement confirmed and explained in a single text, consider what the Apostle hath said, Heb. x. 26, 27. “If we sin wilfully, after that we have “received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more “sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, “and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” This teaches us, that a fire from heaven is due to sinners, and must fall upon those sinners themselves, unless a sacrifice, exposing itself in their stead, shall turn away the indignation that

* Heb. vii. 25. Ibid. ix. 15. John ii. 21. Heb. iv. 14. Ibid. ix. 26. Matt. xx, 28. 1 Cor. vi. 20. 1 John ii. 2. Rom. v. 11. John i. 29.

awaits them. Christ is this sacrifice, accepted of God as our substitute : but, if we depart from our profession, despising the advantage of this substitution, then we can find no other sacrifice, but must receive the divine wrath in our own persons. When God shall be revealed, as once on Mount Sinai, and that fiery indignation, which is looked for, shall be falling upon the adversaries of the Gospel, then we shall see the necessity of this sacrifice for sin : and, if the sophistry of any seducer shall have tempted us to rely on some other method of salvation, we shall curse the hour, in which we listened to him.

CHAP. X.

CONCLUSION.

YOU are not to wonder, my brethren, either at the absurdity, or wickedness, of these attempts which are made upon your faith : the Scripture hath told us, the time should come, when they “ will not endure sound doctrine,” but be possessed with an itch of novelty ; and, as numbers give credit to any false persuasion, it is natural for them to wish, that you may endure sound doctrine as little as they do. With this view, they take all possible pains for the propagation of their false opinions ; which Dr. Priestley, in false English, calls the “ spread of truth*.” These opinions, as you have seen, are very flattering to human pride : and it is an old saying, that flatterers are easily believed. No deep reasoning is requisite, when the treachery of your own hearts assist them in their work ; the success of which is farther promoted by the cheapness of their publications, which puts them into the hands of the lowest readers. Their books fly about the world, at a penny a-piece ; like the seeds of thistles, which, being little and light, are carried about by the winds, and will take root in any soil, (the worse the better) till they overrun the face of the earth ; and this they call the “ spread of truth.” O let not the husbandman go to sleep, while the enemy is thus dili-

* See the Preface to his Sermon on “ The Importance and Extent of free Enquiry into Matters of Religion.”

gent, and successful! You may judge, therefore, that your situation is dangerous; and when you are convinced of this, it is hoped, you will be on your guard. And now I have endeavoured, as my duty requires, to shew you what the enemies of your faith have to say, in one of their pieces, you may be able to judge of the rest for yourselves. So, for the present, I shall conclude with that advice of St. John—"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John iv. 1.

THE
CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

OF A
TRINITY

PROVED BY ABOVE AN

Hundred short and clear ARGUMENTS, expressed in the TERMS

OF THE

HOLY SCRIPTURE,

COMPARED AFTER A MANNER ENTIRELY NEW,

AND

Digested under the Four following TITLES:

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. The Divinity of <i>Christ</i> . | | 3. The <i>Plurality</i> of Persons; |
| 2. The Divinity of the <i>Holy Ghost</i> . | | 4. The Trinity in Unity. |

With a few REFLECTIONS, occasionally interspersed, upon some of the ARIAN WRITERS, particularly Dr. S. CLARKE:

To which is added,

A LETTER to the COMMON PEOPLE, in Answer to some POPULAR ARGUMENTS against THE TRINITY.

BY WILLIAM JONES, M.A. F.R.S.

RECTOR OF PASTON, IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, AND MINISTER OF NAYLAND, IN SUFFOLK.

PREFACE

TO THE

THIRD EDITION.

MY Bookseller having solicited me to re-publish this little Treatise, I have corrected the typographical errors of the last edition, and enlarged some passages of the work itself.

The attempt of a late Bishop of Clogher to propagate *Arianism* in the Church of *Ireland*, induced me to keep the doctrine of the *Trinity* in my thoughts for some years; and I had a particular attention to it as often as the Scriptures, either of the Old or New Testament, were before me. This little book was the fruit of my study; of which I have seen some good effects already, and ought not to despair of seeing more before I die.

Many other observations have occurred to me since the first publication, which I should willingly have added. But some readers might have been discouraged, if I had presented them with a book of too large a size: and the merits of the cause lie in a small compass.

The re-publication of this work, though merely accidental, is not unseasonable at this time, when we are

taught from the press *, (and the author seems to be very much in earnest) that the only sure way of reducing Christianity to its primitive purity, is to abolish all *Creeeds* and *Articles*. But the great rock of offence with this writer, is the *Trinity*; to get rid of which, he would at once dissolve our whole ecclesiastical constitution, and form of worship.

This wild project furnishes a melancholy confirmation of the censure passed upon us by some learned Protestants abroad, who have reflected upon *England* as a country productive of literary monsters †; where some old heresy is frequently rising up, as old comets have been supposed to do, with new and portentous appearances. And the reader whose sight can penetrate through the vehement accusations of *popery*, *bigotry*, *persecution*, *imposition*, and other fiery vapours with which this author hath surrounded his performance, will discover little, if any thing, more than *Arianism* at the centre.

The Scripture is the only rule that can enable us to judge whether that or the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity is more agreeable to truth: therefore I have confined myself to this unexceptionable kind of evidence for the proof of the latter, and have made the Scripture *its own interpreter*. But our adversaries, though they allow the sufficiency of the Scripture, and unjustly pretend to distinguish themselves from us by insisting upon it, do nevertheless make such frequent use of a lower sort of evidence to bias common readers, and shew the expediency of what they are pleased to call *Reformation*;

* In a new work, intituled *The Confessional*.

† *Carpzov. Pref. in Pseudo C. 10, Whistonii.*

that I have thought proper to exhibit a specimen of their method of proceeding in that respect, by adding to this edition *A Letter to the Common People, in Answer to some popular Arguments against the Trinity*. These arguments are extracted chiefly from a small book, intitled, *An Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People; a thing very highly commended by the author of the Confessional* *. But in this author's estimation, every writer that opposes the faith of the Church of *England*, is *ipso facto* invincible: and consequently, this retailer of *Dr. Clarke's* opinions, whoever he is, must come in for his share of merit and applause; which I by no means envy him.

So far as the Scripture itself hath been thought to furnish any objections to the received doctrine, I judged it the fairer and the surer way to answer them as they were offered by *Dr. Clarke* himself, and have therefore no apology to make for neglecting some of his disciples, who have not made any improvement on his arguments, as I do not find that this gentleman hath: the second edition of whose *Appeal* was published in 1754, since which there have been two editions of the *Catholic Doctrine* in *England*, and one or more in *Ireland*.

* "Which book," (says he) "has passed through two editions without any sort of reply that I have heard of. This looks as if *able* writers were not *willing* to meddle with the subject, or that *willing* writers were not *able* to manage it." p. 320. The Rev. Mr. *Landon* published an answer to this book in 1764, printed for *Whiston* and *White*: and he has mentioned another himself in a *note*. But had the case really been as he had reported in his text, it will by no means follow, that a book is therefore unanswerable, because it hath received no answer. If this be good logic, I could present him with a conclusion or two, which he would not very well like.

By all the observations I have been able to make, the greater number of those who disbelieve the Trinity upon principle, (for many do it implicitly, and are credulous in their unbelief) do not profess to take their notions of God from the Bible, but affect to distinguish themselves from the common herd, by drawing them from the fountains of Reason and Philosophy. We cannot be persuaded that the Trinity is denied by reasoners of this complexion, because the Scripture hath *not revealed* it: but do rather suspect that some philosophers dissent from this point of Christian doctrine, because they are not humble enough to take the Scripture as a test of their religious opinions. In which case the whole labour of collecting of texts, and framing of comments, and fishing for various readings, is an after-thought. It is submitted to rather for apology than for proof: to reconcile readers of the Scripture to that doctrine which they would be more jealous of receiving if they knew it to have been originally borrowed from another quarter. He that would deceive a *Christian*, can seldom do his work effectually without a Bible in his hand: a consideration which may help us to a sight of the consequences, if persons were permitted to teach in our churches without any previous enquiry concerning their religious sentiments, and so allowed to take the same liberty, either through mistake or ill design, as was taken by the arch-deceiver in the wilderness*, who never meant to use the Scripture for edification, but only for destruction; not to apply it as an instrument of good, but to turn it, as far as he was able, into an instrument of evil. The Bible was given us for the preservation of the kingdom

* Matt. iv. 6.

of Christ upon earth; as the Book of Statutes in this kingdom is intended to secure the authority of the government together, with the life, peace, and property, of every individual: and we want no prophet to foreshew us the consequences, if all the malecontents in the nation were allowed to be public interpreters of the laws.

These considerations I leave the judicious to apply as they find occasion. I use them chiefly as hints, for the benefit both of such as may be in danger of wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction, and of such philosophers as those alluded to by St. *Paul**, who through the *profession* of fancied *wisdom* fell into real *folly*, and purchased a reputed knowledge of things natural and metaphysical, at the lamentable expence of losing the knowledge of God.

* Rom. i. 22. 1 Cor. i. 21.

PLUCKLEY,
Jan. 1, 1767.

TO THE
R E A D E R.

THE Christian religion is best known and distinguished by the God, proposed in it, as the object of our faith and obedience: and as there is no true religion, but the religion of Christians, so is there no true God, but the God of Christians.

Before the coming of *Christ*, and the fulfilling of the Law, God was known by the name of *Jehovah*, the God of *Abraham*, and of *Isaac*, and of *Jacob*. The *Israelites*, who were the seed of *Abraham*, and drew their whole religion from a divine revelation, had the knowledge of the true God; and the people of every other nation, who were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise,” were also “without God in the world¹.” Though they talked much of God, and wrote much of him, and offered him many sacrifices, yet they knew him not; the being they served, was not God, but another in the place of him, falsely called by his name. And though some modern Christians have forgot there was any difference, yet the very *heathens* themselves, upon some occasions, were ready enough to allow it. *Naaman*, the *Syrian*, when he was cured of his leprosy by the prophet *Elisha*, made a public confession of it.—“Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel².” The same is affirmed by the inspired Psalmist—“All the gods of the heathens are idols³” and God himself declares them *all* to have been *vanities*⁴.

The case is now with the *Christians* under the Gospel, as it antiently was with the *Jews* under the Law: they believe in the only true God; while the unchristian part of mankind, who are by far the majority, neither know him not, or wilfully deny him; as *Pharaoh* did the *God of the Hebrews* when he was told of him. And we are now got to such a pitch of indevotion and ignorance, that among those who profess and call themselves *Christians*, there

¹ Eph. ii. 12.

² 2 Kings v. 15.

³ Psal. xcvi. 5.

⁴ Jer. xiv. 22.

are too many who are almost come to be *Heathens* without knowing it. For there is a fashionable notion propagated by most of our moral writers, and readily subscribed to by those who say their prayers but seldom, and can never find time to read their Bible, that all who worship any God, worship the *same* God; as if we worshipped the three letters of the *word* God, instead of the *Being* meant and understood by it. The *Universal Prayer* of Mr. Alexander Pope was composed upon this plan; wherein the Supreme Being is addressed as a common *Father of all*, under the names, *Jehovah*, *Jove*, and *Lord*. And this humour of confounding things, which ought to be distinguished at the peril of our souls, and of comprehending *believers* and *idolators* under one and the same religion, is called a *catholic spirit*, that shews the very exaltation of Christian charity. But God, it is to be feared, will require an account of it under another name; and though the *poet* could see no difference, but has mistaken *Jove* or *Jupiter* for the same *Father of all* with the *Lord Jehovah*; yet the *Apostle* has instructed us better; who, when the *Priest of Jupiter* came to offer sacrifice, exhorted him very passionately to “turn from those vanities unto the living God[†],” well knowing that he whom the *Priest* adored under the name of *Jupiter*, was not the *living God*, but a creature, a nothing, a *vanity*. Yet the catholic spirit of a moralist can discern no difference; and while it pretends some zeal for a sort of universal religion, common to *believers* and *infidels*, betrays a sad indifference for the Christian religion in particular. This error is so monstrous in a land enlightened by the Gospel, and yet so very common amongst us at present, that I may be pardoned for speaking of it in the manner it deserves. And let me beseech every serious person, who is willing to have his prayers heard, to consider this matter a little better, and use a more correct form; for God, who is jealous of his honour, and has no communion with idols, will certainly reject the petition that sets him upon a level with *Baal* and *Jupiter*.

The *true God* is He that was “in Christ reconciling the world to himself;” there is none other but He; and if this great characteristic be denied, or any other assumed in its stead, a man is left *without God*; after which, he may call himself a *Deist*, if he will; but his God is a mere idol of the imagination, and has no corresponding reality in the whole universe of beings.

† Acts xiv. 15.

The modern *Jews*, by denying their *God* to have been *manifest in the flesh*, are as effectually departed from the *true God*, as their forefathers were, when they danced before the golden calf, and called their idolatrous service “a feast to the Lord.” For the being of *God* is not an object of sight, but of faith; it enters first into the heart; and if it be wrong there, the *first* commandment is broken: if a figure of it be set up before the eyes, then the *second* is broken likewise. The first forbids us to *have* any other *God*; the second, to make any graven *image* of him. Now though we make no image, yet if with the heart we *believe* in any *God* different from the true, the idolatry indeed may be less, but the apostasy is the same. And this seems to be the case of the *Jew*.

The *Mahometans* are another set of infidels, who *abhor idols*, but have in express terms denied the *Son of God*, and set up an idol of the imagination, a *God in one Person*. They inveigh bitterly against the *Christians* for worshipping *three Gods*; for so they state the doctrine of a *Trinity in Unity*, as some others have done beside them.

In answer to all these abominations of the *Deist*, the *Jew*, and the *Mahometan*, and to shew that no unbeliever of any denomination can be a servant of the *true God*, it is written—“whosoever denieth the *Son*, the same hath not the *Father* ¹ :” and again—“whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of *Christ*, hath not *GOD* ² .” And let the *Socinians*, who have not only vindicated the religion of *Mahomet*, but preferred it to the Christianity of the church of *England*, which with them is “*no better nor other than a sort of Paganism and Heathenism* *,” let them consider what a share they have in this condemnation.

And to bring this matter home to the *Arians*; it is to be observed, that every article of the Christian faith depends upon the doctrine of a *Trinity in Unity*. If that be given up, the other doctrines of our religion must go with it, and so it has been in fact, that the authors who have written against the *Trinity*, have also disputed away some other essential parts of Christianity, particularly the doctrines of the *satisfaction* and of *original sin*.

¹ 1 John ii 23.

² 2 John, 9.

* See *Leslie's Theological Works, Fol. Vol. I. p. 218*, where the reader may find a great deal more to the same purpose; and particularly an *Epistle of the Socinians*, to the *Morocco* Ambassador, in the time of *Charles II.* a great curiosity, wherein their whole scheme is laid open to the bottom by themselves.

The whole Bible treats of little else but our *creation, redemption, sanctification, resurrection, and glorification*, by the power of *Christ* and the *Holy Spirit*: and the reader will find hereafter, that there is neither name, act, nor attribute of the Godhead, that is not shared in common by all the persons of the Trinity. If, therefore, the persons of *Christ* and the *Spirit* are not *God* in the Unity of the *Father*, then the prayers and praises we offer to them, as the authors of every blessing, will not be directed to the supreme Lord and God, beside whom no other is to be *worshipped*, but to his creatures and instruments: which overthrows the sense of our whole religion; and drives us upon a sort of second-rate faith and worship, which, beside the blasphemy of it, can be nothing but confusion and contradiction. It is no wonder then, that the *Arians* and *Socinians*, with their several under-sects and divisions, who have fallen into this snare, and departed from the divine *Unity*, while they pretend to be the only men who assert it, have never yet been able to agree in the forms of religious worship. Some of them allowing that *Christ* is to receive divine worship, but always with this reserve, that the prayer tend ultimately to the person of the *Father*. So that *Christ* is to be worshipped, only he is not to be worshipped: and if you should venture, when you are at the point of death, to say with St. *Stephen*—"Lord Jesus, "receive my spirit"¹"—and confess the person of *Jesus* to be "the God of the Spirits of all flesh"²," by committing your own spirit into his hands; you are to take care not to die without throwing in some qualifying comment, to assure him you do it only in hypocrisy, not meaning him but another. Others, again, knowing this distinction to be vain and indefensible, and the same for substance with the *Latria* and *Dulia*, by which the church of *Rome* excuses her adoration of the *blessed Virgin*, &c. have fairly got rid of it, by denying to the person of *Christ* any *divine* worship or invocation at all; which is the case with our *Socinian Unitarians* here in *England*; for those of *Poland* are quite of another mind.

How far such differences as these must needs affect a *Liturgy*, it is very easy to foresee: and that it will for ever be as impossible to frame a Creed or a Service to please all those who bear the name of *Christians*, as to make a coat that shall fit men of all

¹ Acts vii. 59.

² Num. xvi. 22.

sizes*. *Prayer* and *divine worship* and *religious confession*, are the fruit and breath of *faith*; and “out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh¹ :” so that until we are agreed in matters of *faith*, there is neither hope nor possibility of our agreeing in any form of *worship*. God is the fountain-head, and religion the stream that descends from it. Our sentiments as to religion, always flow from the opinion we have formed of the divine nature; and will be right or wrong, sweet or bitter, as the fountain is from whence they are derived. It is the having a different God, that makes a different religion. A true God produces a true religion; a false God, a false religion. *Jews, Turks, Pagans, Deists, Arians, Socinians, and Christians*, all differ about a religion, because they differ about a God.

These few observations will be sufficient, I hope, to raise the attention of the reader; and persuade him, that a right faith in God is a much more serious affair than some would make it; that it is of the last concern, and hath a necessary influence upon the practice and holiness of our lives; that as no other devotion is acceptable with God, but that which is seasoned with love, and charity, and uniformity, the very mark and badge whereby his disciples are to be known from the men of this world, it is the principal duty of every *Christian* to know in *whom* he ought to *believe*, that “with one mind and one mouth we may glorify God² :” for a right notion of God, will as surely be followed by a sound faith and an uniform profession in all other points, as a false faith and a discordant worship will grow from every wrong opinion of him.

All that can be known of the true God, is to be known by *Revelation*. The false lights indeed of reason and nature are set up and recommended, as necessary to assist and ratify the evidence of Revelation: but enquiries of this kind, as they are now managed, generally end in the degradation of *Christ*, and the *Chris-*

* *Hales, of Eton*, in his sarcastic and malicious *Tract upon Schism*, proposes it as a grand expedient for the advancing of *Unity*, that we should “consider all the Liturgies, that are and ever have been; and remove from them whatever is scandalous to any party, and leave nothing but what *all agree on*.” He should have cloed this sentence a little sooner; and advised us fairly and honestly to *leave nothing*; for that will certainly be the event, when the objections of *all parties* are suffered to prevail; there being no one page of the *Liturgy*, wherein *all*, who pretend to worship God as *Christians*, are *agreed*.

¹ Matt. xii. 34.

² Rom. xv. 6.

tian religion * : till it can be shewn therefore, that the Scripture neither does nor can shine by a light and authority of *its own*, the evidence we are to rest in, must be drawn from thence ; and as we all have the same Scripture, without doubt we ought all to have the same opinion of God.

But here it is commonly objected, that men will be of different opinions ; that they have a right to judge for themselves ; and that when the best evidence the nature of the case will admit of is collected and laid before them, they must determine upon it *as it appears to them*, and according to the *light* of their own *consciences* : so that if they adhere as closely to their errors after they have consulted the proper evidence as they did before, we are neither to wonder nor be troubled at it.

This very moderate and benevolent way of thinking, has been studiously recommended by those, who found it necessary to the well-being of their own opinions, that not a spark of zeal should be left amongst us. And surely it is no new thing that the advocates of any particular error, next to themselves and their own fashion, should naturally incline to those who are softest, and stand least in the way. Hence it is, that however magisterial and insolent they may carry themselves in their own cause ; they always take care to season their writings with the praises of this frozen indifference : calling that *Christian* charity, which is nothing but the absence of Christianity : and any the least appearance of earnestness for some great and valuable truth, which we are unwilling to part with, because we hope to be saved by it, is brow-beaten, condemned, and cast out of their moral system, under the name of *heat, want of temper, fire, fury, &c.* They add moreover, that articles of faith are things merely *speculative* ; and that it is of little signification what a man *believes*, if he is but hearty and *sincere* in it : that is, in other words, it is a mere trifle whether we feed upon bread † or poison ‡ ; the one will prove to be as good nourishment as the other, provided it be eaten with an appetite. Yet some well-meaning people are so puzzled and deceived by this sophistry, that they look upon concord among *Christians* as a thing impracticable and desperate ;

* You may have a proof of this from the *Essay on Spirit*, by comparing the book with its *title*, which runs thus—*The Doctrine of the Trinity considered in the Light of Reason and Nature, &c.*

† See and compare Deut. viii. 3. Amos viii. 11. Acts xx. 28.

‡ James iii. 8. 1 Tim. iv. 1.

concluding a point to be *disputable* because it is *disputed*; and so they fall into a loose indifferent humour of palliating and thinking charitably, as it is called, of every error in faith and practice; as if the church of *Christ* might very innocently be turned into a *Babel* of confusion.

Now that men do maintain opinions strangely different from one another, especially on subjects wherein it most concerns them to be agreed, is readily confessed: we are all witnesses of it: and, allowing them to be equally informed, there are but three possible sources from whence this difference can arise. It must be either from God, or from the Scripture, or from themselves. From God it cannot be, for it is a great evil; it is the triumph of Deists and reprobates, and the best handle the enemies of Christianity ever found against it: and God is not the author of evil. Nor can it be from the Scripture: to draw it thence, is but another way of imputing it to God. The Scripture is his word; and he is answerable for the effect of his words when written or reported, as when they are suggested at first hand by the voice of his Holy Spirit. It remains, therefore, that the only source of this evil must be the heart of man: and that it really is so, will be evident from the Scripture, and the plainest matters of fact. The account we have of this affair is, in short, as follows—Ever since the *fall*, the nature of man has been blind and corrupt; his “understanding darkened¹,” and his affections polluted: upon the face of the whole earth there is no man, *Jew* or *Gentile*, that “understandeth and seeketh after God²,” the *natural man*, or man remaining in that state wherein the fall left him, is so far from being able to discover or know any religious truth, that he hates and flies from it when it is proposed to him; he “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God³.” Man is natural and earthly; the things of God are spiritual and heavenly; and these are contrary one to the other: therefore, as the “wisdom of this world is foolishness with God⁴,” so the wisdom of God is foolishness with the world. In a word, the sense man is now possessed of, where God does not restrain it, is used for evil and not for good: his “wisdom is earthly, sensual^{*}, devilish⁵,” it is the sagacity of a brute⁶, animated by the malignity of an evil spirit.

¹ Ephes. iv. 18.² Rom. iii. 11.³ 1 Cor. ii. 14.⁴ Ibid. iii. 19.^{*} *ψυχικη*, Natural.⁵ James iii. 15.⁶ Jude, 10.

This being the present state of man, the Scripture does therefore declare it necessary, that he should be “transformed by the “renewing of his mind¹,” and restored to that “sound mind²,” and “light of the understanding³,” that “spiritual discernment⁴,” with which the human nature was endued when it came from the hands of God, but to which it has been *dead* from the *day* that evil was brought into the world. And where the grace of God that should open the eyes, and prepare the heart to receive instruction⁵, has been obstinately withstood and resisted; this blindness, which at first was only *natural*, becomes *judicial*; from being a defect, it is confirmed into a judgment; and men are not only unable to discern the truth, but are settled and rivetted in error: which is the case with all those to whom “God sends strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, and “have pleasure in unrighteousness⁶.” It is then they sit down in the “seat of the scornful,” as “fools” that “make a mock “at sin⁷,” and “despisers of those that are good⁸,” hating and railing at their fellow-creatures, only because they are endued with the fear of God! This is the last stage of blindness; and it is referred to in those words of the Apostle—“If our Gospel be “hid, it is hid to them that are lost⁹ :” as also in that lamentation of our blessed Lord over the city of *Jerusalem*—“If thou “hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things “that belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine “eyes¹.”

The absolute necessity of God’s grace to *lighten our darkness*, has often been largely and faithfully insisted upon by the writers and preachers of the church of *England*: but since a spirit of *Deism* has crept in among us, it has been openly slighted and contemned by some, and too much neglected by others; which has given an opportunity to several sorts of enthusiasts to make a wrong use of it: such as our *Quakers*, *Methodists*, and particularly the Reverend Mr. *William Law*, who, after writing so excellently upon the vanity of the world, and the follies of human life, (on which subjects he has no superior) has left us nothing to depend upon but *imagination*, and reduced the whole evidence of Christianity to fancied impulses and inspiration; so as to render the Scriptures useless, and the appointed *means* of grace contemptible. I have

¹ Rom. xii. 2. ² 2 Tim. i. 7. ³ Eph. i. 18. ⁴ 1 Cor. ii. 14. ⁵ Prov. xx. 12. and xvi. 1. ⁶ 2 Thess. ii. 11. ⁷ Prov. xiv. 9. ⁸ 2 Tim. iii. 3. ⁹ 2 Cor. iv. 3. ¹ Luke xix. 42.

observed the like to have happened in many other instances; that where any essential point of doctrine has been dropt by the writers of the church, or at least not brought out to view so often as it should have been, it has been taken up by others, (as all *tares* are sown while the husbandmen are *asleep*) and employed, under some false state of it, to the no small disadvantage of the church and the Christian religion.

To illustrate this subject a little farther, I shall make it appear by a few plain examples, that where mankind have been divided in their opinions with regard to any divine truth, it has not been owing to the ambiguity of its terms, or the defect of its evidence, but wholly and solely to the state and temper of the hearers. And thus *Christ* himself has instructed us in his parable of the *sower*; that where the good seed of the word perishes, it is to be imputed to the *ground* and not to the *seed*. How else can we account for it, that when *St. Paul* laid the evidence of the Gospel before a large assembly of *Jews* at *Rome*, “some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not¹,” though the same things were spoken to all? Such in general was the success of the apostolical preaching; some few “receiving the word with gladness,” while others opposed themselves and blasphemed. And though it be supposed, that *words* are more easily misunderstood than *facts*, and may admit of a greater latitude; yet *here* we shall find, that the same spirit which has divided mankind in what are called the more speculative points of faith, will also divide them in the plainest and most striking matters of fact. The resurrection of *Lazarus* was a matter of fact, seen and attested by a competent number of witnesses: but how different was the effect of it upon different persons! for while it had its free course with many of the *Jews*, and moved them to *believe on Jesus*, it only moved the *chief Priests* to hate him the more; and they consulted how “they might put *Lazarus* also to death².” When *Jesus* cured the blind, and cast out devils, some rightly concluded—“*Rabbi*, thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou dost, except God be with him³ :” yet there were not a few, and they of the most learned and knowing too, who concluded far otherwise, that he “cast out devils by *Beelzebub* the prince of the devils⁴.” So likewise, when the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles, and

¹ Acts xxviii. 24.² John xii. 10, 11.³ John iii. 2.⁴ Matt. xii. 24.

inspired them with the gift of tongues, some *devout men* were amazed and confounded at the miracle; plainly seeing the hand of God in it, and asking what it *meant*, what was the end and design of it? and being informed by St. *Peter's* discourse, that it was to confirm the mission of "Jesus of Nazareth, received his word gladly, and were baptized¹"; while *others*, to avoid the conclusion, "mocking, said, these men are full of new wine²." Here is a great multitude assembled together; all of them witnesses to the same fact: yet, in their *opinions* of it, they are as far asunder as drunkenness is from inspiration. But in this case no Christian will raise a doubt about the *real* inspiration of the Apostles, or deny the power of God to have been sufficiently manifested, because some were so profane and senseless as to ridicule it, under the name of drunkenness.

This self-deceit always operates by the assistance of some false principle contrary to the Scripture; which gets possession of the heart by ministering to the passions. And till that be dispossessed, no truth will be suffered to enter which can in the least affect or destroy it. A man in such circumstances may see the truth staring him in the face; and the clearer he sees it, the more he will be enraged at it. He may be convicted, and left without a word to say, but what will expose the hardness and perplexity of his heart; but till it be emptied of its evil treasure, and he becomes as a little child that has nothing of *its own* to oppose to the revelation of God, he cannot be *converted*; but will either shut his eyes, and deny the evidence that is offered to him, or pretend it is a *nice point*, very difficult to be understood; and so give a perverse turn to it, though it be ever so plain and intelligible.

Till the disciples of *Christ* resigned themselves up to be led into all truth by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, they were in the state of mind I am now describing; dull of hearing, and doubtful, and slow of heart. They were often warned of it, particularly in the following words:—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now³." And as the divine wisdom made choice of such men for the good of those who should come after, so these things are written of them for our admonition. They had laid it down as a first principle, that their master's kingdom was to be *of this world*: and formed all their reasonings and expectations accordingly. One was to *sit at his*

¹ Acts ii. 41.² Acts v. 13.³ John xvi. 12.

right hand, another *at his left*; and they were ever disputing which should be *the greatest*. Any occurrence that flattered this notion, was gladly received, and made the most of; and every thing that could not be reconciled with it, was thrust out of sight. “When the Son of man began to teach them, that he must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again¹ ;” all these things were so destructive of their principle, that *Peter* began to rebuke him, as if he had heard blasphemy. *Christ* took an opportunity of inculcating this doctrine afresh, when they were in a state of conviction at seeing him perform a miracle; endeavouring, as it were, to surprize them into a confession of its truth: but the time was not yet.—“While they wondered every one at all things which *Jesus* did, he said unto his disciples, let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying; it was hid from them, that they perceived it not².” The terms were clear and intelligible enough; and the ideas conveyed by them were all common and familiar: but if that saying were admitted, they must part with their beloved principle: therefore it follows, that *they were afraid to ask him of that saying*; lest he should carry on the subject, and leave them no way to escape. They had already heard more than they would believe, and therefore, as to any thing farther, thought it best to remain in the dark.

In short, where there is a taste and relish for “the things that be of men,” more than for “the things that be of God,” and some principle is imbibed wherein the passions are strongly engaged, men are to be persuaded to any thing, and of nothing: ready to take up with every despicable pretence to prop and support their favourite opinion; and deaf to the plainest words and most infallible proofs, if they tend to establish the other side of the question. For example; that a *Messiah* was to deliver their nation was allowed by all the *Jews*; and they were well agreed as to the time of his coming, and the place where he should be born. It was to be shewn, that *Jesus of Nazareth* was the person: and for a proof of it, they were bid to compare the Scripture with the things he did and taught. “But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him³ ;” and as if

¹ Mark viii. 31.

² Luke ix. 43, 44.

³ John xii. 37.

he had left the proof of his mission obscure and defective, they came very formally to him to *ask a sign of him*, after they had seen so many signs; and called out to the very last for better evidence, bidding him “come down from the cross,” that they might “see and believe ¹.” One would take these *Jews* to have been *Sceptics*, who would persevere in their doubtings against every proposition that could be offered. But if we judge from their behaviour upon some other occasions, there never was a more credulous generation upon the face of the earth. They could receive full satisfaction from the most childish and inconsistent tales that ever were invented. The self-contradiction of *Satan casting out Satan*; or the report of a few Heathen soldiers, who witnessed what was done “while they were asleep,” could pass for good gospel; while the most evident miracles, and the clearest prophecies, were all nothing to the purpose, where they did not like the conclusion. And for the same reason, the whole Gospel itself, while it is the savour of life to some, is a savour of death to others! as different as life and death! yet nevertheless one and the same Gospel. It is like the pillar that stood between the camp of *Israel*, and the host of *Egypt*; which was a *cloud* to the one, and light to the other ². But who will deny that the light was clear to the *Israelites*, because the *Egyptians* saw nothing but a cloud of darkness?

Behold then the true source of all our religious differences: they proceed from the blindness and corruption of the human heart, increased and cherished by some false principle that suits with its appetites: and all the prudence and learning the world can boast, will exempt no child of *Adam* from this miserable weakness: nothing but the grace of God can possibly remove it. Where that is suffered to enter, and the heart, instead of persisting in its own will, is surrendered to the will of God, the whole Gospel is sufficiently clear, because no text of it is any longer offensive.

Of this happy change we have the best example in the Apostles of our blessed *Saviour*; who, when they first entered the school of Christianity, had a veil upon their hearts like the rest of their countrymen, and were strongly possessed by a spirit of the world, promising itself the full enjoyment of temporal honours and preferments. But the sufferings and death of their Master having

¹ Mark xv. 32.

² Exod. xiv. 20.

shewed the vanity of such expectations, and served in a great measure to beat down this earthly principle, they were ready for conviction; and then "their understanding was opened, that they might understand the Scriptures¹." The evidence that before was dark and inconclusive, became on a sudden clear and irresistible; and they who had lately fled from disgrace and death as from the greatest of evils, could now rejoice that they were found worthy to suffer. Their opinion was altered, because their affections were cleansed from this world: that mire and clay was washed off from their eyes in the true waters of *Siloam*, and now they could see all things clearly.

What has been here said upon the conduct of our Saviour's disciples, and the unbelieving Jews, may be applied to all those who dispute any article of the *Christian Faith*; and particularly the doctrine of the ever-blessed *Trinity*, as revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. For we shall certainly find that some false principle is assumed, which flatters the pride of human nature. It abhors restraint and subjection; and is ever aspiring, right or wrong, to be distinguished from the common herd, and to "exalt itself against the knowledge of God²." What this principle is, we shall very soon discover: it is publicly owned and gloried in by every considerable writer that of late years has meddled with this subject. I shall instance in the learned Dr. Clarke; because he is deservedly placed at the head of the *Arian* disputants in this kingdom.

He affirms in his first *Proposition*, that the ONE GOD, spoken of in *Matt.* xix. 17, and elsewhere, is only one PERSON; and then adds, "This is the first principle of Natural Religion*."

So then here are two different religions; by one of which it is proved, that the one God is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: that he is therefore three persons. But it is the first principle of the other religion, that he is but one person: though how that can be reconciled with the practice of the whole Heathen world, who were so far from discovering this one person, that they held "Gods many, and Lords many³," is not very easy to determine. And whence comes this religion? it is confessed to be drawn from nature! it is the Gospel of the natural man, unsanctified by divine grace, and un instructed by any light from above; and owes its birth to that found-

¹ Luke xxiv. 45.

* See Script. Doctr. p. ii. § 1.

² 2 Cor. x. 5.

³ 1 Cor. viii. 5.

tain of darkness and self-conceit, from whence has sprung all the confusion and imagination that ever was introduced into the religion of God. And what wonder, if *nature* should operate as strongly in an *Arian*, or a *Socinian*, against the mystery of the *Trinity*, as it did in the *Jews* against the *Law* and the *Prophets*, and in the unconverted disciples against the doctrine of the *Cross*? If it be laid down as a *first principle*, that God is but *one Person*, then it will be utterly impossible, so long as this principle keeps possession, that any person, of common sense enough to know the meaning of words, should quietly receive and embrace a revelation in those parts of it, where it teaches us that God is *three Persons*: these two principles being so diametrically opposite, that while he holds to the one, a voice from the dead will not persuade him of the other. Therefore, I say again, we ought not to wonder if that man should remain for ever *invincible*, who BRINGS to the Scripture that knowledge of God, which he is bound, as a Christian, to RECEIVE from it.

What then will be the consequence in this case? The practice of the *Deist*, who carries on this argument to its proper issue, is to *deny* the Scripture-revelation, because his *natural religion* is contrary to it; and they cannot both be true. But the partial unbeliever, who allows the Scripture to be supported by such external evidence as he cannot answer, while his reason objects to the matter contained in it, must follow the example of the *Jews*, and *reconcile* the Scripture where he cannot *believe it*. Thus they treated the law of *Moses*. "We know," said they, "that God "spake unto Moses¹:" therefore they readily granted his law to have a divine authority: but as it would not serve their turn in its own proper words, they put a false gloss of tradition upon the face of it, to hide its true complexion; and then complained that the Scripture was not clear enough: and if you used it as a testimony to *Jesus Christ*, they would stone you for a *blasphemer*.

What shall we say then? that the *Jews* were of a *different opinion* from the *Christians*? and that this was *their way* of *understanding* the Scriptures? No: God forbid. For if we will believe the Scripture itself, it was their way of *denying* it. "Had "ye believed *Moses*," says our Lord, "ye would have believed "me:" and he gives us upon this occasion the true grounds and reasons of their unbelief; because they "received honour one of "another, and had not the love of God in them²." Every hypo-

¹ John ix. 29.

² See John v. 39, *ad fin.*

thesis of human growth, which was pretty sure to agree with their complexion, and reflected some honour upon themselves by exalting the nature of man, that can make a *religion for itself*, and comes in its *own name*; that they would gladly receive. But if any thing was offered to them in the name of God, to be received for the love of him, and the spiritual comfort of a pure conscience, and the hope of a better world: it was rejected, as an encroachment upon their *natural rights*, and an invective against the innocent pleasures of a carnal *Jerusalem*. And so it is with us at this time: for if an author does but hang out the sign of *Nature and reason* in his title-page, there are readers in plenty, who will buy up and swallow his dregs by wholesale: but if God, of his infinite mercy and condescension, shews to them the *way of salvation*, his words are to be abstracted from the evidence upon which he requires us to believe them, then put into this alembic of *reason*, and demonstrated to be no *poison*, before they can be brought to taste them. And if they should happen to be a little disagreeable to flesh and blood, and the operation should miscarry, the fault is charged upon God, and not upon themselves, who ought to have gone another way to work; as they will certainly find.

We conclude, therefore, because *Christ* has affirmed it, that every degree of doubt and disputation against the words of God, is just so much *unbelief*: proceeding not from the head or understanding, but from the heart¹ and affections. And the world is filled with the vain jangling of uncertainty, for this short reason—
“all men have not faith².”

¹ Heb. iii. 12.

² Thess. iii. 7.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN all the *Texts* which are compared together in the following work, those particular words, whereon the stress of the comparison lies, are printed in *Capitals*; that the argument obtained from them may shew itself to the reader upon the first inspection. And I hope, after what has been observed to him in the foregoing discourse, that this is the only admonition he will stand in need of. The arguments I have drawn from the Scripture, are, to the best of my knowledge, most of them new; and, if I may judge from my own mind, the manner in which they are laid down, is more likely to convince, than any I have yet seen. Had I thought otherwise, I could easily have forborn to trouble myself or the world with the transcribing and printing them. The end I have proposed is not to obtain any reputation (to which this is not the way) but to do some little good, of which there is much need. I do therefore sincerely recommend the following work, and every reader of it, to the grace and blessing of Almighty God, well knowing, that “unless the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”

C H A P. I.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.



I.

Isa. viii. 13, 14. Sanctify the LORD OF HOSTS HIMSELF, and let HIM be your fear, and let HIM be your dread: and HE shall be for a Sanctuary; but for a STONE OF STUMBLING and ROCK OF OFFENCE to both houses of *Israel*.

1 *Pet.* ii. 7, 8. The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a STONE OF STUMBLING, and ROCK OF OFFENCE.

Instead of reasoning upon these words of the Prophet *Isaiah*, according to any private interpretation, I add another passage of Scripture, wherein they are expressly applied to the person of *Christ*; and then shew what must be the result of *both*. If the Scripture, thus compared with itself, be drawn up into an argument, the conclusion may indeed be *denied*, and so may the whole Bible, but it cannot be *answered*. For example:

The *Stone of Stumbling*, and *Rock of Offence*, as the former text affirms, is the *Lord of Hosts himself*; a name which the *Arians* allow to no other but the one, only true, and supreme God ^a.

But this *Stone of Stumbling* and *Rock of Offence*, as it appears from the latter text, is no other than *Christ*, the same stone which the *builders refused*; Therefore,

Christ is the LORD OF HOSTS HIMSELF: and the *Arian* is confuted upon his own principles.

^a See an *Essay on Spirit*, p. 65. *Clarke's Doctr. of the Trin.* C. 10. §. 3. 402.

II.

Isa. vi. 5. Mine Eyes have SEEN the King, the LORD OF HOSTS.

John xii. 41. These things said *Esaias*, when he SAW HIS (CHRIST'S) GLORY, and spake of HIM.

Jesus is the person here spokn of by *St. John*; whose *Glory*, *Esaias* is declared to have *seen* upon that occasion, where the prophet affirms of himself, that his Eyes had *seen* the *Lord of Hosts*: Therefore,

Jesus is the LORD OF HOSTS.

III.

Isai. xlv. 6. Thus saith the *Lord*, the King of *Israel* and his Redeemer, the LORD OF HOSTS, I am THE FIRST, and I am THE LAST, and BESIDES ME there is NO GOD.

Rev. xxii. 13. I (*Jesus*) am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, THE FIRST AND THE LAST.

These Titles of *the first* and *the last* are confined to him alone, *besides whom there is no God*; But *Jesus* hath assumed these Titles to himself: Therefore, *Jesus* is that *God*, *besides whom there is no other*. Or Thus—There is no *God* besides him who is *the first* and *the last*: but, *Jesus* is *the first* and *the last*; therefore *besides Jesus* there is no other *God*.

IV.

Isai. xliiii. 11. I even I am the LORD, and BESIDES ME there is NO SAVIOUR¹.

2 *Pet.* iii. 18. OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

Jesus Christ, then, is *our Saviour*; or, as he is called, *John* iv. 42. *The Saviour of the World*. But unless he were *God*, even the *Lord*, *Jehovah*, as well as man, he could not be a *Saviour*; be-

¹ The argument drawn from this text will be equally convincing, which ever way it be taken—*Jesus Christ* is a *Saviour*, therefore he is *Jehovah*, the *Lord*—*Jesus Christ* is *Jehovah*, therefore he is *the Saviour*. The best observations I have ever met with upon the name of *Jehovah*, and it's application to the second Person of the Trinity, are to be found in a *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity from the Exceptions of a late pamphlet entitled an Essay on Spirit*—by the learned Dr. T. Randolph, President of C.C.C. in *Oxford*; which I would desire the Reader to consult, from p. 61 to 71 of Pt. I.

cause the *Lord* has declared, there is no Saviour beside *himself*. It is therefore rightly observed by the Apostle, *Phil.* ii. 9. that *God*, in dignifying the man *Christ* with the name of JESUS, hath given him a name *above every name*, even that of a *Saviour*, which is his *own name*, and such as can belong to no other.

V.

Rev. xxii. 6. THE LORD GOD of the *Holy Prophets* SENT HIS ANGEL to *shew* unto *his Servants* the *things* which must shortly be done.

Ibid. v. 16. I JESUS have SENT MINE ANGEL to testify unto you *these things* in the *Churches*.

The *Angel* that appeared to St. *John* was the *Angel* of the *Lord God*, and the *Lord God* sent him : but he was the *Angel* of *Jesus*, and *Jesus* sent him : therefore, *Jesus* is the *Lord God of the Holy Prophets*.

VI.

Luke i. 76. And thou Child shalt be called the Prophet of the HIGHEST, for thou shalt GO BEFORE THE FACE of the LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS.

Matt. xi. 10. Behold, I send my messenger BEFORE THY FACE, TO PREPARE THY WAY before thee.

John the *Baptist* goes before the *face of the Lord*, that is, of the *Highest*, whose *prophet* he is, to prepare *his way*. But he was sent as a Messenger before the *face of Christ*, to prepare *his way* ; who therefore, is the *Lord*, and the *Highest*.

VII.

The two following texts are but a repetition of the same argument : but as they speak of *Christ* under a different name, they ought to have a place for themselves.

Luke i. 16, 17. And many of the children of *Israel* shall he turn to the LORD THEIR GOD : and he shall go before HIM.

Matth. iii. 11. HE that cometh AFTER ME is mightier than I—&c.

Here again, the *Baptist* is said to go before the *Lord God of the children of Israel* : but it is certain, he went before *Jesus Christ*, the only person who is said to come after him : therefore, *Jesus Christ*

is the *Lord God of the Children of Israel*. And the same title is given to him in the prophet *Hosea*—*I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God*: which can be no other than the voice of *God the Father*, promising *Salvation* by the person of *God the Son*.

VIII.

Matt. xi. 10. Behold I send MY messenger before THY face, to prepare THY way before THEE.

Mal. iii. 1. Behold I send MY messenger to prepare the way before ME.

As this prophecy is worded by *St. Matthew* (as also by *St. Mark*¹, and *St. Luke*²;) there is a personal distinction between Him who sends his *Messenger*, and *Christ* before whom the *Messenger is sent*—*I send MY Messenger—to prepare thy way before THEE*. But the *Prophet* himself has it thus—*I send MY messenger, to prepare the way before ME*. Yet the *Evangelist* and the *Prophet* are both equally correct and true. For though *Christ* be a *different person*, yet is he *one and the same God with the Father*. And hence it is, that with the *Evangelist*, the *persons* are not *confounded*; with the *Prophet* the *Godhead* is not *divided*. This argument may serve to justify an excellent observation of our Church in the *Homily upon the Resurrection*—“How dare we be so bold to renounce the “presence of the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*? for where *one* is, there is *God all whole* in Majesty, “together with all his power, wisdom, and goodness.”

IX.

Psa. lxxviii. 56. They TEMPTED and provoked the MOST HIGH GOD.

1 Cor. x. 9. Neither let us TEMPT CHRIST as some of them also tempted.

These texts do both relate to the same rebellious acts of the *Israelites* in the *wilderness*. In the *former* of them, the person they *tempted* is called the *most high God*: in the *latter* he is called *Christ*: therefore, *Christ* is the *most High God*.

X.

John iii. 29. He that hath the Bride, is the BRIDEGROOM *
—(meaning *Christ*.)

¹ Mark i. 2.

² Luke vii. 27.

* Another title of Eminence, that shews *Christ* to be upon an equality with *God the Father*, is to be collected from the following Scriptures.

But, according to the Prophet,

Isai. liv. 5. Thy Maker is thine HUSBAND, and the LORD OF HOSTS is his Name.—

And the *Church*, which is the *Bride of Christ*, can no more have two distinct *husbands*, than *Christ* can have two distinct *Churches*. As the *Church* is the *Bride*, the *Body*, the *Building* of God; and as there is *one* *Bride*, *one* *body*, *one* *building*; so *is* there on the other hand, *one* *God*, who is the *husband* or *Bridegroom*; *one* *Christ*, who is the *Head*; *one* *God* with the *Lamb*, who is the *Light* of it. Compare also *Jer.* iii. 1. and 31, 32. *Ezek.* xvi. *Hos.* ii. *Matt.* ix. 15. xxv. 1. *2 Cor.* ii. 2. *Eph.* v. 23. *Rev.* xix. 7. and xxi. 2, 9.

XI.

Here follow some single Texts, to which I add no parallels; there being no danger of mistaking their *application*.

John xx. 28. And *Thomas* answered and said, MY LORD, and MY GOD.

XII.

Rom. ix. 5. Of whom as concerning the Flesh CHRIST came, who is over all, GOD BLESSED FOR EVER. *Amen.*

XIII.

2 Pet. i. 1.—Through the Righteousness of OUR GOD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

The *Greek* is—τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν καὶ Σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ—the very same, as to the order and grammar of the words, with the last verse of this Epistle—τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν καὶ Σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ—which is thus rendered in our English version—of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And so, without doubt, it should be in the other

Psal. xxiii. 1. The LORD (Heb. *Yehovah*) is my SHEPHERD.

John x. 16. There shall be one fold and ONE SHEPHERD.

If *Christ* be not the *Lord*, in *Unity* with the *Father*, there must of course be *two* distinct beings, to whom the Scripture has appropriated this Character of a *Shepherd*; and that would make *two* *Shepherds*. But *Christ* has affirmed there is but *one* *Shepherd*; that is *himself*, THE SHEPHERD of the *Sheep*, v. 2. whom *St. Peter* calls the *chief Shepherd*, *1 Pet.* v. 4. So again—

Psal. c. 3. Know ye that the LORD he Is GOD—we are His people, and the SHEEP of His pasture.

John x. 3. He (that is *Christ* himself) calleth HIS OWN SHEEP.

And again—*John* xxi. 16. Feed MY *Sheep*—said *Christ* to *St. Peter*: which in the Language of *St. Peter* himself, *1 Pet.* v. 2. is—Feed the Flock of GOD.

passage: there being no possible reason why, τὸ Θεὸν ἡμῶν, should not signify *our God*, as well as τὸ Κυριε ἡμῶν, *our Lord*. It is not my design to cast any reflection upon the wisdom of our excellent and orthodox *Translators* (whose version, taken altogether, is without exception the best extant in the world) or to advance this as any discovery of my own; for the *Translators* themselves have preserved the true rendering in the *Margin*; declaring it, by their customary note, to be the *literal sense* of the *Greek*.

There is another expression, *Tit.* ii. 13. that ought to be classed with the foregoing. *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing, τὸ μεγάλη Θεὸς καὶ Σωτήρ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, of our Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.* Of which a great man, deep in the *Arian* Scheme, gives this desponding account.—“ Many understand this whole Sentence to belong to one and the same Person, *viz.* Christ: as if the words should have been rendered, *The appearing of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Which Construction, the words will indeed bear; as do also those in *2 Pet.* i. 1. But it is much more *reasonable*, and more agreeable to the *whole Tenor of Scripture*, to understand the former part of the words, to relate to *the Father* ¹.” As for the *whole Tenor of Scripture*, it is a weighty phrase, but very easily made use of in any cause good or bad: so I shall leave the reader to judge of *that*, after it has been exhibited to him in the following pages. And as for the *reasonableness* of the thing itself, let any serious person consider, whether the Doctrine of the Scripture is not more *rational* under the orthodox application of these words, than under that of this Author. For to allow, as he does, that *Christ is God*, but not the *Great God*, is to make *two Gods*, a *greater* and a *lesser*; which is no very *rational* principle. And I make not the least doubt but this Author, had he been dressing up a system of *natural religion*, would have protested against a notion so absurd and impious. But when the *Scripture* was to be *dealt* with, he chose it as the lesser of two evils, the greater of which, was the doctrine he had *subscribed* to.

XIV.

2 *Cor.* v. 19. GOD WAS IN CHRIST, reconciling the world to HIMSELF.

It is allowed on all hands, that the *world* was *reconciled* by Christ Jesus to the *one, only, great, and supreme God*. But, this very *same*

¹ *Clarke's Doctr. of the Trin.* C. 2. §. 1. 541.

God (for the word is but *once* used in the whole sentence) was *in* Christ; manifest *in* the flesh, and *reconciling the world to himself*. And were there no other passage of Scripture to be found, this alone is sufficient to overthrow the whole doctrine of *Arianism*; which, as far as the Scripture is concerned, depends upon this one assertion—that “the word *GOD* in Scripture, NEVER signifies a complex notion of *more persons than one*; but ALWAYS means *one person only*, viz. either the person of the *Father* singly, or the person of the *Son* singly.” Which is absolutely false: for here it signifies *both*. The text considers *God* as agent and patient at the same time, and upon the same occasion; as the *reconciler* of the world, in the *person* of the *Son*; and the object to whom the *reconciliation was made*, in the *person* of the *Father*; yet there is but one word (*God*) to express them *both*. So that the word *God*, though of the *singular number*, is of *plural* comprehension. And thus I find it to have been taken by some of the most eminent writers before the council of *Nice*, “*Plasmatus in initio homo per manus DEI, id est, FILII & SPIRITUS*,” says *Irenæus*²; putting the singular name of *God*, for the *two persons* of the *Son* and *Spirit*. And the same word, in the language of *Origen*, (if we are allowed to take the version of *Ruffinus* as genuine) includes the whole *three persons*—*Igitur de DEO, id est, de PATRE et FILIO et SPIRITU sancto*³. And our excellent church has used the word *God* in the same comprehensive sense; as in the *Blessing* after the communion service—*GOD ALMIGHTY, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*.

XV.

John xiv. 11. I am in the Father, and the Father *IN ME*.

Compare this with the foregoing article.

XVI.

1 Cor. v. 20. We are ambassadors for *CHRIST*, as though *GOD* did *BESEECH* you by us. We *PRAY YOU IN CHRIST'S STEAD* be ye reconciled to *GOD*.

The usefulness of this text to our present subject, lies in these words—“In *Christ's* stead we *pray*, as though *God* did “*beseech*” —where the interchanging of the names of *God* and *Christ*, shews the *same person* to be entituled to *both*.

¹ *Clarke's* S. D. P. II. § 33.
Lib. IV. C. 2.

² *Lib.* V. § 23.

³ *De principiis*.

XVII.

1 *John* v. 20. We are in him that is true, even in his Son JESUS CHRIST: THIS IS THE TRUE GOD and eternal life.

XVIII.

Col. ii. 8, 9. Beware lest any man spoil you through Philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after CHRIST: for IN HIM DWELLETH ALL THE FULNESS of the GOD-HEAD BODILY.

The *Apostle* foresaw, that a thing calling itself *Philosophy* would set all its engines at work to destroy the notion of *Christ's* true and absolute Divinity—"For in him (says he) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. *Philosophy* will dispute this: and undertake to demonstrate the contrary. But if you listen to such vain deceit, it will overthrow your faith, and spoil you for a disciple of *Jesus Christ*; therefore—Beware."

XIX.

John i. 1. The WORD WAS GOD.

XX.

Isai. ix. 6. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the MIGHTY GOD, the EVERLASTING FATHER.

XXI.

Jer. xxiii. 6. This is the name whereby he shall be called, the Lord (JEHOVAH) our Righteousness.

XXII.

Isai. ii. 17, 18. The LORD ALONE shall be EXALTED in that day: and the IDOLS he shall utterly abolish.

"*Idolatry* is the reverse, and direct opposite to *Christianity* (or, the day of *Christ*.) To destroy this, was the great end of *Christ's* coming into the world.—But except he were *God*, the very and eternal *God*, of one Substance with the *Father*, his Religion would be so far from destroying *Idolatry*, that it would only be a more refined and dangerous species of it. The prophet there-

“ fore, concludes all, that so he might acquit the worship of *Christ*
 “ from all charge of *Idolatry*, with this positive assertion; that it
 “ would prove the most effectual means of putting an end to all
 “ false and Idolatrous Worship: *The Idols he shall utterly abo-*
 “ *lish*. The like conclusion we meet with in the Apostle *St John*;
 “ who having affirmed that *Jesus Christ is the true God and eter-*
 “ *nal life*, immediately subjoins and closes all with this advice,—
 “ *Little Children, keep yourselves from IDOLS.*”

This Remark is taken from the first volume of an *Essay upon the proper Lessons*; written, as I am told, by a gentleman of the Laity. There needs no apology for setting it down; it being of good use in the subject I am upon. And it also gives me an occasion of returning thanks to the pious and learned Author of that excellent work, not for myself only, but for many sincere friends to the religion of *Christ* and the church of *England*, among whom his labours are not without their fruit; and I am confident they will not be without their reward: but the Author must be content to wait for it, till *Wisdom shall be justified of all her Children*.

XXIII.

Rev. i. 8. I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending, saith the LORD, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY.

If the Reader will be pleased to examine the 13th and 17th verses of this Chapter, it will appear that this 8th verse was undoubtedly spoken from the mouth of *Christ*: who therefore has a just title to every name and attribute expressed in it; and among the rest, to that of *the Almighty*.

Origen, who certainly was no *Arian*, though often represented as such, by some who would be pleased to have the vote of so celebrated a genius, has the following observation.—“ Now that you
 “ may know the *Omnipotence* of the *Father* and the *Son* to be one
 “ and the same as HE is ONE and the SAME GOD and LORD
 “ with the FATHER, hear what *St. John* had said in the *Revela-*
 “ *tion*—These things, saith the Lord, which is, and which was,
 “ and which is to come, the *Almighty*.” For who is the *Almighty* that is to come, but *Christ*?¹

¹ Ut autem unam et eandem omnipotentiam Patris et Filii esse cognoscas sicut una tque idem est cum atri Deus & Dominus, audi hoc modo Joan, in Apocalypsi dicentem: Hæc dicit Dominus Deus qui est, et qui erit, et qui venturus est omnipotens. Qui enim venturus est omnipotens, quis est alius nisi Christus?—De principiis Lib. i. C. 2.

XXIV.

The Texts that follow, with this mark (†), prefixed to them, are such as have been abused by the *Arians* to support their Heresy: and to the best of my knowledge, there are some of every sort. But when the Scripture is brought to declare its *own* sense of them, they will either appear to be nothing to the purpose, or confirm and *preach* the *faith* they have been supposed to *destroy*.

† *Matth.* xix. 17. Why callest thou ME GOOD? there is none good but ONE, that is, GOD.

The objection is founded upon the *Greek*, which runs thus—*Ουδεις εστιν αγαθος, ει μη εις, ο Θεος*. There is none good but εις, one; and that (one) is, ο Θεος, God. Whence it is argued, that the adjective εις being in the *masculine* Gender, cannot be interpreted to signify one *Being* or *Nature* (for then it should have been EN, in the *Neuter*) but *one Person*: so that by confining the attribute of *goodness* to the single person of *the Father*, it must of course exclude the persons of the *Son* and *Holy Ghost* from the *Unity* of the *Godhead*.

To say the truth, I think this is the most plausible objection I have ever met with; and I have sincerely endeavoured to do it justice. If it is capable of being set in a stronger light, any man is welcome to add what he pleases to it. For supposing the word εις to signify *one person* (and in that lies the whole force of the argument) then if *one person* only is *good*, and that person is *God*; it must also follow, that there is but *one person* who is *God*: the name of *God* being as much confined hereby to a *single person*, as the attribute of *goodness*. But this is utterly false; the names of *God*, *Lord*, *Lord of Hosts*, *the Almighty*, *most High*, *Eternal*, *God of Israel*, &c. being also ascribed to the *second* and *third Persons* of the blessed *Trinity*. Take it this way, therefore, and the objection by proving too much, confutes itself, and proves nothing.

The truth is, this criticism, upon the strength of which some have dared to undeify their Saviour, has no foundation in the Original. The word εις is so far from requiring the substantive *person* to be understood with it, that it is put in the *masculine* gender to agree with its substantive Θεος, and is best construed by an adverb. If you follow the *Greek* by a literal translation, it will be thus—*There is none Good—ει μη εις ο Θεος—but the one God*; that is, in common English—*not God only*. And it happens

that the same Greek, word for word, occurs in *Mark* ii. 7.—*Who can forgive sins*—εἰ μὴ εἰς ὁ Θεός—*but God only*; so it is rendered by our translators: and we have a plain matter of fact, that εἰς in this place cannot possibly admit the sense of *one person*, because *Christ*, who is *another person*, took upon him to *forgive sins*. In the parallel place, of *St. Luke's Gospel*¹; the expression is varied, so as to make it still clearer—εἰ μὴ μόνος ὁ Θεός—not εἰς, but μόνος, another adjective of the *masculine* gender: which, though it agree with its substantive Θεός, is rightly construed as an *adverb*—either the *alone God*, or *God only*. And the Greek itself uses *one* for the other indifferently—as, ἐπ' ἄρτω μόνῳ, *by bread only*²—ἐν λόγῳ μόνον, *in word only*³. The utmost that can be gathered; therefore, from these words, is no more than this; that there is *one God* (in which we are all agreed) and that there is *none good* beside him; which no body will dispute. Whether in this *God*, there be *one person*, or *three*, remains yet to be considered: and the Scripture is so express in other places, as to settle it beyond all dispute.

If it should here be asked, for what reason *Christ* put this question—“Why callest thou me *good*?” I answer; for the same reason that he asked the *Pharisees*, why *David* in Spirit called him *Lord*⁴; and that was to try if they were able to account for it. This ruler, by addressing our Saviour under the name of *good Master*, when the inspired Psalmist had affirmed long before, that *there is none that doeth GOOD*, no NOT ONE⁵; did in effect allow him to be *God*; no mere man, since the fall of *Adam*, having any claim to that Character. And when he was called upon to explain his meaning, for that *God only* was *good*; he should have replied in the words of *St. Thomas*—“My Lord, “and my GOD:” which would have been a nobler instance of Faith, and have cleared up the whole difficulty. If the case be considered, this man was a very proper subject for such a trial. Fully convinced of his own sufficiency, he comes to *Christ* in the presence of his disciples, to know what *good thing* he might do to merit everlasting life. Whence our Saviour takes occasion to correct his mistake as to the nature of *goodness*; and having tried this *good and perfect* man in a tender point, sent him away grievously dissatisfied.

¹ Luke v. 21.² Matt. iv. 4.³ 1 Thess. i. 5.⁴ Matt. xxii. 43.⁵ Psalm xiv. 3.

XXV.

† 1 Cor. xv. 24. Then cometh the END, when HE shall deliver up the KINGDOM to GOD, even the FATHER.

Luke l. 53. HE (*Jesus*) shall reign over the house of *Jacob* for ever; and of HIS KINGDOM there shall be NO END.

This of St. *Luke*, being a contradiction in terms to that of the *Apostle*, shews the former to be spoken *only* of *Christ's* humanity; as the latter relates *only* to his *Divinity*. When both are laid together, it is evident to a demonstration, that *Christ* is *perfect God*, as well as *perfect man*. As *man*, he received a *kingdom*, which again, as *man*, he shall *deliver up*, when his mediatorial office, for which he took the nature of man, shall be at an *end*. But there is a *kingdom* pertaining to him, which shall have *no end*. And this cannot be true, unless he is a *person* in that *God*, who after the *Humanity* has *delivered up the kingdom* shall be *all in all*. The distinction in this case between the *God* and *man* in the *joint person* of *Christ Jesus*, is warranted by another part of the Chapter, wherein the *Apostle* has given us a key to his own meaning. *Since by MAN* (says he) *came death*, by *MAN* came also *the resurrection of the dead*. For as in *Adam* all die, even so in *Christ* shall all be made alive. Here, it is evident, he is drawing a contrast between the *man Adam* and the *man Christ*; so that unless it be done on purpose, no reader can easily mistake the meaning of what follows—*Then cometh the End*, when HE (that is the *man Christ*, the second *Adam*) shall *deliver up the kingdom*, &c. for so it must be, according to the tenor of the *Apostle's* discourse.

The *New Testament* abounds with expressions of this nature: but they have no difficulty in them, if it only be remembered that *Christ* is *man* as well as *God*; which the *Arians* are willing upon all occasions to forget. And it has been chiefly owing to an abuse of these texts, that they have been able to put any tolerable gloss upon their Heresy. The *Old Testament* seldom speaking of *Christ*, but as a *Person* of the *Godhead* before his *Incarnation*, does not afford them so many opportunities: and hence it is, that most of them confine their enquiries to the *New*, which is the history of him after his *Incarnation*, when he appeared, as the *first born of many brethren*¹; *anointed above his Fellows* (*Mankind*) receiving au-

¹ Rom. viii. 29.

thority and dominion from *God*, who by a power superior to that of his human soul and body, put *all things in subjection* under the *feet* of it.

But some, for whose sakes he thus humbled himself, and became obedient in the flesh, instead of receiving it with humility and devotion, even cast it in his teeth, and make it an argument *against* him: vainly imagining that they do honour to their supreme God, while they say with *Peter*—Lord, *be it far from thee: this shall not, it cannot, be unto thee*. And it is worth their while to consider, whether they may not fall under the same rebuke, when it will be too late to retract and change their opinion.

A solemn advocate of theirs, whom I take to be a *dissenter*, tells us—his *present concern is with the New Testament only*¹. And another writer of some figure, who, you are to suppose, is addressing himself to a *young Clergyman*, puts it into his head, that he “*may reject arguments brought from the Old Testament to prove the Trinity, as trifling, and proving nothing but the Ignorance of those that make use of them*”². And I could wish that were all: for I had much rather be accounted a *fool* in their judgment, than find myself under a necessity of charging them with the horrible guilt, of *denying the Lord that hath bought them*.

XXVI.

† *Acts* x. 42.—That it is HE, which is ORDAINED OF GOD to be the *judge* of quick and dead.

This passage will help us to detect, once for all, that common fallacy of our adversaries, in misapplying such words as relate only to the *human* nature of *Christ*, and erecting arguments thereupon to the degrading of his supreme Essence. *Christ* is *ordained* of *God*, it is true: and the nature that *receives* power, must be *inferior* to the nature that *confers* it. But is his *Godhead* therefore *ordained*? They tell you it is; and their scheme requires it: but the *Scriptures* declare the contrary—GOD (saith *St. Paul*) *hath appointed a day wherein HE will JUDGE the world in righteousness by that MAN* εν ανθρωπῳ, (IN that MAN) *whom he hath ORDAINED*³. The supreme God that was *manifest in the flesh*, and in

¹ A sequel to the *Essay on Spirit*, p. 8.

² Letter to a *young Clergyman* upon the *Difficulties and Discouragements* which attend the study of the *Scriptures* in the way of *private judgment*.

³ *Acts* xvii. 31.

Christ reconciling the world to HIMSELF, shall remain in the same personal union with him, till he has *judged* the world, and is ready to *deliver up the kingdom*. And though our *Judge* shall even then retain the character of a *Man*, yet as *God* who *ordained* him, shall be present with him in the same person, the act of the last judgment is equally ascribed to both natures. In the text just above cited, it is said—*He* (God) will *judge* the world; though it immediately follows, that a *man*, even the *man Christ*, is *ordained* to this office. And so we have it again in the Epistle to the *Romans*—*we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to ME, and every tongue shall confess unto GOD*^a. We are to give an account of ourselves at the *judgment seat of Christ*. And how does the *Apostle* prove it? Why, because it is written, that we shall give an account of ourselves to the *Lord God*, who swears that *he liveth*. But unless *Christ*, who is a *man*, be also this *living God* and *Lord*, this proof is not to the purpose.

XXVII.

† *Acts* x. 40. Him GOD raised up and SHEWED HIM openly to us who did eat and drink with him *after he rose from the dead*.

John xxi. 1. After these things JESUS SHEWED HIMSELF again to his *disciples* at the Sea of *Tiberias*; and on this wise SHEWED HE HIMSELF.

The former text takes something from *Christ*, as *man*; in which capacity he was at the *disposal of the Father*. But the latter restores it to him again as *God*; under which character he is at his *own disposal*, and in unity with the Father. The same is to be said of the two articles which follow.

XXVIII.

† *John* iii. 16. GOD SO LOVED the world, that HE GAVE his only begotten Son.

Ephes. v. 25. CHRIST ALSO LOVED the Church, and GAVE HIMSELF for it.

^a *Isaiah* xlv. 23.

XXIX.

† *Eph. iv. 32.* Forgive one another, even as GOD, for CHRIST'S SAKE, hath FORGIVEN you.

Col. iii. 13. Forgive one another—even as CHRIST FORGAVE you.

XXX.

† *John vi. 38.* I came down from heaven, NOT to do MY OWN WILL, but the WILL of HIM that SENT ME.

Matth. viii. 2. And behold there came a Leper and worshipped him, saying, LORD, if THOU WILT thou canst make me clean. And JESUS said, (Θελω) I WILL, be thou clean.

XXXI.

† *Acts iv. 29, 30.* And now, LORD—grant—that signs and wonders may be done by the NAME of THY HOLY CHILD JESUS.

It seems here, that signs and wonders were not to be wrought by *Jesus Christ*, as the author of them; but by an higher power of the LORD, put into action by the name, Merits or Intercession of the *Holy Child Jesus*. Yet *St. Peter* makes this same *Jesus*, though in heaven, the immediate author of the signs and wonders wrought by his disciples upon earth—"Eneas (says he) JESUS "CHRIST maketh thee whole." *Acts ix. 34.*

XXXII.

† *Matth. xx. 23.* To SIT on my right hand and on my left, is NOT MINE TO GIVE, but (*it shall be given*) to them for whom it is prepared of MY FATHER.

Yet our blessed Saviour has promised elsewhere, to bestow this reward in his own right—"To him that overcometh will I GRANT "to SIT with me in MY THRONE." *Rev. iii. 21.* This is sufficient to rescue the text from any heretical use that may have been made of it. But still there remains some difficulty, which, with God's help, I shall endeavour to clear up. It will appear to any person, not ignorant of *Greek*, that the original in this place does reserve to *Christ* that act of power and authority, of which the *English* version, by inserting a few words, seems to have divested him. The *Greek* is this—*οκ εστιν εμου δοουαι*—it is not mine to give, *αλλ' οis προημασαι*, but to them for whom it is prepared—"nisi quibus

“paratum est.” For in the eleventh verse of the foregoing chapter, there is an expression exactly parallel—*ἀλλ' οἷς δέδοται*—*save they to whom it is given*; or as *Beza* hath it—“*sed ii quibus datum.*” Now there can be no grammatical reason, why we should not take—*ἀλλ' οἷς προετίθει*—in the same manner; and then the text will affirm what it now seems to deny. For to say, that *Christ* cannot give any particular reward, *save to them for whom it is prepared of his Father*, is the same as to say, that to *such* he can and will give it; according to the common maxim—*Exceptio probat regulam in non exceptis.*

The scope of the Text therefore, is to shew, that nothing can be granted even by Almighty power itself, where there is not a suitable merit or disposition in the persons who claim it. “God shall give this honourable place to those, for whom it is prepared by an invariable rule of justice; whose victory of Faith being foreknown and accepted, a seat is allotted them according to it.” And the two passages being laid together, supply us with this principle. As if our *Saviour*, who is the *speaker* in both places, had said—“Though it be *not mine to give*; yet, to him that *overcometh*, will I (even I myself) grant to sit with me in my *Throne*; because for him this seat is prepared.” It is not owing to a defect of power in the *Trinity*, or in any person of it, that the divine purpose cannot be changed; but because it is impossible for the power of God to break in upon the order of his distributive justice. And it is upon this account only, that we read of *Christ*, *Mark* vi. 5. “He COULD there do NO mighty work.” For the *power* of doing a miracle was always present with him; but the *place* being *improper* because of their *unbelief*, made the thing impossible. In the same manner, that declaration of the *Lord* in *Gen.* xvii. 22, is to be accounted for,—*Haste thee, escape thither, for I CANNOT do any thing till thou be come thither.* No man would hence conclude, that the hand of God is straitened, or his power limited; but only that he does, and by his own nature must, act agreeable to the disposition of things and persons, known to himself.

XXXIII.

† *1 Cor.* viii. 6. To us there is but ONE GOD, THE FATHER.

If we compare this with that expression of *St. Thomas*—*John* xx. 28.—MY LORD, and MY GOD, we have the following argument:

TO US there is but one GOD, the FATHER.

BUT TO US JESUS CHRIST IS GOD: therefore, the Gospel has either preached *two Gods to us*, one *distinct* from the other: or that *one God the Father* is here the name of a *nature*, under which *Christ* himself, as *God*, is also comprehended. And the same may be proved of it in several other places.

XXXIV.

† *Matth.* xxiii. 9. Call no man your Father upon earth, for ONE IS YOUR FATHER *which is in heaven*.

Ibid. v. 10. Neither be ye called masters, for ONE IS YOUR MASTER, even CHRIST. *John* iii. 13, *which is in heaven*.

Dr. Clarke has a particular Section², wherein he pretends to have set down *the Passages that ascribe the highest Titles, Perfections, and Powers*, to the second Person of the Trinity. Yet he has wholly omitted the latter of these verses; though by a rule of his own making, it allows to *Christ* an higher title than any other in the whole Scripture. It is this same Author, who has laid so great a stress upon the word *as, one*, which he has insisted upon it can signify nothing else but *one Person*; and the criticism is thought to be of such use and importance to his scheme, that his book *begins* with it; and in the course of his work it is repeated three times, nearly in the same words. But the passage now before us, if he had produced it, would have turned his own weapon against himself. For the word *as* is here an attribute of *Christ*; and if we argue from it in this place, as he has done in the other, it must prove, that *one person only* is our *Master*, and that this person is *Christ*: which excludes the Persons of the *Father* and the *Spirit* from the honour of that title; and so reduces that learned author's reasoning to a manifest absurdity.

We are to conclude then, that as the phrase, *one Master*, cannot be meant to exclude the *Father*; so neither does that other—*one is good* (supposing that were the sense of the *Greek*) or, *one is your Father*, exclude the person of *Christ*. And if the reason of the thing teaches us that it *cannot*, so the *Scripture* assures us in fact that it *does not*: the title of *Father* being also ascribed to the second person of the Trinity. For *Christ*, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, says of himself—*He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be*

² Chap. ii. § 3.

HIS GOD, and he shall be MY SON¹. *Isaiah* calls him—*The Everlasting FATHER*². And again it is written—*They are the CHILDREN of GOD, being the children of the RESURRECTION*³: but, says *Christ*—*I am the RESURRECTION*⁴: therefore he is *God*, and hath us for his Children. If this be the case, the word *Father* cannot always be a name that distinguishes *God* from another person of *God*; but is often to be understood as a term of relation between *God* and *Man*: or as a modern Divine of our Church has well expressed it—“A word not intended for *God the Father* only, the *First person* of the Trinity; but as it is referred unto the *Creature*, made and conserved by *God*; in which sense the appertains to the whole Trinity.”

XXXV.

† *John* xiv. 28. MY FATHER IS GREATER than I.

The two preceding articles will sufficiently justify what the Church has asserted with a view to this passage—That *Christ* is “*inferior to the Father as touching his manhood.*” And the stream of the whole Scripture is against that use the *Arians* generally make of it; who stand in need to be reminded at every turn, that in the person of *Christ*, there is a *human* soul and body, the nature of a *man*, which as it cannot lay claim to what is spoken of *Christ* in unity with the *Father*, so must it receive to its own account whatever seems to degrade and disjoin him from the *Father*. It is indeed hard to say, which of the two heresies is the most unreasonable and unscriptural; that of the *Socinians*, which never considers *Christ* as any thing but a *mere man*; or that of the *Arians*, who never look upon him as any thing but a *supposititious God*. Between these two gross errors, lies the true Catholic Faith; which, as it allows him to be *perfect God* and *perfect man*, is never offended, or put to its shifts, by any thing the Scripture may have said about him in either capacity

XXXVI.

† 1 *Cor.* xi. 3. The HEAD of *Christ* is GOD.

The name *Christ* does here stand, as in other places out of number, for the *man* *Christ*; otherwise it must follow, that as *Christ* is *God*, *God* is the head of *himself*; which is a contradiction; or that *one God* is the head of another *God*; which also is a contradiction.

¹ *Rev.* xxi. 7. ² *ix.* 6. ³ *Luke* xx. 36. ⁴ *John* xi. 25.

This Text is capable of a good illustration from *Genes.* iii. 15. where we read, that the *heel* of the promised seed should be *bruised*: by which the Church has always understood the sufferings of his *human* nature, metaphorically represented by the *inferior* part in man. So in this place, his *Divinity* or *superior nature* is as aptly signified by the *head* or *superior* part of the human body.

XXXVII.

† *Mark* xiii. 32. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels which are in heaven, neither THE SON, but THE FATHER.

It is declared of *Christ* in another place, that he *increased in wisdom*¹: why should it be incredible then, that during the whole term of his humiliation in the flesh, something should still be left, which as man upon earth he did not know? if you suppose him to be ignorant of this matter *as God*, how is it that St *Peter* confesses him to be omniscient, without receiving any rebuke for it, or being reminded of any particular exception?—LORD, *thou knowest all THINGS*².

XXXVIII.

† *John* i. 18. No man hath SEEN GOD at any time.

Ibid. xiv. 8, 9. *Philip* saith unto him, Lord SHEW US THE FATHER—hast thou not SEEN ME, *Philip*? he that hath seen ME, hath seen THE FATHER.

“ These words (says *Dr. Clarke*) do not signify, that he who hath seen the *Person of Christ*, hath seen the *person of the Father*.” No surely; but that he who hath seen all that was visible of *Christ*, hath seen the person, to whom was joined that invisible and divine *Nature*, which the Scripture has called by the Name of *the Father*. And to shew that *Christ* (though he was *God* manifest in *the Flesh*³) is yet no other than the same *invisible God*, whom no man hath or can see and live, we are told, that “ when he shall appear (glorified, not with any *secondary* divinity, but with the FATHER’S OWNSELF⁴) we shall be like him (fashioned like unto his own glorious body⁵, and conformed to his Image⁶) for we shall SEE him AS HE IS;” which no man ever yet hath done.

¹ Luke ii. 52.

² John xxi. 17.

³ 1 Tim. iii. 26.

⁴ John xvii. 5.

⁵ Phil. iii. 21.

⁶ Rom. viii. 29.

XXXIX.

† 1 Cor. xv. 27. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that HE IS EXCEPTED (ἐκτος τῆ υποταξάντος) *which did put all things under him.* And when *all things* shall be SUBDUED (υποταγή) UNTO HIM—

Phil. iii. 20, 21. We look for THE SAVIOUR, the *Lord* JESUS CHRIST—who—IS ABLE EVEN TO SUBDUCE ALL THINGS (υποτάξαι τὰ πάντα) TO HIMSELF.

It is manifest, therefore, that the *exception* in the former text is not meant to set *one Person of God* above *another Person of God*; but only to distinguish the Power of the *Divine Nature* from that of the *human* in its greatest *exaltation*. As *Christ* is *man*, *all things* are *subdued* unto him by ANOTHER; as *Christ* is *God*, he himself is that *other*, and *able to subdue all things* to HIMSELF. And this will be sufficient to confirm the Reader in what I have already observed, that the cause of *Arianism* borrows its chief support from the *humiliation* of *Christ in the flesh*. Search the very best of their arguments to the bottom, by a diligent *comparing* of the Scripture *with itself*, and they all amount to this great absurdity—*Man* is *inferior* to *God*; therefore *God* is *inferior* to *himself*: and this they prove, by *imputing* to *Christ's Divinity* what is said *only* of his *humanity*.

I have now presented to the Reader's consideration the most noted texts, which, under the management of *Arian* or *Socinian* Expositors, may seem to have favoured their Doctrine. Many, I hope, will be of opinion, that the Catholic cause is rather beholden to them, particularly in this last instance, for the opposition they have made against it; inasmuch as the objections they have drawn from the holy Scriptures have directed us to some very clear proofs, which might otherwise have escaped our notice. If there be any other Texts more for their purpose than what I have here set down, they have my free consent to produce and enlarge upon them as much as they please. In the mean time I shall proceed to give the Reader some farther satisfaction, and endeavour to convince him, with the Blessing of God, that while *Heresy* is obliged to glean up a few scattered passages, hard to be understood, and for that reason, easy to be wrested by men of perverse inclinations; the Faith of the Church has the suffrage of

the whole Bible, speaking in such words as need not be refined upon by any metaphysical Expositions, but only applied and considered.

XL.

Jude, 4. Denying the ONLY LORD GOD, and OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.—τον μονον δεσποτην Θεου και Κυριον ημων Ιησουν Χριστον.

As there is no article before Κυριον, the first and second comma are both meant of the same person; and the plain sense, when freed from the ambiguity of the English version, is this—*Denying the only Lord God and our Lord, Jesus Christ.* This literal sense of the Greek may be supported by the parallel Greek of *Phil.* iv. 20. Τω δε Θεω και πατρι ημων. There being here no article before πατρι, it would be violent and unnatural, to refer Θεος to one person, and πατρι to another: whence *Grotius* paraphrases the expression by—*Deo qui IDEM est Pater noster*; and thus may the other be rendered with equal strictness and propriety—δεσποτην qui idem est Κυριος ημων: and though we do not rest the proof of the Trinity on any single passage, yet is the more natural construction of this text very strong and conclusive for it.

If this should be denied, I think the *sense* also is capable of demonstration. The words include this Proposition—There is, ο μόνος ΔΕΣΠΟΤΗΣ, *one supreme Governour*¹: Now if this term be applied to *Christ*, it must follow that HE is that *one supreme Governour*, in the Unity of *the Father*. But it is applied to him in the parallel place of *Pet.* ii. 1. *Denying* (ΔΕΣΠΟΤΗΝ) *the Lord that hath bought them*—τον αγορασαντα αυτους. And if it should be doubted, whether this latter text be meant of *Christ*, it is demonstrated by another—THOU wast slain, and hast BOUGHT us (πυρωσας) unto God by thy Blood². If this chain of reasoning be inverted, the force of it will be clear and undeniable. 1. *Christ* hath bought us². 2. He that hath bought us, is ΔΕΣΠΟΤΗΣ the Lord, or supreme Governour. But 3dly, there is, ο μόνος ΔΕΣΠΟΤΗΣ, *one only supreme Governour*. Therefore *Christ* is he.

XLI.

Jude, 24, 25. Unto HIM that is able—to PRESENT you faultless before the PRESENCE of HIS GLORY—to the ONLY WISE GOD OUR SAVIOUR.

¹ So Dr. Clarke has construed it, C. I. § 3. 411.

² Rev. v. 9.

Eph. v. 27. That HE (*Christ*) might PRESENT it to HIMSELF a *glorious Church*, &c.

It is the *only wise God*, who is able to present us before the presence of his Glory: but *Christ* is to present us, as members of the Church in glory, to himself: therefore he is the *only wise God*, to whom also appertains the presence of Glory; for that is no other than his own presence, himself.

This is another express Instance, that $\mu\omicron\nu\textcircled{C}$ $\textcircled{C}\textcircled{C}$, the *only God*, is not God in one person, but the *Unity of the Trinity*. For if you confine this phrase, with the *Arians*, to the single Person of the *Father*, then of course you exclude the Person of *Christ*, and then, it is manifest, you contradict the Scripture. For though it be affirmed in this place, that the *only wise God* is to present us before his own presence, yet the same is elsewhere expressed by *Christ* presenting us to himself. Which is no way to be accounted for, unless you believe *Christ* to be a partaker in the *Being*, attributes, and offices of the one, undivided, *only wise God*, our Saviour. Then there is no farther difficulty.

XLII.

Eph. iii. 2, 3.—The Dispensation of the Grace of GOD, which is given me to you-ward: How that BY REVELATION HE (*God*) made known unto me the mystery.

Gal. i. 12. I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but BY THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

XLIII.

1 *Kings viii. 39.* THOU, even THOU ONLY KNOWEST the HEARTS of all the children of men.

This, it seems, is the privilege of *God* ONLY: but this *God* is *Christ*; for says he,

Rev. ii. 23. All the Churches shall know that I am HE which searcheth the reins and HEARTS.

Indeed this latter verse speaks plain enough for itself, without being compared with the former. It implies, that there is one only who searcheth the hearts of men, and that *Christ* is he. And the Greek will very well bear it; as the learned reader will easily perceive. It is thus— $\epsilon\gamma\omega$ $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$ \omicron $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\nu\omega\nu$ —There is δ $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\nu\omega\nu$, one that searcheth: but— $\epsilon\gamma\omega$ $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$ —I am He.

XLIV.

2 *Pet.* i. 4.—*Exceeding great and precious promises*, that by these you might be (Θείας Κοινωνίας Φυσεως) PARTAKERS of the DIVINE NATURE.

Heb. iii. 14. For we are made (μετοχοι τῆς Χριστοῦ) PARTAKERS OF CHRIST, if we hold the beginning of our confidence (in the *precious promises* of God) stedfast unto the end.

What St. *Peter* proposes, as the end of our hope in the *promises*, is to be *partakers of the divine Nature*: but this, according to St. *Paul*, is to be *partakers of Christ*; therefore Christ is *in* or *of* the *Divine Nature*; the same *Almighty God*¹ and *Lord*, who declared to *Abraham*—*I am thy Shield, and thy EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD*². So that these being compared together, are decisive for the Catholic *Homoousian* Doctrine, at which the *Arians*, from the Council of Nice to this very day, have been so grievously offended. And it has not been without reason. For if the word *Consubstantial* be applicable to the Person of *Christ*, it makes short work with their *Heresy*. To this end, it was fixed upon and agreed to by the Bishops of the whole Christian World³, as the most proper Bar and Badge of distinction between the *Arians* and themselves. But they object, that the term is *not scriptural*; nay, there are some, of no ordinary figure amongst them, who have not stuck to call it an invention of *Popery*⁴; though it is well known, that at the time this was adopted by the Church, there was no such thing as *Popery* in the world. But the *name* is found to be of great use in amusing weak people, who have no ready stock of learning

¹ Gen. xvii. 1.² xv. 1.

³ I say, of the *Whole Christian World*: though a late Author calls this *Oecumenical Council*, summoned for the condemnation of *Arius*, “*a famous contest*,” as if one half of the world had been divided against the other. And he says, it was “*determined by a majority of near twenty to one*,” whereas, in truth, there were but *five* out of *three hundred and eighteen*, who denied the *Catholic Faith*. I mention this to shew how some things may be *represented* by some sort of people, who if they are not ignorant, must think it their *Interest* to *impose* upon you. What would you think of a man, who having been present at an *Assize*, should bring a report of it home to his family, and tell them he had been at a *famous Contest*, where there was a *majority of near ten* Jury-men, six witnesses, and a Judge, against the *criminal*? See *Ded.* to an *Essay on Spirit*, p. 9, 10.

⁴ *Essay on Spirit*, p. 151.

to contradict them, and, in some cases, I fear, no good desire of being better informed. Who can think it a notable proof of their zeal as *Protestants*, that they take a pleasure in seeing their poor Mother, the *Episcopal* church of *England*, the honour of the Reformation, and the dread of *Poperly*, painted and dressed up for a *Jezebel*, by men of her own household; who have shipwrecked their Consciences by subscribing Articles they never believed, and are growing fat upon the provision allotted by the Providence of God, only to support the Church in her Journey through this world to the kingdom of heaven. A sight that would raise the indignation of a *Mahometan!* and almost move a *Papist* himself to pity and pray for us!

But I hope there are some few among the favourers of *Arianism*, who are not gone quite so far out of the way, and would be ashamed of such low and base artifices, as can only serve to expose and discredit their cause with any man of common learning and honesty. To these I address myself: and now the *Scripture* is before us, let me ask them a plain question or two. Is not the word *Essence* or *Substance* of the same signification with the word *nature*? and have not the Fathers of the Church thus expounded it? and is not this phrase—*of the same nature*—as conclusive for the *Divinity of Christ*, as that other—*of the same substance*? why then should that expression in the *Nicene Creed* be thought so offensive, when there is another in the *Scripture* so near of kin to it, that the *Arians* must be sensible they could gain nothing by the Exchange? for *divine Nature*, we all agree, can be but *one*; *three divine natures* of course making *three* different Gods. But the *Scripture*, compared as above, has asserted *Christ* to be *of this divine Nature*. And if people were once persuaded of that, all farther disputes about the word *Consubstantial* would be at an end. But peace and unity for *Christ's* sake is a blessing of which God has deprived this Church for the punishment of its sins: and as we do not seem to be in any posture of repentance, it is to be feared he will never restore it to us again in this world; but suffer us to go on from bad to worse, till the measure is filled up.

XLV.

It is a rule, laid down by *St. Paul*, that *GOD swears by HIMSELF*, for this reason, *because he can swear by NO GREATER.* *Heb. vi. 13.*

But *Christ* has sworn by himself:

Isai. xlv. 23. I have sworn by MYSELF,—that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

• Which words being compared with *Rom.* xiv. 10, 11. are proved to be the words of Christ.—*We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ: For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess unto God.*

Christ, therefore, has sworn by HIMSELF: so that if the Apostle's rule be applied, he must for this reason be GOD, and there can be no GREATER.

XLVI.

Eph. iv. 8. When HE (*Christ*) ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Yet the Scripture here referred to, expressly affirms the person who ascended, &c. to be the *Lord God*.

Ps. lxxviii. 17, 18. The chariots of GOD are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels: the LORD is among them, as in *Sinai*, in the holy Place. THOU hast ascended on high, THOU hast led captivity captive, &c.

XLVII.

Heb. ix. 20. This is the Blood of the TESTAMENT which GOD hath enjoined you.

Ibid. v. 16. Where a TESTAMENT is, there must also of necessity be the DEATH of the TESTATOR.

God is a Testator: but, argues the *Apostle*, every Testator must die, before the last Will or Testament enjoined by him, can be of force. Therefore, if you keep close to the terms, the natural conclusion is, that GOD, being a Testator, should die, to make way for the execution of his Testament. But it being impossible that the divine nature of God should be capable of Death; it follows, that the person who was capable of Death, and did die, as a man, was also God the Testator. And it is to express the strict and perfect union of the two natures in the single person of Christ, that what is true only of one, is predicated of both. Of this, two more examples shall be added in the articles that immediately follow.

XLVIII.

Rev. v. 9. THOU wast slain, and hast redeemed us to GOD by THY BLOOD.

A distinction is here observed between the two natures of *Christ*, and the act of *redeeming* us by the *shedding of his blood* is ascribed to the *Lamb*, the *Messiah's Humanity*. But in another place it is imputed to his Divinity—*Feed the Church of GOD, which he hath purchased with HIS OWN BLOOD*‡: not that *God*, strictly speaking, has any *blood* of his *own* to shed; but that he who shed his blood for us, *as man*, was *God* as well as *man*: or, in other words, that *God* and *man* were united in the same person; something being predicated of *God*, which cannot possibly be true without such an union. So again—

XLIX.

Zech. xii. 4.—In that day saith THE LORD—v. 10.—they shall look on ME whom they have PIERCED.

But, according to the Evangelist *St. John*, this *Scripture saith*, *John* xix. 37. They shall look on HIM (*Christ*) whom they have PIERCED.

As it stands in the Prophet, the *Lord (Jehovah)* was to be *pierced*. So that unless the man *Christ*, who hung upon the Cross, was also the *Lord Jehovah*, the Evangelist is found to be a false witness, in applying to him a prophecy that could not possibly be fulfilled in him.

L.

Phil. i. 10. That ye may be sincere and without offence, till the DAY of CHRIST.

2 *Pet.* iii. 12. Looking for and hasting to the coming of the DAY of GOD.

LI.

Isa. xl. 10. Behold, the LORD GOD will COME—HIS REWARD IS WITH HIM.

Rev. xxii. 12. Behold, I (*Jesus*) COME quickly, and MY REWARD IS WITH ME.

Amen: even so come LORD JESUS.

‡ Acts xx. 28.

CHAP. II.

THE DIVINITY OF THE HOLY GHOST.



I.

John iii. 6. Το γεγεννημενον εκ τῆς Πνεύματος—That which is BORN OF THE SPIRIT.

1 *John* v. 4. Το γεγεννημενον εκ τῆς Θεῆς—whatsoever is BORN OF GOD.

The same individual act of divine Grace, *viz.* that of our spiritual birth, is ascribed, without the change of a single Letter, to *God*, and to the *Spirit*. Some *capacity* then there must be, wherein the *Scripture* makes no *distinction* between *God* and the *Spirit*:—and this is what the *Scripture* itself calls *the divine nature*; under which *God* and the *Spirit* are both *equally comprehended*.

II.

Acts xiii. 2. The HOLY GHOST said, separate ME *Bar-nabas* and *Saul* for the work whereunto I HAVE CALLED them.

Hebr. v. 4. No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is CALLED OF GOD.

The shorter way is to ask this same *Saul*, *who* it was that appointed *him* to the *work of the ministry*? and his answer is no other than this—*Paul* CALLED to be an *Apostle*, SEPARATED unto the *Gospel*—By the *commandment* of GOD OUR SAVIOUR¹.

III.

Matth. ix. 38. Pray ye therefore the LORD OF THE HARVEST, that HE will SEND FORTH *Labourers* into his harvest.

¹ Rom. i. 1. and 1 Tim. i. 1.

Acts xiii. 4. So they being SENT FORTH BY THE HOLY GHOST.

In this act of *sending forth Labourers* upon the *work* of the Gospel, the *Holy Ghost* is proved to be the *Lord of the Harvest*, to whom *Christ* himself has directed us to PRAY. Wherefore, they are not to be heard, who advise us to alter the *third petition* in the *Litany*; a *work*, to which I am sure the *Holy Ghost* hath not called us, and such as will never be consented to by any Labourers of his sending.

IV.

Luke ii. 16. And it was revealed unto him (*υπο*¹) BY the HOLY GHOST, that he should not see Death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

Ibid. v. 28. And he BLESSED GOD, and said, LORD now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to THY WORD.

This *word*, was the *word* of the *Holy Ghost*; who therefore is intitled to the context, and is *God* and *Lord* to be *blessed* or *praised*; not under any imaginary restrictions and limitations, according to a certain degree of Power delegated to him, an evasion you will meet with in some modern writers; but the Scripture, and common reason instructed by the Scripture, disclaim and abhor it, as an inlet to all sorts of *Idolatry*.

V.

John xiv. 17. HE (*the spirit of Truth*) dwelleth with you, and shall be IN YOU.

1 Cor. xiv. 25. GOD is IN YOU of a truth.

VI.

2 Tim. iii. 16. All Scripture is given by INSPIRATION of GOD.

2 Pet. i. 21. Holy men of God spake as they were MOVED BY THE HOLY GHOST.

¹ I set down the *preposition*, because it slays the *Arian* with his own weapon. It shews the prime agency and authority in this affair to have been that of the *Holy Ghost*, acting in his own right, and not as the *minister* or *instrument* of an higher power; for then, according to them, it should have been *δια*. For my own part, I lay no stress upon it; because I perceive, upon a review of the Scripture, that these two prepositions are used indiscriminately.

VII.

John vi. 45. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all TAUGHT OF GOD.

1 Cor. ii. 13. Not in the words which *man's* wisdom teacheth, but which the HOLY GHOST TEACHETH.

This latter verse would prove the *Holy Ghost* to be *God* by itself: for I cannot find that *man*, in the style of the Scripture, is ever opposed in this manner to any *being* but *God* only. I will subjoin a few examples of it.

John i. 13. Not of the will of man, but of God.

1 Thess. iv. 8. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God.

Rom. i. 29. Whose praise is not of men, but of God.

VIII.

Acts v. 3. Why hath *Satan* filled thine heart to LYE to the HOLY GHOST?

Ibid. v. 4. Thou hast not LYED unto men, but unto GOD.

Dr. *Clarke* affirms, that “the Person of the *Holy Ghost* is no where in Scripture expressly stiled *God*” And then adds, by way of authority—“see the Text, No. 66¹.” And what text would you suppose this to be? why, it is no other than that of *Acts v. 4*, where he IS expressly stiled *God*. The *Doctor* refers us to it, because he has added a long perplexed Comment to help us to understand it, I suppose; though a child may see the force of it without any Comment at all. The substance of all he has said may be reduced to this—“*Ananias* lyed to *God*, because he lyed to the Apostles, in whom *God* dwelt by his *Spirit*.” Thus he has tried to evade it; even by producing one proof of the *Holy Ghost's* Divinity, as an answer to another. For if the Scripture assures us that *God* dwelleth in us; and our only argument for it is, because the *Spirit* dwelleth in us; who can the *Spirit* be, but *God* himself? as it is proved in the following Article. But before we proceed to it, I must beg the Reader to observe how he has used and represented *Athanasius's* opinion upon this text. “*Athanasius* himself (says the *Doctor*²) explains this text in the same manner: “He that lyed (saith he) to the *Holy Ghost*, lyed to GOD, WHO

¹ Part II. § xxxii.

² No. 66.

“*dwelleth in men by his Spirit. For¹ where the Spirit of God is, there is GOD.*” The difference, then, between this author and St. *Athanasius*, is no more than this: the former takes occasion to *deny* that the *Holy Ghost* is GOD, the latter to *prove* it, and both from one and the same text; which, if you believe the *Doctor*, they have explained *in the same manner*.

IX.

1 *John* iii. 21. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward GOD.

Ibid. v. 24. And *hereby* we know that HE abideth in us, by THE SPIRIT which he hath given us.

The Apostle's reasoning is this—“*The Spirit* abideth in us; “and *hereby* we know that *He (God)* abideth in us.” But unless the *Spirit* be a *person* in the *Unity of God*, the conclusion is manifestly false.

X.

1 *Cor.* iii. 16. The TEMPLE of GOD is holy, which temple are YE.

1 *Cor.* vi. 19. Know ye not, that YOUR BODIES are the TEMPLE of the HOLY GHOST?

XI.

Matt. iv. 1. Then was *Jesus* LED up (υπο) BY THE SPIRIT, to be TEMPTED, &c.

Luke xi. 2—4. OUR FATHER which art in heaven—LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.

Is it not my business in this place to shew particularly in *what manner* and for *what end* God leads us into temptation. That it is no way inconsistent with the divine attributes, is plain from the case now before us: for *Jesus* was led up into the wilderness to meet his adversary, and be *tempted* by him. And it is also plain from that petition in the Lord's Prayer, that *our Father which is in heaven* would not lead us into temptation: it being needless and absurd to pray that God would not do, what by the necessity of his nature, it is impossible for him to do. In this case, *God* is not the tempter: he only introduces us to the trial; and always provides, if we have the grace and prudence to embrace it, *a way for our escaping, that we may be able to bear it*.

¹ Οπου γαρ εστι το Πνευμα των Θεων, εκει εστιν ο Θεος.

But when *Jesus* was tempted, the leading him into temptation was the act of the *Holy Spirit*. Therefore as often as we repeat the *Lord's Prayer*, we address ourselves inclusively to the *Person* of the *Spirit*, under the one name of **OUR FATHER**; and certainly, he also is *our Father*, of whom we are *begotten* and *born*, even of the *Spirit*: and again, as many as are **LED** by the **SPIRIT** of *God*, they are the **SONS** of *God*. Rom. viii. 14. See Art. I. of this Chapter.

XII.

2 Cor. i. 3. Blessed be **GOD**, even the **GOD** of **ALL** COMFORT.

If all spiritual Comfort (sent from heaven) be of *God*, how is it consistent, that the churches had rest—walking in the **COMFORT** OF the **HOLY GHOST**¹, unless the *Holy Ghost* be a person in the Unity of *God*? and how can he be styled by way of eminence, **THE Comforter**², if there be a *God* distinct from him, who claims that title? for then he is not *the Comforter*, but one of the *two*; and *two divine Comforters*, like *two Almighty's*, would make *two Gods*; which is not a principle of Christianity, but of heathen Idolatry. And the same reasoning will hold good as to another of his titles. For the *Holy Ghost* is called, by way of eminence, **THE SPIRIT**³, i. e. the true and principal, the head and Father of all *other Spirits*. Yet we are told that *God* is a *Spirit*⁴: so that unless the *Spirit* be also *God*, we must believe in *two* supreme, distinct, and independent *Spirits*. And thus we justly argue for the Divinity of *Christ*; that because **GOD** is **LIGHT**⁵, and *Christ* is **THE LIGHT**⁶, therefore, he is and must be *God*; even the **TRUE God**, because he is the **TRUE Light**⁷.

XIII.

1 Cor. ii. 11. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the **SPIRIT** of a man which is **IN HIM**? **EVEN SO** the things of **GOD** knoweth (εἰδεις) none but the **SPIRIT** OF **GOD**.

The *Spirit* of a man knows the things of a man for *this* reason, because it is *in him*. For the *same* reason, the *Spirit* of *God* knows the things of *God*, because it is *in* the *Godhead*; than which nothing

¹ Acts ix. 3. ² ὁ παρακλητὴς, John xiv. 26. ³ 1 John v. 6. ⁴ John iv. 24.
⁵ 1 John i. 5. ⁶ John i. 4, 7, 8, and viii. 12. ⁷ Ibid. i. 9.

farther need be desired to prove the *co-essentiality* of the *Holy Ghost*⁸. If you take it otherwise, there can be no parallel between the two cases. For how strange would it be to say—the *human Spirit* knows the things of a *man*, because it is *in him*; EVEN SO, the *Divine Spirit* knows the things of *God*, because it is *out of him*. This text brings the matter to a short issue. The Church affirms the *Spirit* to be *in God*, as a *person* of the *same divine nature*: the *Arians* deny it, and will understand him to be *out of God*; not a person of the divine nature, but one inferior to, and distinct from it. To see on which side the truth lies, a man needs no other qualification but that of *faith*, to receive the *Scripture* as the infallible *word of God*: which the *Arians*, in most of their writings, have freely confessed it to be. If once they come openly to deny this, they are no longer *Arians*, but infidels of another denomination, with whom a different course is to be taken.

XIV.

1 *Cor.* ii. 11. THE THINGS OF GOD knoweth no man.

Ibid. v. 14. But the natural man receiveth not the THINGS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

Here again, the *Scripture* makes no distinction, farther than that of personality, between *God* and the *Spirit of God*; but renders unto *God* the *things* that are *God's*, by rendering them to the *Spirit*, who is *God*.

XV.

Deut. vi. 16. and *Matt.* iv. 7. Thou shalt not TEMPT the LORD thy GOD.

Acts v. 9. How is it that ye have agreed to TEMPT the SPIRIT of the LORD?

The *Spirit* is here substituted as the object of that particular act of disobedience, of which, according to the *Law* and the *Gospel*, the only object is the *Lord our God*: therefore the *Spirit* is the *Lord our God*.

Dr. *Clarke* denies that in “any place of *Scripture* there is any mention made of any SIN against the Holy Ghost, but only of a

⁸ The *Scripture* uses the same preposition to denote the *co-essentiality* of *Christ*. *John* xiv. 11. I am (EN ΤΩ ΠΑΤΡΙ) in the Father. And xiii. 32. God shall glorify him (EN ΕΑΥΤΩ) in Himself.

“BLASPHEMY¹.” He that can distinguish BLASPHEMY from SIN, must be an acute reasoner; when it is of *all sins* the greatest. But is it no SIN against the *Holy Ghost*, to *lie* to him, to *grieve* him², or to *tempt* him? why then did the Lord *swear* in his *wrath* against those that *grieved* him, if it were no SIN? and why was that commandment given in the Law, *thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*? And if the *Spirit* be *tempted*, is not the *Spirit* the object *offended* by that *temptation*? this is the very thing that learned man was afraid of. He would have proved *blasphemy* to be no *Sin*, lest the *Spirit* should appear to be the *object* of *Sin*; for that would have proved him to be *God*, the author and giver of the *Law*: and that, again, would have spoiled his *Scripture Doctrine*: so the short way was, to *deny* it.

XVI.

Gen. vi. 3. And the LORD said, MY SPIRIT shall not *always strive with man*.

The *Spirit of the Lord* strove with the Inhabitants of the old world, endeavouring to reclaim them by grace, and *waiting* long for their repentance. But this is called, 1 *Pet.* iii. 20. the *long-suffering* of GOD that *waited* in the days of *Noah*.

XVII.

Luke xi. 20. If I with the FINGER of GOD cast out devils.

The parallel place in St. *Matthew's* Gospel has it thus:

Matth. xii. 28. If I with the SPIRIT of GOD cast out devils.

The *finger of God* is a metaphorical expression for the immediate power and agency of God: and to say that *Devils were cast out* by the *finger of God*, is the same as to say, that they were cast out by *God himself*. But it appears from the text of St. *Matthew*, that this particular act of the *finger of God*, that is, of *God himself*, was the act of the SPIRIT; therefore the *Spirit* is *God himself*.

XVIII.

Ezek. viii. 1—3. The hand of the LORD GOD fell there upon me—and HE (the *Lord God*) put forth the form of an hand, and *took me* by a lock of mine head, and the SPIRIT *lift me up*, &c.

¹ S. D. p. 112.

² Eph. iv. 30.

In this text, the name of the *Lord God*, and the name of the *Spirit*, do both belong to the same *person*. For though it be said that the *Spirit lifted up* the prophet, yet was it no other than the *Lord God who put forth the form of an hand, and took him*: therefore the SPIRIT is the LORD GOD.

XIX.

Acts iv. 24, 25.—They lift up their voice to God with one accord, and said, LORD, *thou art GOD*, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that therein is. *WHO by the mouth of thy servant DAVID has said, &c.*

The terms LORD and GOD are here used to express the Divinity of *him*, who spake *by the mouth* of his servant *David*. But it was the *person* of the HOLY GHOST, who *spake by the mouth of his servant David*—for, saith *St. Peter*—*This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the HOLY GHOST by the mouth of DAVID spake, &c.* Therefore, the terms LORD and GOD are certainly used to *express the Divinity* of the HOLY GHOST.

So again;

It was the LORD GOD of *Israel*, who SPAKE by the mouth of his holy *Prophets*, since *the world began*. *Luke i. 68. 70.*

But then, it is written—well SPAKE the HOLY GHOST by *Esaias the prophet*¹, &c. Therefore the *Holy Ghost* is the LORD, GOD of *Israel*.

XX.

Psal. cxxxix. 7. Whither shall I go from *THY SPIRIT?* or whither shall I go from thy *Presence?* If I ascend up into heaven, *THOU art there.*

The Psalmist, to acknowledge the omnipresence of the *Holy Ghost*, says—*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?* and by what is immediately subjoined, he shews this to be the omnipresence of *God himself*—*If I ascend up into heaven, THOU art there.* So that the terms *Thou*, and *thy Spirit*, are equivalent; i. e. equally conclusive for the immediate *presence* of the *divine nature itself*.

¹ Acts xxviii. 25.

XXI.

It was said by the Angel—*Luke i. 32.*—*He shall be great, and shall be called the SON of the HIGHEST.* But the reason given upon this occasion WHY Christ was called the SON OF GOD, is this, and this only, *viz.* because he was begotten by the *Holy Ghost*—“the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power “ of the HIGHEST shall overshadow thee: THEREFORE also “ that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the “ Son of GOD.” *v. 35.*

When *Jesus* is called *the Son of God*, we understand the *supreme and true God*, besides whom there is no other. The *Devils* themselves allowed it, and said—“*Jesus, thou Son of God MOST “ HIGH !*” But the person in God, whose Son *Jesus* is said to be in this place, is the *Holy Ghost*, by whose power (called the *Power of the highest*) he was begotten of the blessed virgin, and thence called *the Son of God*.

Therefore, the *Holy Ghost* is *God*, and the *Highest*.

XXII.

The Prophet *Isaiah*, in his 6th Chapter, tells us he saw the LORD OF HOSTS. And at ver. 8. that he heard the voice of the LORD, SAYING—*Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not, &c.*

Yet these very words, which the prophet declares to have been spoken by the *Lord*, even the *Lord of Hosts*, were spoken by the *Holy Ghost*—*Well SPAKE THE HOLY GHOST, by Esaias the prophet, unto our Fathers, saying, Go unto this People, and say, hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand², &c.*

Therefore, the HOLY GHOST is the LORD OF HOSTS.

The article of the Holy Ghost's supreme and absolute Divinity being now established in the plainest terms, I shall proceed to answer from the Scripture, the objections usually made against it from thence.

XXIII.

† *Matth. xix. 17.* There is none GOOD but ONE, that is, GOD.

If this be a good objection to the Divinity of *Christ*, it must be equally strong against that of the *Holy Ghost*; for it is argued from this passage, that the attribute of *goodness* is confined to the

¹ *Luke viii. 23.*

² *Acts xxviii. 26, 27.*

single person of God the Father ; who therefore is a Being superior to, and different from *Christ* and the *Holy Ghost*. The Error of this argument has been fully shewn above : for it is not *one person*, but *one God*, whom the Scripture has asserted to be *good* ; and I now have an opportunity of confirming it, and of proving withal, that in the unity of this one God, besides whom no other is *good*, the person of the Holy Ghost is, and must be included. For it is written—*Thy SPIRIT is GOOD*[†]—so that if the same inspired Scripture which declares the person of the *Spirit* to be *good*, does also as plainly declare that *none* is *good*, but *God only* ; then the Spirit is God, even the only true and supreme God ; and we are as well assured of it, as if it had been said, “ there is none Good “ but one, that is *the Spirit*, who is one with God.” The Hebrew in this place is yet stronger than the English. It is not טוב *good*, but טובה *Goodness itself*, that is, divine essential uncommunicated goodness, besides which there neither is nor can be any other of the like kind. There is one sort of goodness communicated to men upon earth ; as we read, *Psal. cxii. 5. the good man sheweth favour, &c.* and *Acts ii. 24. that Barnabas was a good man, full of faith, &c.* There is another sort of goodness to be found only in heaven, and that is the goodness of God, which is essential : but this goodness is also an attribute of the *Spirit* ; who therefore is proved to be *very God* ; and by that argument too, for the sake of which, some have *denied* him to be God.

XXIV.

† *Matth. iii. 16.* The *Spirit* of GOD.

The Spirit, say they, is not *God*, because he is only the Spirit of God. But so likewise the *human Spirit*, whence the Apostle has taught us to borrow an Idea of the *Divine*, is the Spirit OF a man ; yet, was it ever pretended, that the *Spirit*, for this reason, is *one* Being, and the *man* another ? No, certainly : and the same must be true of *God*, and the Spirit of God ; as far as the Being of the *same man*, who is *one* person, can be an image of the *same God*, who is *three* persons. But there is the plainest testimony of Scripture, that the Spirit, though said to be the *Spirit* OF *Jehovah*, is also called by the express name of *Jehovah* himself. For it is written, *Judg. xv. 14. that the Spirit* OF *Jehovah* CAME upon *Samson*. Yet at *Chap. xvi. 20.* it is said, that

† *Psal. cxliiii. 10.*

Jehovah himself DEPARTED from him. Till it can be shewn, then, that the person who came upon him was *one*, and the person who departed from him was *another*; it is undeniable, that the *Spirit*, though said to be OF *Jehovah*, is strictly and properly *Jehovah himself*.

XXV.

† *Heb.* ii. 4. GOD also bearing them witness with—*gifts* of the *Holy Ghost* according to his own will.

Hence it is objected, that the *Holy Ghost* is subservient and subordinate to the *Will* of another; therefore he cannot be the supreme and true God. But if this *own will* of God should prove to be no other than the *will* of the *Spirit*, this imaginary objection of the *Arians*, which if it be an *error* must also be a *blasphemy*, will turn to a demonstration against them. And that the *will* of God really is the *will* of the *Spirit*, is manifest from 1 *Cor.* xii. 11. *All these worketh that one and the self-same SPIRIT, dividing to every man severally as HE (even he himself) WILLETH.*

XXVI.

† *Rom.* viii. 26. The *Spirit* itself maketh intercession for us.

The *Spirit* is not God, because he maketh intercession with God; and God, as it is imagined, cannot intercede with himself. But it is a matter of fact, that he has actually done this: therefore it is wicked and false to say that he cannot. For God reconciled the world TO HIMSELF, and it was done by *Intercession*.

The other Objections I meet with are all of this stamp: as that the *Spirit* is said to be *given*, to *proceed*, to be *poured out*, to be *sent*; and they argue that it is impossible for God to *give*, to *proceed* from, or to *send*, himself. But here the question is begged, that God is but *one person*, in which case it might be a contradiction: but the Scriptures demonstrate, as it will be seen in the following Chapter, that God is *three persons*: and then there is no contradiction in any of these things. It is also to be observed, that the *giving*, *proceeding*, *sending*, and *ministration* of the *Eternal Spirit* to *Christ* in *Glory*, are terms that concern not the *divine nature*, but relate merely to the *acts* and *offices*, which the several *persons* of the blessed *Trinity* have mercifully condescended to take upon them, for conducting the present *Œconomy* of man's *redemption* and *sanctification*.

By this time, I take it for granted, every pious reader must have observed, how very copious and conclusive the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament* are, upon the subject of the *Trinity*; and that without having recourse to them upon every occasion, it is impossible for me or for any man to deal fairly and honestly by the *Apostolical Doctrine* of the Church of *England*. Our *Lord* himself has told us, that *every Scribe, or teacher instructed into the kingdom of heaven, should bring forth out of his treasure, things NEW and OLD* ¹. It was his own practice. He appealed, at every turn, to the *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*, for the testimony of his own doctrine; and the Church has followed his example, from the days of the *Apostles*, almost down to the present times. And so far is the *Old Testament* from being no part of the *Scripture*, that it is the book, and the only book, the *Gospel* calls by the name of *the Scripture*. It was this book, which the noble and faithful *Beræans* searched every day of their lives, to see whether the *Gospel* then preached, and afterwards published in the *New Testament*, was agreeable to it; with the intention, either to receive or reject it, as it should appear to be recommended by this Authority. It was this Book, for his skill in which, *Apollos* is praised as one *mighty in the Scriptures*; the same *Scriptures*, of which *St. Paul* was bold to affirm, for the benefit of a brother *Christian*, that they were able to make him wise unto salvation, through Faith that is in *Christ Jesus*. As long as this Faith flourished in the Church, these *Scriptures* were much read and profitably understood: but now it is dwindled into a dry lifeless System of *Morality*, they are become in a manner useless; and some (it grieves me to say it) even of those who have undertaken to teach others, want themselves to be taught again this first Element of *Christianity*, that the *New Testament* can never be understood and explained, but by comparing it with the *Old*.

Of this Error and its consequences, we have a sad example in the celebrated *Dr. Clarke*; a man, whose talents might have adorned the *Doctrine* of *Christ*, had not his Faith been eaten up by an *Heathen Spirit* of *Imagination* and *Philosophy*. He published a Book entitled, *The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*; a work of great pains and premeditation. In a short preface, he allows the subject to be of the greatest importance in religion—not

¹ *Matt.* xiii. 52.

to be treated of carelessly—but examined by a serious study of the WHOLE SCRIPTURE. And to convince the world that this and no other was *his own* practice, he affirms in his *Introduction*, p. 17. and prints it in *capitals*, that he has collected ALL the *Texts* relating to that matter. Yet his whole Collection is finished and shut up without a Single Text from the *Old Testament*! I cannot find that he has even mentioned such a Book. “The Christian Revelation,” says he, p. 1. “is the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles.” This he calls, p. 4.—“The Books of Scripture; and again, p. 5.—“The Books of Scripture—not only the Rule, but the Whole and the only Rule of Truth—the only Foundation we have to go upon.” And he proves it thus—“because no man has since pretended to have any new Revelation.” An argument that will prejudice few people in favour of his sincerity. For though there has been no *new Revelation* SINCE the Books of the New Testament, as we all confess; does it follow that there was no *old Revelation* BEFORE them? and did this author never read, that the same GOD, who spake in these last days by his Son, spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets? yet he affects to know nothing at all of the matter.

And as to the use he makes of the *New Testament*, who would expect, that a man who has made *Nothing of one half* of God’s Revelation, should be very nice in his treatment of the *other*? In the first place, he has not vouchsafed to follow the Apostle’s Direction of *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, thence to collect their true meaning; but sets down his Texts in such an order, as makes them all to be single and independent of one another; and that gives all possible liberty to the Imagination to thrust in what sort of comment it pleases. When he refers to any parallel place (which I think is *never* done, but on *one* side of the Question) the Reader is not directed to the text itself, but to the *meaning* he has fastened upon it. At the beginning of every chapter, he sets down his *own opinion* at large, as the *Title* of it: and you are to believe, that all the passages of that Division do certainly prove it; which if cleared of his comments, and compared with other texts, are found to prove no such thing, but the very contrary. And this he calls *The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*: but if we call it by its true name, it is—Clarke’s *Doctrine of the Scripture*;

that is, of *half* the Scripture. How it came to pass, that he should thus boldly set down his own resolutions upon the most profound article of the *Christian* Faith, without consulting *all* the Evidence that relates to it, or rightly examining *any part of it*: how this came to pass, God is to determine, to whom all things are naked and open. All I have to do with him, is to rescue the *Word of God* from such *deceitful handling*. And I have prevailed with myself to make these few Reflections, because I find some modern Objectors of a lower Class, have used this Book in Conversation and in Print as the Oracle of the Party, taking the *Scripture* upon trust as his principles would give him leave to retail it. I know it will be accounted an *hard thing*, and called *invidious*, to rake thus into the *Ashes* of a writer, who is not alive to answer for himself. And I confess, I am very far from taking any *pleasure* in it. But is it not much *harder*, that the ashes of this man should be scattered over the land, to breed and inflame the plague of heresy, till the whole *head* is sick and the *heart faint*, and the *whole body* full of putrifying blains and sores? *Arianism* is now no longer a *pestilence* that walketh in *darkness*, but that brazens it out against the sun's light, and *destroyeth* in the *noon'day*. It is a *canker*, which if it be *encouraged* much longer, will certainly *eat* out the vitals of *Christianity* in this kingdom: and when the *faith* is gone, the *Church* in all probability will soon follow after it: for if the holy oil be wasted and spilt, the Lamp that was made to hold it, will be of no farther use.

CHAP. III.

THE PLURALITY AND TRINITY OF PERSONS.



I.

THE *Hebrew* name so often used in the *Old Testament*, which we have translated by the word *God*, is *Elohim*, a noun substantive of the *plural* number, regularly formed from its *singular**, and very frequently joined with plural verbs and plural adjectives, to express a *plurality* in the divine nature: though for another obvious reason, it is generally constructed of verbs and pronouns of the singular number, and gives a good sense, though the Grammar of it be somewhat irregular.

The *Jews* would persuade us not to consider this word as a plural noun, but on some particular occasions. Whoever will be at the pains to examine their reasoning, will find it to be very childish and inconsistent, wholly owing to their hatred against the divinity of *Jesus Christ*, and the notion of a Trinity. But when the *Jew* is become a *Christian*, and the stumbling-block of the *Cross* removed out of his way, he can allow the name *Elohim* to be *plural* as readily as other men; and it is one of the principal points he chuses to insist upon, to convince the world that his eyes are open, and he is sincere in his profession of the *Christian* religion.

John Xeres, a *Jew* converted here in *England* about forty years ago, published a sensible and affectionate address to his unbelieving brethren, wherein he lays before them his reasons for leaving the *Jewish religion* and embracing the *Christian*. “The *Christians*, (says he †) confess *Jesus* to be *God*; and it is this that makes us look upon the *Gospels* as books that overturn the very principles of religion, the truth of which is built upon this article, the *Unity of God*. In this argument lies the strength of what you object against the *Christian religion*.” Then he undertakes to prove that the unity of *God* is not such as he once understood it to be, an unity of *Person*, but of *Essence*, under which more

* אלוה and אלה: see the Heb. of Deut. xxxii. 17. and Hab. i. 11.

† P. 53.

persons than one are comprehended; and the first proof he offers is that of the name *Elohim*. “Why else, (says he *) is that frequent mention of *God* by nouns of the plural number? as in *Gen. i. 1.* where the word *Elohim*, which is rendered *God*, is of the plural number, though annexed to a verb of the singular number, which demonstrates as evidently as may be, that there are several persons partaking of the same divine Nature and Essence.”

II.

Gen. i. 26. And GOD said, let us make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness.

No sensible reason can be given, why God should speak of himself in the *plural* number, unless he consists of more persons than one. Dr. *Clarke* contrived the plan of his *Scripture Doctrine* so as to leave out this difficulty with many more of the same kind. Others there are who tell us it is a figurative way of speaking, only to express the dignity of God, not to denote any *plurality* in him. For they observe it is customary for a King, who is only one person, to speak of himself in the same style. But how absurd is it, that God should borrow his way of speaking from a King, before a man was created upon the earth! And even granting this to be possible, yet the cases will not agree. For though a King or Governor may say *us* and *we*, there is certainly no figure of speech that will allow any single person to say, *one of us*, when he speaks only of *himself*. It is a phrase that can have no meaning, unless there be more persons than one to chuse out of. Yet this, as we shall find, is the style in which God has spoken of himself in the following article. Though it be impossible to apply this plural expression to any but the Persons of the Godhead, there is a writer who has attempted to turn the force of it by another text, in which, as he says very truly, *the weakness of the argument will appear at sight*. God invites the people by the prophet *Isaiah*, and says, “Come now and *let us reason* together.” chap. i. ver. 18. Upon which he remarks, that, “if this form of expression puts the children of *Israel* upon an equality with God, then we may allow some force in this argument †.”

And so we may if it does not. For *let us reason* refers to an act common to all spirits; and therefore no Christian ever thought

* P. 57.

† See an *Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People*, p. 139.

of arguing from it. But *let us make man* refers only to an act of the Godhead. All spirits can *reason*: but only the supreme Spirit can *create*. Therefore the author, instead of answering the expression, hath only brought together two texts as widely different as God and man.

If the King were to say to another, "let us *see*," or let "us *breathe*," no man would be so weak as to think that the expression denoted any equality or co-ordination in the person so spoken to. But if he should say, "let us pardon a malefactor condemned by "the law," then the expression would admit of such an inference. And the objector might have been aware of these distinctions, if he had not prematurely settled his faith before he had consulted the Holy Scripture.

III.

Gen. iii. 22. And the LORD GOD said, behold the man is become like ONE OF US.

The *Jews* are greatly perplexed with this passage. They endeavour to put it off, by telling us, God must here be understood to speak of himself and his *council*, or as they term it בֵּית דִּין his *house of judgment*, made up of angels, &c. to which there needs no answer but that of the prophet, *who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor* *?

IV.

Gen. xi. 6, 7. And the LORD said—let us go down and there confound (*Heb.* let us confound) their language.

Another instance of this occurs in *Isaiah vi. 8.* *I heard the voice of the LORD, saying whom shall I send, and who will go for us?* Upon the plural word *Nobis*, us, there is a short note of *Junius* and *Tremellius*, which contains the substance of all that can be said upon the occasion—"Nam consilium est Dei Patris, "Fili, et Spiritus Sancti"—For this (say they) is a consultation of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.—And it shall be proved to be so, in a proper place, from an inspired comment upon this Chapter of *Isaiah*.

V.

Genes. xx. 13. And it came to pass when GOD caused me to wander from my father's house, &c.

* Rom. xi. 34. and Isai. xl. 13.

The *Hebrew* is—*Deus errare facerent*—God they caused me to wander: which, however strange it may sound to an *English* hearer, is the strict grammatical rendering of the original. And the expression is affirmed by *Junius* and *Tremellius*, with other commentators out of number, to respect the plurality of the persons in the Godhead. They have a short note upon it to the following effect—*Plurale verbum cum Dei nomine, ad indicandum S. Triados mysterium*: which I mention, not in the way of *authority*, but only to shew how clear the case is to an *Hebrew* reader, whose mind is without prejudice. And though others may have attempted to conceal such evidence as this under an heap of critical rubbish, yet if we are to come to no resolution till those who dislike the doctrine of a Trinity have done disputing about the words that convey it, the day of judgment itself would find us undetermined. And if we would but attend to this state of the case, and apply it also to other points of doctrine, I am well convinced it would shorten many of our disputes, and make the word of God a much more easy and intelligible book than it passes for at present.

VI.

Gen. xxv. 7. Because there GOD appeared unto him, &c.

Here again the *Hebrew* verb is plural—*Deus revelati sunt*—God they appeared, or were revealed to him. So again in *2 Sam. vii. 23.*—*even like Israel whom God went to redeem*: which in the original is—*iverunt Deus ad redimendum*; the verb being in the plural. A celebrated *Latin* translator¹ of the Old Testament has ventured to render it—*iverunt Dii ad redimendum*: but *Dii* in *Latin* is not answerable to *Elohim* in the *Hebrew*; and, in strictness, may be thought to countenance the notion of *Tritheism*, or a plurality of Gods; which is abhorrent from the express doctrine of the Scripture; and against which the name *Elohim* is purposely guarded, by its being connected so very often with verbs and pronouns in the singular.

VII.

Deut. iv. 7. What nation is there so great, that hath GOD so nigh unto them? &c.

In the two preceding articles we have seen the name of God connected with *plural verbs*: it is here joined to a *plural adjective*,

¹ *Pagninus* in his interlineary version published by *Montanus*.

whose termination is the same with its own; for the original has it—*Elohim Kerebim*—*Deus propinquus*—*God who are so near*. Another instance of which we have in *Josh. xxiv. 19. Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is an holy God*. For the *Hebrew* reads it—*Deus sancti ipse*,—*he is a God who are holy ones*. And again, *Psal. lviii. 12. Doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth*: the *Hebrew* of which is—*Deus judicantes in terra*—*a God (i. e. divine persons) who are judging in the earth*.

VIII.

Several other nouns there are beside the name *Elohim*, as well adjective as substantive, that are set down in the plural number, where it cannot be denied that the Being of *God* is to be understood by them.

Mal. i. 6. If I be a MASTER, where is my fear? The *Heb.* is אדונים *Adonim*, in the plural—*If I am masters, &c.*

Isai. liv. 5. For thy Maker is thine husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. Here also the *Hebrew* substantives for *thy maker* and *thy husband*, are both plural—בעלך עשך. And to prove that עשך cannot signify *thy maker*, in the singular number, it is also found connected with the word *Jehovah* in its singular form, without the *v* inserted; as in *Isai. li. 13. And forgettest the Lord thy maker*—יהוה עשך.

Eccl. xii. 1. Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, &c. The *Hebrew* of which is—Remember בוראך את *thy Creators*, in the plural. And there is nothing strange in this, when we can prove so easily that the world and all men in it were created by a *Trinity*.

Instead of the usual names of *God*, *adjectives* expressing some divine attribute are very frequently substituted: and these also occur in the plural, as in the following examples.

Prov. ix. 10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge (קדשם) of the HOLY ONES is understanding. Another instance of which may be found in *Chap. xxx. 3*: see also *Hosea xi. 12*; in the *Hebrew*, xii. 1.

Eccl. v. 8. There be HIGHER than they. The *Hebrew* is (גבהים) *high ones*, in the plural: and is understood even by the *Jews* themselves to mean the *holy and blessed God*. *Junius* and *Tremellius* put *altissimus* in their text, but acknowledge the *Hebrew* to be *alti—plurale pro singulari superlativo, mysterium, S. Triados notans*.

Psalm lxxviii. Man did eat Angels food.

The word (אֲבִירִים) *mighty ones*, is never used for *Angels*; and must in this place signify *God*, for the two following reasons:—
 1. Because *Abir* in the singular is several times used absolutely as a name of God; who is called *Abir Israel*, the *mighty one of Israel*, and *Abir Jacob*, the *mighty one of Jacob*. Gen. xlix. 24. *Psal.* cxxxii. 2, where the LXX have rendered it Θεός. 2. Because our blessed Saviour, in discoursing upon the *Manna*, John vi. 31—33, quotes this part of the Psalm, and calls that *the bread of God from heaven*, which in the Psalm itself is called the *bread of the mighty*. Therefore *Abirim* is put for *Elohim*, and is taken in the plural because God is plural.

IX.

Dan. iv. 26. And whereas THEY commanded to leave the stump of the tree-roots, &c.

At the 13th verse of this Chapter we read only of one *watcher* or *holy one* coming down from heaven, of whom it is said that HE cried—*leave the stump of his roots in the earth*. Yet the number is here very remarkably changed from *he said* to *they commanded*. And though the words of the curse upon *Nebuchadnezzar* were pronounced by A *watcher* and An *holy one*, in the singular; nevertheless, at the close of the speech, this *matter* is declared to be by the *decree of the WATCHERS* and the *demand by the word of the HOLY ONES*¹. Now it is very certain that the judgments of God are not founded upon the *decree* and *word* of Angels, or of any created beings: therefore this *watcher* could be no created angel, but a person in the Lord *Jehovah*, who condescends to *watch over*² his people, and is called the *keeper of Israel*, that *neither slumbereth nor sleepeth*. The change of these verbs and nouns from the singular to the plural, can be accounted for upon no other principle: it is a case to which there is no parallel in any language, and such as can be reconcilable only to the Being of *God*, who is *one* and *many*. We are to collect from it, that in this, as in every act of the Godhead, there was a consent and concurrence of the persons in the Trinity; and though there was *one* only who *spake*, it was the *word* and *decree* of *all*. There is an instance of this sort in the New Testament. The Disciples of *Christ* were commanded to *baptize in the name of the Father*, and

¹ Ver. 17. Compare this with Prov. ix. 10. cited in No. VIII. of this chapter.

² Jer. xxxi. 28.

of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And, without doubt, the baptism they administered was in all cases agreeable to the prescribed form. Nevertheless we are told of some, who were commanded to be *baptized in the name of the Lord*¹, and particularly, in the *name of the Lord Jesus*²: so that there was a strange defect either in the baptism itself, or in the account we have of it; or the mention of one person in the Trinity must *imply* the presence, name, and authority of them all; as the passage is understood by Irenæus—*in Christi nomine subauditur qui unxit, & qui unctus est, & ipsa unctio in qua unctus est.* Lib. III. cap. 20.

X.

Dan. v. 18. The most high GOD gave to Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom and majesty and *glory* and honour.

Ver. 20. And THEY took his *glory* from him.

Here again, the word *they* is a plain relative to the *most high God*. Nor can it otherwise be agreeable to the sense of the history, or the reason of the thing itself, considered as a matter of fact. For who was it that *took away* the *glory* of the king? It was not the work of *men*, but a supernatural act of *the most high God*; to whom *Nebuchadnezzar* himself hath ascribed it—*those that walk in pride HE is able to abase.*

I might here subjoin in proof of a *plurality*, those numerous passages of the Old Testament, wherein God is spoken of, or speaks of himself, as of *more persons than one*. I will produce a few of them, to shew, that such are not wanting. Gen. xix. 24. *The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.* Psal. cx. 1. *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, &c.* Dan. ix. 17. *Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant—for the Lord's sake.* Prov. xxx. 4. *Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?* Isai. x. 12. *When the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Jerusalem I will punish, &c.* Ibid. xiii. 13. *I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.* Ibid. xxii. 19. *And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down.* Ibid. lxiv. 4. *Neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that*

¹ Acts x. 48.

² Ibid. viii. 16.

waiteth for him. *Ihs.* i. 7. *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God.* *Zech.* ii. 10, 11. *I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord; and many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me unto thee.* *Ibid.* x. 12. *And I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord.*

The passages hitherto produced in this Chapter are designed only to prove an *indefinite* plurality in God. In the remaining part of it, I shall bring forward another class of texts, which shews this plurality to be a *Trinity*.

XI.

Psal. xxxiii. 6. By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the *breath* (*Iheb.* SPIRIT) of his mouth.

The *breath* or spirit of the Lord's *mouth*, does undoubtedly mean the third person of the Trinity; who is called, *Job* xxxiii. 4. *The Spirit of God, and the Breath of the Almighty.* And it should here be remembered, that when Christ communicated the *Holy Ghost* to his disciples, he did it by *breathing* upon them²: a demonstration that *Christ* our Saviour, who, as a *person*, is the *word* of the Lord, is in *nature* the Lord *himself*; because the spirit or *breath* of the *Almighty* is also the *breath* of *Christ*. And this fact is also decisive for the word *FILIOQUE*, so much controverted in the *Nicene Creed*.

XII.

Isai. xlvi. 16. And now the LORD GOD and his SPIRIT hath sent ME.

The speaker in this verse is no other than *Christ*, who, at ver. 12, calls himself *the first and the last*, and does here declare himself to be *sent*, not only by the *Lord God*, but also by his *Spirit*: which should be taken some notice of, because the *Arians* have objected to the co-equality of the *Son* with the *Father*, because he is said to be *sent* by him. But if this should hold, it will follow that *Christ*, for the same reason, is also inferior to the *Spirit*. The author of an *Essay on Spirit*, whose violent proceedings in the Church have chiefly moved me to draw up these papers, is warm in the pursuit

² *John* xx. 22.

of this argument, that *Christ* is inferior to the Father, because he was *sent* by him. “We may therefore,” says he, “fairly argue, as “our Saviour himself does upon another occasion—that as *the servant is not equal to his Lord, so neither is he that is sent equal to him that sent him* ¹.” Not quite so *fairly*: for here is a gross misrepresentation, of which, and of many other things, this author should give us some account, before he proceeds any farther in the work of *reformation*; it being a maxim, I think, with the wise and learned, that a man should always reform *himself*, before he undertakes to reform the world. Upon the occasion he refers to, our Saviour has said—*The Servant is NOT GREATER than his Lord; neither is he that is sent GREATER than he that sent him* ². But in the place of this, he has ventured to substitute another reading that comes up to his point, and agrees better with the intended work of Reformation—“*he that is sent is not equal to him that sent him* ;” printing the word *equal* in a different character to make it the more observable; and then puts an objection of his own *forging* into the mouth of our blessed Saviour. He professes himself a great enemy to *human compositions*; and we have reason to believe him, where those compositions are not *his own*. But his making so free with this and many other texts, does not look as if he was any great friend to the compositions of the *Holy Ghost*; and can do but little credit to a *Vindicator* of the *Holy Scriptures* from the cavils and scoffs of an Infidel.

XIII.

Isai. xxxiv. 16. Seek ye out of the Book of the *Lord* and read—for MY mouth it hath commanded, and HIS SPIRIT it hath gathered them.

In these words, there is *one* person speaking of the *Spirit* of *another* person: so that the whole *Trinity* is here included. Whether God *the Father* or God *the Son* is to be understood as the speaker, it is neither easy nor material to determine. I am rather inclined to think it is the *former*.

XIV.

Numb. vi. 24, &c.

The LORD bless thee and keep thee.

The LORD make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.

¹ P. 98.

² John xiii. 16.

The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

After this form the High Priest was commanded to bless the children of Israel. The name of *the Lord*, in Hebrew *Jehovah*, is here repeated *three* times. And parallel to this is the form of Christian Baptism; wherein the three personal terms of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, are not represented as so many different names, but as *one name*: the one divine nature of God being no more divided by these three, than by the single name *Jehovah* thrice repeated. If the three articles of this benediction be attentively considered, their contents will be found to agree respectively to the three persons taken in the usual order of *the Father*, *the Son*, and *the Holy Ghost*. The *Father* is the author of *blessing* and *preservation*. Grace and *illumination* are from the *Son*, by whom we have *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ*. *Peace* is the gift of the *Spirit*, whose name is *the Comforter*, and whose first and best *fruit* is the work of *Peace*.

Petrus Alphonsi, an eminent Jew, converted in the beginning of the 12th Century, and presented to the font by *Alphonsus* a king of *Spain*, wrote a learned treatise against the *Jews*, wherein he presses them with this Scripture, as a plain argument that there are *three persons* to whom the great and *incommunicable* name of *Jehovah* is applied. And even the unconverted *Jews*, according to *Bechai*, one of their *Rabbies*, have a tradition, that when the high Priest pronounced this Blessing over the people—*elevatione manuum sit digitos composuit, ut Triada exprimerent—he lifted up his hands, and disposed his fingers into such a form as to express a Trinity*. All the foundation there is for this in the Scripture, is *Lev. ix. 22*. As for the rest, be it a matter of fact or not, yet if we consider whence it comes, there is something very remarkable in it. See *Observ. Jos. de rois. in Pug. Fid. p. 400, 556, 557*.

XV.

Matt. xxviii. 19. Baptizing them in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST.

XVI.

2 Thes. iii. 5. The LORD (the *Holy-Ghost*, see c. 2. art. 4. 18.) direct your hearts into the love of GOD (*the Father*) and into the patient waiting for CHRIST.

XVII.

2 *Cor.* xiii. 14. The grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the love of GOD, and the communion of the HOLY GHOST.

In this and the foregoing article, the *order* of the *persons* is different from that of *Matth.* xxviii. 19. The Holy Ghost having the *first place* in the form of them, and Christ in the latter: which is a sufficient warrant for that clause in the Creed of St. *Athanasius*—"In this Trinity none is afore or after other." And Dr. *Clarke*, I presume, apprehended something of this sort; because he has corrected the Apostle, and transposed the order of the persons in 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14. without the least apology, or giving his reader any warning of it. §. LV. p. 377.

XVIII.

1 *John* v. 7. There are THREE that bear record in heaven, the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST—

There has been much disputing about the authenticity of this Text. I firmly believe it to be genuine, for the following reasons: 1. St. *Jerom*¹, who had a better opportunity of examining the true merits of the cause than we can possibly have at this distance of time, tells us plainly, that he found out how it had been adulterated, mistranslated, and omitted on purpose to elude the truth. 2. The Divines of *Lovain* having compared many *Latin* copies, found this text wanting but in five of them; and *R. Stephens* found it retained in nine of sixteen ancient manuscripts which he used. 3. It is *certainly* quoted twice by St. *Cyprian*², who wrote before the council of *Nice*: and also by *Tertullian*; as the reader is left to judge after he has read the Passage in the Margin³. Dr. *Clarke*, therefore, is *not to be believed* when he tells us, it was "never cited by any of the *Latins* before St. *Jerom*⁴." 4. The sense is not perfect without it; there being a contrast of three witnesses in heaven to three upon earth; the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*, whose testimony is called the *witness of God*; and the *Spirit*, the *water*, and the *blood*, which being administered by the Church upon earth, is called the *witness of men*. He that de-

¹ Præf. ad Canon. Epist.

² De Unit. Eccl. 109 Epist. LXXIII.

³ Connexus patris in filio, et filii in paraclito, tres efficit coherentes, alterum ex altero; qui tres unum sunt, &c. *adv. Præx.*

⁴ See the text in his 2d Edition.

Sires to see this text farther vindicated from the malice of *Faustus Socinus*, may consult *Pool's Synopsis*, and *Dr. Hammond*; and I wish he would also read what has lately been published upon it by my good and learned friend *Dr. Delany*, in his volume of *Sermons*, p. 69, &c.

But even allowing it to be spurious, it contains nothing but what is abundantly asserted elsewhere; and that both with regard to the Trinity in general, and this their divine *Testimony* in particular. For that there are *three* divine persons who *bear record* to the Mission of Christ, is evident from the following Scriptures;

John viii. 17, 18. *The Testimony of two men is true.*

I am ONE that bear witness of MYSELF.

The FATHER that sent me beareth witness of me.

1 John v. 6. *It is the SPIRIT that beareth witness.* And Christ has also mentioned, upon another occasion, a *plurality* of witnesses in heaven.—*We speak* (says he) *that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not OUR Witness*¹! which can be no other than the *witness* of the *Trinity*; because it is added—*no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven*; therefore no *man* could join with *Christ* in revealing the things of heaven to us.

XIX.

Isa. vi. 3. And one cried unto another and said, **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY** is the **LORD OF HOSTS**. See also *Rev.* iv. 8.

“ They are not content (says *Origen*) to say it *once* or *twice*, but “ take the perfect number of the *Trinity*, thereby to declare the “ manifold *holiness* of God; which is a repeated intercommunion “ of a threefold holiness; the holiness of the *Father*, the holiness “ of the only begotten *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*².” And that the *Seraphim* did really celebrate all the three persons of the God-head upon the occasion, is no conjecture; but a point capable of the clearest demonstration.

The prophet tells us, ver. 1. *he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne*; and at ver. 5. that *his eyes had seen the king, the Lord of*

¹ *John* iii. 17.

² Non eis sufficet semel clamare sanctus, neque bis; sed perfectum numerum Trinitatis assumunt, ut multitudinem sanctitatis Dei manifestent; quæ est trinæ sanctitatis repetita communitas; sanctitas patris, sanctitas unigeniti filii, et spiritus sancti. *Orig. Hom. in Mt.*

Hosts. Now if there be any phrase in the Bible to distinguish the true God, it is this of the *Lord of Hosts*. I never saw it disputed by any *Arian* writer. The author of an *Essay on Spirit* confesses it¹; and Dr. *Clarke* supposes the name *Lord of Sabaoth* (Jam. v. 4.) proper to the *Father* only. So that in this *Lord of Hosts*, sitting upon his Throne, there was the presence of *God the Father*.

That there was also the presence of *God the Son*, appears from *John* xii. 41. *These things said Esaias, when he saw his (Christ's) Glory, and spake of him* *.

And that there was the presence of *God the Holy Ghost*, is determined by *Acts* xxviii. 25. *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the Prophet unto our Fathers, saying, &c.* then follow the words which the prophet affirms to have been spoken by the *Lord of Hosts*.

The text of *John* xii. 41. which being compared with this of *Isaiah*, proves the second person of the Trinity to be the *Lord of Hosts*, is evaded by Dr. *Clarke* in the following manner: “The *Glory* which *Isaias* saw, *Isai.* vi. 1. is plainly the glory of *God the Father*; whence the followers of *Sabellius* conclude, because *St. John* here calls it the *Glory of Christ*, that therefore the *Father* and the *Son* are one and the same individual person².” It is concluded by the Orthodox of the Church of *England*, that the person of *Christ*, and the person of *God the Father*, are not one and the same individual person, but one and the same *Lord of Hosts*; because the Scripture, thus compared, hath affirmed them so to be, and THIS is the conclusion Dr. *Clarke* should have answered. But instead of this, he has produced the monstrous and impossible doctrine of *Sabellius*, that they are one and the same individual person, and answered that: which to be sure is easily done, and is

¹ P. 65.

* It is written at ver. 3 — *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* This *St. John* has affirmed to be the *Glory of Christ*; but it was the glory of the *Lord of Hosts*: therefore *Christ* is the *Lord of Hosts*. And if the parallel passage of *Rev.* iv. 8. be compared with this, it will appear (as it hath already Chap. I. Art. XXIII.) that he is the *God Almighty* spoken of in that Book. The Greek version of the LXX. hath it thus:

αγιος, αγιος, αγιος Κυριος σαββαωθ.

In *Rev.* iv. 8. it is, αγιος, αγιος, αγιος Κυριος θεος ο παντοκρατωρ. Whence it evidently appears, that Κυριος ο θεος ο παντοκρατωρ, is equivalent in the language of heaven to *Jehovah Sabaoth*: therefore, as *Christ* is the *Lord of Hosts* of the Old Testament, he is thereby proved *ipso facto* to be the *God Almighty* of the New. Which shews the weakness of those frequent remarks Dr. *Clarke* has bestowed upon the word παντοκρατωρ, as the great term of distinction between the person of *Christ*, and that of *God the Father*.

² P. 102.

quite foreign to the purpose. The other conclusion, which is the only true and natural one, is kept out of sight, because it cannot be answered: and this of *Sabellius* is slurred upon his credulous Readers, as the doctrine of the *orthodox*, who disclaim and abhor it. This is no slander; for let any person read his book with a little circumspection, and he will soon find who and what he would mean by the *followers* and *doctrine* of *Sibellius*. And let me give the reader the following caution, which he will find to be of great service in detecting the fallacious answers of the *Arian* writers in their controversies with the *orthodox*. Always be careful to examine whether they have replied to the proof *itself*, or to *something else* in the place of it. For when you have obtained any clear evidence from the Scripture, that two or more persons are one *God*, one *Lord*, &c. they will give a new face to your conclusion, by changing the terms *God* or *Lord*, which are names of a *nature*, for that of *person*, which can belong only to an *individual*. And then they shout for victory. O, say they, this man is a *Sabellian*! he believes *three persons* to be *one person*! But on the other hand, if you make it appear that in the unity of the one *God* or *Lord* there are more persons than one, then they change the word *persons* for that of *Gods*: so that you are confuted this way also; and they cry you up for a *Tritheist*, a maintainer of *three Gods*! By the help of this artifice, Dr. *Clarke* attempted to deal with the *Scripture*; and the author of an *Essay on Spirit* with the *Creeds* and *Liturgy* of the Church. And, though it be matter scarce worth mentioning, thus also the Authors of a *Monthly Review* have attempted to deal with *myself*. Some time ago I published a *full Answer to the Essay on Spirit*, which has since been reprinted in *Ireland*, and I humbly hope may have done some little service. But when these Gentlemen had deliberated with themselves upon it for three or four months, it was retailed from their scandalous Shop as a system of *Tritheism*, *Sabellianism*, and what not? I hope God will forgive them! and this is all the answer I shall ever make to such men and such writers.

CHAP. IV.

THE TRINITY IN UNITY.



IF there be any diversity of nature, or any essential subordination in the persons of the Godhead, it must be revealed to us either in their *names*, or their *attributes*, or their *acts*; for it is by these only that they are or can possibly be made known to us in this Life. If the Scripture has made no difference in any of these, farther than that of a *personal* distinction, (which we all allow) we are no longer to doubt that there is a natural or essential *Unity* in the three Persons of the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*. It shall therefore be shewn in this Chapter, by a sort of proof more comprehensive than what has gone before, that these Persons have the same *Names*, the same *attributes*, the same counsel or *will*, and all concur, after an ineffable manner, in the same divine *acts*: so that what the Scripture is falsely supposed to have ascribed to God in *one* Person, will appear to be ascribed by the same authority to God in *three* Persons. That therefore, these three persons are but *one* God; they are three distinct *agents*, yet there is but one and the same divine *agency*: or, as the Church has more fully and better expressed it, that “that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we are to believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality¹.”

I.

The Trinity in Unity is the *one Lord*, the *Creator* of the world.

Psal. xxxiii. 6. *By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath (Heb. Spirit) of his mouth.* The whole Trinity therefore created the world: yet this Trinity is but *one Lord*: for it is written,

¹ Proper Preface upon the feast of Trinity.

Isai. xlv. 24. I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens ALONE, that spreadeth abroad the earth BY MYSELF. It follows therefore, either that the *word* and *spirit* did not make the heavens, or, that the *Father* with his *word* and *spirit*, are the ALONE Lord and Creator of all things.

II.

The Trinity in Unity is the one Supreme Being or Nature, distinguished from all other Beings by the Name *Jehovah*. For the Scripture gives us the following position.

Deut. vi. 4. The Lord our God is ONE JEHOVAH: and again, Psal. lxxxiii. Thou whose name ALONE is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.

Yet *Christ* is *Jehovah*.

Jer. xxiii. 3. This is the name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH our righteousness.

So is the *Spirit* also.

Ezek. viii. 1. 3. The Lord JEHOVAH put forth the form of an hand, and took me, — and the SPIRIT lift me, &c. see also CHAP. II. Art. IV. and XXIV.

Therefore, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are the ONE *Jehovah*: they are three persons, yet have but *one name*, and *one nature*. And it is the great advantage of this argument, that the name *Jehovah* is not capable of any such equivocal interpretations as that of *God*; it has no plural; is incommunicable to any derived or created being; and is peculiar to the divine nature, because it is descriptive of it. The Author of an *Essay on Spirit* has endeavoured to avoid the force of this proof, by pretending that there are *two Jehovahs*, one a distinct Being from the other. But in this he has exposed the cause he meant to defend, and left the argument in a worse state than he found it: for if there be *two*, then it is false that there is a *most high over all the earth, whose name ALONE is Jehovah*; and let him try if he can reconcile it. Dr. *Clarke* also pretends, in the Titles to two of his Sections, wherein the collection of texts is very numerous, to have set down the *Passages wherein it is declared* that the Second and Third persons *derive their Being* (that is the expression he was not afraid to make use of) *from the Father*. But he has not produced one such passage; no such thing being declared in the whole Bible; and the contrary to it is plainly revealed under this application of the name *Jehovah*,

III.

The Trinity in Unity is *the Lord* absolutely so called; in Hebrew, *Adonai*; in Greek, ο Κυριος.

Rom. x. 12. † *The same LORD over all, is rich unto all that call upon him.*

Luke ii. 11. *A Saviour which is Christ the LORD.*

Rom. xi. 34. *For who hath known the mind of the LORD, or who hath been his counsellor? Which Lord, as we learn from the prophet whence this is quoted, is the Spirit; for it is written, Isa. xl. 13. who hath directed the SPIRIT of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? That the person of the Spirit is the Lord, is also plain from 2 Cor. iii. 18. now the Lord is that Spirit—ο δε κυριος το Πνευμα εστιν—we are changed from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord; καθαπερ απο κυριου Πνευματος, as by the Lord the Spirit: which is all along to be understood of the personal Spirit, because the Apostle begins expressly with that at the 3d verse of this chapter. And it was from the authority of these words—The Lord is the Spirit—added to those of ver. 6. the Spirit giveth life—that the council of Nice borrowed the following clause of its Creed—“I believe in the Holy Ghost, the LORD and GIVER OF LIFE.”*

IV.

The Trinity in Unity is the *God of Israel*.

Matth. xv. 31. *The multitude glorified the God of Israel.*

Luke i. 16, 17. *The children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord THEIR GOD: and he shall go before HIM*—that is, before Christ.*

2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. *The SPIRIT of the Lord spake by me—the GOD of Israel said, &c. So that unless he who spake was one being, and he that said was another, the Spirit is the God of Israel.*

* Dr. Clarke allows that the word *him* means *Christ*, yet denies that he is intended by *the Lord their God*, which is the antecedent to it: and calls this a *manner of speaking*¹.

† The Reader is desired to observe, that as I cannot in all cases fix upon a text that does precisely distinguish the *person* of the *Father*, I shall therefore be frequently obliged, as in this instance, to set a passage down in *the first* of the three ranks, that does confessedly denote the *first God*.

¹ No. 354.

V.

The divine *Law*, and consequently the *authority* whereupon it is founded, is that of a Trinity in Unity.

Rom. vii. 25. *I myself serve the LAW of GOD.*

Gal. vi. 2. *Fulfil the LAW of CHRIST*.*

Rom. viii. 2. *The LAW of the SPIRIT of life*.*

The divine *Law* then, is the law of *God, Christ,* and the *Spirit of life.* But it is written, *Jam.* iv. 12. *There is ONE LAW-GIVER who is able to save and to destroy: therefore, these THREE are ONE.* And here we have the true reason why the Scripture has represented the whole Trinity as *tempted* and *resisted* by the *disobedience* of man. For *sin* being the transgression of the *Law*, and the law being derived from the undivided authority of the *Father,* the *Son,* and the *Holy Ghost,* every breach of it is an offence against the Trinity: therefore it is written,

Deut. vi. 16. *Thou shalt not TEMPT the LORD thy God.*

1 Cor. x. 9.—*neither let us TEMPT CHRIST.*

Acts v. 9. *How is it that ye have agreed together to TEMPT the SPIRIT of the Lord?* For *Dr. Clarke's* opinion of this matter, see *Ch. II. Art. XV.*

** *Dr. Clarke* has left both these texts out of his collection; though he pretends to have set down all the *highest Expressions* relating to *Christ* and the *Spirit.*

VI.

The *mind* and *will* of God is the *mind* and *will* of a Trinity in Unity.

The *mind* of God.

1 Cor. ii. 16. *Who hath known the MIND of the LORD?*

Ibid.—*We have the MIND of CHRIST.*

Rom. viii. 27. *He that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the MIND of the SPIRIT.*

The *will* of God.

1 Thess. iv. 3. *This is the Will of GOD.*

Acts xxii. 14. *The God of our Fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know HIS WILL*.*

2 Pet. i. 21. *Prophecy came not in old time by the WILL of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the HOLY GHOST.*

* This passage is meant of *Christ*, and of *his* will. *The God of our fathers* (said *Ananias*) hath CHOSEN thee, &c. but the person in God who appeared to *Ananias*, and said of *Saul*, he is a CHOSEN vessel unto ME, was the Lord, even *Jesus*. *Acts* ix. 15, 17. For want of comparing the Scripture with itself, *Dr. Clarke* has set down the text of *Acts* xxii. 14. as a character of the *Father only*. No. 366.

VII.

The Power of God is the Power of a Trinity in Unity.

Eph. iii. 7.—The Grace of GOD given unto me, by the effectual working of HIS POWER.

2 Cor. xii. 9.—that the POWER of CHRIST may rest upon me.

Rom. xv. 19.—signs and wonders by the POWER of the SPIRIT of God.

The Scripture therefore has ascribed divine power, and that in the same exercise of it (the ministry and miracles of *St. Paul*) to *Christ* and the Spirit in common with God the Father. So that when all glory and power is ascribed to the only wise God, what God can that be, but the Trinity? Upon this principle the Scripture is easily reconciled: upon any other it is unintelligible, as the reader may soon find by consulting *Dr. Clarke*, and some other of the *Arian* writers; who to avoid the plain doctrine, have tried to amuse us with a religion made up of scholastic niceties and unnatural distinctions, which no man can understand, and which themselves are not agreed in, nor ever will be to the world's end. Yet they often dispute against us from the acknowledged simplicity of the Scripture!

VIII.

The Trinity in Unity is Eternal.

Rom. xvi. 25, 26. The mystery—made manifest according to the commandment ($\alpha\iota\omega\nu\iota\varsigma$) of the EVERLASTING GOD.

Rev. xxii. 13. I (*Jesus*) am the FIRST and the LAST*.

Heb. ix. 14.—who through ($\alpha\iota\omega\nu\iota\varsigma$) the EVERLASTING SPIRIT.

* *Dr. Clarke* allows these words, in this place, to mean *Christ*; yet where the same words occur in *Rev.* i. 8. with the addition of the epithet *Almighty*, he denies it¹; though they are demonstrated

¹ See No. 686. 414.

to be spoken of the same person by the context and tenour of the whole chapter †: and he tells us, the character in one place *differs* from the other. So that upon his principle, the Scripture has revealed to us two different beings, both of whom are the *first and the last*, yet not *coeternal*. Which is sufficient of itself to justify all that was said above concerning his *distinctions*, &c. See Ch. I. Art. III.

IX.

— Is TRUE.

John vii. 28. *He that sent me is TRUE.*

Rev. iii. 7. *These things saith he—that is TRUE, he that hath the key of David, &c.*

1 John v. 6. *It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the SPIRIT is TRUTH—η αληθεια THE truth.*

X.

—is Holy.

Rev. xv. 4. *Who shall not fear thee, O LORD, and glorify thy name? for THOU ONLY art HOLY.*

Acts iii. 14. *But ye denied THE HOLY ONE, and desired a murderer to be released unto you, &c. See also Dan. ix. 24. and Rev. iii. 7.*

1 John ii. 20. *Ye have an unction from THE HOLY ONE; that is, an anointing from the Holy Ghost, who is called*

John xiv. 26. *ΤΟ ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΤΟ ΑΓΙΟΝ, The Spirit the Holy one.*

XI.

—is omnipresent.

Jer. xxiii. 24. *Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the LORD?*

Eph. i. 22.—*the fulness of HIM (Christ) that filleth all in all.*

Psal. cxxxix. 7, 8. *Whither shall I go then from thy SPIRIT?—If I go up into heaven THOU art there; if I go down into hell, THOU art there also.*

XII.

—is the fountain of life.

Deut. xxx. 20.—*love the LORD thy GOD, for HE is thy LIFE.*

† See the note at Ch. III. Art. XIX.

Col. iii. 4. *When CHRIST who is OUR LIFE shall appear;*
&c.

Rom. viii. 10. *The SPIRIT is LIFE.*

XIII.

The Trinity in Unity made all mankind.

Psal. c. 3. *The LORD he is GOD, it is HE that hath MADE US.*

John i. 3. *By HIM (Christ) were ALL THINGS MADE.*

Job xxxiii. 4. *The SPIRIT of God hath MADE me.*

XIV.

—quicken the dead.

John v. 21. *The FATHER raiseth up the dead, and QUICKENETH them.*

Ibid.—even so the SON QUICKENETH whom he will.

Ibid. vi. 63. *It is the SPIRIT that QUICKENETH.*

XV.

—instruct us in divine knowledge.

John vi. 45. *They shall be all TAUGHT of GOD.*

Gal. i. 12. *Neither was I TAUGHT it but by the revelation of JESUS CHRIST.*

John xiv. 26. *The Comforter, the holy SPIRIT, will TEACH you all things.*

XVI.

—have fellowship with the faithful.

1 John i. 3. *Truly our FELLOWSHIP is with the FATHER.*
—Gr. Κοινωνία.

Ibid. *And with his Son JESUS CHRIST.*

2 Cor. xiii. 14. *The FELLOWSHIP (Κοινωνία) of the HOLY GHOST be with you all.*

XVII.

—are spiritually present in the elect.

1 Cor. xiv. 25.—GOD is IN YOU of a truth.

2 Cor. xiii. 5. CHRIST is IN YOU, except ye be rebobates.

John xiv. 17. *The SPIRIT—dwelleth with you and shall be IN YOU.*

So again,

2 Cor. vi. 16. GOD hath said, I will DWELL in them.

Ephes. iii. 17. That CHRIST may DWELL in your hearts.

Rom. viii. 11. His SPIRIT that DWELLETH in you.

XVIII.

— reveal to us the Divine Will.

Phil. iii. 15. God shall REVEAL even this unto you.

Gal. i. 12.—neither was I taught it but by the REVELATION of JESUS CHRIST.

Luke ii. 26. It was revealed unto him by the HOLY GHOST.

So again,

Heb. i. 1. GOD who SPAKE unto the fathers by the prophets.

2 Cor. xiii. 3. Ye seek a proof of CHRIST SPEAKING in me.

Mark xiii. 11. It is not ye that SPEAK, but the HOLY GHOST.

And as prophecies are revealed *by*, so are they also delivered *in the name*, that is, by the special authority of each person in the Godhead. For though the usual introduction to any divine revelation be—*Thus SAITH the LORD*—yet we also find the expressions—*These things SAITH the SON of GOD.* *Rev.* ii. 18. And—*Thus SAITH the HOLY GHOST.* *Acts* xiii. 3. with many other passages to the same effect.

XIX.

— raised the Body of Christ from the grave.

1 Cor. vi. 14. GOD hath both RAISED UP the Lord, and will also raise us up by his OWN POWER*.

John ii. 19. Destroy this temple, and in three days I WILL RAISE IT UP.

1 Pet. iii. 18. Christ—being put to death in the flesh, but QUICKENED by the SPIRIT.

* See Art. vii. of this Chapter.

XX.

— conduct the people of God.

Isai. xlviii. 17. I am the LORD thy GOD, which LEAD-ETH thee by the way that thou shouldst go.

John x. 3. He (Christ the Shepherd) calleth his own sheep by name, and LEADETH them out.

Rom. viii. 14. As many as are LED by the SPIRIT of God, they are the sons of God.

XXI.

— give a commission and authority to the ministers of the Gospel.

2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. *Our sufficiency is of GOD, who hath MADE us able* MINISTERS.

1 Tim. i. 12. JESUS CHRIST—*counted me faithful, PUTTING me into the* MINISTRY.

Acts v. 28. *Take heed therefore—to all the flock over the which the HOLY GHOST hath MADE you* OVERSEERS.

XXII.

— sanctify the elect.

Jude, 1.—*to them that are* SANCTIFIED *by* GOD, *the* FATHER.

Heb. ii. 11. *He that* SANCTIFIETH, *and they who are sanctified, are all of one ; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them* brethren.

Rom. xv. 16. *Being* SANCTIFIED *by the* HOLY GHOST.

XXIII.

— perform all spiritual and divine operations.

1 Cor. xii. 16. *It is the same* GOD *which* WORKETH ALL IN ALL.

Col. iii. 11. CHRIST *is all, and* IN ALL.

1 Cor. xii. 11. *But* ALL *these* WORKETH *that one and the self-same* SPIRIT.

CONCLUSION.

LET us now take a review of what has been collected in these papers, and sum up the evidence in its own natural terms.

It has appeared from the *first* Chapter, that *Christ Jesus*, whose Divinity is daily blasphemed amongst us, because it is not proved in the Scripture, is the *Lord of Hosts*¹, the *first and the last*², than whom there is *no greater*³, and beside whom there is *no God*⁴: that he is the *Saviour of the world*⁵, the *Lord and God of the holy Prophets*⁶ and *Apostles*⁷, the *most high God*⁸, the *searcher of all hearts*⁹, comprehended and made known to us under the name of

¹ Chap. I. Art. I. II. III.

² III.

³ XLV.

⁴ III.

⁵ IV.

⁶ V.

⁷ XI.

⁸ IX.

⁹ XLIII.

that God to whom the world was reconciled ¹. Who though he was the *Word of God*, that came forth from the Father into the world; yet he was God ², and of the same *divine nature* ³ with him that sent him. Though he was perfect *man*, of the *seed of Abraham*, born of his mother, and in all things made like to his brethren; yet *the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily* ⁴. Though he suffered, died ⁵, was pierced upon the Cross, and redeemed us by his *blood*; yet that blood was the blood of God ⁶, and upon his Cross *Jehovah* was pierced ⁷.

That the objections urged against all these positive proofs, proceed wholly upon false principles; being drawn, partly, from *natural religion* and *Philosophy*, which never was, nor ever will be subject to the *law of God*; and is not intended so to be by those who set it up and dispute for it. Partly from the *œconomical offices* and humiliation of *Christ* in the *flesh* ⁸; in which it is nevertheless affirmed, that *God* himself was made *manifest* ⁹. And lastly, from the *unity* ¹ of *God* so often asserted and insisted upon in the Scripture; not in opposition to the Godhead of *Christ*, but to the *Idols* ² then worshipped all over the heathen world. Hence it is, that *God* is called the *true God*; for they were *false ones: one God*; for they were *many* ³: the *living God* ⁴; for they were *vanities* without life. Yet in the place of these *idols*, who are to supply the contrast, they have substituted the person of their blessed Redeemer, the *true God* ⁵, the *everlasting Father* ⁶, the *Lord of Glory* ⁷, who is able to *subdue all things to himself*, and of whose *kingdom* there shall be *no end*.

From the *second Chapter* it has appeared, that the *Holy Ghost* is our spiritual *Father* ⁸, by whose divine power we are *begotten* to a new life; and to whom we daily *pray* that he would not *lead us into temptation* ⁹. That he is the *Lord* ¹, even the *Lord of Hosts* ², the ruler of the Christian *œconomy*, *calling* men to that *honour* in his church, which *God only* ³ can bestow upon them. That he is incomprehensibly *united* with *God*, and sensible of the omnipotent *will* in himself; *even as* the human *Spirit* is united to *man*, and understandeth its *own thoughts* ⁴. That *his power* is the immediate power of *God himself* ⁵; his *inspiration*, is the in-

1 XIV. 2 XIX. 3 XLIV. 4 XVIII. 5 XLVII. 6 XLIX.
7 XLIV. 8 XXV. XXVI. XXXIX. 9 1 Tim. iii. 16. 1 XXIV. XXXIII.
2 XXII. 1 John v. 21. 3 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. 4 Acts xiv. 15. 5 1 John v. 20.
6 XX. 7 1 Cor. ii. 8. 8 Ch. II. Art. I. 9 XI. 1 III. 2 XXII.
3 II. 4 XIII. 5 XVII.

piration of *God*⁶; his *presence*, the presence of *God*⁷. That he is *God*⁸, even the *highest*; for the *man* Christ Jesus, who is the *Son of God*, and the *Son of the highest*, was so called BECAUSE he was begotten of the *Holy Ghost*⁹.

That the objections usually brought to disguise and destroy this evidence, are taken from the *unity*, the *attributes* and *will* of *God*, and the *ministration* of the *Spirit* in the œconomy of grace; all of them falsely interpreted¹. For as to the *unity* of *God*, it is not an *unity of person*. As to the supreme attribute of *goodness*, it is also possessed by the *Spirit*. As to the *Will* of *God*, according to which the gifts and graces of the *Spirit* are distributed, it is opposed to the will of *man*, not to that of the *Spirit*; which is said to blow *where it listeth*, and to divide or distribute unto every man his gifts; not as *man* the receiver, but as he himself *willeth*².

It has appeared from the *third* Chapter, that *God* is signified to us throughout the Old Testament by a name that is plural³, and proved to be such from many particular instances; yet generally so restrained and qualified, as to destroy the suspicion of a plurality of *Gods*. That to this common name of *God*, many other plural names and expressions are added⁴; and that an interchanging of the *plural* and *singular*⁵ is frequently observed, which neither grammar nor reason can account for upon any principle, but that of a real divine plurality. That the *persons* of *God* are *three* in number, precisely distinguished on some occasions by the personal names of the *Father*, the *Word*, or *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*⁶, and also by different offices. That the same term is not always peculiar and proper to the same person; because the words *God*, *Lord*, *Jehovah*, and *Father*, are sometimes applied to one person, sometimes to another; while at other times they are not personal, but general names of the *divine nature*. That in the *Lord of Hosts*⁷, sitting upon his throne, and speaking of himself in the *plural* to the Prophet *Isaiah*, there was not *one* person only, but *three*; the *Father*, *Jesus*, and the *Holy Ghost*, all expressed under one name in the Old Testament, but personally distinguished to us by three different ones in the new, where this matter is referred to.

⁶ VI.⁷ IX. V. XX.⁸ VIII.⁹ XXI.¹ XXIII. XXIV.² XXV.³ Chap. III. Art. I.⁴ V. VI. VII. VIII. & IX. X.⁵ XVIII.⁶ XIX.

In the *fourth* and last Chapter, the passages of the Scripture have been laid together, and made to unite their beams in one common center, the *Unity* of the Trinity. Which unity is not metaphorical and figurative, but strict and real: and there can be no real unity in God, but that of his *nature, essence, or substance*, all of which are synonymous terms: this unity considered *in itself*, is altogether incomprehensible: but it is one thing to read and to know that there is a divine nature, and another thing to *describe* it. That it is proved to be an unity of essence; 1st. because the three persons are all comprehended under the same individual and supreme appellation. They are the one *Lord* absolutely so called ¹. *The Creator of the world*, and the *God of Israel* ². 2dly, because they partake in common of the name *Jehovah* ³, which, being interpreted, means the *divine Essence*: and what it signifies in one person, it must also signify in the others; as truly as the singular name *Adam*, in its appellative capacity, expresses the common nature of all mankind. And this name neither is nor can be communicated, without a contradiction, to any derived or inferior nature, as well on account of its signification as its application, which is expressly restrained to *one only*. 3dly, It is farther proved, in that the *authority* ⁴, the secret *mind* ⁵ or counsel, and the *power* ⁶ by which all things are established and directed, is ascribed to *Christ* and the *Spirit* in common with God the Father; and that in the same exercise of it, and upon the same occasions. 4thly, because there is a participation of such divine *attributes* ⁷ as cannot subsist but where they are original. Our understanding, if it be moderately instructed, will satisfy us there can be *one only* who is *eternal*, and possessed of *holiness, truth, life, &c.* in and from himself. Yet the whole Trinity is *eternal, holy, true, living, and omnipresent*: therefore these *three* were, and will be *one God* from everlasting to everlasting. 5thly, and lastly, because there is a concurrence of the whole undivided Godhead in all those *acts* ⁸, every one of which have in them the character of a divine wisdom and omnipotence; and express such an intimate union and communion of the Holy Trinity, as the understanding of man cannot reach, and which no words can explain. For though it is and must be *one God* who doth all these things, yet it is *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who gave us our being,*

¹ Chap. IV. Art. I. III.
² VIII. IX. X. XI. XII.

³ IV. ⁴ II.
⁵ XIII. &c. ad fin.

⁶ V. ⁷ VI. ⁸ VII.

instruct and illuminate us, *lead* us, *speak* to us, and are *present* with us; who give *authority* to the church, *raise the dead*, *sanctify* the elect, and perform *every* divine and spiritual operation.

This is the God revealed to us in the holy Scripture; very different from the *Deity* so much talked of in our systematical schemes of *natural* divinity; which with all its wisdom never yet thought of a *Christ*, or an *Holy Ghost*, by whom *nature*, now fallen and blind, is to be reformed, exalted, and saved. The Bible we know to be the infallible word of God; the rule of our faith and obedience. I find this doctrine revealed in it; therefore I firmly believe and submit to it. And as the Liturgy of the Church of *England* hath affirmed the same in all its offices, and contains nothing contradictory thereto; I believe *that* also: and hope the God whom we serve will defend it against all attempts toward reforming *Christianity* out of it: that the Church militant here on earth, may continue to agree in this fundamental doctrine with the Church triumphant in heaven. For there the Angels *rest not day and night*, praising this *Thrice-Holy* ¹, blessed and glorious Trinity. They have neither time nor inclination to dispute against that Glory, which they cannot stedfastly behold. And had we a little more humility and devotion, we should not abound so much with disputation. If, in such a subject as this, we trust to our own reason, and it should prove at last to have betrayed us into error, irreligion and blasphemy; what shall we have to say in excuse for ourselves? we shall not dare to plead the dignity and strength of our rational faculties before the tribunal of Him, who came into the world to bring the wisdom of it to nought. And if the Religion of *Jesus Christ* is to be corrected and softened till it becomes agreeable to the natural thoughts and imaginations of the human heart, then in vain was it said—
Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.

As for him, who is convinced that God is wiser than himself; who *believes* as he ought, and as the Catholic Church of Christ hath given him an example from the beginning; *his* danger lies on the other side: and while I venture to give him warning of it, *I beseech him to suffer the word of exhortation*, and to take in good part the *faithful wounds of a friend*. Let him take care then, that while he values his orthodoxy, he be not led unawares to *overvalue* it, by drawing false conclusions from it, and con-

ceiving himself to be *already perfect*. If he knows and believes in the true God, he doth well: but let not that which is an honour to him be a discouragement to dishonour God; the knowledge of whom will only serve to increase our condemnation, if we live in any *list of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles, who knew him not*. And though it be the *faith* of a Christian, and not his *morality*, that distinguishes him from the rest of mankind; yet that faith must appear in the conduct of his life; even as love to a friend is best witnessed by a readiness to do him service. It is true, the service is not the love, nor of equal value with it: yet the love that refuses the service will be accounted as nothing. The *mystery of faith* is an invaluable treasure; but the vessel that contains it must be clean and undefiled; it must be *held in a pure conscience*; as the *manna*, that glorious symbol of the *word of faith*, preached to us by the Gospel, was confined to the Tabernacle, and preserved in a vessel of gold. A mind that is conformed to this world, and given up to its pleasures, though it repeat the creed without questioning a single article of it, will be abhorred in the sight of God, as a vessel unfit for the master's use, and unworthy, because unprepared, to stand in the *most holy place*. It is the great excellence of faith, that it can produce such a transformation in the life and manners, as no other principle has any power to do: and many are possessed of this truth without applying it to their own advantage. It is to be feared, that a consciousness of this damps their zeal, and creates that poor, pitiful, cowardly indifference, so much in vogue; which if it had not by accident found the name of *charity*, would have been ashamed to shew its face in a Christian country. They are cold and backward to promote any religious conversation; they will not appear to be in earnest about their faith in the eyes of the world, lest they should be forced to abridge somewhat from the gaiety of their lives, and to *live as they speak*. But let them remember, that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*: no dross or impurity of this world will be suffered to continue in his sight. And in this, he is no hard master, *reaping* where he hath not *sown*, and requiring the fruit of good works without giving us strength and ability to bring them forth. He has provided for us the precious blood of the Lamb, and offered to us the assistance of his Holy Spirit, that we may be enabled to *serve* that living God in whom we *believe*. If we are purged by *him*, we shall be *clean*; if he washes us, we shall be *whiter than snow*: and when the

kingdom of God shall come, and his glory shall appear, we shall be prepared to *behold his face in righteousness*.

This, and no other, is my sincerest wish and prayer for every Christian, who shall give himself the trouble to peruse these papers, in which I pretend to no merit but that of a *transcriber*; which I shall always esteem to be honour enough, where the word of God is my original. And if they should be any way instrumental to promote so good an end, he will not have read, nor shall I have written, in vain.



A

LETTER

TO THE

COMMON PEOPLE,

IN ANSWER TO SOME

POPULAR ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE TRINITY.

BEING AN

APPENDIX

TO THE

CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

A

LETTER

TO THE

COMMON PEOPLE.



MEN AND BRETHREN,

AS Christians and members of the Church of *England*, you have been taught, that the True God, whom you are bound to believe and worship, is a *Trinity in Unity*. In the *Name* of these three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, you have been *baptized*: and in the Litany are directed to pray to this *Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God*, that he would *have mercy upon us miserable sinners*.

From the first propagation of the Gospel, there has been a sort of men in the Christian church, who had too high an opinion of their own knowledge and wisdom to submit quietly to this doctrine. They pretended it was contrary to their Reason and common sense, and impossible in the Nature of Things, that the true God should be made manifest in the flesh for the Salvation of the world; and hence they argued, that the Incarnation must either have been a delusion, a fact brought to pass only in shew and appearance; or that the Person incarnate must have been some created Being, far inferior in power and dignity to the divine Nature itself.

About three hundred years after the death of Christ, when Paganism, or the worship of idols, was losing its influence in the Roman empire, this Heresy, being come to its full growth, did immediately supply the place of it, and prospered to such a degree, that it overspread the greatest part of the East, and ended at last in the imposture of the false prophet *Mahomet*; whose doc-

trine was readily embraced wherever *Arianism* prevailed, and nowhere else among Christians; and his disciples do at this day most zealously deny that Trinity which you worship.

When the Teachers of the Church found themselves disturbed, and their people corrupted, more and more by the daily increase of this heresy; upwards of three hundred Christian bishops, many of whom had been tortured and maimed in the heathen persecutions, assembled together at the city of *Nice*, in *Bythinia*, and one *Arius*, a principal promoter of this wickedness, was summoned to appear before them: his doctrine and writings were condemned; the Faith which these holy men had brought with them to the council was declared, and is now preserved in the *Nicene Creed*; which form we make use of in the church because it comprehends the sense of our faith in a few words. But we do not rest our belief upon the *Authority* of any human form, because the doctrine therein expressed is secured by the unquestionable authority of the Old and New Testaments.

The Evidence of this faith, as it is found in the Scripture, I have endeavoured to extract and methodize in the best manner I could. The work was made public rather with a humble and charitable desire to assist the studies of the younger clergy, than to instruct the common people; and therefore it was first printed at *Oxford*. Nevertheless, I am well persuaded, that so many of the arguments therein contained are level to all capacities, that an unlearned reader may thence be able to satisfy himself, and inform his Christian neighbours. I shall therefore have no occasion in this place to urge any new evidence from the Scripture, but only to refer to some of the old; it being the design of this Address to obviate a set of *popular* arguments, which have been made use of by some nameless writers to turn your affections from the doctrine of the Trinity; most of which might be applied with as much propriety to prejudice you against any other article of faith in the Christian Religion.

I. You know, my dear brethren, that *pride* is a very prevailing passion in human nature; and unless we are very much upon our guard, and are fortified with the true principles of Christian humility, we are all of us in danger of being ensnared by it. Men are proud of their clothes, and proud of their riches, and proud of their titles; but, above all, they are proud of their understanding. Some men are endued with a strength of mind which enables them

to bear up with cheerfulness under the common trials of sickness, and losses, and disappointments; while, perhaps, the same men cannot endure the thought of being *cheated* and *imposed upon*, because it is a reflection upon their *understanding*. Our adversaries, therefore, hoping to make the stronger impression, apply themselves first of all to your pride, and inform you, that this doctrine of the Trinity is *imposed upon your consciences by Church Authority* ¹. But if the fact be laid before you, it will soon appear that no point of faith is thus imposed upon you by the Church of England. The points of faith which you are required to believe are interwoven with all the forms and offices of our public Liturgy. They are collected together for the younger sort of people in the Church Catechism; and for all teachers, whether clergy or laity, they are drawn out more at large in the *Articles of Religion*, generally printed at the end of the Book of Common Prayer. So that all the articles of faith being imposed in the same manner, it will follow, that they are *all* imposed by *Church Authority*, or none of them. Let us put it to the trial, and begin with the first article of the *Creed*—*I believe in God the Father Almighty*. How is this article imposed? Does the Church determine by her own authority whether there is a God or not? And so for the rest. Does the Church determine whether there is a *Christ*, or an *Holy Ghost*? whether there will be a *resurrection of the dead*, and a *life everlasting*? Certainly the Church neither does nor can pretend to determine any of these things for us; because where any thing is determined by authority, such authority must be superior to what it determines: to suppose which, in this case, would be equally false and presumptuous. Therefore the truth of the matter is this; that the Church does only declare that faith which it has received; and instead of her *imposing*, this faith is *imposed* upon the Church by the uncontrollable authority of God in the Holy Scripture, to which every private Christian is referred for the proper evidence of any particular doctrine, and for that of the Trinity amongst the rest. Those articles which are of a nature inferior to the Church itself, are the only subjects of Church Authority. Thus, as the *body is more* than the *raiment* that is worn upon it; so the life and being of the Church is superior to those outward regulations, which serve only to the order, decency, and well-being

¹ See the title-page of a pamphlet called "An Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People," &c. printed for Millar, in the Strand.

of it; and which the Church may, for this reason, appoint, alter, and improve by her own authority. But if any man informs you, that points of faith, or moral practice, are *imposed upon your consciences* by the same authority, he has either mistaken the case, or is himself endeavouring to impose upon your understanding.

II. But “the Gospel,” they say, “was designed for persons of all capacities,” and unless *all persons of common sense* are qualified to understand what the Lord requires of them, we must “charge Almighty God with dealing unfairly with his creatures¹.” Now if the Gospel be so easy, that nothing but bare common sense is wanted for the understanding of it, why do these authors write so many books to help you to understand it in the *Arian* sense? If you are able, as they flatter you, to instruct yourselves out of the Gospel, then their practice is a contradiction to their principle, and their labour is superfluous by their own confession. My brethren, we do not argue in this manner; we know that you have sense and ability to understand the merits of a cause, and are ready to hear reason, when it is plainly represented to you: but if you were able to make all things intelligible to your ownselves, we should neither preach to you, nor write books for you.

When God appointed *Teachers* in his Church (1 *Cor.* xii. 28.) he certainly did not suppose that the congregation would be equally capable of teaching themselves. If this were true, then indeed God would seem to have dealt unfairly with Christian people, by appointing a ministry of learned men, and providing for their instruction, as if bare common sense, with the Bible in its hand, were not so sufficient as our adversaries would have you believe; in opposition to *us*, but not to themselves.

The duty of a Christian Minister is to *teach*; his studies are intended to qualify him, and his time is set apart for that purpose. For the bulk of the people, God hath appointed labour and business of another kind, as necessary to support themselves and their families; and *their* duty is to *hear*. But if God has required you to do our work and your own too, then your lot is hard indeed. You will not, therefore, think it any reflection upon your common sense, that God has appointed an order of Teachers in his Church, who will never desire you to believe what they are not at all times ready to prove; but will rather beseech him that these Teachers

¹ Ibid. p. 2.

may be endued with faith and affection to fulfil the *labour of love* to which they are called, and courage to declare that truth which they have learned from the Holy Scriptures; and by thus praying for the Clergy, you will convince them, that God hath added *Grace* to your *common sense*, and that you practise that Christian charity which is more acceptable in His sight than the attainments of learning and knowledge; for these are no more than temporary qualifications, and are to be used only as means; but Charity is the end and perfection of all.

III. They tell you, moreover, that people of all sorts have a *right to judge for themselves in matters of Religion*¹. As this principle very nearly affects the peace of the Christian world, and the salvation of individuals, I would advise you to enquire strictly into the meaning of these terms; and to consider how far they may be justified, and how far they are to be condemned. *Right* is a pleasing thing, and *liberty* is an old temptation; but if any Christian doth so assert his right against an human law, as to depart from his obedience and subjection to the divine law, such a right will do him no good when he has got it, because it will not protect him under his religious mistakes against the superior judgment of God; so far from it, that it is probably one of the chief mistakes he will have to answer for.

When they assert that you are to *judge* for yourselves, they must mean, either that you are to judge of truth by its proper evidence; or that, by a certain prerogative of conscience, you are to *guess* for yourselves what is right or wrong, without any evidence at all. If only the former of these senses is intended, they say no more than we all say, and what the Church hath said ever since the Reformation. If the latter is also allowed, and unlearned people have a right to follow their conscience (that is, their *inclination*) without any evidence, or with some false and partial representation of it; then it will follow, that the difference between good and evil is not real, but imaginary; that truth and falshood, like temporary fashions, are not the objects of reason but of fancy; which doctrines, if admitted in their full latitude, would turn all reason and religion upside down: and I think they have done it in part already.

When they come to apply this principle, they take occasion

¹ Ibid. p. 133.

to add, that *if you are convinced* of such doctrines as they teach you, *viz.* that God Almighty *is only one and the same person*; that the Holy Ghost is *first minister* in the government of the church; that he has *angels to assist him*; that Christ is to be honoured with *mediatorial worship, &c.* “then you have a *right to protest against the Athanasian Creed*.” But I say, neither you nor I can possibly have any such right as this, unless we are convinced by *sufficient reasons*. Our persuasion can never be turned into any argument; unless it be also maintained, that a man who is persuaded can never be mistaken. The *Mahometans* are convinced, that their *Alcoran* is a divine revelation; that all Christians are guilty of blasphemy in believing, and idolatry in worshipping, a Trinity in Unity; and that they have a right to protest against the foundations of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But as they are convinced of these things for very *bad reasons*, we pity the blindness of their understanding, and only laugh at the right they have assumed, as one of those many groundless castles, which human vanity and bigotry have builded in the air.

But allowing that *Arians* thus convinced have a right of protesting, what are orthodox *Christians* to do on the other hand? have *they* no right? does a persuasion confer a right on one side, and none on the other? that would be very unreasonable. Therefore we, who are convinced that the Creed of *Athanasius* is more agreeable to the Scripture than the doctrines of *Arianism*, have a right to remonstrate against the repealing of it; though we can never expect to do so, without being persecuted and reviled for it as long as we live.

IV. To prejudice your minds against the *Athanasian Creed*, they inform you, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as there set forth, is *not expressed in the words of Scripture: there are no such propositions to be found in the declarations of Christ and his Apostles*⁵. By this it is meant, that you do not find any such expressions as—*Trinity in Unity—not three Eternals, but one Eternal*—and such like. The best course you can take upon this occasion, is to argue with them upon their own principles, which generally stop a man’s mouth sooner than any other. Ask them, where they find it asserted in the words of Scripture, *Almighty God is one supreme intelligent Being, or Person?* Ask them, in what chapter or verse, Christ or his Apostles did ever declare, that *the Holy Spirit*

⁴ Ibid. p. 115.

⁵ Page 5.

is *first minister in the Government* of the Church; and where it is said that he has *Angels for his assistance*? Ask them, again, where they meet with the proposition—*the worship of Christ is inferior, or mediatorial*? And you might ask them twenty more such questions, which they can never answer upon their own principles: so that they have employed an argument to corrupt you, which returns upon themselves, and with this disadvantage on their side, that they have departed from the *sense* as well as the *words* of Scripture; but the Church, if, besides the words of Scripture, it uses others, does still retain such a sense, as the words of Scripture will clearly justify.

V. But lest you should believe this, they assure you the *Athanasian Creed* has proposed a downright contradiction as an Article of Faith; and if this be the case, then indeed we must allow that such a contradiction cannot be justified by the words of Scripture. “You must believe (say they) if this Creed has any weight, that “three Gods is one God⁶.” If you examine the Creed itself, you will find no such doctrine as they have put into it; but, on the contrary, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are NOT THREE GODS, but ONE GOD; and again, “We are *forbidden*, by the Catholic Religion, to say, there be Three Gods.” I pray you to observe this; and to consider with yourselves, whether our adversaries, supposing them to be satisfied in their own consciences that they were able to confute the Catholic doctrine of *Three persons, and one God*, would have endeavoured to take advantage of your simplicity, by putting this false notion of *Three Gods* into the place of it?

VI. Upon other occasions, they try to give you an ill opinion of our ecclesiastical forms, by calling them the *decrees of fallible men*⁷, and *Creeeds of human invention*⁸; which is a very mean objection, unless they who make it, and propose a contrary sort of belief, are themselves *infallible*. We readily own that the persons, who drew up the forms used in the Church were men like ourselves. But did they deliver the doctrine of these forms as their *own* doctrine, or as the doctrine of Almighty God in the Scripture? If they delivered it as their own, then their fallibility would be a pertinent consideration; but if it is the doctrine of the Scripture,

⁶ P. 87.⁷ P. 5.⁸ P. 37.

then the fallibility of the men who delivered it, is nothing to the purpose; and as such only we take it, using our own private judgment in relation to the *men*, but submitting our reason to the infallible *Spirit of God*. A judge who sits upon the bench by the king's authority, to determine civil causes, is a fallible man: but so far as he makes the law of the land the rule of his judgment, he is infallible. And we never attempt to persuade you, that the teachers of our Church are infallible, but so far only as they make the Scripture the rule of their judgment. Therefore, when you hear them reflected upon as fallible men, do them so much justice as to ask yourselves the question, whether they who make this objection are themselves infallible? Is not the Author of an *Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People*, a fallible man, when he tells you, in terms of human invention, that God is one *supreme intelligent Agent, or Person*? that the Holy Spirit is his *first Minister*? that Christ did *really suffer in his highest capacity*? that he is to be honoured with *Mediatorial Worship*? Doth he not deliver these doctrines as a fallible man? Yea verily, not only as one who *may be*, but who actually *is*, deceived, if the Scripture is true.

VII. As a farther encouragement to opposition, you are taught that any body may deny the Trinity upon *Protestant principles*. And here give me leave to tell you, my friends, that there are some people who seem to think it is the profession of a *Protestant*, not to *believe* but to *deny*; and that a man is no good Protestant, unless he disputes every thing that falls in his way. Had this been the true Christian spirit, our Saviour would probably have recommended it to his hearers, by setting a bear, or a tyger, or a fox, before them, and proposing these creatures as the best examples of it. Instead of which he shewed them what his followers ought to be, by presenting to them a little child as their pattern; whence the people were to understand, that as a little child receives the instruction of its parents, without any of the perverse disputings of a corrupted mind; so ought they to receive the kingdom of heaven, that is, the doctrine of the Gospel. This is a disposition lovely in the sight of God and men, and so far from rendering the possessors of it more liable to be imposed upon,

that none but persons of this temper are able to discern the truth, when it is offered, according to that expression of Christ—*I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* There would be more peace in the world than there is now, if men would but remember this; and there would be more wisdom too: for none are so blind as they who are always boasting of the quickness of their own eye-sight; they are so filled up with the opinion of their understanding every thing, that it is impossible to make them understand when they are mistaken.

But it may be dangerous to enlarge any farther upon this subject, lest it should be suspected that I am leading you into Popery.

There is, however, a very false light, in which your liberty, as Protestants, is represented to you, and therefore I think it my duty to make you aware of it. “*No Protestant (they say) can, consistently with acknowledging the Scripture as the only rule, charge you with the least presumption, for bringing decrees not found there to the test of a rational enquiry*”¹. The decrees here alluded to is the doctrine of a *Trinity in Unity*. As to myself, my whole book bears witness for me, that I thought it my own duty, and would have it also be your practice, to bring this doctrine to the test of Scripture, as the only sufficient rule in such a case. And I am persuaded, no reasonable Christian will have any objection to your proceedings, if you examine in the best manner you are able, *whether the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity is found in the Scripture, or not.* But we shall charge you justly with a great deal of presumption, if you undertake to compare it with Scripture as a decree *not found* in Scripture: for this is to beg the question; that is, to take it for granted that a decree is *false*, and then compare it with the Scripture to see whether it be *true*. If this is your method, you must unavoidably conclude as your advisers have done before you. To prevent which, I recommend those words of the wise man—*He that answereth a matter, before he heareth it, it is folly, and shame unto him*². A Protestant who enters upon a mock enquiry with these prejudices and anticipations, is guilty of great injustice towards his Christian brethren, and is all the while putting a trick upon himself.

¹ P. 6.

² Prov. xiv. 13.

If you consult the discourse to the reader, prefixed to the *Catholic Doctrine*, you will see, towards the latter end of it, upon what grounds I have charged the learned *Dr. Clarke*, and his followers, with this unfair practice of *bringing* to the Scripture that knowledge which they ought to *receive* from it. Perhaps you never heard any history of that Author, therefore I will tell you thus much of him: that he was a man greatly to be respected for his temper and scholarship; but it happened, unfortunately for his character as a Christian, that he wrote a celebrated book upon the *Being and Attributes* (or perfections) of *God*; and having discovered, as he thought, by the force of his own wit, what *God* was and must be in all respects, he rejected the Christian doctrine of the Trinity; and to put the best face he could upon his Unbelief, spent much of the remainder of his life in writing ambiguous comments, and finding various readings, that is, in *picking holes* in the Bible.

The Author of an *Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People*, calls him, *the immortal Dr. Clarke*³, and has borrowed from him the substance of that whole book, which was the worst thing he ever wrote in his life. The glittering characters of *great*, *learned*, and *immortal*, are frequently thrown out with an intention to dazzle the eyes of common readers; and chiefly by those writers who are most forward to accuse us of an implicit obedience to *human authority*, and *the decrees of fallible and interested men*. But if you leave the faith and hope of a Christian, your loss will be equally great, whether you are tempted to it by the Pope of Rome, or by the *immortal Dr. Samuel Clarke*.

VIII. Now we are upon the subject of human characters, I will propose to you, on the other hand, those learned and godly Martyrs, who were concerned in reforming the Church of England from the errors of Popery. If the doctrine of the Trinity is so contrary to the Scripture, as our adversaries would have you believe, how did it happen that these men, who were certainly endued with all the advantages and ornaments of human learning, and had the Bible so often in their hands, that they translated every word of it into the English tongue, suffered this doctrine of the Trinity to stand unreformed? I will shew you how the *Arians* endeavoured to solve this difficulty, which is indeed a very great one. They say, "it may fairly be presumed, that as they

“ were just come out of the gross corruptions of Popery, they did not see the whole truth as it is in Jesus⁴.” So that notwithstanding their resolution to reform, yet Popery hung about them still, and they did not reform *so much* as they ought to have done. But if you are to be guided by presumptions, you will soon discover, that the fairer presumption is on the other side, when the nature of men and things upon such occasions is rightly considered. When tares, growing amongst wheat, are to be plucked up, there is not nearly so much danger that any tares should be left behind, as that some of the wheat should be plucked up along with them. If you have a crooked stick in your hand, and would make it straight, the first step you take is to bend it too much the contrary way; after which it may come to be right at last. Just so it happens, that if mankind are offended with any thing, and sensible of a past error, they are apt to fly from it with such an undistinguishing aversion, as to fall, before they are aware, into the contrary extreme: and their prejudice, if they have any, is not *for*, but *against*, what they are correcting. Instead of doing too little, they are in danger of being in such a heat as to *over-do* every thing they set about: whence it is most naturally to be inferred, that our Divines, who reformed the errors of Popery, were not then inclined to act in favour of Popery. A spirit of Reformation is an excellent thing; and I wish to God it abounded amongst us more than it does, provided it would exert its force against those real corruptions, which are but too visible to all serious members of the Church of England; but unless it is tempered with great wisdom and caution, it degenerates naturally into a spirit of contradiction. Which things being considered, I would advise you not to be influenced by any presumptive reflections upon the judgment of our first Reformers, till the *Arians* are able to prove, by some *direct evidence*, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as now expressed in our Creeds and Offices, is an unreformed article of Popery.

IX. Our adversaries lay so great a stress upon this charge of popery, and find it so convenient at every turn, that they are determined to make papists of us at any rate; therefore they assure you, in words not fit for a Christian to repeat, that “ the Church of Rome had as good a right to impose the worship of angels, and the *Virgin Mary*, upon the consciences of men, as the

⁴ Ibid.

“ church of *England* had to impose the worship of the Holy Spirit “ as God, and of Three Persons as one God⁵.” The papists, without question, will thank them for putting the worship of the *Virgin Mary* upon a level with that of the *Holy Spirit*. But this respect being paid to the papists at our expence, it is proper you should be made acquainted with the merits of this affair.

The papists do not pretend to justify their worship of the blessed *Virgin* by any precept or example of the *Scripture*; but tell you, in some fabulous legends, what heavenly favours have been granted to her worshippers; that ignorant people may be encouraged to the like idolatry. But where will the *Arians* find any such stories imposed by the church of *England*, to justify the worship of the *Holy Ghost*?

If you ask the papists how they can prove that we ought to worship the blessed *Virgin*, the best argument they can allege, is the practice and infallibility of their own *Roman Catholic* church: but do we ever attempt to quiet your scruples with any pretensions to unscriptural authority, or personal infallibility?

Let us pass at length to the *Scripture* itself, which will shew you how dangerous it is for unlearned and well-meaning people to trust themselves in the hands of an *Arian* reasoner.

Doth the *Scripture*, in any chapter or verse of it, call the bodies of Christian people the *Temple* of the *Virgin Mary*? But the apostle *St. Paul* saith—*Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost*⁶? And what is the use of a temple? Is it not an house of prayer, praise, and sacrifice? He that has a temple must be entitled to divine honours in it; or we shall be guilty of *idolatry* when we worship him in his *own temple*; which is absurd. The apostle himself makes this practical inference in the words which immediately follow—*Therefore glorify God in your body*. And if the word *God* in this place denotes an object of worship exclusive of the *Holy Spirit*, (as our adversaries are obliged to suppose, or give up the point) then it will follow, that the *Temple* belongs to one Being, and the glory and worship to another; which is one of those many strange things you are bound to believe, before you can be of the *Arian* opinion⁷.

⁵ P. 123.

⁶ See *Cath. Doct.* Chap. ii. Art. 10.

⁷ You may see the Author of the *Apeal* driven to this absurdity, and endeavouring seriously to uphold it, if you consult his book, p. 61, 62.

Can you find it any where written in the Scripture, that the angels of heaven worshipped the *Virgin Mary*? Read the sixth chapter of the prophet *Isaiah*, in which the *Seraphim* ascribe *Glory* to that *Lord of Hosts* who spake the following words to the prophet—*Go, and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not,* &c. Now *St. Paul* teaches us, in the last chapter of the *Acts*, that these words were spoken by the *Holy Ghost*. So that when we say, “*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the HOLY “GHOST,*” we have the example of the seraphim in heaven for this way of worship; a consideration which will make us easy under all the opposition it meets with here below in the world⁸.

When you have reflected upon these things, then you may ask yourselves the question, Whether Christians who are *born of God* are any where said to be born of the *Virgin Mary*? Whether the Apostles, who were *called of God* to the ministry of the Gospel, were called of the *Virgin Mary*? Whether the *Virgin Mary* can be *tempted* and *blasphemed* by sinners? Whether she conferred divine *inspiration* upon the prophets of the Old, or the Apostles of the New Testament? Whether we are baptized in the NAME, that is, into the *religion* and *worship* of the *Virgin Mary*? But all these things, and many more, are true of the *Holy Spirit*; who dwelling in our body as in his own temple, is therein to be served and glorified; and being also worshipped and glorified, together with the Father and the Son, by the angels of heaven, I think we have a better right to worship him here upon earth, than the papists have to worship the *Virgin Mary*.

Our adversaries would persuade you we have so little to say upon this subject from the Scripture, that it is a great favour in them not to *triumph* over us, and *insult* us for it⁹. As if it were no insult upon the Church of England to suppose her worship as groundless as the idolatry of the papists!

The Argument drawn from the words of *Isaiah* with those of *St. Paul* is very plain, and very close: “The Lord of Hosts, whom the seraphim glorified, spake those words which were spoken by the Holy Ghost: therefore the Holy Ghost is the Lord of Hosts whom the seraphim glorified.” Yet the author of the *Appeal* declares, that *nothing can be more fallacious than this way of reasoning*, and that he could in the same manner conclude that *Isaiah* is the Lord, because the words of the Lord (*I was found*

⁸ See Cath. Doct. Chap. III. Art. XIX.

⁹ See Appeal, p. 104. note.

of them that sought me not) are applied to *Isaiah*, *Rom. x. 20*. Where the Apostle thus introduces them—*But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not*¹. This author, I believe, is the first Christian who did ever suppose, that the Apostle *applied* the words in this verse to the person of *Esaias*; or those in the preceding to the person of *Moses*. This, however, is not worth insisting upon, because he has mistaken the nature of the argument. The force of it lies here; that the *speaker* of the words above-mentioned, as they stand in the prophet *Isaiah*, is called by the name of *the Lord of Hosts*, was *glorified* by angels, seated upon the throne of heaven, and sent a prophet by his own authority: and this speaker, as *St. Paul* informs us, was the Holy Ghost. If the Scripture doth any where assert that *Isaiah* spake under the same name, and with the same circumstances, then we shall be ready to allow that the cases are parallel, and will worship *him* also. Had the objector expressed himself clearly, his meaning would have appeared to be this: that because God speaks by a prophet, and speaks also by his Holy Spirit, as much may be inferred in honour of the one as of the other. But when God speaks by a prophet, he speak by *another*; when he speaks by his Spirit, he speaks *by himself*. He reconciled the world by *Jesus Christ*, but not as by another: for *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself*. So when he speaks by the Spirit, he speaks by himself; as truly as a man utters his voice by the *spirit* or breath of his *own* mouth; or searcheth his own thoughts by the operation of his own mind. I am not afraid to insist upon this comparison, because I borrow it from *St. Paul*: and it demonstrates such an unity between God and the Spirit of God, as Christians believe, and Arians do not: nor do they attempt to get over it by any solution I have yet seen, which will not also prove that a man and his spirit must be two different beings; or that we may correct an Apostle's argument till it squares with our own opinion. In this manner reasons the author of the Appeal. *The Spirit is represented as a Person who searcheth the deep things of God, and consequently he cannot be God*². But if he cannot be God, because he searcheth the things of God; then the spirit of a man cannot be a man, because it knoweth the things of a man. But observe how he proceeds: "No man, says he, can
 " know or make known to others the thoughts of a man, but

¹ P. 63.² P. 66.

“either the man himself, or he to whomsoever the man will discover them.” In which words the premises are manifestly changed. The Apostle saith, *what man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of man which is in him*; that is, the man himself: but the Author of the Appeal says, *either the man himself, or some other*. The Scripture itself gives us the Catholic conclusion; this alteration of the Scripture will admit of the *Arian* conclusion. From St. Paul’s comparison, the Spirit is God himself; from this author’s, he is *either* God himself, or some other.

X. In a book lately published against the *Articles of Religion*, under the title of *The Confessional*, I have met with a new objection to our way of worship; which, as it can deceive none but common readers, I shall present you with it in this place. “The *Athanasian Creed* says,” as the author of this work observes, “that in ALL THINGS the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped³.” Then he asks, “Is this the case in ALL our forms of worship? Turn back to the Litany,” (that is, *turn forward*, the Litany stands *after* the *Athanasian Creed*) “and you will see three distinct invocations of the three Persons, to each of whom the term *God* is assigned, implying a sufficiency in each, in his *personal* capacity, to hear and grant the petition.” This, he assures you, is a *remarkable* and *notorious deviation* from the *Athanasian* maxim; and that others might be given *in great abundance*.

By an *Athanasian*, he means a *Christian* maxim; but calls it *Athanasian*, that your faith may seem to *stand in the wisdom of men*: and our deviation from this maxim is evident to him, from the three distinct invocations in the beginning of the Litany. But if you look into the Litany itself, you will discover, that these three invocations are followed by a fourth, addressed to the “Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons and ONE GOD.” In the three former petitions, the Unity in *Trinity*; in the fourth, the Trinity in *Unity* is worshipped. But of this fourth he takes no notice; and then accuses the Church of a *remarkable* and *notorious deviation* from her own maxim; whereas he ought to have taken the *whole* address together, and then have urged his exceptions, if any such could have been reasonably made against it. To take one portion of any form, abstracted from another which completes it, and then charge his brethren with defects and contradictions of his own making, is agreeable

neither to sound criticism, nor indeed to common equity. Such a practice as this will convict even the Scripture itself of atheism: for if you leave out the words—*The fool hath said in his heart*, there will remain the naked assertion—*there is no God*. Or it might be proved from the Gospel, as I once heard it attempted by an excommunicated infidel, that the Old Testament is now to be utterly condemned and laid aside, because it is said—*Hang all the law and the prophets*. But if the sentence be taken in that form in which the Scripture hath given it, the sense is entirely altered; and so it happens with the objection lately discovered by the author of the *Confessional*. His brethren, as you have seen, accuse us of believing in *Three Gods*; and he mocks at our worship, as if it could be reconciled with no other principle.

XI. But it is said farther, that the doctrine of the Trinity is an *offensive doctrine* ⁴, which has *done infinite mischief* to the cause of Christ's religion, and that it is *in vain to expect the conversion of Jews, Mahometans, and Heathens* ⁵, so long as we hold this doctrine necessary to salvation.

On such occasions as this, the Gospel, I fear, will countenance but a very small degree of compliance. In matters indifferent, and for the sake of those who have not yet broken the bond of peace, and Christian unity, every concession ought to be made that can be made with innocence. But if we once quit our moorings, to launch out into the boundless ocean of worldly Policy, miscalled Moderation, in search of proselytes, whose pride, pleasure, and merit it is, not to be found and converted, we shall be rewarded with shame and disappointment, and shall also make shipwreck of our own faith.

The *Socinians* objected it to us long ago, that the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation prevent the conversion of *Mahometans, Jews, and Pagans*. And the same doctrines hinder our *Arians* and *Socinians* too from being converted: the true character of the Christian Saviour, and the true object of Christian worship, being so essential to the Gospel, that no man is to be accounted a convert, till he agrees with Christians in these articles. Were we to alter the Christian faith into what *Jews, Turks, and Pagans* believe, then we should gain them all; for then we should be agreed; that is, we should cease to be Christians as well as they.

If this reasoning is of any force in one case, it must be admitted in others. The Trinity, they say, is so offensive to the

⁴ P. 66. of the Appeal.

⁵ P. 133. Ibid.

Turks, that we shall never gain them till it is given up. No: nor then neither. For *Mahomet* gave them a liberty of having several wives; but *Christ* hath taught us, that *God in the beginning made them male and female*, and that a Christian must have no more wives than *Adam* had. Of this doctrine I may therefore say, with as much reason as the *Arians* do of the Trinity, that it has done infinite mischief, and that we can never expect the conversion of *Mahometans*, so long as it keeps its place in the Gospel of *Christ*. If an *Arian* or *Socinian* were to preach in the streets of *Constantinople*, insisting properly upon this doctrine, he would make no converts: for the Turk will as soon be persuaded to worship the Trinity in Unity, or even three different Gods, as submit to have no more than one wife. And this may serve to shew the weakness and absurdity of such popular arguments: to which, I apprehend, our disputants against the Church would not apply themselves so very often, could they depend safely upon better topics. If the present faith and worship of the Church are against the Scripture, that is enough; and we shall want no other arguments to persuade us out of them. But if they are not, I leave you to judge, my friends, whether we ought to forsake them out of civility to the *Turks*, who pray five times a day that they may never become Christians.

But there are *Papists* in the world who have souls to be saved as well as the *Turks*; and what would they think of us, if we should gratify *Jews*, *Heathens*, and *Mahometans*, by denying the Trinity? They have always been sound in the belief of this doctrine; and we could never hope to recover any proselytes from the errors of popery; but, on the contrary, should make the religion of Protestants more odious than ever, if, under the name of reformation, we were to root up the foundations of the Gospel. You have heard, perhaps, that they have called us *Heretics* for these two hundred years past; and very falsely: but if we should abjure the Christian Trinity, we should no longer have the name for nothing; but should be guilty of adding that truth to the accusation, of which they would not fail to make their advantage. And, lastly, the far greatest part of Protestants would reject us.

These things being considered, we are brought at length to the following issue: that to please some, we must part with the doctrine of the Trinity; and to please others, we must keep it. Which may shew plainly enough what I have had in view from

the beginning of this Epistle, that merely popular arguments are of no use towards settling points of scriptural doctrine; but it may be turned this way or that, as the manager finds it most convenient. Discretion and charity are indeed to be consulted by every Christian, and on every subject; but a writer who has a good cause to maintain, and knows where its proper strength lies, will not go out of his way to amuse people with what is nothing to the purpose. Whereas, if a cause is not so strong as it should be, popular considerations serve to put the reader into an heat; and when a man's passions are up, he will hear no reason on one side, and requires none on the other.

XII. There is one more of their insinuations, which is the last I shall make any remarks upon at present; and it is this, viz. that "there are several Clergymen of the Church of *England*, who groan under the weight of the *Athanasian* forms and worship, that would be very glad of your assistance to be delivered from so great a burden upon their consciences⁶." For the credit of the Church of England, I hope there are not many such: but if any Clergyman should be so mistaken as to imagine, that a contempt for any of the Christian doctrines is an argument of their superior sense and learning, they are more truly the objects of Pity, than of Envy or Imitation: and your Arian counsellors, who are so forward to caution you against *human authority*, will give me leave to advise you not to depend upon *human example*. An error is still an error, though it resides in a Clergyman; and instead of being thereby sanctified, is only more deformed and dangerous than it was before. A profane oath, or a curse, would sound the more horrible, if a Bishop were to have the uttering of it. A toad is an hideous creature in every situation; but never so much abhorred as when it creeps into the best room of the house. The ministers of Christ are the *salt of the earth*: and if this salt *have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?*

The Scripture will teach you, that the worship of the Golden Calf was a grievous sin, though *Aaron*, who was a Clergyman, had the making of it. And there was a time, when the whole body of the Clergy, I mean the Jewish, determined Christ himself to be a blasphemer and deceiver, and were instant with loud voices requiring that he might be crucified.

⁶ Appeal, p. 120.

Those Clergymen, who, like Dr. *Clarke*, and his follower, the author of the *Appeal*, do by their own confession believe *two different Gods*, while they falsely accuse us of believing *Three*, would undoubtedly be very glad to be well rid of a Trinity in Unity; as the Turks were, when they took the religion of *Mahomet* into the place of it. And if they should at length prevail, by dint of popular clamour and importunity, of which some wonderful effects have been seen in this kingdom, the Turks, and the Jews too, would congratulate them upon their victory; and so would every determined Deist and Atheist in the nation. Yet, after all, none of them would worship that imagined inferior Deity, whom this author would persuade you to worship.

I believe it also to be very true, that they would, as their advocate tells you, be *very glad of your assistance*. And I have been considering with myself in what form and manner your assistance can be administered. They can hardly mean, that you should assist them with the pen, and write books upon *Reformation*; for very few amongst you are scholars: nor with the tongue, for you are no orators. And I know not how you can assist them otherwise, except it be with fire and sword, as the reformed Clergy were assisted in the last century, when loyalty was malignity, an episcopacy was anti-christianity, and the most miserable oppression and slavery of two-thirds of the people, was celebrated as a state of Christian liberty to the prevailing party.

We know but too well, that the Gospel, with all its doctrines, is an insupportable *burden* to those who do not believe it: and so is the law of the land to those who do not like to be under the restraint of it. Some men are fond of liberty in one shape, and some in another. Some think as they please; and others act as they please. This latter sort of people, many of whom are *groaning under the weight of political forms*, would also be very glad of your assistance toward amending the constitution, and restoring gentlemen to that state of freedom, in which they might follow their consciences without any danger. And, perhaps, they would not object to your assistance as unwarrantable in the sacred cause of liberty, though you should accomplish their purposes by pulling the magistrate from his chair, the judge from his bench, the two houses of parliament from their seats, and the King from his throne.

These are the prospects I have before my eyes, when I hear Deists and Socinians haranguing the public upon the subjects of

Conscience and Imposition: which prospects having been once realized in this Church and Kingdom, cannot be deemed altogether chimerical. Such popular reasonings as I have now been contending with, have already produced the most fatal consequences, to the triumph of the Papists, and the scandal of the Reformation: they have deceived you once: and unless you are upon your guard, they will deceive you again: *and the last error shall be worse than the first*; worse in itself, and worse in its consequences. It pleased God to deliver the Church from its captivity, under the Puritans, and the people from their infatuation: but if experiments, when they have been tried, leave us no wiser, or, perhaps, not so wise as they found us, it is much to be questioned whether we shall again meet with the like indulgence: at least, it will be safest always to bear in mind that course of divine Providence in a similar instance, proposed as a warning to all Christians by the Apostle St. *Jude*, *How that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not.*

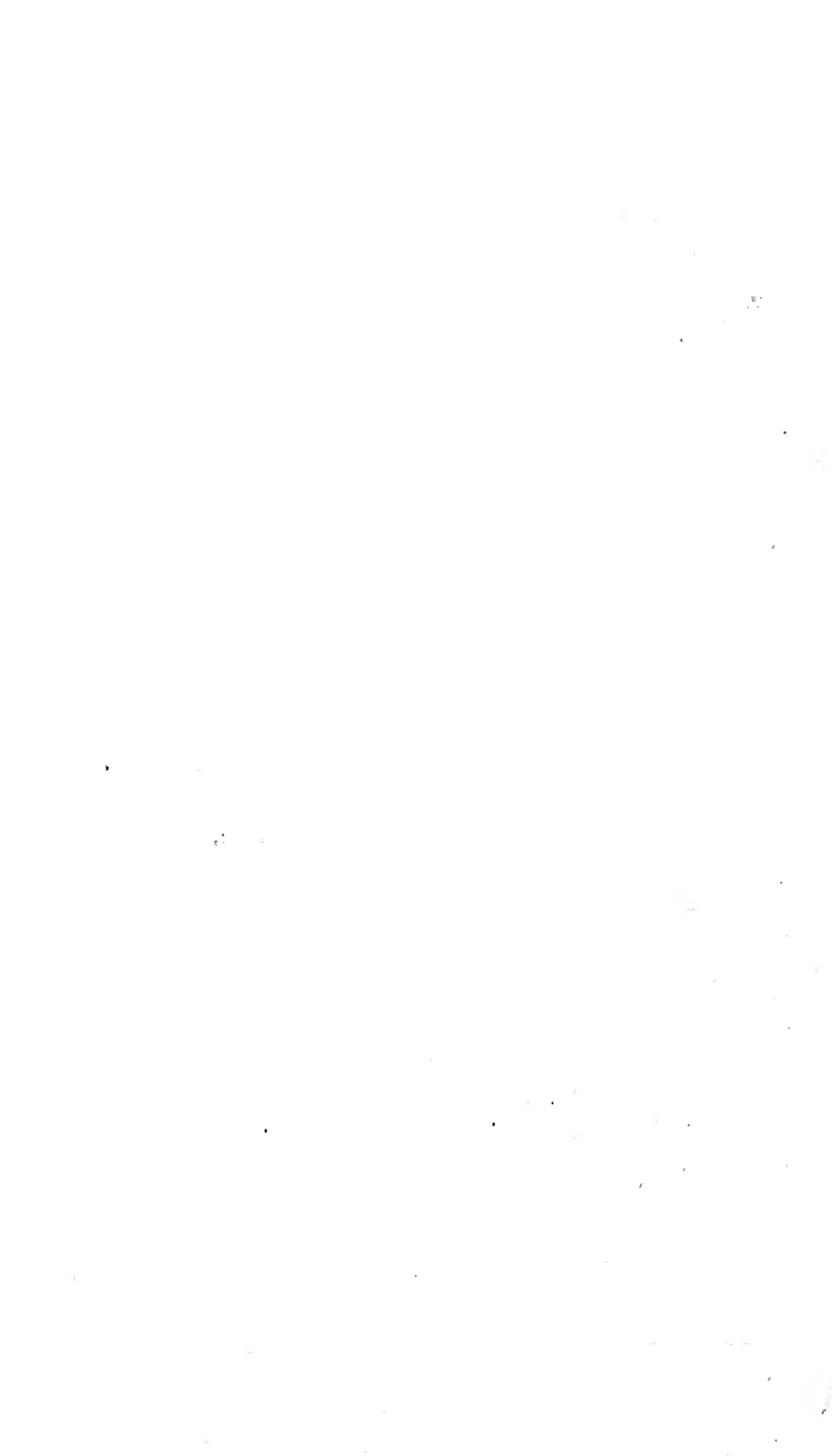
Those authors who would stir you up to seditious motions, make you so many fair speeches, and lay claim to so much candor and charity, that you may easily mistake them for your best friends. But I must now leave you to judge for yourselves, whether a writer, who lies sculking in the dark, under a nameless title-page, can really love you better than one who is not afraid to subscribe his name at length to what he has written, and is exposing himself for your sakes to be reviled and persecuted in the monthly publications of infidel Critics, who on account of the information I have here given you, with a desire to clear away some of that dust, which they and their friends are perpetually throwing into your eyes, will find, if possible, some worse names for me than they have ever done yet. They have expressed their wrath against me more than once or twice; and probably they will now do it again. But a little more ill language will do me no harm; and if I can do you any good at such an expence, it will all be chearfully taken by your

Very sincere Friend,

And most affectionate

Brother in Christ,

WILLIAM JONES.



REFLEXIONS

ON THE

GROWTH OF HEATHENISM

AMONG

MODERN CHRISTIANS:

IN A

LETTER TO A FRIEND AT OXFORD.

*Humbly recommended to the serious Consideration of all those
who are entrusted with the EDUCATION of YOUTH.*

BY A PRESBYTER OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Reader may be shocked when he is told, that there is a disposition to Heathenism in an age of so much improvement, and pronounce the accusation improbable and visionary; but he is requested to weigh impartially the facts here offered, and then to form his judgment. The following Letter was intended only for the inspection of a friend; but if there is any tendency in the public to such a peculiar kind of corruption, as is here pointed out, they ought to have some warning of it; and therefore it has been judged that the present publication can be neither impertinent nor unseasonable.

The present Edition of this Letter, in the year 1794, is more seasonable than the first; now we have been witness to the profane affectation of Heathen manners by the Philosophers of France; with its malignant effects on Religion, Government, and the Peace of the Christian world.

REFLEXIONS, &c.



DEAR SIR,

A WORTHY gentleman*, who is a collector of things rare and curious in their several kinds, shewed me a large shoeing-horn, which as tradition reports had been the property of an ancient abbot of Glastonbury. This relic of antiquity is very handsomely engraved with figures representing the seven works of charity; which are, the giving of bread to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, cloaths to the naked, lodging to strangers, visiting the sick, and prisoners, and burying the dead. On this my learned friend took occasion to remark, that in the ages before the Reformation, the subjects of the ornamental arts, which are now so universally taken from the Heathen Mythology, were then generally borrowed from the Holy Scripture, and had some pious relation to the doctrines of Christianity. Of this he shewed me another remarkable instance in the powder-horn of King Henry VIII. which is adorned with the history of St. Stephen's martyrdom, in elegant figures of ivory. Whereas, had an artist of this age been set to invent a device for a powder-horn, his imagination would immediately have suggested to him the fall of Phaeton, the Cyclops forging thunderbolts, or some like allusion to the history and effects of fire from the stores of the Heathen Mythology.

I shall not stop here to dispute which of these two sources, Paganism or Christianity, will furnish the best subjects for poets, painters, and sculptors to work upon: but I cannot help observ-

* The late Rev. Mr. Gostling, of Canterbury.

ing, that the general state of religion and manners may be judged of by the style and taste adopted in the ornamental arts. There might be a faulty superstition, with a mixture of simplicity bordering upon ignorance, in the works of former ages; but the style of them shewed that Christianity was the religion of the country, and that the several particulars of the Sacred History were then held in honour, as the subjects most worthy to be offered for admiration, and recommended by all the efforts of human ingenuity.

This was certainly the persuasion of those times: but in the present age the public taste can seldom find any thing but Heathen matter to work upon: from which it is natural to infer, that Heathenism is in better repute than formerly; and thence it will follow, that the public regard to Christianity, and all that relates to it, is proportionably declined.

Polydore Virgil, in his work *De rerum inventoribus*, tells us how in the middle ages of the church, they christened the ceremonies of the Pagan superstition, and adapted their fables to the mysteries of the Christian worship: which observation will undoubtedly account for much of the pomp that appears in the celebrities of the modern church of Rome. There might possibly be a very good intention in thus attempting to reclaim what had been misapplied, in order to make an impression upon vulgar minds in their own way; but there was often great weakness and want of judgment in the manner, which should never be proposed for imitation. Thus much of their humour ought to be retained, that the true religion should, in all places, and on all occasions, be seen to preserve its superiority over the false; not merely because one is better than the other, but because the one is worthy of God, and will raise honourable sentiments in men, while the other was never intended for any thing but an engine of the devil, to infuse sentiments of impurity, obscenity, pride, and vanity, dishonourable to God, and destructive to man. Yet the taste for Heathen learning, which began to prevail about the times of the Reformation, hath been productive of an evil, which hath been growing upon us for two hundred years past, and hath at length given to Heathenism the upper hand in almost every subject. The fabulous objects of the Grecian mythology have even got possession of our churches in one of which * I have seen a monument,

* At the village of Wharton, near Kettering, in Northamptonshire.

with elegant figures as large as the life, of the three Fates, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, spinning and clipping the thread of a great man's life: by which species of memorial, he is taken as it were out of the hands of the true God, whom we Christians worship in our churches, and turned over to the miserable blindness of Heathen destiny: not to mention the insult and profanation with which Heathen idols are brought into a Christian temple. In the same church, the baptistry or font is removed almost out of sight; and when found, has a very mean and unworthy appearance, as if it were intended for some other use: so natural is it for those improvements which exalt Heathenism to debase Christianity. How conspicuous are all the temples of the Heathen idols in the famous gardens of Stowe in Buckinghamshire; while the parish church, which happens to stand within the precincts, is industriously shrouded behind evergreens and other trees, as an object impertinent, or at least of no importance to a spectator of modern taste. In our rural ornaments we have temples to all the Pagan divinities; and in the city a Pantheon, wherein there is a general assembly of the sons and daughters of pleasure, under the auspices of Heathen dæmons*.

This taste is not only prophane and corrupting whenever it takes place, but the productions of it are sometimes monstrously absurd and incongruous: it begets a certain inattention to propriety, which admits of false and shocking associations, consistent neither with goodness of taste, nor correctness of judgment. When I see the figure of a cock upon the top of a steeple, I am reminded of that sacred bird who was a monitor to St. Peter, and through his example is now giving a daily lesson to all believers. When I see the globe and cross on the top of St. Paul's, I rejoice in the exaltation of him who was humbled for our sakes, but is now the head of all principality and power to the church and to the world; and I feel a secret satisfaction in reflecting, that a cross so exalted has no reproach in it, as if the offence of it were ceased. But when I see the dragon upon Bow-steeple, I can only wonder how an emblem so expressive of the devil, and frequently introduced as such into the temples of idolaters, found its way to the summit of a Christian edifice. I am so jealous in these matters, that I must confess myself to have been much hurt by a like impropriety in a well-known music-room, where there is an organ consecrated

* The author of these Reflexions hath lived to see it destroyed by fire.

by a superscription to Apollo, although the praises of Jehovah are generally celebrated by it once every month in the choral performances: and it seems rather hard that Jehovah should condescend to be a borrower, while Apollo is the proprietor.

In all the sciences the tokens of this Pagan infection are very observable. In politics we hear of nothing but Brutus, and are stunned with the heroism of rebels, and the virtue of regicides. In morality, how venerable are the characters of Socrates, and Cato the suicide: while the Spartan virtue is become the grand object of patriotic emulation; though I am sure it would make a shocking figure if the moral character of that commonwealth were impartially represented on the authority of Plutarch. Botany, which in ancient times was full of the blessed Virgin Mary, and had many religious memorials affixed to it, is now as full of the Heathen Venus, the Mary of our modern virtuosi. Amongst the ancient names of plants, we find the *Calceolus Mariæ*, *Carduus Mariæ*, *Carduus benedictus*, our Lady's Slipper, our Lady's Thistle, our Lady's Mantle, the *Alchymilla*, &c. but modern improvements have introduced the *Speculum Veneris*, *Labrum Veneris*, Venus's Looking-glass, Venus's Basin (the *Dipsacus*), Venus's Navel-wort, Venus's Fly-trap, and such like: and whereas the ancient botanists took a pleasure in honouring the memory of the Christian saints with their St. John's wort, St. Peter's wort, herb Gerard, herb Christopher, and many others; the modern ones, more affected to their own honour, have dedicated several newly-discovered genera of plants to one another; of which the *Hottonia*, the *Sibthorpia* are instances, with others so numerous and familiar to men of science, that they need not be specified.

But in poetry, the servility of Christians is most notorious of all. Here they follow as implicitly as if the Heathen Muses had deprived them of their wits. If any machinery is to be introduced, it must all be according to the Heathen model, by a law as invariable as that of the Medes and Persians. But it should be considered, that when an Heathen poet made use of his divine machinery, he only spoke as he believed, introducing such powers into his verse as he professed to worship in prose. After he had been offering sacrifices in the temple of Minerva, it was natural for him to bring her in to the assistance of his hero: but when a Christian moralist does the same, proposing a pattern of virtue on the Heathen plan for the purposes of education, he

goes out of his way, to adopt what he knows to be as absurd in itself as it is contrary to his profession. If there is a natural opposition between truth and falshood, we are now as irrational in betraying a partiality to the profane objects of Heathenism, as the Heathens themselves would have been, had they shewn the like regard to the sacred objects of the Bible; only with this difference, that they would have taken up what was better than their own, whereas we incline to that which is worse: their choice would have brought them nearer to God; ours brings us nearer to the Devil. How strange would it have been, if while their temples were dedicated to Venus, Mars, and Bacchus, their gardens had been adorned with statues of Moses and Aaron, the walls of their houses painted with the destruction of Sodom, the overthrow of Pharaoh, the delivery of the two tables on Mount Sinai, and such like subjects of sacred history! Who would not have inferred in such a case, that their temples were frequented out of form, while their inclinations were toward the law of Moses, and the God of the Hebrews? The Heathen priests would never have been silent on such an occasion: they would have exclaimed against this double-faced disaffection, and have given the alarm against all that were guilty of it, as persons ready to apostatize from the religion of their ancestors. But alas! no Heathens were ever found to be thus inconsistent: they were faithful to their profession, and with one mind abominated every thing that was Jewish, for the relation it bore to the Jewish worship; always railing against that nation as low and contemptible, and their religion as foolish and superstitious. We also should be as sincere in our profession as they were in theirs, and should express our aversion against folly and profaneness wherever they occur, unless our intellects were vitiated with false wisdom from the common forms of education. To take little things for great, and great for little, is the worst misfortune that can befall the human understanding. The machinery of Heathenism appears great to scholars, because it has been described by great wits of antiquity, with great words and musical verses; and being offered very early to the mind at school, there is a natural prepossession in favour of it. But is there really any thing great in the character of Æolus, shutting up the winds in a den? In Vulcan the blacksmith, hammering thunderbolts with his one-eyed journeymen? in Neptune, a man living under water like a fish, and flourishing a pitch-fork to still the raging

of the sea? If these things are taken literally, according to that poetical character in which the ancient writers used them, and in which only they are adopted by the moderns, they are so mean and ridiculous, that when the Heathens were pressed with them after the commencement of the Gospel, they could find no way of upholding their dignity, but by resolving them into their physical character; that is, by accommodating them to the powers and operations of nature, to which they alluded with a sort of mystical resemblance*.

Notwithstanding all this, such is the attachment to the Heathen models, that Boileau lays it down as a principle in epic poetry, that no grandeur of description can be attained without introducing Jupiter, Juno, Pallas, Neptune, with the whole tribe of Pagan divinities: and if any Christian should be deterred by a sense of his profession from making use of these *ancient ornaments*, as he calls them, his scruples can be ascribed to nothing but a vain and superstitious fear. And indeed our poets have generally assented to this doctrine of Boileau, without finding themselves much embarrassed by the errors of Christian superstition; insomuch that if any stranger were to judge of our religion from the practice of our poets and tragedians, he would take Paganism for the established religion of the country. For besides hymns to Venus, and Bacchus, and Wood Nymphs, and Water Nymphs †, we see virtues and attributes impersonated and deified as they were of old: we have odes to Liberty, odes to Health, odes to Contentment; in which Health is prayed to for health, and Contentment is intreated to give contentment, that is, to be the cause of itself; and many other absurdities, in which the licence of poetry is not very consistent with common sense, and much less with the sense of religion.

What is more common with poets than to make a compliment of the creation to Jupiter? and consequently of all those sovereign attributes of power, wisdom, and goodness, which are displayed in the works of nature; especially in the formation of the human species? Of this we have a specimen in the following lines by the late celebrated Dean of St. Patrick's.

* This is done at large by Phurnatus, in his book *Περὶ Θεῶν φύσεως*, published in Gale's *Opuscula Mythologica*.

† The last thing that occurred to me of this kind, was a prayer of poor Phyllis Wheatley, the negro poetess, to Neptune, entreating his providence to preserve her friend in a voyage.

When Cupid did his grandsire Jove entreat
 To form some beauty by a new receipt :
 * * * * *
 Jove mixt up all, and his best clay employ'd,
 Then call'd the happy composition Floyd.

If a Latin poet celebrates the nativity and genius of some learned men, Lucina presides at his birth, and brings him safely into the world; the Muses are his nurses, Minerva teaches him, and Phœbus inspires him. When his death is to be lamented, what can his surviving friend say for him, on poetical principles, but wish himself Orpheus, that so with his lyre he might go down to hell, and prevail on Pluto (the keeper of all dead Christians*) to restore him back again? This is the poor trite stuff, which hath now been repeated for some ages past: the Heathen Deities have been the objects of poetical gratitude, and the Heathen fables the sources of poetical consolation! Such poets must excuse me, if I remind them of their error in words like those of the Apostle; “O foolish Christians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should return to these beggarly elements, before whom Jesus Christ hath been set forth, as alive from the dead? Having begun in Christianity, are ye to be made perfect by Heathenism? Have ye suffered so many persecutions, and are ye now going back to those idols, for whose sakes ye were appointed as sheep to the slaughter? The folly which returned from the freedom of the Gospel back to the bondage of the law, was nothing when compared to that which trifles with Omnipotence, and gives to idols and devils the honour due only to the true God.”

For the origin of poetry, Boileau, the French critic, can go no higher than to the Heathen Oracles:

“These miracles from numbers did arise,
 Since which in verse heaven taught his mysteries;
 And by a priest possess'd with rage divine,
 Apollo spoke from his prophetic shrine.”

Dryden's Trans.

* The public has been informed, that a procession after the mode of the Heathen funeral rites, was lately celebrated with great pomp, instead of Christian burial: in which procession, the heart of a dead Christian was carried through the Elysian Fields to soft music, and placed with proper solemnity in a very conspicuous Mausoleum. Some years ago, a Bacchanalian festival was celebrated, and sacred rites performed before the idol of Bacchus, at the same place; the particulars of which are preserved in some public prints of that time.

How serious is this! One would think Apollo had written the Bible; or at least that the oracular verses of Heathen diviners were prior to the sacred songs of the Scripture, and of equal authority. But when great wits are transported into the fabulous regions of poetry, they become insensible of the wickedness of diabolical imposture (for such was the practice at the shrines of Apollo) and forget what they owe to truth, reason, and revelation.

I think Milton hath made it appear, that what is great in poetry may well be attained without borrowing any thing from the ancient ornaments of the Pagan machinery: and indeed his poem of *Paradise Lost* never sinks below itself more effectually, than when he condescends to treat his subject in the Heathen phrase, and embellish it with Heathen allusions, as where Adam and Eve are compared to Jupiter and Juno*; which is so foreign and unnatural, that the imagination being shocked with the impropriety, becomes incredulous, and then the pleasure of reading is lost. Perhaps it may be imputed to the formality of Puritanism, that his poem was not still more deformed with the impertinent ornaments of profane literature. In that age, the religion and morality of the classical writers, had not obtained quite so much authority as afterwards, when they were called in to give their sanction to heresy, and to corrupt the highest mysteries of the Christian faith. Then was the pernicious example of Cato set up, who hath been followed ever since as a pattern of suicide, because the sin was unfortunately varnished over by the sentiments and diction of that elegant scholar Mr. Addison; who spoke of "treading on classical ground" with that veneration, with which the palmers and pilgrims of the twelfth century visited the Holy Land, which had been the scene of our blessed Saviour's miracles.

Who does not know, that Heathen fragments are now sought after as zealously as Christian relics were collected in former ages? There was a time when all the curious people of this nation were alarmed and animated if the bones of some ancient hermit were found, or some treatise recovered and added to the works of a legendary writer. Now the like alarm is spread, if an Etruscan vault is opened, and some old broken pitchers are brought to light, with grotesque ill-designed figures upon them.

* Book iv. 499.

When some great men, famous for their parts and learning, have distinguished themselves by a taste for Heathen principles and Heathen curiosities, the whole tribe of inferiors follows them of course, as the vulgar on all other occasions submit readily to fashion; the common rule of those who have no judgment. That the study of antiquity is not entertaining and curious, I do not mean to say; neither would I suggest that it is without its use; for certainly it is both useful and reputable to know many things which it is not necessary to admire: but some minds are so ill prepared to make proper distinctions, that their curiosity rises insensibly to a religious veneration, too often attended with a disaffection toward every thing that relates to the Christian character.

It is much to be lamented, that while we are learning from the scholars of profane antiquity, the beauties of imagery, the graces of diction, the arts of oratory, and the harmony of poetry, we are not better upon our guard against their principles, which steal upon us through the vehicles of poetry and oratory, till our taste is wholly vitiated, and the glorious realities of the Christian revelation become insipid and insignificant.

Experience shews how difficult it is to dwell with delight upon the expressions of Heathen writers, without embracing too many of their sentiments. When a painter hath exhibited *Thais* with all her charms, he that values the lines of the picture, and admires the skill of the master, may very possibly be tempted to lust after the original, though he is apprized before-hand that she is an infamous and abandoned strumpet.

Dr. Middleton confesses in one of his letters, that his classical engagements had rendered him very squeamish in his theological studies; and I am well convinced this has been the case with many others, who from having their brains filled with Heathen notions, and their affections touched with the vanity of conscious erudition, have contracted a nausea toward the Bible and its contents; first disrelishing, and at length deliberately opposing, the Christian doctrines; perhaps without being sensible how their minds were originally debauched. If this experiment is fatal in so many instances, and dangerous in all, it is an alarming consideration, that the first ideas conceived by school-boys are for the most part of the Heathen stamp: and I fear they are too seldom instructed in due season concerning the infinite difference between

the true God and the false *. I was told once by a school-boy, that one of his companions asked him very seriously, which was the uppermost, Jupiter or God Almighty? And well might the poor child be ignorant of the distinction, when his elders, who ought to have had more judgment, have made some foul mistakes in the same way; such as that in the Universal Prayer of Mr. Pope, which gives us a new sort of levelling Theology, unknown to the wisdom of former ages. When the Jewish nation was called out by the prophet Elijah to be spectators of the grandest dispute the world ever saw, that is, to determine whether Jehovah or Baal was the proper object of religious adoration, Mr. Pope could have settled it all in a word or two, only by instructing the parties that the true God is worshipped in every climate by those who worship any God at all: that the Saint, the Savage, and the Sage, the Hebrew, the Hottentot, and the Greek philosopher, were the votaries of one and the same Divinity. How mistaken were the poor Christians under all the Roman persecutions, in throwing away their lives upon a distinction which had no existence! They were brought before the altar of Jupiter, and the usual alternative was proposed, either to suffer death or signify their adoration. Had either party been aware of the new levelling principle, they might have been reconciled without proceeding to these extremities, and have joined amicably in the same sacrifices. Thus much however we may conclude for certain, that if the poet had been in the like circumstances, he could not possibly have been a martyr, if he believed his own doctrine.

The pious and excellent author of the Night Thoughts, who writes as a Christian moralist, hath been tempted by the force of custom to transgress that rule of sound criticism, which obliges us to make every composition uniform and of a piece. What occasion had he thus to adopt the Heathen style, “that more than miracle the *Gods* indulge †.” Why gods in the plural? Why must they have the honour of working miracles? And why are the Holy Angels of God, and the red-faced Bacchus of Paganism, brought together into the same poem? Which, to say nothing of the impiety of it, can never be reconciled to the rules of propriety and good writing. If we write as Christians, let us keep up to

* This caution hath been laudably observed by the judicious editor of the *Selectæ et profanis Scriptoribus Historiæ*, who hath prefaced his collection by such admonitions and distinctions as would render the present strictures superfluous, if they were more generally attended to.

† Night III.

the style of our profession : if our scene is laid upon Heathen ground, then let us take the language of the Heathen writers—*Sit quod vis simplex duntaxat et unum.* The Levitical law forbade the people to plough with an ox and an ass together ; and the New Testament taking up the same principle, commands us not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. All I contend for here is consistency and propriety ; and I am sure the judgment of the best critics will bear me out in what I have said.

The case of the primitive martyrs, who chose rather to die than do honour to the Heathen Deities, brings to my remembrance a circumstance which lessens my admiration of those antique statues, which, as the productions of genius, are otherwise very much to be admired for elegance of design and truth of proportion. In times of persecution it was the custom with the bigots of Heathenism to drag the Christians up to the images of their idol-gods, either to offer sacrifice or be put to death : whence it is by no means improbable, that the blood of many innocent Christians may have been barbarously shed to the honour of some statues now in high esteem with modern virtuosi of the same Christian profession ; who, for a little excellence of workmanship, admire and respect what their purer predecessors had reason to regard with horror and detestation*.

Where at last will this taste, which hath been prevailing and increasing for so many years, from the days of lord Herbert to the late erection of the Pantheon, where, I say, will it lead us ? Where can it lead us, but to indifference and atheism ? A Christian corrupted with Heathen affections, degenerates into something worse than the original Heathens of antiquity. They had great faith in such gods as they knew ; depended upon them devoutly ; and applied to them on every public occasion, either of deprecation or thanksgiving. If we except the Epicureans, they insisted almost universally on a special providence, directing things *pro re natá* ; and were assured that the gods were the avengers of perjury and impiety. But faith in the divine protection, and fear of divine vengeance, are but coldly regarded, and rarely to be met

* We have heard it observed, that the Statues of Heathen Deities have been generally found under the earth with their faces downward : which renders it probable, that after the conversion of the empire, such Statues had been purposely buried out of the way by the zeal and piety of the primitive Christians. How surprisingly are times altered ! We now hear Mr. Gibbon blaming Christians, for not intermixing the *elegant* and *innocent* rites of Paganism with their own worship !

with in many of their modern disciples. Sacrifice was practised by them, as the essential part of religion, for the expiation of private or national guilt: but when the Christian sacrifice is neglected, and the Heathen sacrifices are exploded, nothing remains but a religion without expiation; a thing which never existed since the expulsion of Adam from Paradise, till it was begotten of late time in Socinus, and his followers; when Christian lukewarmness engendered with the pride and ignorance of gentile philosophy.

While we have been considering the case of poets, orators, and artists, how they all stand affected to Heathenism; I had almost forgotten the philosophers, I mean the natural philosophers, whose science for an hundred years past, hath been claiming kindred with the Heathen divinity. About the year 1680, it was observed by an eminent scholar of that time, that the exact and scrutinizing spirit of the school-divinity was become necessary, in order to detect the pretensions of some "who were ready by the study of nature to immerse God in matter, and with those impieties of Democritus and Epicurus, to confound him with nature." In the year 1685, Mr. Boyle, in a treatise intitled, "A free Inquiry into the vulgarly received notion of Nature," expressed an apprehension that the same doctrine was likely to gain ground amongst us; and he gave the alarm to the public in the following emphatic language, which merits well to be considered. "Nor are Christians themselves so much out of danger of being seduced by these Heathenish notions about an intelligent world (the stoical *anima mundi*;) but that even in these times there is lately sprung up a sect of men, as well professing Christianity as pretending to philosophy; who, (if I be not misinformed of their doctrine) do very much symbolize with the ancient Heathens, and talk much indeed of God, but mean such an one as is not really distinct from the animated and intelligent universe; but is on that account very differing from the true God whom we Christians believe and worship. And though I find the leaders of this sect to be looked upon by some more witty than knowing men, as the discoverers of unheard-of mysteries in physics and natural theology, yet their hypothesis does not at all appear to me to be new, &c." Then he proceeds to shew, that this philosophical God, which is not essentially different from Nature, was the Deity of the Heathen philosophers, citing such passages as that of Seneca, *Nihil natura sine Deo est, nec Deus sine natura, sed IDEM est uterque.*

How near the expressions of our Doctor Halley approach to an avowal of this Heathen opinion in his eulogium on the Newtonian philosophy, let any impartial person judge, when he has considered the sense of them. And here let me observe by the way, that it is to no purpose for any man to tell us that these things are popular, and must not be spoken against: they ought to be spoken against for that very reason; because the whole world does not afford a greater temptation to error than long established popularity; on which consideration, all men who wish to chain down others to their own favourite errors, are for ever ringing this popularity in their ears. To go on therefore with Doctor Halley, whose sentiments concerning God and Nature, are communicated in the following lines:

*En tibi norma poli, et divæ libramina Molis,
Computus en Jovis, et quas dum primordia rerum
Conderet, omnipotens sibi leges ipse Creator
Dixerit*—————

Here the *Moles*, or mass of matter which constitutes the world, has the epithet *diva* ascribed to it, which makes it divine: and in another part of the same poem the epithet is given to Nature,

—————*jamque abdita DIÆ
Claustra patent NATURÆ*—————

Then the *computus Jovis*, or calculation of Jupiter, supposing it to allude to the motions of the heavenly bodies, must imply that the visible world is Jupiter, as it stands in the Heathen poet—*Jupiter est quodcunque vides*: and this seems farther evident from the sentiment which is explanatory of it, viz. that the Creator (supposing Jupiter to be he) gave laws to himself; which is true if God and Nature are the same thing; because in that case the laws given to *Nature*, will be laws imposed upon *God*. The Psalmist, who distinguishes rightly between the works and the work-master, says, “he gave *them* a law which shall not be broken:” and Mr. Boyle, in his treatise above referred to, hath well remarked, that “God when he made the world, and established the laws of motion, gave them to Matter, and not to himself* ;” as if he had been censuring that expression of Dr. Halley, which has been the subject of our present animadversion,

* Edit. 1685-6. p. 158.

If any other philosophers have been betrayed by the authority of great names, into the belief of this strange doctrine, it cannot be wondered at, if such are found but badly disposed for the reception of the Christian mysteries: for what concord hath the Heathen Jupiter with the Christian Trinity? What arguments can be strong enough to persuade those men of a divine co-equal personality in the Godhead, who have relapsed into the reveries of Stoicism, and are the votaries of an *anima mundi*, an intelligent universe, a Deity immersed in matter? To such, the notion of a co-eternal Son of God, Creator of all things that exist, and who shall be still the same when nature shall wax old, and the heavens shall vanish away, must of necessity be contemptible and incredible: and this I apprehend to be one reason why we have so many Arians among the professed admirers of natural philosophy, thus falsely understood.

Let it not be said that I take any pleasure in censuring: a capitious censor is an odious character. If the question should be put to me, "who made thee a ruler and a judge?" I am ready to answer for myself, that I shall never wish to rule where so few are inclined to obey; and that I shall never judge where my duty will permit me to excuse. I see my country hastening to ruin on many different principles; and I point out one of them, which is the most pernicious of all, if it is not in fact the mother of all the rest. I only say what must be said by somebody, if we are ever to be reclaimed from the perilous consequences of Pagan corruption: if not, *liberavi animam meam*. Should any person ask me how Christianity is to be banished out of Christendom, as the predictions of the Gospel give us reason to expect it will be, I should make no scruple to answer, that it will certainly be brought to pass by this growing affection to Heathenism*. And therefore it is devoutly to be wished that some censor would arise with the zeal and spirit of Martin Luther, to remonstrate effectually against this indulgence of Paganism, which is more fatal to the interests of Christianity than all the abuses purged away at the Reformation. This is now the grand abuse, against which the zeal of a Luther, and the wit of an Erasmus, ought to be directed: it is the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not, even in the sanctuary of Christianity, and is a worse offence than all the profa-

* Is not this conjecture of the Author, in the year 1776, now confirmed, by what hath lately happened in France?

nations that ever happened to the Jewish temple. In the mean time, till the world shall be blessed with such a monitor, I have presumed to claim some freedom of thought, and liberty of speech, against the tyranny of prevailing fashion: and you will pardon me if I confess to you, upon this occasion, the mean opinion I have long entertained of some modern refinements; insomuch that I could wish many of them were exchanged for a little of that religious simplicity, which placed the seven works of charity upon the shooing horn of the Abbot of *Glastonbury*.

I am, dear Sir,

Your's, most faithfully,

and affectionately.

N. B. An Abbot of Glastonbury was hanged at the place, for denying the supremacy of Henry VIII, when his effects were confiscated; and perhaps this article might have been found amongst them.

AN

ABRIDGMENT

OF THE

AURIFODINA OF DREXELIUS.

BY GEORGE HORNE, D.D.

LATE BISHOP OF NORWICH.

AN

ABRIDGMENT, &c.



THIS is an excellent tract on the necessity of taking notes in writing, in order to profit by what we read; and the manner of doing it is prescribed.

The memory is unfaithful, and the best memory cannot retain all. *Augustin* complained of the many things he had suffered himself to lose, and was obliged to seek after them again. Much time is lost in this way. Instances are given of learned men endued with great memory, who yet all assisted themselves by making collections—*ergo notandum et excerpendum*.

Pliny Secundus, the secretary of nature, attained to prodigious erudition by this method, which he observed constantly; insomuch that his nephew tells us, he never read any thing without making extracts. While he was lying in the sunshine; at supper; after supper; while he was bathing; while he was dressing, *liber legabatur, adnotabatur*. Even while he was on a journey, an amanuensis was with him; who wrote in gloves if the weather was cold: while his nephew was walking out for the air, he used that memorable expression, *poteras has horas non perdere—O temporis parsimoniam, quam ignota es et rara!—Omnium rerum jactura reparabilis, præter quam temporis*.

Extracts are necessary, even to a poet, who works from his imagination. We see an example of this in *Herman Hugo*, whose *Pia Desideria* are an ingenious contexture of the Scriptures and the Fathers together; out of which, when he had collected, he made this excellent use. Extracts are the life and soul of *history*; and no history can be composed without previous notation. Even orators must read, and note, and transfer the excellencies of others into their own page. Which of them all did ever arrive at the summit of learning without constant applica-

tion to notes and extracts? Aristotle exceeded all that went before him; but not without the making of infinite collections from the books they had left behind them. Among great divines, examples are given of *Augustin, Jerom, Cyprian, and Bernard*; and after every one, *Drexelius* presses the inference, that nothing great ever was, or ever will be done, without industrious notation. At last he adds an example from his own experience, and protests, that he would not part with his notes for any price but that of heaven itself. In displaying the profit of it, he observes, 1. That whatever subject was proposed, he could tell all the authors that had written upon it; even though the subject were minute and out of the way. A friend wanted to borrow his book: but most authors are of use only to those that have read them. He reckons a man nothing, if he could not talk an hour upon a subject. 2. In preaching: If the Scriptures were duly read and extracted, a man's store would never be exhausted. 3. For instructing any person who comes to consult or ask. Particulars of time and place can rarely be recollected without notes. 4. A man may subsist upon his own stock, in case of sickness, or under any hindrance, or in time of age, when he must write, but cannot read. It is miserable to be running to the baker, when we should be going to dinner: think of the ant and the bee. The author declares of himself, with advantage and satisfaction he used the fruits of thirty years labour, and that, if his life were to last ever so long, his fund would never be out. He was a great example of his own doctrine. 5. In all kinds of speaking and writing, he found himself in readiness: and could engage to write two books in a year on different subjects out of his *excerpta*. There is little difficulty in building, when all the necessary materials are ready at hand. 6. It is of excellent use in conversation; keeps it from flagging, and places us above the necessity of vain repetitions, such as women and ignorant persons fall into for want of matter.

After the doctrine has been confirmed by testimonies and examples, the author considers the *reasons* 1. It is observed, that the attention is fixed better by writing and noting, than by repeated readings. Dionysius of Halicarnassus reports, that Demosthenes transcribed Thucydides eight times. Jerom wrote over many volumes. 2. The matter is deeper impressed upon the mind. In reading, the eye wanders, and the judgment is less exact. Money is not examined merely by looking at it: we

rub it, and weigh it, and sound it, to distinguish between the precious and the vile, and by a similar method we must distinguish truth from error, and one style from another. 3. What is written is not forgotten—*Litera scripta manet*—as it was said in a former chapter. 4. How many volumes for the benefit of the public have been sent abroad from the mere industry of collecting! *Antiquæ lectiones, Florigelia, Horæ subsecivæ, Musarum horti, &c. &c.* And if we find the collections of others so serviceable, how much more so will our own be? When we ourselves are the collectors, our own uses and purposes are provided for; and we may derive more use from one page of this sort, than from a hundred by another person, who works according to his own views, not according to yours; as every scholar will discover, who has any exercise in this way: he takes only what suits him; turning and twisting every stream into his own channel. (This teaches how we are exposed when another person picks out an history for us.) 5. The ant collects in summer for her food in winter. This is beautifully described and applied—*itionibus ac reditionibus eandem viam relegit millies, fatigari nescia—brumæ injurias non metuit, infæcundam hiemem non ægre tolerat, &c.* The happy industry of the bee is described with the same poetical elegance—*Omnes apiculæ flores delibant, et velut judicio excerptunt—violarum suaves divitias—nec extrahunt nisi quod melioris succi est; venenum quod in flore deterius, araneis relinquunt. Hæc opum sedulitas, et in excerptendo studiûm, mellis et ceræ thesauris orbem opulentat.* Let us be as wise as they in our studies: let us take the best authors, and out of them the best things: otherwise, like summer flies, we have neither honey nor wax; our conversation and writings are poor and empty. 6. Notes form an epitome, and contain the essence of a library, and will supply the place of it: they will travel with us, where books are difficult to be met with. Take what you want out of the book you are reading, and it is done for ever: you need never turn it over any more. Incredible how useful a volume may be compiled in how short a time! Your own papers will always be found your best library.

Objections answered.—1. I have no design to write volumes like Origen. *A.* But the smallest thing cannot be well done without it—hence we have so many *jejune* compositions—and when any public exercise comes in course, not having dug, we are forced to beg and borrow.—2. Another objection: that persons who write, neglect the use of memory, and so lose it. *A.* This

is not to set aside, but to assist, the memory; and keeps it in exercise; for, after all, you must remember when, where, what you have noted. Assistance your memory must have, unless it is universal, and you can carry off by heart the books of a library.

—3. Many, and they not unlearned, do not practise this method. *A.* Make not those your example who turn out of the straight road, but follow those who are in it. They who do as well as they can without these helps, would do much better with them.

—4. The old philosophers delivered to their scholars by ear and memory. *A.* But they wrote afterwards at home. The practice of all universities is an answer to this, where they write down notes of the lectures given to them.—5. You may lose your notes, and then what becomes of your learning? *A.* What if the sky should fall? Do men avoid laying up money, for fear the thieves should have it? or to build houses, for fear they should be burned? And suppose I should lose my papers, I may at the worst have more left upon my mind, than you who never wrote at all.—6. It will be troublesome to carry them about. *A.* If they are collected with judgment, according to the method I teach, they will never rise to a great bulk: besides, you, who are so afraid of being over-burthened, consider how many articles were carried from place to place by every Roman soldier—*cibum, utensilia, vallum, arma*—and is not learning a sort of warfare?—

7. It is a work of too much time. *A.* Your time cannot be better employed: and to some persons, all the time they spend in reading without it, is thrown away. Marking the book, as some people do, is a slovenly trick, and of little use.—8. There are indexes. *A.* Into which you will often look without obtaining any satisfaction—They promise great things, and often do little—Authors seldom make them for themselves—Many books have none—No index so good as our own, taken with the reading of the *context*—It is too late to consult indexes when you are to write or speak: and besides, it is part of the use of your own notes to direct you what books to consult, and what indexes to go to. Idleness is at the bottom of all these excuses: you read for ease and pleasure, not for profit; your reading is of no value—It is not worth while to build a granary to lay up chaff. There is no more benefit in reading a great deal, than in eating a great deal: the good is from what is properly digested. The work may have its trouble; but nothing valuable is obtained without it. Many of moderate parts become great by the practice of noting. That

is properly your own, which is the result of your own observation: and nobody can tell, but by experience, the pleasure with which such a work is surveyed, both in its growth, and when it is finished. The scholar enters into his labours, as the bee into its hive.

PART II.

THE rules by which our practice is to be guided, are these following.

1. To enter upon the work *early in life*: the sooner we begin, the more we shall collect: musicians begin their notes when they are children; but better late than never. 2. To do it *with judgment*. The great question is, what to take, and what to leave; and the best way of settling it, is to lay in good principles of truth, (happy are they, thrice happy, that find them) and to propose some scope, some objects, at which we aim more particularly. 3. To do it *continually*—the pen should be always in hand—no book so bad, said Pliny, but some good to be found in it; and so observes our Mr. Herbert, where he treats of a parson's knowledge. Practice makes all things easy, and skill will come with use—read no book *quin excerptas*. 4. Extracts should consist not of common, but of select things. 5. At times review and read over what you have written: no greater pleasure: a man surveys his labours as he does the garden which he has planted, and sees how plants flourish in their proper borders. There is great profit in this, because it transplants things from the book to the memory. 5. Always keep in view the end of your own studies—The philologist fixes on one thing, the orator on another, the physician on another, &c. and the theologian on something different from them all. He will be thinking of the *places*, the *people*, the *times*, the *vices*, *errors*, &c. with which he is concerned; if an improvement occurs, he will note it, as a thing suggested by the note he is taking.

The method. Every thing that is done well, must be done in some order. It was the method of Drexelius to divide all his collections into three classes, which he called *Lemmata*, *Adversaria*, *Historica*: of these he had one title for *sacred*, another for *profane*; so in all he had six sortments. The first comprehended what related to virtues and vices, and subjects of conversation in

common life; the second, wise sayings and notable things, ancient rites and customs. The third, examples at large from history. These were all referred to in three alphabetical indexes. Every person may chuse his own method, with a good index accommodated. When Drexelius was asked by his friend Faustinus, how he could do so much as he had done? He answered, the year has 365 days, or 8460 hours: in so many hours great things may be done—*nulla dies, nulla hora sine linea*—the slow tortoise made a long journey by losing no *time*. He had several choice subjects, for each of which he reserved a volume by itself; and these he called works *singularis industriæ*; such were his *Res Nummaria*, which contained the whole history of money, and the wealth of different ages and empires; and his *Lusus Urbani*; his Epitome of Baro-nius, Livy, Tacitus, Cæsar, the two Plinys, and many others; his philological collection of words and sentences.

PART III.

WHAT authors we ought to read. 1. Every author who is the best in his way. 2. Such authors who suit best with our own genius. 3. The ancient writers are generally to be preferred to modern.

How we ought to read. 1. Not to affect that rambling sort of reading, which looks at every thing, but sticks to nothing. 2. To read an author through, from the beginning to the end. 3. Not to read cursorily, but with meditation and steadiness. The reasons are these. 1. Against rambling. You must settle somewhere before you can extract. He that is always travelling, will have many landlords, but few friends. Meats do not profit unless they are retained in the stomach: the wound will not heal, which is constantly interrupted with fresh applications: the plants will not thrive, which are too often transplanted. The squeamish stomach is amused with variety, and tastes of many things. Many persons read, as dogs drink out of the Nile, as they run, and therefore never profit much. Not more than two authors should be studied at the same time. And in all authors three things are to be observed. 1. The matter or subject, with the drift of his argument. 2. The words, style, and construction of his sentences. 3. The numbers, and cadence; for not only poets, but orators also consider the harmony of their periods. If the style

of an author be rough, hobbling, and inharmonious, the reader is disgusted.

The memory will receive great help from method and imagination. Method is almost every thing in memory—*ordo animæ memoriæ*. Nothing is so irregular in its nature, but that method will reduce it to order, and make it portable—*omnium inftar mihi ordo*; without it we may as well write on water or sand. It is not so clear what he means by *imagination*; but I suppose it to be, the frequent thinking of a thing over again in the mind, by which means it will be so fixed as never to depart. As the mind was made to contain great things, let it not be overloaded with trifles. Remember *sin*, to bewail it; *kindness*, to return it; *death*, to prepare for it; *mercy*, to hope for it; *wrath*, to fear it; *eternity*, to despise the world, and all temporal things—so to *pass* through things temporal, as not to lose the things eternal.



General Rules for a Preacher.

HE, of all men, is a student, who can be nothing without the practice of notifying and collecting: so I consider his case by itself. Besides the three classes above-mentioned, he should have a book to receive his *symbolæ*, under the titles of all the festivals and Sundays of the year. Should make himself master of the Scriptures, the gospels, lessons, &c. appointed for each day; and then throw together under each, whatever he meets with conducing to the explanation of them; with all texts and subjects proper to be treated of on those days. Of this the author gives examples, and particularly for *ascension day*; producing texts and subjects for thirty-four years on that one festival. This plan is excellent. Every sermon should have some point of practice to be enforced; it is otherwise unprofitable. We love to hear fine expositions, and a curious display of learning, &c. so we come back a little more learned, but not warmed or excited to piety. Tell me what I am to desire, and what to avoid; how I may strengthen my weak faith; how repel temptations, and be a match for evil; how I may bear misfortunes without repining myself, and prosperity without making others repine—*scire discimus plerumque, non facere.*

Particular Rules for a Preacher.

I. Fix upon some particular point which you would enforce. Ask yourself, what am I going to prove? and how? What head of Christian doctrine do you mean to inculcate, that your audience may more firmly believe it? To this all is to be directed. They that are best skilled, say every good sermon should be reducible to a syllogism. For want of this, many fine discourses are good for nothing: they are elegant in language and sentiment, but produce no effect; they are every thing but what is needful and useful: therefore let it be the scope of a discourse to promote the salvation, and improve the morals of your hearers, not to raise their admiration.

II. Let your exordium be short, and relate to the matter that is to come. The head ought not to be half as long as the body. The entrance upon a discourse should be such as to gain the attention of the audience; but he disgusts them, who keeps them too long in expectation; and when once their attention drops, you will with great difficulty recover it. Therefore let your beginning be short, and to the purpose, lest it be said that you began with fish, and ended with fowls. Your conclusion should also be short, clear, nervous, and pathetic.

III. Speak slow, and never throw your words out too precipitately. It is incredible how this one thing will recommend you. The learned will take you for a person of judgment, who knows what is proper, and has a command of himself; and the unlearned will have time to follow and understand you.

IV. Avoid all affectation and stiffness. Purity of intention, and a desire for the glory of God, will make your delivery easy, humble, and natural. Whatever is unnatural, never pleases. Your diction should not be fine and over-wrought, but nearly such as you would use in common talk; for this insinuates readily into the mind. He is the best preacher, who, forgetting himself, seems to know nothing but Christ crucified. He avoids all vain and curious questions, and all novelties, as improper for the pulpit; having nothing in his intentions but the reformation of the people.

V. Suit yourself to the audience, the place, and the time. As it is a great fault not to be understood at all, it is also bad if you are understood with difficulty. There are figures of speech which give great help to the understanding; such as the *prosopopœia*, the form of a dialogue, the strong delineation, as if a thing were present to the view (*hypotyposis*). But above all, there should be a frequent use of similitudes; for this is the manner of the Scripture throughout. A strong text often repeated has good effect; as our Saviour, three times in four verses, uses that striking expression, the *worm that never dieth*. Him you are to imitate; not only in the *manner*, but in the *duty* of preaching: never omit it; he was always ready for it.

VI. It is of great service to stop sometimes, to recollect yourself, and preserve your presence of mind. This is particularly necessary toward the conclusion, when every nerve must be strained to fix what you have explained in the mind of your hearers. Unison of tone, or monotony, is ever to be avoided as lifeless and unaffecting.

VII. Let human learning be the servant, but let divine learning rule. Build nothing but upon the Scriptures: a preacher should have them nearly by heart; for which purpose, he should read at least two chapters every day of his life, and notify therefrom into his classes or his *symbolæ*. As one egg hath more nourishment than a pot full of herbs, one sentence of the Bible will have more effect than a thousand from Aristotle or Cicero, which are dry and bloodless. Many err in this respect, who totally, or at least very shamefully, neglecting the divine oracles, think they have done finely, when they have painted themselves with the colourings of Heathen orators, &c.

VIII. Write down your plan, arguments, texts, disposition, &c. in a rough draught first; and have all your materials ready before you begin to build. As the work goes on, you may pick and chuse, leave out or alter, as you see best. No practice but this can make the composition good: *omnis concio bis scribenda*.

IX. Above all things divide clearly, and sort your matter well: the work is more than half finished when this is done: your words and sentences will come easy, and as it were of them-

selves. To methodise and digest well is the point both for the speaker and the hearer—*Qui bene distinguit* *, *bene docet*—a sermon well digested may be got by heart over night.

X. Never exceed an hour ; but rather fall short of it. None can attend more, even though you were to preach roses and jewels ; nor can the memory carry off more. When the attention is exhausted, you speak without effect ; the full stomach loaths the honey and the honeycomb : that which is moderate and well disposed, will be the sweetest—in *fine ne corrumpas*.

XI. Teach nothing to others, of which you are not persuaded yourself—*si vis me flere*, &c. Nothing will reach the heart, but that which comes from the heart. How great is the difference between him who collects and repeats, and him who speaks affectionately of that truth which he knows and feels ! To gather scraps from homilies and sermons, and then consarcinate, is poor work : but if nothing better can be done, make it your own, by thinking well on what you have collected from others.

XII. Reprove vices sharply, but not persons. Great men, and persons in authority, should not be named, or even pointed at ; which exasperates without amending : private admonition should rather be used. Never spare the vices which are most in fashion ; but even here all bitterness is to be avoided—according to that admonition of St. Paul, *reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine*. 2 Tim. iv. 2. Let your pity prevail against your indignation—remember Christ weeping over the

* Three eminent writers, *Fenelon*, *Voltaire*, and Bishop *Berkeley*, are against formally dividing a sermon : but the reasons on the other side are stronger. See *Maury* sur l'Eloquence, &c. p. 424. In *Cicero's* excellent oration *pro lege Manilia*, the transitions from one head to another are marked and mentioned throughout as distinctly and plainly as preachers do in their sermons—*Quod extremum proposui—quod reliquam est*, &c. It seems to be a perfect model of method in composition, and should be thoroughly studied as such. *Non mihi tam copia quam modus in dicendo querendus est*, says the author in his exordium. What would the human figure be, unless it were built upon bones and joints, properly connected and covered, so that the whole has a regular and elegant appearance ? The late learned Dr. *Samuel Johnson*, in his directions to a clergyman concerning the composition of a sermon, very properly observes, that “ divisions not only help the memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer: they supply sources of invention, and keep every part in its proper place.” *Boswell's* Life of *Johnson*, Vol. II. p. 324.

* And yet what would it be to strip & expose every bone & sinew & joint? as some of our preachers do?

guilty Jerusalem ; and never forget, that sins, not sinners, are to be lashed.

XIII. Detest all pride, first in yourself, and then in others. Let your speech, and even your countenance, breathe humility, and lowliness of heart. The pompous orator is a mimic, or a tragedian ; more fit for the stage than the pulpit ; and his only object is to gain applause. The preacher who is truly humble, despises no man, nor doth he hurt any one by private reflections. He will not only bear reproof, but court it : he will get some faithful friends to tell him his faults. Chrysostom suffered himself to be admonished and corrected by an old woman. He that is to know himself, must have faithful friends, or bitter enemies : and the divine Spirit only can enable him to make a proper use of them.

XIV. Imitate nobody in preaching. It is useful to hear good preachers, but to imitate their manner is not so. Every man is most powerful in his own natural character. In other sciences imitation is good : here it is bad. Every man should consult his own genius, and cultivate it to the best of his ability. When a man is out of himself, then he is affected ; and affectation spoils every thing.

XV. Do what you say. Without this nobody believes you. Be the same out of the pulpit as in it : otherwise it will be cast in your teeth, “ he says and *does not*.” Be ye then doers of the word, and not preachers of it only. The Gospel is never so effectually recommended, as when we see it realized in the life and manners of the preacher.

Conclusion.

THE improvement of our time is the first consideration in human life ; for on time depends eternity. Nothing but time can make a scholar or a divine ; and he that makes the most of it, by some such method as is here recommended, is the wisest man,

Many never discover its value till they have lost it, and would give the whole world, if they had it, to recover it again. The only laudable avarice is that of our time; of which there have been many great examples. Cato Uticensis made it his practice to carry a book with him into the senate-house, that instead of hearing idle talk, he might read till business began. Plato and Sophron, the poet of Syracuse, laid at his pillow when he was dying. Abbas Dorotheus had a book open while he was eating, and by his bed side against he waked. Bernard said, "let us talk this hour out; on this hour eternity may depend." Beware of thieves, but especially of those who rob you of your time, for which they can never make you any amends. Read, note, be vigilant, be active, stock your memory; let no hour or minute be without its use. *Magna vitæ pars elabitur malè agentibus, maxima nihil agentibus, tota aliud agentibus*, i. e. in doing what is nothing to the purpose: Teach us, good Lord, so to value our time, and *number our days*, as to *apply our hearts unto wisdom*.

BISHOP ANDREWS.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HIM,

WITH THE USE MADE OF HIS CHARACTER, BY
BISHOP HORNE.



THE attention of Dr. Horne to the writings of this eminent prelate commenced in the early part of his life, and increased with his years; till he published Bishop *Andrews's* Devotions, nearly after the pattern of Dean *Stanhope's* edition.

Bishop Andrews was, without exception, the first preacher of his time; and his discourses and lectures, though somewhat obsolete, from their antiquity, in style and manner, are yet so excellent for the truth, learning, eloquence, and piety, found in them, that when we have laid down rules for a preacher, no character can be produced, in which they were better exemplified.

His funeral sermon was preached by Bishop Buckridge. It is there said, that they who spake truth of him could not but speak well of him; and if they spake falsely of him, his life and manners did confute them. As soon as he was put to school, he counted all the time lost that was not spent in his studies. He sat late, and arose at four in the morning: not like moderns at seven or eight, with their heads and stomachs aching—*quinondum hesternam edormiverunt crapulam*. He loved not the things of this world; though he had them as a steward. He sent alms under other mens' names: he stayed not till the poor sought him, but he first sought them.

In most of his sermons he was so careful and exact, that there were few of them which were not thrice between the hammer and the anvil, before they were preached. He ever mishked often and

loose preaching, without proper study of antiquity; and used to say, that if he preached twice on a Sunday, he prated once. He thought the word of God was never well enough handled, and the work of God never well enough done, till it received his utmost care and circumspection. When he could not preach, he went but little to court: that only is a priest's business there. After he had an episcopal house, with a chapel, he kept monthly communions inviolably, though he received at court the same month. It was his custom to offer twice at the altar; and he gave his servants money that it might not be a burthen to them.

He privately complained much of three sins: usury, from which he withdrew many: simony, and sacrilege; wherein the reformed were suffering correction and chastisement from God: and he wished some person would collect an account of the families so raised and ruined*.

His life was in a great measure a life of prayer; and his book of private devotions, composed in Greek and Latin, for his own daily use, was, towards the conclusion of his life, scarcely ever out of his hands. In the time of his fever and last sickness, besides the prayers which were often read to him, in which he repeated the Confession and other parts with an audible voice so long as his strength served; he did, as was well observed by certain tokens in him, continually pray to himself, though he seemed otherwise to rest or slumber; and when he could pray no longer with his voice, by lifting up his eyes and hands he prayed still; and when they failed, he still prayed with his heart, till it pleased God to take his blessed soul to himself.

The Puritans of his time called his doctrine atheistical, irrational, and worse than that of Arminius. He had foretold the destruction of the church of England by their means, in a sermon before the clergy in the year 1593; where, after an account of them and their preachings, he says—*Nisi doctrinæ vocî attenditis, idque maturè, BREVI nulla futura est omnino, cui (si maximè ve-*

* This was afterwards done (perhaps in consequence of what Bishop Andrews had said) by Sir Henry Spelman, who has written largely upon the subject in several of his works, and has been much attended to. There is a Treatise, the publication of which was omitted when his Posthumous Works were collected, under the title of the *History and Fate of Sacrilege*: in which there is a curious chapter on the Great Sacrilege of Henry VIII. with the consequences to the king, and his agents, and the lords that voted in his parliaments, and to the whole kingdom, particularly to the poor. Some just Remarks are added on the contrary Spirit in Queen Elizabeth.

litis), *possitis attendere*—but that a Babel should be erected instead of Sion*.

In the preface to an edition of his Lectures, it is well observed of the eloquence of the pulpit, that the abuse of it is worse than that of the stage. For as *faith cometh by hearing*, so doth infidelity; and that by hearing the word of God; by hearing it perverted; not rightly opened, nor well applied. So Mr. *Herbert* says, sermons are no indifferent things; people are either the better or the worse for them. When any disturbance or sedition was meditated by the saints, tickets were dispatched to the parsons, to preach and pray up the thing designed. King James the 1st, for twelve entire years together, during his residence in Scotland (his reign we can hardly call it) prayed to God upon his knees before every sermon he was to hear, that he might hear nothing from the preacher that might afterwards grieve him. But after his coming into England, he said his case was so much altered, that it was his prayer to edify by what he heard. In his *Βασιλδαρον*, Lib. II. p. 41, 42. he gives to his son Charles this character of the Puritans:—“take heed of such Puritans, very pests in the church and in the commonwealth; whom no deserts can oblige, nor oaths or promises bind; breathing nothing but sedition and calumnies, aspiring without measure, railing without reason, and making their own imagination the square of their conscience.”

* From a passage in the folio of his English Discourses, he appears also to have foreseen and predicted, that the government of this country would at length be swallowed up by the prevailing power of the third estate; which actually came to pass about forty years after. In a Discourse on Judges xvii. 6. “There was then no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes,” in pleading for the necessity of preserving the power of the crown inviolate over the three estates, in the year 1606, he has the following remarkable words:—“Of those three estates, that which swayeth most, doth in a manner overtop the rest, and like a foregrown member depriveth the other of their proportion of growth. The world hath seen it in two already (the *Spiritual Lords*, and the *Barons*) and shall daily more and more see it in the third. Requisite, therefore, there be one over all, that is none of all, but a common Father to all, that may poise and keep them all in *æquilibre*, that so all the estates may be evenly balanced.” See p. 122 of the Appendix.

A NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

Bishop Horne, in the early part of his life, found himself so much informed by studying all the works of Bishop Andrews, and so animated by his example, that he became strongly possessed with the desire of making himself useful as a preacher in the church of England, after the pattern of this learned prelate. To his notes on the life of Bishop Andrews, he added a prayer to God for grace and help to enable him to sow the sincere word of life in the hearts of men ; and that the remembrance of this holy Bishop might stir him up ever more and more to follow his example, in labour, in diligence, in devotion and charity ; that so he might be found worthy at last to *sit at his feet* in a better world. His petition was fulfilled in every respect, so far as our observation reaches : but whether he will sit at the feet of Bishop Andrews, or whether Bishop Andrews will sit at his feet, none but the great Judge of both can determine, who will reward them according to their works.

Bishop Andrews is reported to have been well learned in fifteen languages, ancient and modern ; and to have been the greatest civilian, as well as the best preacher, of his time ; and they who best knew how to praise him, said, his character never was exceeded in any of the three capacities in which he excelled ; that is, as *Doctor Andrews* in the schools, *Bishop Andrews* in the pulpit, and *Saint Andrews* in the closet.

He has three sermons upon the Passion of Christ ; one of which, on Lam. i. 12. is justly reputed the highest wrought discourse extant on that great subject ; and Bishop Horne took a delight in preaching it in modern language.

ELENCHUS MATERIÆ THEOLOGICÆ ;

A

SHORT INDEX TO THE MATTER OF DIVINITY.

DIVINITY makes known to us the *kingdom of God*.

1. His *celestial* or invisible kingdom, over angels and spirits.
2. His *ecclesiastical*, over the church upon earth, which is the body of Christ in its militant state.
3. His *political* kingdom, over the governments of the world, as King of kings and Lord of lords.
4. His *spiritual* kingdom, of grace in the hearts of men, to direct and assist them in the conflict between the flesh and the spirit : in which view, every individual man is a state by himself, a church in a single person.

All these several polities should bear the image as nearly as may be of the *celestial* government, in which *order* and *concord* are consummate and without interruption.

It makes known to us also the KINGDOM of SATAN, in opposition to that of the Blessed Trinity. Its characters are these following :

1. As God is the fountain of good, this is the fountain of evil.
2. God creates in goodness : Satan destroys in malice.
3. The angels of God minister to the salvation of believers ; the evil angels tempt them to sin.
4. The Son of God redeems from death : Satan draws men back to perdition.
5. Christ is the head of his body the church : Satan is the head of the whole body of *Antichrist*, and worketh in all the children of disobedience.
6. The divine Spirit purifies the heart by faith ; Satan pollutes it by infidelity.

7. The Son, being the wisdom of God, wins us thereby to salvation : Satan works by fraud and cunning for our seduction.

8. The good Spirit edifies ; the evil spirit subverts.

9. The one unites ; the other separates.

The duties of the Christian life are all comprized under the three Graces of

FAITH, HOPE, and CHARITY.

FAITH opens the door of heaven, and is our evidence of things not seen—yet is capable of *full assurance*. It lies between knowledge and opinion. Actual knowledge of the things of God, is reserved for another life : opinion is a state of ignorance, such as the Heathens were under ; and such as they are now in, who put themselves into the state of Heathens. Faith is spiritual ; and as such contrary to that fleshly or worldly wisdom, which is according to the lusts of man. The Jews are at present incapable of it, from that hardness of heart into which they are fallen, in consequence of having sought righteousness from the works of the ceremonial law.

“ Faith worketh in us,”

1. Righteousness, which is the fruit of faith, and can arise from no other principle.

2. Peace of conscience, through a sense of the forgiveness of sin.

3. Certainty in respect to the Scriptures.

4. Ready and pure obedience to the will of God.

5. The true fear of God, though we see him not.

6. It produces contempt of this world, being the victory that overcometh the world.

7. It therefore gives constancy under all trials ; it endures as seeing him that is invisible.

8. Moderation in prosperity.

9. Distrust of our own powers.

10. Full confidence in the divine mercy.

“ Faith is nourished and increased,”

1. By frequent prayer.

2. By frequent thanksgiving.

3. By the Holy Eucharist.

4. By that mortification which keeps us separate from the world.

5. By the reading of the Scriptures.

6. By daily meditation on heavenly things.

7. By acts of love and charity.

“ Lord increase our faith !”

HOPE is that part of a living faith, by which we expect things to come, according to the promises of God. It lies between the two extremes of presumption and despair. It is a reasonable virtue, not an enthusiastic or groundless persuasion of the mind, like presumption and despair. It has the same effect in the Christian as in the husbandman, who ploweth and soweth in expectation of the harvest; and spares neither labour nor expence. So the Christian is never weary of well doing; knowing that we shall reap if we faint not. It bears sufferings with cheerfulness, as knowing that all the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. It is the staff of life, to support the steps of those who would otherwise faint in their journey through this wilderness: it presents daily to the mind the promises and blessings of Canaan.

CHARITY, is the love of God for himself, and the love of man for the love of God; which is best shewn by helping him forward in the way of his salvation. No man loves God who does not love his neighbour; nor can any love his neighbour truly who does not first love God. Charity gives perfection to the will, as faith does to the understanding. Faith begets charity, and charity increases faith; which without charity will go out, as a lamp that has no oil. By sin faith is darkened, and by degrees totally extinguished. Faith increased renders charity vigorous: faith is the root; the works of charity are the branches bearing fruit; and the branches can bear no fruit, but so far only as the root supplies them with sap. Without this, they dry up and are withered.

Without these, man is all sin, or has nothing toward salvation.

DIRECTIONS

FOR

EXTRACTING AND APPLYING PROFITABLY THE MATTER OF A TEXT;

WITH AN EXAMPLE.



THE Scripture itself teaches us how this is to be done :

Rom. xv. 4. " Whatsoever things were written aforetime were
" written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort
" of the Scriptures might have hope."

1 Cor. x. 11. " These things happened unto them for en-
" samples, and they are written for our admonition."

2 Tim. iii. 16. " All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,
" and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for
" instruction in righteousness :

" That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished
" unto all good works."

Hence we learn for what purposes the Scriptures are intended ;
and consequently, that they are to be used for " doctrine," or
teaching ; for " reproof ;" for " correction ;" for " instruction in
righteousness ;" for " comfort," and " admonition."

I. *Προς διδασκαλιαν*, for DOCTRINE. The words teach, that
we should always be ready to publish the truth of the Gospel.
2. Even though we should lose all by so doing. 3. Christ and
his truth are above all that is in the world, even life itself. 4.
That there is eternal punishment for those who are tempted to
deny him. 5. That we need not fear, because God always hath
us under his care, so that none can hurt us till he permits. 6.
This we may be sure of, because even the least things, the smallest
of creatures, seemingly insignificant, have his regard ; much more
we.

II. Προς ελεγχον, for REPROOF ; i. e. *confutation on conviction.*

1. Of those who think it sufficient to believe with the heart, but palliate and dissemble with men, as times and interests serve—as in persecution—“with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” 2. For the confutation of Epicureans, who remove God from the government of the world. 3. Of Stoics, who govern the world by fate. 4. Against those who believe chance and fortune. 5. Those who hold only a general providence, not descending to minute particulars. 6. Those who trust more to worldly helps, than to the power of God, which made and preserves even the hairs of our heads. 7. Those who cruelly or inconsiderately destroy those creatures, which it is the care of God to preserve,

III. Προς παιδειαν—*ad vitæ morumque institutionem.*—1. To have the true fear of God before our eyes: to meditate constantly on the torments prepared for those who deny Christ; that we may amend our sinful lives. 2. That we may learn to despise worldly greatness, lest we lose our souls for the preservation of it—therefore to leave all for him and his glorious kingdom. 3. To think of the presence of God ready at hand to help—to implore his assistance, and be firmly persuaded our actions are governed and guided by him.—that there is no danger from which he cannot secure or deliver us.

IV. Προς επανορθωσιν, CORRECTION. 1. Of the negligence of those who seek not by earnest prayer for that pure love of God which will enable them to part with life itself; and for that better sort of fear which is proper to children toward their parent—this to be done more especially in times of danger—that they may endure unto the end and be saved. 2. Of the blindness of such as do not see the care of God’s providence in the government of the world. 3. Of the ingratitude of those who do not constantly acknowledge it with thankfulness. 4. Of those who abuse any of the creatures of God. Thus we are corrected in our mistakes, and spurred on to attention and diligence.

V. Προς Παρακλησιν—for COMFORT. Is it not a great consolation under trials and afflictions, that God is not unmindful of us; that we and all our concerns are in the hands of him, who

careth for us ; and so careth, that not an hair falls to the ground without him ?

Let it be observed that all things in the Scriptures are to be brought home to the present state of the church, kingdom, town, parish, university, college, family, and to the heart of each individual. The Scripture has something for every person, condition, situation, that ever was or ever shall be.

Those of parts and capacity, who desire to learn, find doctrines of heavenly philosophy—those who have erred in faith or practice, find sharp reproof—the simple and the humble, who aspire to no great heights, but are solicitous to live righteously, find instruction, *παιδείαν*—those who know the truth but are dull and heavy, find exhortations and reproofs—those who are in sorrow and affliction, find consolation—histories of that which is past shew what is to be expected, and so serve *προς νουθεσίαν*, for warning and admonition of dangers and deliverances. See 1 Cor. x. 11.

Doctrine promotes knowledge ; *reproof* reclaims the wanderer, *instruction* sets forward in the path of life ; *correction* calls sinners to repentance ; *consolation* raises the weak and afflicted to hope and gladness. Here is every thing that can be wanted to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

Lord teach our ignorance, reprove our errors, instruct us unto righteousness, quicken our sloth, comfort our sorrows—thou art good and gracious ; O teach us thy statutes.

ENTHUSIASM.

1. *What it is.*

ENTHUSIASM is the vice of a mind falsely supposing itself under the immediate inspiration of God. It is above the use of ordinances; and has a near alliance with Schism, in which it commonly ends. It is the peculiar engine of the devil, by which he does most harm. His kingdom is best advanced, when he can pass his delusions for the dictates of the Holy Ghost. He has many ways of tempting men to sin: but if any pleases him most, it is when he is taken for the spirit of God; as of old in the Hea-then oracles.

2. *The usual Causes of it.*

Enthusiasm is bred in these days from ignorance of the Scripture, and of Christian antiquity. The regular way to true piety is by knowledge, by the *purifying of the heart by faith* (Acts xv. 9.) and hearing the word of truth rightly divided. There is no real enthusiasm till we are taken off from the word, and have assumed some other principle of knowledge. Labour therefore in that, and never attempt to set up without it. They who know not the marks of the true spirit, and would yet be doing great things in an extraordinary character, are in danger from the evil spirit; who takes advantage of that zeal which is without knowledge, and turns it to his own purposes. Not understanding rightly the means of grace, or thinking them below their attention, they claim the grace of God without the means; which being contrary to his will, who has appointed both an inward and an outward religion, accommodated to the soul and body of man, it is not strange if they get something else instead of it. Negligence in some of the clergy of the church, and the want of discipline,

gives offence to those who are too ready to seek it: in which case they run after some better way, and are easily made a prey of.

The Marks of Enthusiasm.

It affects great and extraordinary fervours of devotion, above the measure of other men; and discourages the piety of sober Christians, as formal and lifeless. The proof of its pretensions being not in its fruits, but in its feelings, which are evidence only to the person himself; it refuses to be brought to a trial, and so is above conviction. Thus did the *Montanists*, when the Catholic bishops would have exorcised *Maximilla*. *G. Keith* accepted the repeated challenges of the Quakers, and would have met them at Turner's-hall; but they shuffled and refused to come*. They are not obliged to answer any thing; having an inward testimony that they are right, and all others wrong; and to question this, is to *quench the spirit*, and despise prophesyings: so it is impossible they should be reclaimed.

Enthusiasm rarely fails to betray great contempt of the priesthood, hierarchy, government, discipline, and succession of the church; and depreciates the church itself, as if nothing were meant by it but a building with stone walls. It despises the necessary labour of study. Forty years were requisite to form an *Andrews*; but an ordinary person, if a gifted enthusiast, shall be far beyond him in a few days. Hence schools and universities may be laid aside. The enthusiast has charity for every thing but the church: because the church only has the form of sound doctrine, with the history of truth and error from the beginning; and so can bring to nothing their boasted sanctity and pretended revelations; therefore they cannot speak of the church with patience, nor bear with a churchman.

The affectation of superior austerity, is a grand delusion, by which deceivers impose upon the simple. The *Montanists*, in the first centuries, despised the Catholics as a carnal people, because they themselves ostentatiously practised greater mortification and severity. As to convulsions, roarings, ravings, and falling senseless on the ground, &c. these ever were the marks of a dæmoniac, not of the spirit of Christ, which is first pure, then peaceable. Montanus therefore was reckoned possessed; and the Quakers in this country had all the signs of it, as Mr. Leslie has

* See Leslie's Works, Vol. II. 253.

fully shewn in his writings against them, wherein a strange mystery of iniquity is detected. Few people know at this day what the Quakers were at their first setting out.

The Character of Enthusiasm.

ENTHUSIASM has no principle but imagination; to which it has committed itself: and when there is no rule but fancy and impulse, every thing a man does is right, and he can think himself in the exaltation of charity, when he is in the gall of bitterness. He rises to a sphere above others, from whence he looks down upon them with disdain, which he calls piety. From a loose, idle, and disorderly life (for so it hath often happened) he is converted without repentance, and commences teacher without knowledge. He finds latitudinarianism very convenient, and can take the colour of every company he is in. He thinks well of every thing but a churchman; yet he can keep himself within the church, while he makes his court to her enemies. He boasts that he has conquered the fear of man, when he is past shame or feeling.

A certain person, who after a profligate life, took to the reading of Mr. *Law*, without preparatory knowledge, fell into a state of great mortification; preferred fasting to the sacrament, and told his friends he received more benefit by it. He soon began to talk freely of the other sacrament; decried infant baptism, and all water baptism*: and the church having set apart Wednesdays and Fridays, as days of mortification, he fixed on Monday as his fasting day. He waited for new revelations to his mind, while he neglected that already given, which is sufficient for every purpose. He spake slightly of an acquaintance, as having once been in a fair way to be a Christian. The fact was this: that acquaintance had been instructed from his childhood in the Holy

* In a history of the church, during the three first centuries, by Mr. *Milner*, the following observation occurs on the sacrament of baptism:—"In Cyprian's time, to call baptism itself the new-birth was not very dangerous. In our age it is poison itself; for it has long been the fashion to suppose all baptized persons regenerate of course." P. 358. It does not appear how baptism and the new-birth can be separate things, when the express words of our blessed Saviour—BORN OF WATER—have joined them together: neither do we know who has been poisoned by any established false doctrine concerning baptism; when the church teaches us to pray for *spiritual regeneration*, and *heavenly virtues*, and that every baptized Christian may lead the rest of his life according to that beginning. If the Gospel does not promise the new-birth to water-baptism, where and when doth it teach us to expect it without baptism?

Scripture, which enabled him to see through the deception, and avoid it.

The Evils of Enthusiasm.

ENTHUSIASM has been the root of the greatest evils that have befallen the Christian church. From this arose the Popish legends of their saints, which have been used as instruments, in the hands of evil-minded persons, to induce them to reject the belief of the real miracles of Christ and his Apostles: and from hence our several sorts of Dissenters took their rise; till they were once settled and established, and then dropt it by degrees, because it would unsettle themselves. It is a perfect opposition to all rule or government; and there can be no order kept where it is admitted*.

Among the other evils of Enthusiasm, it is not the least, that a disgrace is thereby brought on all appearances of godly zeal, and Christian piety. An evil word goes out against a good man, and the effect of his labours is lessened, if not entirely defeated. The best gold may be brought under suspicion, if malice takes advantage of the counterfeits that are abroad, with design to poison the ignorant, who know not how to distinguish. Thus said the Jews of our blessed Saviour, "he hath a devil, and is mad, why hear ye him?" At the time of Christ's ministry many were possessed by devils; and the fact being true in general, would be credited of any particular: but the scandal was raised by persons

* Preface to the *Snake in the Grass*, p. 12.

"Extraordinary inspirations are not to be credited, unless vouchsafed by miracles, which God always sent to attest an extraordinary commission. And if they are pretended to come from him, and do not, we are sure they must come from the devil.

"Enthusiasts have no principles: they have no rule but their own fancy, which is strongest in madmen: and this they mistake for inspiration, and then their madness is at the height. It is as inconstant as the wind; for they can promise themselves nothing for an hour together.

"Enthusiasm is an art, by which we impose upon ourselves as well as upon others. They say a man may tell a lie, till he comes to believe it himself: and a strong enthusiastic habit may fix a man's thoughts upon a beloved object, till it dazzles his understanding, and glares so in his sight, that the worst absurdities will go down, and the highest blasphemy obtain the character of piety and devotion. It is a fatal mistake of the soul, and generally irrecoverable, when it falls in love with its own disease. In a çalentine, the unhappy patient mistakes an unfathomable ocean for a pleasant field, as the enthusiast mistakes presumption and blasphemy for holy contemplation and humility; which, in effect, is mistaking hell itself for heaven."—[From Bishop *Herne's* Remarks on the latter writings of Mr. *Law*.]

who had neither godliness nor honesty. And if he who spake as never man spake, and confirmed his word with miracles and signs, could not escape the foulest censure, the best man upon earth, be his caution and prudence what it will, can hardly preserve an uninjured reputation: they that scrupled not to call the Master of the house Beelzebub, will never spare those of his household. The character of a sober Christian will always be in danger from two sorts of people, the lukewarm, and the fanatic; from those who have too much religion, and those who have too little. With the former sort his piety will be lifeless and formal; and the latter will brand him for an enthusiast. Thus it was, and thus it ever will be: true piety, like all other virtue, is in the middle, between two extremes.

The Prevention and Cure.

The causes of Enthusiasm being known, its cure must be opposite to its causes, on the principle of what the physicians call *medicina contraria*. If Enthusiasm arises from ignorance of the Scripture, and the doctrine and discipline of the primitive church, let the Scripture be studied, and the religion of the first Christians enquired into. One way to be secured against any root of evil, is to see and consider the fruits of it; and the fruits of Enthusiasm, with all its extravagancies, were never more conspicuous than in our English Quakers; whose errors are completely laid open in Mr. *Leslie's Snake in the Grass*; a piece too curious and useful to be neglected: and there is a preface to it, (already quoted) describing the enthusiasm of *Antonia Bourignon*: shewing, from her example, the marks by which Enthusiasm may be known, and detecting it under all its disguises. To that preface the reader is referred for any thing that may be wanting in these short observations.

N. B. The above discourse, though excellent for its method and matter, is written with such abbreviations and references in the author's manuscript, that the Editor has been obliged sometimes to interpret, and sometimes to fill it up to the best of his judgment.

SCHISM.

TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE RELATING TO IT.



IT tends to subvert the kingdom of Christ. Matth. xii. 25. "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." It is a work of the flesh. 1 Cor. iii. 3. "Ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, διχοστασιαι, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" Gal. v. 19, 20. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies." 2 Tim. iv. 3. "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own LUSTS they shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But WATCH thou in all things, &c." 2 Pet. ii. 10. "The Lord reserves the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished; but chiefly them that walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government: presumptuous are they, self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." Jude, 8. "These filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." 11. "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain." 13. "They [the Apostles] told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit." Jam. iii. 13. "Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and

“ strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. From whence come wars and fightings (or brawlings) amongst you? come they not hence, even of your lusts which war in your members?”

Schism excludes from the kingdom of heaven. Gal. v. 20, 21. “ They that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven.” It is to be rewarded with the fire of judgment. John xv. 4. “ He that abideth not in the vine, is cast forth as as a branch, and is burned.” Heb. x. 25. “ Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.” St. Augustin, Serm. 11. on Matth. xii. 32. makes it the sin against the Holy Ghost. Schismatics are to be considered as exotics. Matth. xv. 13. “ Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.” They are *withered branches*. John xv. 6. *False brethren*. 2 Cor. ii. 26. “ False brethren unawares brought in.” Gal. ii. 4. Matth. vii. 15. “ Beware of false prophets that come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.” Acts xx. 29. “ Grievous wolves enter in, not sparing the flock.” Matth. xxiv. 11. “ Many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many.” 1 John iii. 14. “ He that loveth not, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” 1 Tim. vi. 3. “ If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according unto godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doating about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings (or, gallings one of another) of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.” Tit. i. 10. “ Many untuly and vain talkers and deceivers.” 1 John v. 14. “ This is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.—Woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh.” Mark ix. 42. “ It were better that a milstone were hanged about his neck, &c.” Phil. iv. 21. “ Salute every saint in Christ Jesus ;

“ in his body the church.” Tit. iii. 15. “ Greet them that love us in the faith.” Heb. xiii. 24. “ Salute them all that have the rule over you, and all the saints.” 1 Pet. v. 14. “ Greet ye one another with a kiss of CHARITY. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus.” As to those who are not in Christ Jesus, we are bound not to salute them. 2 John 10. “ Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God—If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your houses, neither bid him God speed.” Communion with them is forbidden, Gal. v. 12. “ I would they were even cut off that trouble you, *αταστας*—*Ἰουδαίους*, who disturb, raise factions, overturn, destroy.” 2 Thess. iii. 6. Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every BROTHER that walketh disorderly, (*αταξίως*, breaking his rank) and not after the TRADITION that he received from us.” v. 14. “ And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.” 2 Pet. iii. 17. “ Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Rom. xvi. 17. “ Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men.” Tim. iii. 10. “ A man that is an heretic after the first or second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself: *ἐξερραπίλαι*, he is turned out of the way.” Such are to be classed with heathens and publicans. Matth. xviii. 17. “ If he hear not the CHURCH, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” Luke xi. 23. “ He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.” Communion was forbidden with Korah. Numb. xvi. 26. “ Depart: pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.” All that

eat of the sacrifices of such are abominable. Hos. ix. 4. is spoken of the schismatical ten tribes and their offerings. 1 Cor. i. 10. "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions (Gr. SCHISMS) among you." Eph. iv. 2. "Forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Instances of Schismatics, &c. punished.

Satan first broke the unity in heaven, and was cast down to hell. Hatred is opposite to love. Cain, being of that wicked one, fell into envy, and slew his brother, in a quarrel which was altogether of a religious kind. He went out from the presence of God, i. e. from the church, as it then was, a fugitive, and a vagabond in the earth; and built a city, in a state of separation from that part of his family in which the church was continued in the line of Seth. The schism of Cain was continued till the flood came, and destroyed them all. Corruption became general, through the intermixture of the members of the church with the posterity of Cain, the people of the schism. The crime of Korah and his company was wholly that of schism: they sunk into the pit. Jeroboam and the ten tribes, who set up the calves against the one altar at Jerusalem, to secure their new government, were destroyed and extirpated for ever. The man of God (1 Kings xiii. 8, 9.) who was sent thither, was neither to eat nor drink at Bethel, the conventicle of the calf; but he did, and was slain for it (ver. 22.) It cannot be, that spiritual things should be common with the church and schism, when the communion even of earthly things was so strictly prohibited. The people of the Samaritan schism, who separated from the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, were numbered with the Heathens. Matth. x. 5. "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not." 2Chron. xxvi. 21. Uzziah, though king, for intruding into the priest's office, was struck with a leprosy, and cut off from the house of the Lord.

Images describing Schism and its consequences.

Col. ii. 19. The church is a body, holding with "the head, from which the whole, by means of joints and bands, having

“nourishment ministred, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.” The Spirit is from the head to all the members; so that if any member is separated from the body, it must lose the life of the body.

2. When a bough is separated from a tree, it no longer partakes of the life from the root. When it is cut off, it is soon withered; and when it is withered, its end is to be burned.

3. A ray of light shines by its communication with the sun: when it is cut off from that communication with the source of light, it shines no longer.

4. It is the same with a stream of water, which is soon dried up, when it communicates no longer with its fountain.

5. To be joined to any but the bridegroom of the church, is the sin of spiritual adultery; by which the members of Christ are made the members of an harlot. The chaste dove has but one mate: one family are in one house.

6. The ark of Noah was a figure of the church: there can be therefore no salvation out of the church, because there could be none out of the ark.

7. The seamless coat of Christ is not to be divided. 1 Kings xi. 30, 31. The prophet divides his coat, to signify the schism that should be among the tribes. Christ's coat was providentially not divided, to signify the unity that ought to be preserved in his church. We are to put on Christ entire; if the garment is torn, it must betray our nakedness.

8. Rahab was ordered to gather all her friends into her house, that they might be saved: if any were found out of it, they were to perish. Josh. ii. 18.

9. The Paschal Lamb was to be eaten in *one* house: none of it was to be cast out.

10. The old Jerusalem was a pattern of the new: there was one temple, and one altar; all the rest of the world were without.

11. The church of Christ is a fold of sheep, under the protection of the shepherd: if the sheep strays, it is in the way of the wolf.

Texts for Love and Unity, respecting the Church.

Ephes. iv. 4, 5. “There is one body, one spirit, one baptism.” Christ and the Father are one—these three are one—Christians are

to be one as they are. Psal. lxxviii. 7. God maketh men to be of one mind in a house. *In domo Dei, in ecclesiæ Christi, unanimes habitant, concordés et simplices perseverant.* Matth. xviii. 19. "If two of you shall AGREE touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." But how can he agree with any one, who is at variance with the body of the church, and with the whole fraternity? Christ was with the three in the furnace, who praised him with one heart, and one voice. He was with two Apostles in prison, and brought them out. Matt. v. 23. "When you stand praying, forgive, if you have any thing against any one, that your heavenly Father may forgive you." So again—"offer not your gift till you are first reconciled to your brother"—much more to the church itself. Peace was the legacy which Christ left to his church—"love one another."—"See that ye fall not out by the way."—"Though we have all faith, yet without love we are nothing."—"He that abideth in love, abideth in God, and God in him:" and we have no visible way of abiding in God, but by abiding with the church, with which he is present—"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." The working of miracles would avail nothing, without love keeping the commandments. "All the law and the prophets are fulfilled in this, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbour as thyself." Acts iv. 32. "The company of those that believed were of one heart, and of one mind." So when the Spirit descended, "they were all with one accord in one place." They were ordered to remain together in Jerusalem, where the visible church was, till they were endued with power from on high. John xvii. 20. Christ prayeth for all those that shall believe—that they may be *one*—that the world might thence believe that God had sent him—putting the proof of his mission, and the testimony of his religion, on the unity of his disciples. How great, then, must be the offence of exposing his religion to the contempt and disbelief of the world, by making divisions in his church!

Schism in the spiritual body of the church, is a greater scandal than corruption in manners; as in the natural body, a wound or solution of continuity, is worse than a corrupt humour. Bacon's Sentences, Vol. III. p. 295.

CONTROVERSY.

SOME RULES FOR THE STUDY OF IT.

I. **STRIP** the book of its trappings. Collect the arguments urged by the author, either of his own scheme, or against yours. Arrange them methodically; state them briefly, clearly, and fairly.

II. Mark diligently, and note down *concessions* made unawares in different parts of the work, which weaken or destroy the arguments on the other side.

III. Discover his *drift* and *design*; to what sect he belongs; who are his friends; who applaud him; and who are applauded by him: whence he fetches his arguments, &c.

IV. Throw out what is nothing to the purpose, and fix upon the point on which the dispute turns. Find out the *jugulum causæ*, where one good stroke will do more than many pages of lax argumentation. A controvertist should be trained as the Arabians train a falcon to fasten upon the *throat* of the gazell, and there stick till the creature drops. See Goldsmith III. 85.

V. Examine whether the opinion *contended* for be not clogged with more difficulties, and liable to more objections than the opinion *opposed*.

VI. In writing controversy, go as far as you can with your antagonist; join with, and commend what is right in him. He that would do *good* by what he says, must oppose and contradict as little as possible; must make all allowances, and take things in the best light. He must avoid all reproachful language, all that is sarcastical or biting. This never did good from the pulpit or the press. The softest words make the deepest impression.

VOLTAIRE.

2 Cor. ii. 11. *We are not ignorant of his devices.*

I. VOLTAIRE scoffs at religion, from the abuses and corruptions of it among the Heathens. It should be shewn, by a true state of the case, how things were from the beginning, that it may be seen which was the original, and which the copy; how it happened that there was such a similitude between the true and the false; a similitude extending to all the nations of the earth; by which it is demonstrated, that as there was once one original language, of which all other languages were dialectical, so one and the same religion was once universal to all mankind. The Heathens carried off, what they afterwards corrupted by tradition more early than the written law. Voltaire turns all the errors of the copy to the reproach of the original; gives priority to the copy; and sneers at Jewish and Christian institutions under the cover of terms belonging to the Heathen. He finds circumcision among the Egyptians before Abraham; and derives baptism from the Indians, practising religious ablutions in the river Ganges. His object is to be rid of truth under the name of error; and to this ail his artifices are directed.

II. With this view, the abuses among the professors of Christianity, such as bitter controversies, wars, persecutions, massacres, superstitions, and legendary miracles of Rome, are all laid to the score of their religion, (though they arose in fact only from the corruption of it) as if religion produced nothing but bad fruits. If truth is disgraced by vice and hypocrisy, as it ever was and will be, he reports it to be in itself good for nothing. False logic confounds things; true logic distinguishes properly: the former is the logic of the dishonest, the latter of the wise and learned.

III. Works done at the command of God, are considered as done without his command, and then exclaimed against as severe and cruel. The executioner is guilty of no crime, when felons

are lawfully condemned by their judge: much less when the sentence is from the Judge of all the earth. Earthquakes and pestilences slay, indiscriminately, men, women, and children: but who accuses God of injustice on that account? All the mistakes and stretches of authority are magnified and swelled out with all his rhetoric, to make authority itself odious, [or transfer it by degrees to the hands of his friends; and all the world now sees how they use it.] What a strange appearance things will take, when we tell some circumstances of a story, and conceal the rest! If we tell of David's sin, as Voltaire delights to do, and suppress the sentence and the punishment passed upon it: for thus the Bible, which forbids murder and adultery, is made to encourage them.

IV. He ridicules the customs and manners of old times, because they do not agree with those of the present age. The same faults may be found with Homer, whose wisdom is yet very justly admired. Emblematical actions of the prophets, without their sense and meaning, may be made to appear strange and unreasonable, but are of great force and propriety when the reason is added. Tell the story of Jonah and the whale, independent of all other things; or throw it into the heap, among the wonders of Zoroaster and Lomonocodom, and it will be rejected, together with them. But when it is considered that our Saviour himself confirmed the truth of it, and made his use of it; that life, death, the resurrection, and the eternal salvation of mankind, are the most interesting subjects we know of, and merit every possible wonder of nature to explain to us the nature of them, the case is altered. What would be incredible, without the sequel of Christ's resurrection added to it, and considered with it, becomes just and reasonable: and thus every fair critic will consider it.

V. He collects industriously all the slips, blunders, and absurdities of commentators and defenders, and so endeavours to depreciate their labours, and render them contemptible, and religion through them: while all the excellent things a man hath said are overlooked, because he hath said some things that are weak.

VI. Difference of opinion, divisions, &c. do not prove that there is no such thing as truth; but rather that some men do not rightly *understand* it, and that others do not *like* it. When a man hates the wisdom of the Scripture, we hold it impossible

that he can understand it. Truth will never enter, where there is not the love of truth. 2 Thes. ii. 10. "They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Rom. iii. 3. "What if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?"

VII. The stiff-neckedness of the Jews is used as a handle against their law. The reason should be given why God chose such a people: why he gave them such a law. They are censured for their hatred of other nations: but they were taught to hate and avoid their idolatry; and with idolaters that hatred was unpardonable. He is always railing at the Jews, always vindicating the Heathens: he absolutely denies it to be possible, that Trajan, Titus, and Antoninus, each good men, could ever be guilty of persecution: but when a man's principles obliges him to deny facts, it is a sign he is on very bad ground. The supposed ignorance of the Jews has been much aggravated, by men who appear to have been more ignorant than they. A true and fair account of them should be given.

VIII. To answer what is said against mysteries, the true nature of a mystery should be shewn. So far as mysteries signify doctrines above the reason of man, they are unavoidable, if God is pleased to tell us any thing about himself, and the things of an invisible world. So far as mysteries signify *parables*, where truth is both hidden and explained (hidden from some, and explained to others) under the veil of material things, they are vehicles of instruction worthy of all admiration.

IX. Ridicule, and scorning, and reading with a view to sneer, are symptoms of a very bad disposition. Prov. xiv. 6. "A scorner seeketh wisdom and findeth it not." All scorn is from contempt; all contempt is from pride; and pride prevents improvement; so the scorner findeth no wisdom; the proud mind is so full of itself, that there is no room for any thing else. He that hateth another, is never so well pleased as when he can make him and his actions appear ridiculous; this is the never-failing effect of hatred and malice: and however incredible it may sound, we are certain it is a possible thing for man to *hate God*; to hate his ways and his word; and in that case he will proceed as aforesaid. In Rom. i. 31. the Heathens are said to have been $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma \upsilon\psi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$,

“ haters of God:” and ver. 25. to have “ changed the truth of “ God into a lye:” and Psalm lxxxi. 15. speaks of the “ haters “ of the Lord.” If there be any such persons now, as there undoubtedly have been formerly, Mr. Voltaire might be one of them; and all good men who read his bitter sarcasms against the people of God, the church of God, the providence of God, the word of God, and in short of every thing that belongs to him, may be left to judge for themselves. Every truth, however high and sacred, may be represented under some low and ridiculous idea; but this is no test.

X. When an author writes to the passions of mankind, instead of addressing himself to their reason, weak proofs will have great weight: the work may be sometimes done without any proofs: he wants none, who *follows the worse* while he *sees the better*; a weakness to which all men are subject, when passion has the dominion over them. Would a man use the meretricious arts of telling tales and novels, to *inflame* and *corrupt*, if he could use reason to convince? Why does he act thus, but because he is appealing to that corrupt judge, which every man carries about in his own breast; who is so easily cheated and bribed to favour the adverse party?

XI. The foundation of the New Testament being laid in the Old Testament, it is impossible to vilify the Old without striking at the New. Christ and his Apostles vouch for the Old Testament as the word of God: they appeal to it and build upon it. When therefore we see men at this work, we may be assured their design is to overturn Christianity.

XII. The objects of infidels and unfaithful critics against the inspiration of the *language* of the Scripture, should be obviated—See what *Middleton* and *Warburton* have thrown out.—The Scripture is not offered to us as the *sense* or *sentiment* of God, but as the *word of God*; communicated to us through persons, 2 Pet. iv. 21. “ who *spoke* as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” It is not only against the express declarations of the Scripture, but it is false philosophy to suppose that an inspired man speaks his own words. Luke xxi. 15. “ I will give you a *mouth* and wisdom.” That the divine spirit does actually inspire words, is demon-

strated by the gift of *languages* to the Apostles, which consist of *words only*.

The best way to confute and expose unbelievers, would be, not to answer their cavils, (which are without end) but to carry the war into the enemy's quarters; to shew plainly what infidelity is, whence it comes, how it maintains itself, &c. See *Massillon* Carême III. 277. The *History of Infidelity* would be a valuable work [beginning with the *Heathens*, and coming down to apostatising Christians.]

NOTE.

IF Bishop *Horne* had drawn out these reflections, he would have given us a compleat character of *Voltaire*, as an enemy to Christianity; which, from such a hand, would have been a choice work, both edifying and entertaining. But as no such thing is found among his manuscripts, the Editor of these Extracts has attempted a sketch, from his own knowledge of that author's writings.

The reason of *Voltaire* was to right reason what a monkey is to a man. The gesticulations of that animal provoke even a wise man to laughter; while his head at the same time is filled with mischief, and his heart is incapable of any one good affection. He had an imagination which inclined him to the writing of plays: his mind is therefore always upon a stage, and his object is to catch the attention of an audience rather by mimicry than by sense and argument. With a strong disposition to evil, he was no friend to restraint of any kind: so he abhorred all law but the law of *liberty*, which is no law; and all government but the government of *equality*, which is no government: and as religion is the support both of law and government, he hated that worst of all. He affected a great abhorrence of persecution, and recommended universal toleration; only with design to let evil loose among mankind: of which it required not half his wit to see the consequence. Give equal liberty to a tyger and twenty sheep: the sheep will all perish by degrees, and the tyger will thrive and fatten upon their blood. But he had a farther end in his affected clemency. He trained his readers to a passion for toleration, that they might take the same dislike with himself to the justice of God in the holy Scripture; which justice he has frequently ar-

raigned as intolerant; while he artfully imputes its operations to the bigotry and malignity of the Jews. He views the Hebrew nation only on one side, to pick out their faults, and make them odious; that when he has brought you to despise their characters, you may despise their laws and religion with them. If the people of God have an enemy, Voltaire always finds in that enemy something congenial with himself. He therefore takes part with the Egyptians against the Jews, with the Heathens against the Christians, with the Sectaries against the Church, with the Heretics against the Scripture, and with Atheists against God; having expressly defended the Atheist *Vanini*. He is as fond of levelling in learning as in politics. By making unjust associations, and putting things good and bad together, he leaves no value nor superiority in any thing. The Bible makes known to us the existence of angels: but what then? Kings had their couriers; so men thought they could do no less than give them to their deities. Mercury and Iris were the messengers of Heathenism; the Persians had their Peris; the Greeks had their dæmons, &c. In this way he puts truth and error together, till the mind of an unlearned reader, having no touchstone, is confounded and believes nothing. If Heathens speak with falsehood and malice, he uses their authority: if they say nothing, but treat Christianity with contemptuous silence, he uses that also; and thence infers, that the facts of Christianity are of no credit; for had they been true, the Heathens must have known them, and had they known them they must have confessed them. But why so? When Mr. Voltaire himself knew them without confessing them? See with what contemptuous indifference Festus, an Heathen, who was upon the spot, at the time when the facts of the Gospel were fresh, speaks of “one Jesus who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.” The penmen of the Scriptures, being above all fears and suspicions, make no secret of these things; but shew us, without reserve, how ignorant and foolish people despised and neglected the Gospel then, as they do now.

Mr. Voltaire is as unsound in his metaphysics as in his divinity. He tells us the belief of the existence of the human soul depends only on revelation: and consequently, when revelation is set aside, man is left without a soul. So far as the soul of man is a subject of philosophy, men dispute about that as about other things. He collects their sophisms and contradictions, and puts them together, till the whole subject appears ridiculous; and in this way

he rids himself of every thing serious ; as *Bayle*, his master, did before him.

He is very copious and frequent as a commentator on the Bible, on which few writers have bestowed more attention : but his method is this ; he takes a passage of the Scripture, which he distorts and perverts by every art of misrepresentation ; and when he thinks the Christian reader is entangled past recovery, he finishes all with a pious sneer—"but, these are things we must not look into—God does not write like us weak mortals—his wisdom is surrounded with clouds, obscure and respectable." However, witty as he thinks himself, his wits often forsake him, and he talks like a child or an idiot, when he gives his opinion of the doctrines or institutions of Christianity. The fall of man, he says, is the plaister we put upon all the maladies of the soul and the body : as if we should say, the fall of a man from a ladder, is the plaister we put upon his broken leg. Speaking about baptism, he tells us, "men who are always governed by their senses, easily imagine, that when the body is washed, the soul is washed." But this is the very thing, which men who are governed by their senses never did imagine, nor ever can ; because the washing of the soul is not an object of sense but of faith. To make light of this sacrament, he feigns absurd difficulties in regard to the administration of it ; as, whether a person under necessity in the deserts of Arabia might be baptized *with sand* ; or, if there were no clear water, whether he might be baptized with *muddy water*. Such criticisms as these naturally remind us, that the devil never *loved holy water*.

It is an undeniable fact, that the world is full of wickedness : but if we complain of it, as arising from the corruption of nature, Mr. *Voltaire* always finds religion worse than nature. Men are found to eat one another. How savage is the practice ! What a disgrace to human nature ! But, not at all, says Mr. *Voltaire* ; it arose from the custom of hunting, and hunting is natural to man. When men have hunted down stags and bears, they eat them : even so, when they had hunted down their enemies, how natural to eat them too ! But if you hold it absolutely wicked and detestable for man to eat the flesh of man, he finds an order for it in the Bible. In Ezek. xxxix. he hears God promising his people, that they shall eat, not only the horses of their enemies, but their enemies themselves, even their horsemen and soldiers : then he adds, *cela est positif*. But in the passage he refers to, those words are not addressed to the people : they are part of a proclamation to every

feathered fowl and every *beast of the field*, to come and devour the flesh of the slain.

The man who does not see the wisdom of God in the Bible, can never be expected to see much of his providence in the affairs of this world: he is accordingly very ingenious in his ways of evading it. There is an accursed malady, unknown to the Heathens of antiquity, with which Christians are visited for their wickedness; and dreadful havock it makes among the species. He that can impute all this to chance, might as well believe that gibbets grow naturally out of the brakes upon Hounslow-heath. But Mr. *Voltaire* proves it never could be intended for a judgment, because it first began in some small islands, where men and women lived together in perfect simplicity and innocence. Where and from whom he learned this piece of history, he does not tell us: but we may suppose, it was where he learned to read the prophet Ezekiel.

The religion of Mr. *Voltaire*, by which I mean his speculations about the Deity (for he had no other) was, as nearly as we can discover, the same with that of the Atheist *Vanini*. Matter being animated with immaterial qualities, this animation of the world is the Deity; and man is a part of the animated mass, with nothing withinside of him distinct from the animation of his body. Life is but as the active force of any other piece of machinery: which, as it was nothing before we were born, will be nothing after we are dead. Which doctrine he thus illustrates: Vulcan, as Homer relates, made certain tripods, which had a motion of their own upon their wheels, and came and went of themselves as occasion required. But, says he, Vulcan would have been reckoned a mean artist, if he had been obliged to put a little blacksmith withinside to move his tripods. In like manner, man being but a perfect piece of machinery, there is no need of a soul, like the *petite personne* within the tripod, to give him motion; and it is a reflection upon the Deity to suppose it.

As to the learning of *Voltaire*, it was nothing extraordinary: he had the way of making a great figure with a little. He affected universality; but it does not appear that he was deep in any one science: and though he was a ready poet, his mind was either too vitiated, or too narrow, to comprehend the sublilities of our Shakespeare, whom he held in utter contempt; and was therefore himself no true genius. He had a great and quick flow of words; he could put a high varnish upon shallow sense; by which the eyes of his readers are dazzled, as by a picture purposely

placed in a false light: he had the dexterity of a juggler in confounding the distinctions of good and evil; and giving to truth the appearance of falsehood. Before he died, he had a foretaste of the success of his writings; and, with the assurance of a prophet, foretold that *Age of Reason* and illumination, which is now come. As Simon the Sorcerer is said to have bewitched the people of *Samaria*, and deceived them into a high opinion of his own power and wisdom; so have the works of *Voltaire* unchristianed the French nation, and produced all the horrors of their revolution. Try his principles by the effects of them. His tender love of toleration has ended in a worse than Decian persecution: his liberty has generated a tyranny more absolute and cruel than that of Turkey or Algiers; his declamations against kings, as the enemies of peace, have produced such tumults and wars as never were known, and have nearly put the whole world into arms. This is the man, of whom the present philosophers of France now boast, that his writings have prevailed to the extirpation of Christianity. Twelve Apostles, they say, were necessary to propagate it, but one *Voltaire* was sufficient to overthrow it. But how little do they see into the merits of the cause! The Gospel is a system of faith; contrary to the wisdom of man, which is without faith; and its principles are so subversive of his passions and prejudices, that his nature will not yield to arguments; and it was therefore found necessary to overpower, and take his reason captive, by the force of miracles, before he could be prevailed upon to receive it: and the belief of its doctrines has been supported in the world from that day to this by the belief of its miracles. Let but this belief be removed, and man falls back naturally into his old corruption. Christianity had drawn him forcibly up hill; but his own gravity carries him down again; or, if the hand of man is wanting to set him agoing, a very weak hand will be sufficient. When a candle burns, and gives light to a house, many wonderful things contribute to the phænomenon. The fat of an animal is the work of the Creator; or, the wax of the bee, is made by his teaching; the wick is from the vegetable wool of a singular exotic tree; much labour of man is concerned in the composition; and the elements that inflame it are those by which the world is governed. But after all this apparatus, a child or a fool may put it out; and then boast that the family are left in darkness, and are running against one another. Such is the mighty achievement of Mr. *Voltaire*; but with this difference, that what is real darkness is called illumination: and there is no other between the two cases.

HINTS TO THE LEARNED,

ON EVIL-SPEAKING, RAILING, AND REPROACHING,
IN THEIR WRITINGS.

THIS practice is unreasonable upon all accounts. It is *needless*, because mild words will express the same thing full as well, and to better purpose. It is commonly *unjust*, loading men with more blame than it can be proved that they deserve; for every man who thinks wrong, is not a *fool*, nor is every man who acts wrong a *rogue*. It is *uncharitable*, as making the worst of every thing, and shewing no mercy. It is *mischievous*, as exciting the most pernicious of passions, and so becoming answerable for their effects. Upon the bench, it turns justice into abuse; in the pulpit, it turns zeal into animosity; in the mouth of a friend, it turns reproof into malignity. In disputation, it is prejudicial to the speaker, inflaming his own passions, so that he cannot make the best of his arguments. It is prejudicial to the hearer, because arguments, even when made the best of, yet so proposed, will never be admitted by him, unless he be a prodigy indeed of candour and meekness. It is prejudicial to truth, because strength of passion is generally thought to indicate in an advocate a distrust of his cause, and a scarcity of proof. It is a practice given into sometimes through sudden anger; sometimes through inveterate hatred; sometimes through revenge for an injury received; sometimes through self-conceit and contempt of others; sometimes through envy; sometimes through ambition and interest; sometimes through mere malignity, to cherish a *cacoëthes* of this kind, either inbred or acquired by custom; sometimes out of wantonness: and sometimes through negligence and inadvertency. It is directly opposite to the very nature and tenour of our religion; it is expressly condemned and prohibited by it as evil. No practice hath severer punishments denounced against it; it is in itself the symptom of a weak, distempered, and disordered mind; a stream

flowing from a bitter spring; a black smoke issuing from a volcano; it is the sure sign of a mean spirit, and low breeding; all wise, honest, and ingenuous persons detest and fly from him that useth it; who, being regarded as a hater of mankind, is accordingly hated by mankind, and one way or other fails not to be shrewdly requited by them in the end.

With regard to the examples sometimes alledged of the prophets, Apostles, and our Saviour Christ himself, it is to be considered, that they had a special commission, and a special illumination to discern the proper objects on which to exercise it. The whole tenour of their lives and actions demonstrated, that they spake upon such occasions, as moved not by prejudice, pique, and passion, but by a view to the glory of God, the good of men, and the necessity of the case. And whenever only their own private credit and interest were concerned, they opened not their mouths, unless to bless their persecutors.

When the crimes of men are such as call for a severity of language, it may be used by him who is commissioned for that purpose, upon a just cause and clear evidence, for the service of God, the maintenance of truth, the vindication of innocence, the preservation of public justice and peace, the amendment of our neighbour himself, or the preservation of others from contagion. And then we must be careful to observe the measures prescribed by truth, equity, and humanity; speaking no worse of a man than his actions, according to the most favourable construction of them, deserve, and the cause absolutely requireth.

See an excellent chapter in Taylor's *Worthy Communicant*, on *Speaking Good of our Neighbour*, p. 194. See also a Sermon of Dr. Jortin.

Non amo eorum indolem, qui nec in laudibus nec in probris modum ullum servant. Laudanda, sine invidiâ, quæ laudibus digna sunt; improbanda, sine malignitate, quæ a verò dissentiunt. Le Clerc Art. Crit. Vol. III. p. 274.

Some Considerations on Mr. LOCKE'S Scheme of deriving Government from an *Original Compact*.

1. **H**OOKER allows, that "to fathers within their private families, *nature* hath given a *supreme power*; for which cause," saith he, "we see throughout the world, even from the foundation thereof, all men have been taken as *lords* and lawful *kings* in their own houses*." He also thinks it probable, with Aristotle, that "as the chiefest person in every household was always as it were a *king*; so when numbers of households joined together in civil societies, *kings* were the first kind of governors amongst them." The question is, how these civil governors came by their power over a number of families dispersed, as mankind increased, and independent of one another? Here is supposed to be a necessity for *compact* to take place, in the appointment of one common head; and the chiefs of the several families are the *peers* between whom it is imagined to have been made, for their mutual interest and welfare.

As mankind multiplied, they were obliged to separate and disperse; which they did under their *natural* rulers the heads of families, clans, or tribes. This would fill the earth with *little* governments; and as there was land enough for them, who needed only to till the ground, and feed their flocks, thus they would continue, till quarrels arose, and one clan subdued others by force, and the *larger* governments arose by conquest, swallowed up the lesser into themselves, and then contended with and overthrew each other. In the Xth chapter of Genesis, we have an account of the families, clans, or *lesser* governments with which the earth was overspread, by the descendents of the sons of Noah: and at ver. 8, 9, 10. we find the kingdom or *larger* government of Babel arising by means of Nimrod, a *mighty one*, i. e. a sub-

* The same sentiment is expressed by Mr. Addison with his usual accuracy and elegance. "The obedience of children to their parents is the basis of all government, and is set forth as the measure of that obedience which we owe to those whom Providence hath placed over us." Spect. No. 189.

duer, a conqueror, a hunter, or persecutor and oppressor. Soon after arose Ashur, the founder of the Assyrian monarchy, which afterwards fell into that of Babylon, and became universal: thence it passed to the Persians, Grecians, and Romans; and so down to the present state of things in this world. And all this without any necessity of supposing an *original compact*, and without any sign of such compact appearing in history.

Mr. Locke asserts the free consent of every individual necessary to be had in founding governments; but soon after tells us, such consent is "next to impossible to be had." So that, according to his own account, his hypothesis stands on a supposition "next to impossible" to be realized; indeed, we may venture to say, *altogether* impossible, for the reasons he himself assigns. B. II. ch. 8.

The original compact being supposed to be made, each individual consents from thenceforth to be determined by the *majority* of the society. But as the majority may exceed the minority only by a single vote, consequently half the society may be *enslaved* by the other half, (that is, in fact, by the will of a single person, the casting voter) which seems to be an *infringement on liberty*, to which men born *free* and *equal* might scruple to submit.

Mr. Locke says, "no man can submit himself to the arbitrary power of another." B. II. ch. 11. Then can he not submit himself to any government whatsoever: for in every government the *legislature* is arbitrary, and is not bound by its own laws, which it can repeal, alter, dispense with, deny the benefit of habeas corpus, keep a man in Newgate, take his life by act of attainder, &c.

His farther reason (why no man can submit himself to the arbitrary power of another) is, that no man can give what he hath not, viz. a power over his own life. How then came any government possessed of a power of life and death? Divine right surely must come in here: what else can give to another that power over my life, which I have not in myself *?

* The author of an *Essay on Crimes and Punishments*, (one of the first pieces in which the politics now prevailing in France were published to the world) seeing that no government can exist without a power of life and death, supposes, that though one man has no power over his life, the aggregate of society may have it; which is the same as to say, that though one cypher does not make a sum, a multitude of cyphers may.

According to the plain state of this case, Gen. ix. 6. the taking away of man's life without law, is an act of rebellion against God, who is the giver of life, and made

He farther asserteth, that absolute subjection to any form of government is worse than anarchy, or a state of nature, "as he is in a much worse condition who is exposed to the arbitrary will of one man, who has the command of 10,000, than he who is exposed to the arbitrary power of 100,000 single men." But which is best for *the whole* 100,000, that their general or king should now and then command or do an hard thing by one of them, or that they should all be turned loose to devour each other, *a fortiori*, with regard to a nation, or the whole world, which, in such a case, would be an *aceldama*.

He tells us, (B. II. ch. 19) that if a government become arbitrary, it is *dissolved*; the people are again in a state of nature, and may again proceed to election. 1. Government may pass from one contending party to another, but its *dissolution* is a whim and a dream. 2. Dissolve it in England and Scotland, and see when the individuals would agree on another form*?

It is observable, that among the instances of mal-administration which dissolve government, Mr. Locke reckons that of corrupting the representatives, or their electors. "This," he says, "is to cut up government by the roots, and poison the very fountain of public security: it is a great breach of trust, and as *perfect a declaration of a design to subvert the government as is possibly to be met with*. To which if one shall add rewards and punishments visibly employed to the same end, and all the arts of perverted law made use of to take off and destroy all that stand in the way of such a design, and will not comply and consent to destroy the liberties of their country, *it will be past doubt what is doing*—and one cannot but see, that *he who has once attempted any such thing, cannot any longer be trusted*." B. II. ch. 19. p. 338. Now had Mr. Locke's principles been universally received, and had the good people

man in his own image. By himself, therefore, power is given to every government to take away the life of man by an act of justice, in virtue of a divine law: for the same authority which ordains the law, doth in so doing ordain power to execute the law, without which the law is nothing; and this we call the power of the *sword*. This power being original in God, the Apostle, *Rom. xiii. 6*, considers the civil magistrate as the minister of God for the execution of the divine law; and that to resist him is to resist the *ordinance of God*: therefore government is the ordinance of God. The argument is plain, and can never be answered. In the work above mentioned, *suicide* is considered as a *voluntary migration*; as when a man by choice leaves his parish, and goes to seek his fortune in another!

* Late events have taught us, that when the regular establishment of government is destroyed, factions arise in its stead, who murder and plunder one another.

of England acted up to them, in the days of Sir Robert Walpole, the nation had been a scene of confusion from that time to this*.

Mr. Locke says farther, that "till mischiefs are grown general, &c. the people who are *more disposed to suffer* than right themselves by resistance, are not apt to stir." *Ibid.* p. 345. "There is a slowness and aversion in people to quit their old constitution—and whatever provocations have made the crown to be taken from some of our princes' heads, they never carried the people so far as to place it in another line." p. 340. Here it is curious to see how great men differ. Mr. Hume thinks passive obedience should be preached, without mentioning any case wherein it is to give way to resistance; because the people are far more likely to rebel in the wrong place, than to omit doing it in the right; the bias of human nature being, in the judgment of that acute observer of it, towards rebellion. See his reflections on the reign of Charles I. at the close of his history of that reign. The same inference, by the way, follows from what Mr. Locke says, p. 340, that when people are oppressed, preach *jure divino*, and passive obedience, as much as you please, they will rebel. If this be so, we may very safely preach it; it can do no hurt to civil liberty. But surely conscience is some restraint; and if people will rebel as soon as rebellion is proper, though you preach obedience, they are in great danger of doing it before it is proper, if you preach resistance.

In the next page, Mr. Locke is again of opinion, that the people are *not* disposed to rebellion. "Great mistakes in the

* When the order of the constitution is violated, and bad principles are introduced, the government does not fall to pieces, but the different parts of it maintain themselves as well as they can by mutual encroachments; the commons, by taking something from the crown, and the crown, by substituting pecuniary influence, to supply what it loses of its lawful power. "We may give (says Mr. Hume) to this influence what name we please; we may call it by the invidious name of corruption and dependence: but some degree, and some kind of it, are *inseparable from the very nature of the Constitution, and necessary to the preservation of our own mixed government.*" I. 67. This seems to be the true account of the matter: and it hath appeared in fact, that when the crown hath thought proper to exert itself, it has carried every question in the house of commons. Mr. Hume was of opinion, that if ever the power should devolve to the commons, and a popular government be erected, we shall be overwhelmed with faction or tyranny, and "such a violent government cannot long subsist, but we shall at last, after infinite convulsions and civil wars, find repose in absolute monarchy, which it would have been happier for us to have established more peaceably from the beginning. Absolute monarchy is therefore the easiest death, the true euthanasia of the British constitution." I. 78.

ruling part, many wrong and inconvenient laws, and all the slips of human frailty will be borne by the people without mutiny or murmur." p. 341. Not if they were thoroughly persuaded, that all power was originally in them, and they might change the legislative as often as they pleased, but what *wrong and inconvenient laws* had *Moses* made, or of what *slips of human frailty* had he been guilty, when *Dathan* and *Abiram* asserted a design to subvert the constitution, and to make himself *arbitrary*, was so plain, that the people must see it, unless he "put out their eyes!" Numb. xvi. 13, 14.

To those who object the confusion, civil wars, &c. that must follow from Mr. Locke's principle, he answers, by comparing a ruler, who violates the constitution, to a robber, a pirate, a wolf, a polyphemus (p. 343); and is very witty on a supposition that *Ulysses*, as a prudent man, for the sake of peace, preached passive obedience to his companions in the den, &c. But the cases are not parallel, as none of his worthies are invested with any authority of any kind, to which obedience is due. And, by the comparisons, one would really think nothing was more common than for kings to cut or tear the throats of their subjects, and suck the blood, as it ran warm from the jugulars.

He who places all power in the people, says Mr. Locke, *makes the best fence against rebellion*. P. 341. How so? Why, because the ruler who breaks his trust, is *properly* the rebel; he does *rebelleire*, bring back that war, force, or violence, which it was the design of the original compact to drive and to keep away: for rebellion is not against *persons*, but against the *authority* lodged in the constitution and the laws. But can authority exist without a person to exist in? or can the laws execute themselves? We have an equal right to take away from the other side the *persons of rebels*; then may we leave *rebellion* and *authority*, in the abstract, to settle the matter by themselves: there will be no bloodshed between them. *Prerogative* and *privilege*, considered in the same way, without a crown and a parliament, that is, without any subject to inhere in, may be the two seconds; and that the combatants may have room enough, let them fight in infinite space. If the right of government be not inherent in the persons of governors, there can be no such thing as government upon earth*.

* This distinction between *persons* and *authority* is plainly calculated to produce changes of government by insurrections and rebellions. For if authority be not resident in persons, then may any person seize upon it without offence against any other person. It was actually so applied in the last century. It is the old distinction that raised the

To Mr. Locke's scheme of founding government upon compact among peers in a state of nature, it had been objected, that men never were in such a state. Mr. Locke is so obliging as to favour us with some instances of men in that state. As first, the *Floridans*, *Brasilians*, and *Cherokees* in America, who it seems have no kings, but chuse leaders as they want them in time of war. (p. 242.) It is probable that they may. But men at the beginning were not placed by their Maker in so miserable a state. It is a state, to which, by the loss of revelation, and other knowledge, through the divine judgments upon them, some generations of men have been reduced to run wild, like brutes, in the woods. This is not a state of *nature*, but the most *unnatural* state in the world, for creatures made in the image of God. And does a polite philosopher, in these enlightened days, send us to study politics under Cherokee tutors!

A second instance is the company that left Sparta, under the conduct of Palantus, whom by a free and equal vote they chose for their leader. The persons here alluded to were an extraordinary breed of bastards, begotten on the women of Sparta by certain young men sent home to cohabit with them promiscuously, from the Spartan army, detained at the siege of Messena, under a vow not to return till the city was taken. When the issue of this promiscuous concubinage came to years of maturity, partly having grace enough to be ashamed of their mothers, and partly afraid of being starved for want of an inheritance from their fathers, they chose Palantus, the pious author of the advice, for their general, seized upon Tarentum, drove out the original inhabitants, settled, grew seditious, and at last banished for ever that same Palantus, the cause of their birth, and the guide of their peregrinations. How many happy circumstances must concur to bring our posterity into this same Spartan state of nature, in order to erect a free and equal government? I say, our *posterity*; because we ourselves, having the misfortune to be already born of honest parents, must despair of so great a blessing*. Two other

rebellion against Charles I. and has been expressly condemned by the laws, which have obliged both *clergy*, *corporations*, and *militia* to "abhor that traitorous position of takings arms by the king's authority against his person, or against those that are commissioned by him."

* The narrative here referred to is very singular, and worth a farther inquiry. The hero of the tale is also called *Pbalantibus*, and the spurious race are called *Partbenii*, because they were born of unmarried women. They were engaged in a plot with the *Helots* for cutting off the inhabitants of Sparta, and taking possession for themselves; but the *Helots* betrayed them, and the miscarrying of this design occasioned their emigration;

instances produced by Mr. Locke are the founders of Rome and Venice. The former were a gang of robbers; the latter were the inhabitants of Padua, Aquileia, and other cities on the continent of Italy, driven thence by the Goths in the fifth century; consequently obliged to shift as they could, and chuse governors in their distress, when they were deprived of their natural ones, in the places where they lived before. 'There is no question but some men have been, and some may again, either bring themselves, or be brought by others, into this state of anarchy; in which case, they must get out of it as well as they can. But all Mr. Locke's instances are of men in an *unnatural* state; to which they were reduced by breaking or being forced away from civil government, which was in the world long before any of these instances happened. "From the beginning it was not so."

Mr. Locke says only (p. 250) it is *probable* men were naturally free, and *by their own consent* submitted to the government of their *father*, and of his *eldest son* after him, finding the *easiness* and *equality* of it. Here the fact is allowed, and the *compact*, it seems, made by the *tacit consent* of the childrent. So saith Bishop Hoadley: "If Adam's monarchy were founded upon, and supported by the *tacit consent* of his descendants, this amounts to such a *compact* as I am defending." See *Finishing Stroke*, p. 19. Confounding consent of *duty* with consent of *authority*. This did for the golden age: but afterwards when governors grew naughty, "men found it necessary to examine more carefully the original and rights of government, (p. 252) and find out ways to restrain, &c." So that this was only a *secondary* affair, and the original compact between peers in an independent state of nature is given up; only we must not say the *patria potestas* was by *divine right*, but by the *tacit consent* of the children; which was certainly given, unless *crying* could be interpreted into a dissent*.

Mr. Locke's great argument against the patriarchial scheme

It is curious to observe how fornication and sedition here go hand in hand, and how both together furnish Mr. Locke with an example which suits with his opinion on the origin of government.

* It was argued, that if government were the ordinance of God, and there could be no authority of government but from the consent of the governed, it would then follow, that the authority of God himself must be founded upon the consent of the people. And the advocates for *compact* did still persist, and went so far as to assert, that God became the God of the Hebrews in virtue of a *contract* which the people made with him at *Horeb*; that is, because the people chose him. Thus a consent of duty is turned into a consent of authority.

proceeds on a supposition, that its patrons held an *universal monarchy in a right line from Adam*, and desires to be shewn who that monarch now is. But this God never intended. Adam was ruler in his own family; but if a colony went off to a distance under one of his sons, *he* was the ruler *there*, and so on: which is sufficient to shew there could be no independent state of nature from the beginning. Afterwards, when conquest and usurpation made confusion, the general rule for the preservation of peace and order in the world could only be this, that the possessor had the right, if nobody could shew a better. And people at this day must be guided by the constitution and laws of their own country, obeying the supreme power, wherever it is placed, for conscience sake.

But after all, there can be no such thing as any permanent authority in any kind of government; if it be true, as Mr. Locke asserts (p. 255), that a man born under government, is as free as one dropped in the woods; because though his father, by compact, had passed over *his* liberty, he could do it only for *himself*, not for his children*, who, it seems, are free, and consequently under no obligation to obey God, when he commands them to be subject to the powers that be, till they have given their own consent, by compact with those powers. The man, who, when he comes of age, should act upon this principle, and plead an authority to transgress the laws because he had never consented to them, would either receive punishment, or be put into confinement as a person out of his wits.



A NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

[If a father have promised for his son, that he shall obey the law of God, we are sure that son can never be released from the obligation from any authority of his own. For the moral government of God is as wide as the world; and where the laws of God are known, every man is born subject to them; and he will be judged by those laws at last. Every civil government is erected in aid to this moral government of God; and thus the peace and security of the world is preserved, though the value of government to mankind be sometimes not known till it is lost; as

* This is a contradiction to what Mr. Locke had before asserted, concerning a *tacit consent of the children*.

men do not know the blessing of health till they have been sick. Authors argue about government, without remembering that they are under revelation. This has been the occasion of all our disputes: and we have seen from an event universally known, that when the principles which human philosophy has invented are realized, and brought to effect, they are found to have so little religion in them, that it is doubted whether they will consist with the being of a God.

It seems to have been the design of all Mr. Locke's arguments, not to obtain from history and reason the true original of government, nor to teach us how and why it is to be maintained in the world; but, in a supposed state of nature, the power of the populace, and the obligation of an imaginary compact, to lay a plausible foundation for insurrections and dissolutions. For this purpose, his principles were taken up and circulated. *Price* and *Priestley* wrote for them; and all their followers defend them. In the beginning of the present revolution in France, one of their friends, who visited them from England, reported of them in a news-paper, that they were wonderfully enlightened, and *talked like men who had read Locke*. It is probable they might; though *Locke* was transmitted to their reading through the writings of *Voltaire*. If what they have *acted*, hath been in consequence of what they had *read*, then is the merit of Mr. *Locke's* principles brought to an issue, which is very short, and level to every capacity: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

If the reader wishes to see natural right, natural liberty, and natural equality, farther exposed, we refer him to an excellent disquisition of *Soame Jenyns, Esq*; one of the best pieces which the present times have produced.]



AN INSTANCE OF
MORAL DEMONSTRATION,

OR, A

CONJUGATION OF PROBABILITIES,
PROVING THAT THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST IS
FROM GOD.

FROM BISHOP TAYLOR'S DUCTOR DUBITANTIUM.

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SECT. 12.

THIS discourse, of all the disputables in the world, shall require the fewest things to be granted; even nothing but what was evident, even nothing but the very subject of the question, *viz.* that there was such a man as Jesus Christ; that he pretended such things and taught such doctrines: for he that will prove these things to be from God, must be allowed that they were from something or other. But this postulate I do not ask for need, but for order's sake and art; for what the histories of that age reported as a public affair, as one of the most eminent transactions of the world, that which made so much noise, which caused so many changes, which occasioned so many wars, which divided so many hearts, which altered so many families, which procured so many deaths, which obtained so many laws in favour, and suffered so many rescripts in the disfavour of its self; that which was not done in a corner, but was thirty-three years and more in acting; which caused so many sects, and was opposed by so much art, and so much power, that it might not grow, which filled the world with noise, which effected such great changes in the bodies of men, by curing the diseased, and smiting the contumacious or the hypocrites; which drew so many eyes, and filled so many tongues, and employed so many pens, and was the care and the question of the whole world at that time, and immediately after; that which

was consigned by public acts and records of courts, which was in the books of friends and enemies, which came accompanied and remarked with eclipses and stars and prodigies of heaven and earth; that which the Jews even in spite and against their wills confessed, and which the witty adversaries intending to overthrow, could never so much as challenge of want of truth in the matter of fact and story; that which they who are infinitely concerned that it should not be believed, or more, that it had never been, do yet only labour to make to appear not to have been divine: certainly, this thing is so certain that it was, that the defenders of it need not account it a kindness to have it presupposed; for never was any story in the world that had so many degrees of credibility, as the story of the person, life and death of Jesus Christ; and if he had not been a true prophet, yet that he was in the world, and said and did such things cannot be denied; for even concerning Mahomet, we make no question but he was in the world, and led a great part of mankind after him, and what was less proved we infinitely believe; and what all men say, and no man denies, and was notorious in itself, of this we may make further inquiries whether it was all that which it pretended, for that it did make pretences and was in the world, needs no more probation.

13. But now whether Jesus Christ was sent from God, and delivered the will of God, we are to take accounts from all the things of the world which were on him, or about him, or from him. Consider first his person: he was foretold by all the prophets: he, I say, for that appears by the event, and the correspondencies of their sayings to his person: he was described by infallible characterisms which did fit him, and did never fit any but him; for when he was born, then was the fulness of time, and the Messiah was expected at the time when Jesus did appear, which gave occasion to many of the godly then to wait for him, and to hope to live till the time of his revelation: and they did so, and with a spirit of prophecy which their own nation did confess and honour, glorified God at the revelation: and the most excellent and devout persons that were conspicuous for their piety did then rejoice in him, and confess him; and the expectation of him at that time was so public and famous, that it gave occasion to divers impostors to abuse the credulity of the people in pretending to be the Messiah; but not only the predictions of the time, and the perfect synchronisms did point him out, but at his birth a strange star appeared, which guided certain Levantine princes and sages

to the inquiry after him; a strange star which had an irregular place and an irregular motion, that came by design, and acted by counsel, the counsel of the Almighty Guide; it moved from place to place, till it stood just over the house where the babe did sleep; a star of which the Heathen knew much, who knew nothing of him; a star which Chalcidius affirmed to have signified the descent of God for the salvation of man; a star that guided the wise Chaldees to worship him with gifts (as the same disciple of Plato does affirm, and) as the holy Scriptures deliver: and this star could be no secret; it troubled all the country; it put Herod upon strange arts of security for his kingdom; it effected a sad tragedy accidentally, for it occasioned the death of all the little babes in the city and voisinage of Bethlehem: but the birth of this young child, which was thus glorified by a star, was also signified by an angel, and was effected by the holy Spirit of God, in a manner which was in itself supernatural; a virgin was his mother, and God was his father, and his beginning was miraculous; and this matter of his birth of a virgin was proved to an interested and jealous person, even to Joseph the supposed father of Jesus; it was affirmed publicly by all his family, and by all his disciples, and published in the midst of all his enemies, who by no artifice could reprove it; a matter so famous, that when it was urged as an argument to prove Jesus to be the Messias, by the force of a prophecy in Isaiah, "a virgin shall conceive a son," they who obstinately refused to admit him, did not deny the matter of fact, but denied that it was so meant by the prophet, which, if it were true, can only prove that Jesus was more excellent than was foretold by the prophets, but that there was nothing less in him than was to be in the Messias; it was a matter so famous, that the Arabian physicians, who can affirm no such things of their Mahomet, and yet not being able to deny it to be true of the holy Jesus, endeavour to elevate and lessen the thing, by saying, It is not wholly beyond the force of nature, that a virgin should conceive, so that it was on all hands undeniable, that the mother of Jesus was a virgin, a mother without a man. This is that Jesus at whose presence before he was born, a babe in his mother's belly also did leap for joy, who was also a person extraordinary himself, conceived in his mother's old age, after a long barrenness, signified by an angel in the temple, to his father officiating in his priestly office, who was also struck dumb for his not present believing: all the people saw it, and all his kindred were

witnesses of his restitution, and he was named by the angel, and his office declared him to be the fore-runner of the holy Jesus; and this also was foretold by one of the old prophets; for the whole story of this divine person is a chain of providence and wonder, every link of which is a verification of a prophecy, and all of it is that thing which from Adam to the birth of Jesus was pointed at and hinted by all the prophets, whose words in him passed perfectly into the event. This is that Jesus who, as he was born without a father, so he was learned without a master; he was a man without age, a doctor in a child's garment, disputing in the sanctuary at twelve years old. He was a sojourner in Egypt, because the poor babe, born of an indigent mother, was a formidable rival to a potent king; and this fear could not come from the design of the infant, but must needs arise from the illustriousness of the birth, and the prophecies of the child, and the sayings of the learned, and the journey of the wise men, and the decrees of God: this journey and the return were both managed by the conduct of an angel and a divine dream, for to the Son of God all the angels did rejoice to minister. This blessed person made thus excellent by his Father, and glorious by miraculous consignations, and illustrious by the ministry of heavenly spirits, and proclaimed to Mary and to Joseph by two angels, to the shepherds by a multitude of the heavenly host, to the wise men by a prophecy and by a star, to the Jews by the shepherds, to the Gentiles by the three wise men, to Herod by the doctors of the law, and to himself perfectly known by the inhabiting his human nature in the bosom and heart of God, and by the fulness of the Spirit of God, was yet pleased for thirty years together to live an humble, a laborious, a chaste and a devout, a regular and an even, a wise and exemplar, a pious and an obscure life, without complaint, without sin, without design of fame, or grandeur of spirit, till the time came that the clefts of the rock were to open, and the diamond give its lustre, and be worn in the diadems of kings, and then this person was wholly admirable; for he was ushered into the world by the voice of a loud crier in the wilderness, a person austere and wise, of a strange life, full of holiness and full of hardness, and a great preacher of righteousness, a man believed by all the people that he came from God, one who in his own nation gathered disciples publicly, and (which amongst them was a great matter) he was the doctor of a new institution, and baptized all the country, yet this man so great, so revered, so fol-

lowed, so listened to by king and people, by doctors and by idiots, by Pharisees and Sadducees, this man preached Jesus to the people, pointed out the Lamb of God, told that he must increase, and himself from all that fame must retire to give him place; he received him to baptism, after having with duty and modesty declared his own unworthiness to give, but rather a worthiness to receive baptism from the holy hands of Jesus; but at the solemnity God sent down the holy Spirit upon his only Son, and by a voice from heaven, a voice of thunder (and God was in that voice) declared that this was his Son, and that he was delighted in him. This voice from heaven was such, so evident, so certain a conviction of what it did intend to prove, so known and accepted as the way of divine revelation under the second temple, that at that time every man that desired a sign honestly, would have been satisfied with such a voice; it being the testimony by which God made all extraordinaries to be credible to his people from the days of Ezra, to the death of the nation; and that there was such a voice not only then, but divers times after, was as certain, and made as evident as things of that nature can ordinarily be made. For it being a matter of fact, cannot be supposed infinite, but limited to time and place, heard by a certain number of persons, and was as a clap of thunder upon ordinary accounts, which could be heard but by those who were within the sphere of its own activity; and reported by those to others, who are to give testimony as testimonies are required, which are credible under the test of two or three disinterested, honest, and true men; and though this was done in the presence of more, and oftener than once, yet it was a divine testimony but at first, but is to be conveyed by the means of men; and as God thundered from heaven at the giving of the Law, though that he did so, we have notice only from the Books of Moses received from the Jewish nation; so he did in the days of the Baptist, and so he did to Peter, James, and John, and so he did in the presence of the Pharisees and many of the common people; and as it is not to be supposed that all these would join their divided interests, for and against themselves for the verification of a lye, so if they would have done it, they could not have done it without reproof of their own parties, who would have been glad by the discovery only to disgrace the whole story; but if the report of honest and just men so reputed, may be questioned for matter of fact, or may not be accounted sufficient

to make faith when there is no pretence of men to the contrary, besides that we can have no story transmitted to us, no records kept, no acts of courts, no narratives of the days of old, no traditions of our fathers; so there could not be left in nature any usual instrument whereby God could, after the manner of men, declare his own will to us, but either we should never know the will of heaven upon earth, or it must be that God must not only tell it once but always, and not only always to some men, but always to all men; and then as there would be no use of history, or the honesty of men, and their faithfulness in telling any act of God in declaration of his will, so there would be perpetual necessity of miracles, and we could not serve God directly with our understanding, for there would be no such thing as faith, that is, of assent without conviction of understanding; and we could not please God with believing, because there would be in it nothing of the will, nothing of love and choice; and that faith which is, would be like that of Thomas, to believe what we see or hear, and God should not at all govern upon earth unless he did continually come himself: for thus, all government, all teachers, all apostles, all messengers would be needless, because they could not shew to the eye what they told to the ears of men: and it might as well be disbelieved in all courts and by all princes, that this was not the letter of a prince, or the act of a man, or the writing of his hand, and so all human intercourse must cease, and all senses but the eye be useless as to this affair, or else to the ear all voices must be strangers but the principal, if, I say, no reports shall make faith: but it is certain, that when these voices were sent from heaven and heard upon earth, they prevailed amongst many that heard them not, and disciples were multiplied upon such accounts, or else it must be that none that did hear them could be believed by any of their friends and neighbours; for if they were, the voice was as effective at the reflex and rebound as in the direct emission, and could prevail with them that believed their brother or their friend, as certainly as with them that believed their own ears and eyes.

14. I need not speak of the vast numbers of miracles which he wrought; miracles which were not more demonstrations of his power than of his mercy; for they had nothing of pompousness and ostentation, but infinitely of charity and mercy, and that permanent and lasting and often: he opened the eyes of the blind, he made the crooked straight, he made the weak strong, he cured

fevers with the touch of his hand, and an issue of blood with the hem of his garment, and sore eyes with the spittle of his mouth and the clay of the earth; he multiplied the loaves and fishes, he raised the dead to life, a young maiden, the widow's son of Naim, and Lazarus, and cast out devils by the word of his mouth, which he could never do but by the power of God. For Satan does not cast out Satan, nor a house fight against itself, if it means to stand long; and the devil could not help Jesus, because the holy Jesus taught men virtue, called them from the worshipping devils, taught them to resist the devil, to lay aside all those abominable idolatries by which the devil doth rule in the hearts of men: he taught men to love God, to fly from temptations to sin, to hate and avoid all those things of which the devil is guilty, for Christianity forbids pride, envy, malice, lying, and yet affirms that the devil is proud, envious, malicious, and the father of lies; and therefore wherever Christianity prevails, the devil is not worshipped; and therefore he that can think that a man without the power of God could overturn the devil's principles, cross his designs, weaken his strength, baffle him in his policies, befoul him and turn him out of possession, and make him open his own mouth against himself, as he did often, and confess himself conquered by Jesus and tormented, as the oracle did to Augustus Cæsar, and the devil to Jesus himself, he, I say, that thinks a mere man can do this, knows not the weaknesses of a man, nor the power of an angel: but he that thinks this could be done by compact, and by consent of the devil, must think him to be an intelligence without understanding, a power without force, a fool and a sot to assist a power against himself, and to persecute the power he did assist, to stir up the world to destroy the Christians, whose Master and Lord he did assist to destroy himself; and when we read that Porphyrius, an Heathen, a professed enemy to Christianity, did say, *Ἰησοῦ τιμωμένῃ τῆς θεῶν δημοσίας ἀφελείας ἐκ ἡσθέρῳ* *, that since Jesus was worshipped, the gods could help no man, that is, the gods which they worshipped; the poor baffled enervated dæmons. He must either think that the devils are as foolish as they are weak, or else that they did nothing towards this declination of their power; and therefore that they suffer it by a power higher than themselves, that is, by the power of God in the hand of Jesus.

* Euseb. lib. 5. c. 1. præp. Evang.

15. But besides that God gave testimony from heaven concerning him; he also gave this testimony of himself to have come from God, because that he did God's will; for he that is a good man, and lives by the laws of God and of his nation, a life innocent and simple, prudent and wise, holy and spotless, unreprieved and unsuspected, he is certainly by all wise men said in a good sense to be the Son of God; but he who does well and speaks well, and calls all men to glorify and serve God, and serves no ends but of holiness and charity, of wisdom of hearts and reformation of manners, this man carries great authority in his sayings, and ought to prevail with good men in good things, for good ends, which is all that is here required. But his nature was so sweet, his manners so humble, his words so wise and composed, his comportment so grave and winning, his answers so seasonable, his questions so deep, his reproof so severe and charitable, his pity so great and merciful, his preachings so full of reason and holiness, of weight and authority, his conversation so useful and beneficent, his poverty great but his alms frequent, his family so holy and religious, his and their employment so profitable, his meekness so incomparable, his passions without difference, save only where zeal or pity carried him on to worthy and apt expressions: a person that never laughed, but often wept, in a sense of the calamities of others; he loved every man, and hated no man; he gave counsel to the doubtful, and instructed the ignorant; he bound up the broken hearts, and strengthened the feeble knees; he relieved the poor, and converted the sinners; he despised none that came to him for relief, and as for those that did not he went to them; he took all occasions of mercy that were offered him, and went abroad for more; he spent his days in preaching and healing, and his nights in prayers and conversation with God; he was obedient to laws and subject to princes, though he was the Prince of Judæa in right of his mother, and of all the world in right of his Father: the people followed him, but he made no conventions, and when they were made, he suffered no tumults: when they would have made him a king he withdrew himself; when he knew they would put him to death he offered himself: he knew men's hearts, and conversed secretly, and gave answer to their thoughts and prevented their questions; he would work a miracle rather than give offence, and yet suffer every offence rather than see God his Father dishonoured; he exactly kept the law of Moses, to which he came to put a period.

and yet chose to signify his purpose only by doing acts of mercy upon their Sabbath, doing nothing which they should call a breach of a commandment, but healing sick people, a charity which themselves would do to beasts, and yet they were angry at him for doing it to their brethren. In all his life, and in all his conversation with his nation, he was innocent as an angel of light, and when by the greatness of his worth, and severity of his doctrine, and the charity of his miracles, and the noises of the people, and his immense fame in all that part of the world, and the multitude of his disciples, and the authority of his sermons, and his free reproof of their hypocrisy, and the discovery of their false doctrines and weak traditions, he had branded the reputation of the vicious rulers of the people, and they resolved to put him to death, they who had the biggest malice in the world, and the weakest accusations, were forced to supply their want of articles against him by making truth to be his fault, and his office to be his crime, and his open confession of what was asked him to be his article of condemnation; and yet after all this they could not persuade the competent judge to condemn him, or to find him guilty of any fault, and therefore they were forced to threaten him with Cæsar's name, against whom then they would pretend him to be an enemy, though in their charge they neither proved, nor indeed laid it against him; and yet to whatsoever they objected he made no return, but his silence and his innocence were remarkable and evident, without labour and reply, and needed no more argument than the sun needs an advocate to prove that he is the brightest star in the firmament.

16. Well, so it was, they crucified him, and when they did, they did as much put out the eye of heaven as destroy the Son of God; for when with an incomparable sweetness, and a patience exemplar to all ages of sufferers, he endured affronts, examinations, scorns, insolencies of rude ungentle tradesmen, cruel whippings, injurious, unjust, and unreasonable usages from those whom he obliged by all the arts of endearment and offers of the biggest kindness; at last he went to death as to the work which God appointed him, that he might become the world's sacrifice, and the great example of holiness, and the instance of representing by what way the world was to be made happy [even by sufferings and so entering into heaven] that he might (I say) become the Saviour of his enemies, and the elder Brother to his friends, and the Lord of Glory, and the fountain of its emanation.

Then it was that God gave new testimonies from heaven; the sun was eclipsed all the while he was upon the cross, and yet the moon was in the full; that is, he lost his light, not because any thing in nature did invest him, but because the God of nature (as a Heathen at that very time confessed, who yet saw nothing of this sad iniquity) did suffer. The rocks did rend, the veil of the temple divided of itself and opened the inclosures, and disparted the sanctuary, and made it pervious to the Gentiles eye; the dead arose, and appeared in Jerusalem to their friends; the centurion and divers of the people smote their hearts, and were by these strange indications convinced that he was the Son of God. His garments were parted, and lots cast upon his inward coat; they gave him vinegar and gall to drink, they brake not a bone of him, but they pierced his side with a spear, looking on him whom they had pierced; according to the prophecies of him, which were so clear and descended to minutes and circumstances of his passion, that there was nothing left by which they could doubt whether this were he or no who was to come into the world: but after all this, that all might be finally verified, and no scruple left, after three days burial, a great stone being rolled to the face of the grave, and the stone sealed, and a guard of soldiers placed about it, he arose from the grave, and for forty days together conversed with his followers and disciples, and beyond all suspicion was seen of five hundred brethren at once, which is a number too great to give their consent and testimony to a lye; and it being so publicly and confidently affirmed at the very time it was done, and for ever after urged by all Christians, used as the most mighty demonstration, proclaimed, preached, talked of, even upbraided to the gainsayers, affirmed by eye-witnesses, persuaded to the kindred and friends, and the relatives and companions of all those five hundred persons who were eye-witnesses, it is infinitely removed from a reasonable suspicion; and at the end of those days was taken up into heaven in the sight of many of them, as Elias was in the presence of Elisha,

17. Now he of whom all these things are true, must needs be more than a mere man; and that they were true was affirmed by very many eye-witnesses, men who were innocent, plain men, men that had no bad ends to serve, men that looked for no preferment by the thing in this life; men to whom their Master told they were to expect, not crowns and scepters, not praise of men, or wealthy possessions, not power and ease, but a voluntary cast-

ing away care and attendance upon secular affairs, that they might attend their ministry; poverty and prisons, trouble and vexation, persecution and labour, whippings and banishment, bonds and death, and for a reward they must stay till a good day came, but that was not to be at all in this world; and when the day of restitution and recompence should come, they should never know till it came, but upon the hope of this and the faith of Jesus, and the word of God so taught, so consigned, they must rest wholly, and for ever. Now let it be considered, how could matters of fact be proved better? and how could this be any thing, but such as to rely upon matters of fact? What greater certainty can we have of any thing that was ever done which we saw not, or heard not, but by the report of wise and honest persons? especially since they were such whose life and breeding was so far from ambition and pompousness, that as they could not naturally and reasonably hope for any great number of proselytes, so the same that could be hoped for amongst them, as it must be a matter of their own procuring, and consequently uncertain, so it must needs be very inconsiderable, not fit to outweigh the danger and the loss, nor yet at all valuable by them whose education and pretences were against it? These we have plentifully; but if these men are numerous and united, it is more. Then we have more; for so many did affirm these things which they saw and heard, that thousands of people were convinced of the truth of them: but then if these men offer their oath, it is yet more; but yet not so much as we have, for they sealed those things with their blood; they gave their life for a testimony; and what reward can any man expect, if he gives his life for a lye? who shall make him recompence, or what can tempt him to do it knowingly? But after all, it is to be remembered, that as God hates lying, so he hates incredulity; as we must not believe a lye, so neither stop up our eyes and ears against truth; and what we do every minute of our lives in matters of little and of great concernment, if we refuse to do in our religion, which yet is to be conducted as other human affairs are, by human instruments and arguments of persuasion proper to the nature of the thing, it is an obstinacy that is as contrary to human reason as it is to divine faith.

18. These things relate to the person of the holy Jesus, and prove sufficiently that it was extraordinary, that it was divine, that God was with him, that his power wrought in him; and therefore that it was his will which Jesus taught, and God signed,

But then if nothing of all this had been, yet even the doctrine itself proves itself divine, and to come from God.

19. For it is a doctrine perfective of human nature, that teaches us to love God, and to love one another, to hurt no man, and to do good to every man; it propines to us the noblest, the highest, and the bravest pleasures of the world; the joys of charity, the rest of innocence, the peace of quiet spirits, the wealth of beneficence, and forbids us only to be beasts and to be devils; it allows all that God and nature intended, and only restrains the excrescences of nature, and forbids us to take pleasure in that which is the only entertainment of devils, in murders and revenges, malice, and spiteful words and actions; it permits corporal pleasures where they can best minister to health and societies, to conversation of families, and honour of communities; it teaches men to keep their words, that themselves may be secured in all their just interests, and to do good to others, that good may be done to them; it forbids biting one another, that we may not be devoured by one another; and commands obedience to superiors, that we may not be ruined in confusions; it combines governments, and confirms all good laws, and makes peace, and opposes and prevents wars where they are not just, and where they are not necessary. It is a religion that is life and spirit, not consisting in ceremonies and external amusements, but in the services of the heart, and the real fruit of lips and hands, that is, of good words and good deeds; it bids us to do that to God which is agreeable to his excellencies, that is, worship him with the best thing we have, and make all things else minister to it; it bids us to do that to our neighbour, by which he may be better: it is the perfection of the natural law, and agreeable to our natural necessities, and promotes our natural ends and designs: it does not destroy reason, but instructs it in very many things, and complies with it in all; it hath in it both heat and light, and is not more effectual than it is beauteous; it promises every thing that we can desire, and yet promises nothing but what it does effect; it proclaims war against all vices, and generally does command every virtue; it teaches us with ease to mortify those affections which reason durst scarce reprove, because she hath not strength enough to conquer, and it does create in us those virtues which reason of herself never knew, and after they are known, could never approve sufficiently; it is a doctrine in which nothing is superfluous or burdensome, nor yet is there any thing wanting which can

procure happiness to mankind, or by which God can be glorified: and if wisdom, and mercy, and justice, and simplicity, and holiness, and purity, and meekness, and contentedness, and charity, be images of God, and rays of divinity, then that doctrine in which all these shine so gloriously, and in which nothing else is ingredient, must needs be from God; and that all this is true in the doctrine of Jesus, needs no other probation but the reading the words.

20. For that the words of Jesus are contained in the Gospels, that is, in the writings of them who were eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of the actions and sermons of Jesus, is not at all to be doubted; for in every sect we believe their own records of doctrine and institution; for it is madness to suppose the Christians to pretend to be servants of the laws of Jesus, and yet to make a law of their own which he made not: no man doubts but that the alcoran is the law of Mahomet, that the Old Testament contains the religion of the Jews; and the authority of these books is proved by all the arguments of the religion; for all the arguments persuading to the religion are intended to prove no other than is contained in those books; and these having been for fifteen hundred years and more received absolutely by all Christian assemblies, if any man shall offer to make a question of their authority, he must declare his reasons, for the disciples of the religion have sufficient presumption, security and possession, till they can be reasonably disturbed; but that now they can never be is infinitely certain, because we have a long, immemorial, universal tradition that these books were written in those times, by those men whose names they bear; they were accepted by all churches at the very first notice, except some few of the latter, which were first received by some churches, and then consented to by all: they were acknowledged by the same, and by the next age for genuine, their authority published, their words cited, appeals made to them in all questions of religion, because it was known and confessed that they wrote nothing but that they knew, so that they were not deceived; and to say they would lie must be made to appear by something extrinsic to this inquiry, and was never so much as plausibly pretended by any adversaries; and it being a matter of another man's will, must be declared by actions, or not at all. But besides the men that wrote them were to be believed because they did miracles, they wrote prophecies, which were verified by the event; persons were cured at their sepulchres; a

thing so famous, that it was confessed even by the enemies of the religion: and after all, that which the world ought to rely upon, is the wisdom and the providence, and the goodness of God: all which it concerned to take care that the religion, which himself so adorned and proved by miracles and mighty signs, should not be lost, nor any false writings be obtruded instead of true, lest without our fault the will of God become impossible to be obeyed. But to return to the thing: all those excellent things which singly did make famous so many sects of philosophers, and remarked so many princes of their sects, all them united, and many more which their eyes *ὄμματα υψτερίδων*, dark and dim, could not see, are heaped together in this system of wisdom and holiness. Here are plain precepts full of deepest mystery; here are the measures of holiness and approaches to God described; obedience and conformity, mortification of the body, and elevations of the spirit, abstractions from earth, and arts of society and union with heaven, degrees of excellencies, and tendencies to perfection, imitations of God, and conversations with him; these are the heights and descents, upon the plain grounds of natural reason, and natural religion; for there is nothing commanded but what our reason by nature ought to choose, and yet nothing of natural reason taught but what is heightened and made more perfect by the spirit of God, and when there is any thing in the religion that is against flesh and blood, it is only when flesh and blood is against us, and against reason, when flesh and blood either would hinder us from great felicity, or bring us into great misery: to conclude, it is such a law, that nothing can hinder men to receive and entertain, but a pertinacious baseness and love to vice, and none can receive it but those who resolve to be good and excellent; and if the holy Jesus had come into the world with less splendour of power, and mighty demonstrations, yet even the excellency of what he taught, makes him alone fit to be the master of the world.

21. But then let us consider what this excellent person did effect, and with what instruments he brought so great things to pass. He was to put a period to the rites of Moses, and the religion of the temple, of which the Jews were zealous even unto pertinacity; to reform the manners of all mankind, to confound the wisdom of the Greeks, to break in pieces the power of the devil, to destroy the worship of all false gods, to pull down their oracles, and change their laws, and by principles wise and holy

to reform the false discourses of the world. But see what was to be taught; a Trinity in the Unity of the Godhead, $\tau\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \chi\acute{\rho}\iota\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \tau\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha$; that is the Christian arithmetic, Three are one, and one are three: so Lucian in his *Philopatris*, or some other, derides the Christian doctrine; see their philosophy, *ex nihilo nihil fit*. No: *ex nihilo omnia*, all things are made of nothing; and a Man-God and a God man, the same person finite and infinite, born in time, and yet from all eternity the Son of God, but yet born of a woman, and she a maid, but yet a mother; resurrection of the dead, reunion of soul and body; this was part of the Christian physics, or their natural philosophy. But then certainly their moral was easy and delicious. It is so indeed, but not to flesh and blood, whose appetites it pretends to regulate, or to destroy, to restrain, or else to mortify: fasting and penance, and humility, loving our enemies, restitution of injuries, and self-denial, and taking up the cross, and losing all our goods, and giving our life for Jesus: as the other was hard to believe, so this is as hard to do. But for whom, and under whose conduct was all this to be believed, and all this to be done, and all this to be suffered? Surely for some glorious and mighty prince, whose splendor as far outshines the Roman empire as the jewels of Cleopatra outshined the swaddling clothes of the Babe at Bethlehem. No, it was not so neither: for all this was for Jesus, whom his followers preached; a poor Babe born in a stable, the son of a carpenter, cradled in a cratch, swaddled in poor clouts; it was for him whom they indeed called a god, but yet whom all the world knew, and they themselves said, was whipped at a post, nailed to a cross; he fell under the malice of the Jews his countrymen, and the power of his Roman lords, a cheap and a pitiful sacrifice, without beauty, and without splendor. The design is great, but does not yet seem possible: but therefore let us see what instruments the holy Jesus chose to effect these so mighty changes, to persuade so many propositions, to endear so great sufferings, to overcome so great enemies, to master so many impossibilities which *this* doctrine and *this* law from *this* Master were sure to meet withal.

22. Here, here it is that the divinity of the power is proclaimed. When a man goes to war, he raises as great an army as he can to out-number his enemy; but when God fights, three hundred men that lap like a dog are sufficient; nay, one word can dissolve the greatest army. He that means to effect any thing, must have

means of his own proportionable ; and if they be not, he must fail, or derive them from the mighty. See then with what instruments the holy Jesus sets upon this great reformation of the world. Twelve men of obscure and poor birth, of contemptible trades and quality, without learning, without breeding ; these men were sent into the midst of a knowing and wise world to dispute with the most famous philosophers of Greece, to out-wit all the learning of Athens, to out-preach all the Roman orators, to introduce into a newly settled empire, which would be impatient of novelties and change, such a change as must destroy all their temples, or remove thence all their gods : against which change all the zeal of the world, and all the passions, and all the seeming pretences which they could make, must needs be violently opposed : a change that introduced new laws, and caused them to reverse the old, to change that religion under which their fathers long did prosper, and under which the Roman empire obtained so great a grandeur, for a religion which in appearance was silly and humble, meek and peaceable, not apt indeed to do harm, but exposing men to all the harm in the world, abating their courage, blunting their swords, teaching peace and unactiveness, and making the soldiers arms in a manner useless, and untying their military girdle ; a religion which contradicted their reasons of state, and erected new judicatories, and made the Roman courts to be silent, and without causes ; a religion that gave countenance to the poor and pitiful, (but in a time when riches were adored, and ambition esteemed the greatest nobleness, and pleasure thought to be the chiefest good) it brought no peculiar blessing to the rich or mighty, unless they would become poor and humble in some real sense or other ; a religion that would change the face of things, and would also pierce into the secrets of the soul, and unravel all the intrigues of hearts, and reform all evil manners, and break vile habits into gentleness and counsel : that such a religion, in such a time, preached by such mean persons, should triumph over the philosophy of the world, and the arguments of the subtle, and the sermons of the eloquent, and the power of princes, and the interest of states, and the inclinations of nature, and the blindness of zeal, and the force of custom, and the pleasures of sin, and the busy arts of the devil, that is, against wit, and power, and money, and religion, and wilfulness, and fame, and empire, which are all the things in the world that can make a thing impossible ; this I say could not be by the proper force of such instruments ; for

no man can span heaven with an infant's palm, nor govern wise empires with diagrams. It were impudence to send a footman to command Cæsar to lay down his arms, to disband his legions, and throw himself into Tyber, or keep a tavern next to Pompey's theatre; but if a sober man shall stand alone unarmed, undefended, or unprovided, and shall tell that he will make the sun stand still, or remove a mountain, or reduce Xerxes's army to the scantling of a single troop, he that believes he can and will do this, must believe he does it by a higher power than he can yet perceive, and so it was in the present transaction. For that the holy Jesus made invisible powers to do him visible honours, that his Apostles hunted the dæmons from their tripods, their navels, their dens, their hollow pipes, their temples, and their altars; that he made the oracles silent, as Lucian, Porphyry, Celsus, and other Heathens confess; that against the order of new things, which let them be never so profitable or good, do yet suffer reproach, and cannot prevail, unless they commence in a time of advantage and favour, yet that this should flourish like the palm by pressure, grow glorious by opposition, thrive by persecution, and was demonstrated by objections, argues a higher cause than the immediate instrument; now how this higher cause did intervene, is visible and notorious: The Apostles were not learned, but the holy Jesus promised that he would send down wisdom from above, from the Father of spirits; they had no power, but they should be invested with power from on high; they were ignorant and timorous, but he would make them learned and confident, and so he did: he promised that in a few days he would send the Holy Ghost upon them, and he did so; after ten days they felt and saw a glorious immision from heaven, lights of moveable fire sitting upon their heads, and that light did illuminate their hearts, and the mighty rushing wind inspired them with a power of speaking divers languages, and brought to their remembrances all that Jesus did and taught, and made them wise to conduct souls, and bold to venture, and prudent to advise, and powerful to do miracles, and witty to convince gainsayers, and hugely instructed in the Scriptures, and gave them the spirit of government, and the spirit of prophecy. This thing was so public, that at the first notice of it three thousand souls were converted on that very day, at the very time when it was done; for it was certainly a visible demonstration of an invisible power, that ignorant persons who were never taught, should in an instant speak all the languages of the Roman empire; and

indeed this thing was so necessary to be so, and so certain that it was so, so public and so evident, and so reasonable, and so useful, that it is not easy to say whether it was the indication of a greater power, or a greater wisdom; and now the means was proportionable enough to the biggest end; without learning they could not confute the learned world; but therefore God became their teacher; without power they could not break the devil's violence, but therefore God gave them power; without courage they could not contest against all the violence of the Jews and Gentiles; but therefore God was their strength, and gave them fortitude; without great caution and providence they could not avoid the traps of crafty persecutors, but therefore God gave them caution, and made them provident; and as Balaam and Aholiab received the spirit of God, the spirit of understanding to enable them to work excellently in the tabernacle, so had the Apostles to make them wise for the work of God and the ministers of his diviner tabernacle, which God pitched, not man. Immediately upon this, the Apostles, to make a fulness of demonstration, and an undeniable conviction, gave the spirit to others also, to Jews and Gentiles, and to the men of Samaria; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied; then they preached to all nations, and endured all persecutions, and cured all diseases, and raised the dead to life, and were brought before tribunals, and confessed the name of Jesus, and convinced the blasphemous Jews out of their own prophets, and not only prevailed upon women and weak men, but even upon the bravest and wisest. All the disciples of John the Baptist, the Nazarenes and Ebionites, Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, Sergius the president, Dionysius, an Athenian judge, and Polycarpus, Justinus and Irenæus, Athenagoras and Origen, Tertullian, and Clemens of Alexandria, who could not be such fools as upon a matter not certainly true, but probably false, to unravel their former principles, and to change their liberty for a prison, wealth for poverty, honour for disreputation, life for death, if by such exchange they had not been secured of truth and holiness, and the will of God.

23. But above all these was Saul, a bold and a witty, a zealous and a learned young man, who going with letters to persecute the Christians of Damascus, was by a light from heaven called from his furious march, reprov'd by God's angel for persecuting the cause of Jesus, was sent to the city, baptized by a Christian minister, instructed, and sent abroad; and he became the prodigy of

the world for learning and zeal, for preaching and writing, for labour and sufferance, for government and wisdom; he was admitted to see the holy Jesus after the Lord was taken into heaven; he was taken up into paradise; he conversed with angels; he saw unspeakable rays of glory, and besides that himself said it, who had no reason to lie, who would get nothing by it here but a conjugation of troubles, and who should get nothing by it hereafter, if it were false; besides this I say, that he did all those acts of zeal and obedience for the promotion of the religion, does demonstrate he had reason extraordinary for so sudden a change, so strange a labour, so frequent and incomparable sufferings: and therefore as he did and suffered so much upon such glorious motives, so he spared not to publish it to all the world; he spake it to kings and princes; he told it to the envious Jews; he had partners of his journey, who were witnesses of the miraculous accident; and in his publication he urged the notoriousness of the fact, as a thing not feigned, not private, but done at noon day, under the test of competent persons; and it was a thing that proved itself, for it was effective of a present, a great and a permanent change.

24. But now it is no new wonder, but a pursuance of the same conjugation of great and divine things, that the fame and religion of Jesus was with so incredible a swiftness scattered over the face of the habitable world, from one end of the earth unto the other; it filled all Asia immediately; it passed presently to Europe, and to the furthest Africans; and all the way it went it told nothing but an holy and an humble story, that he who came to bring it into the world, died an ignominious death, and yet this death did not take away their courage, but added much: for they could not fear death for that Master, whom they knew to have for their sakes suffered death, and came to life again. But now infinite numbers of persons of all sexes, and all ages, and all countries, came in to the holy crucifix; and he that was crucified in the reign of Tiberius, was in the Time of Nero, even in Rome itself, and in Nero's family by many persons esteemed for a god; and it was upon public record that he was so acknowledged; and this was by a Christian, Justin Martyr, urged to the senate, and to the emperors themselves, who if it had been otherwise could easily have confuted the bold allegation of the Christian, who yet did die for that Jesus who was so speedily reputed for a god: the cross was worn upon breasts, printed in the air, drawn upon four heads, carried on banners, put upon crowns imperial; and yet the Christians

were sought for to punishments, and exquisite punishments sought forth for them: their goods were confiscate, their names odious, prisons were their houses, and so many kinds of tortures invented for them, that Domitius Ulpianus hath spent seven books in describing the variety of tortures the poor Christian was put to at his first appearing; and yet in despite of all this, and ten thousand other objections and impossibilities, whatsoever was for them made the religion grow, and whatsoever was against them made it grow; if they had peace, the religion was prosperous; if they had persecution, it was still prosperous: if princes favoured them, the world came in, because the Christians lived holily; if princes were incensed, the world came in, because the Christians died bravely. They sought for death with greediness, they desired to be grinded in the teeth of lions, and with joy they beheld the wheels and the bended trees, the racks and the gibbets, the fires and the burning irons, which were like the chair of Elias to them, instruments to carry them to heaven, into the bosom of their beloved Jesus.

25. Who would not acknowledge the divinity of this person, and the excellency of this institution, that should see infants to weary the hands of hangmen for the testimony of Jesus? and wise men preach this doctrine for no other visible reward, but shame and death, poverty and banishment; and hangmen converted by the blood of martyrs springing upon their faces, which their impious hands and cords have strained through their flesh? Who would not have confessed the honour of Jesus, when he should see miracles done at the tombs of martyrs, and devils tremble at the mention of the name of Jesus, and the world running to the honour of the poor Nazarene, and kings and queens kissing the feet of the poor servants of Jesus? Could a few fishermen and a publican effect all this for the son of a poor maiden of Judæa? Can we suppose all the world, or so great a part of mankind can consent by chance, or suffer such changes for nothing? or for any thing less than this? The son of the poor maiden was the Son of God, and the fishermen spake by a divine spirit, and they caught the world with holiness and miracles, with wisdom and power bigger than the strength of all the Roman legions. And what can be added to all this, but this thing alone to prove the divinity of Jesus? He is a God, or at least is taught by God, who can foretel future contingencies; and so did the holy Jesus, and so did his disciples.

26. Our blessed Lord, while he was alive, foretold that after his death his religion should flourish more than when he was alive: he foretold persecutions to his disciples; he foretold the mission of the Holy Ghost to be in a very few days after his ascension, which within ten days came to pass; he prophesied that the fact of Mary Magdalen in anointing the head and feet of her Lord, should be public and known as the Gospel itself, and spoken of in the same place; he foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and the signs of its approach, and that it should be by war, and particularly after the manner of prophets, symbolically named the nation should do it, pointing out the Roman eagles; he foretold his death, and the manner of it, and plainly beforehand published his resurrection, and told them it should be the sign to that generation, viz. the great argument to prove him to be the Christ; he prophesied that there should arise false Christs after him, and it came to pass to the extreme great calamity of the nation; and lastly, he foretold that his beloved disciple St. John should tarry upon the earth till his coming again; that is, to his coming to judgment upon Jerusalem; and that his religion should be preached to the Gentiles; that it should be scattered over all the world, and be received by all nations; that it should stay upon the face of the earth till his last coming to judge all the world, and that the gates of hell should not be able to prevail against his church; which prophecy is made good thus long, till this day, and is as a continual argument to justify the divinity of the author: the continuance of the religion helps to continue it, for it proves that it came from God, who foretold that it should continue; and therefore it must continue, because it came from God; and therefore it came from God, because it does and shall for ever continue, according to the word of the holy Jesus.

27. But after our blessed Lord was entered into glory, the disciples also were prophets; Agabus foretold the dearth that was to be in the Roman empire in the days of Claudius Cæsar, and that St. Paul should be bound at Jerusalem; St. Paul foretold the entering in of heretics into Asia after his departure, and he and St. Peter and St. Jude, and generally the rest of the Apostles had two great predictions, which they used not only as a verification of the doctrine of Jesus, but as a means to strengthen the hearts of the disciples who were so broken with persecution: the one was, that there should arise a sect of vile men, who should be enemies to religion and government, and cause a great apostacy, which hap-

pened notoriously in the sect of the Gnostics, which those three Apostles and St. John notoriously and plainly do describe: and the other was, that although the Jewish nation did mightily oppose the religion, it should be but for a while, for they should be destroyed in a short time, and their nation be made extremely miserable; but for the Christians, if they would fly from Jerusalem, and go to Pella, there should not a hair of their head perish; the verification of this prophecy the Christians extremely longed for, and wondered it staid so long, and began to be troubled at the delay, and suspected all was not well, when the great proof of their religion was not verified; and while they were in thoughts of heart concerning it, the sad *catalysis* did come, and swept away one million one hundred thousand of the nation; and from that day forward the nation was broken in pieces with intolerable calamities, they were scattered over the face of the earth, and are a vagabond nation, but yet, like oil in a vessel of wine, broken into bubbles, but kept in their own circles; and they shall never be an united people till they are servants of the holy Jesus; but shall remain without priest or temple, without altar or sacrifice, without city or country, without the land of Promise, or the promise of a blessing, till our Jesus is their High Priest, and the Shepherd to gather them into his fold: and this very thing is a mighty demonstration against the Jews by their own prophets, for when Isaiah and Jeremiah, and Malachi had prophesied the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, and the change of the old law, and the introduction of a new by the Messias, that this was he, was therefore certain, because he taught the world a new law, and presently after the publication of this, the old was abrogate, and not only went into disuetude, but into a total abolition among all the world; and for those of the remnant of the scattered Jews who obstinately blaspheme, the law is become impossible to them, and they placed in such circumstances that they need not dispute concerning its obligation; for it being external and corporeal, ritual, and at last made also local, when the circumstances are impossible, the law that was wholly ceremonial and circumstantial must needs pass away, and when they have lost their priesthood, they cannot retain the law, as no man takes care to have his beard shaved when his head is off.

28. And it is a wonder to consider how the anger of God is gone out upon that miserable people, and that so great a blindness is fallen upon them, it being evident and notorious that the Old

Testament was nothing but a shadow and umbrage of the New that the prophecies of that are plainly verified in this ; that all the predictions of the Messias are most undeniably accomplished in the person of Jesus Christ, so that they cannot with any plausibleness or colour be turned any other way, and be applied to any other person ; although the Jews make illiterate allegations, and prodigious dreams, by which they have fooled them themselves for one thousand six hundred years together, and still hope without reason, and are confident without revelation, and pursue a shadow while they quit the glorious body : while in the mean time the Christian prays for his conversion, and is at rest in the truth of Jesus, and hath certain unexpressible confidences and internal lights, clarities of the holy Spirit of God, and loves to the holy Jesus produced in his soul, that he will die when he cannot dispute, and is satisfied and he knows not how, and is sure by comforts, and comforted by the excellency of his belief, which speaks nothing but holiness, and light and reason, and peace and satisfactions infinite, because he is sure that all the world can be happy if they would live by the religion of Jesus ; and that neither societies of men nor single persons can have felicity but by this ; and that therefore God who so decrees to make men happy, hath also decreed that it shall for ever be upon the face of the earth, till the earth itself shall be no more. Amen.

29. Now if against this vast heap of things any man shall but confront the pretences of any other religion, and see how they fail both of reason and holiness, of wonder and divinity, how they enter by force, and are kept up by human interests, how ignorant and unholy, how unlearned and pitiful are their pretences, the darkneses of these must add great eminency to the brightness of that. For the Jews' religion which came from heaven is therefore not now to be practised, because it did come from heaven, and was to expire into the Christian, it being nothing but the image of this perfection ; and the Jews needed no other argument but this, that God hath made theirs impossible now to be done ; for he that ties to ceremonies and outward usages, temples and altars, sacrifices and priests, troublesome and expensive rites and figures and future signification, means that there should be an abode and fixed dwelling, for these are not to be done by an ambulatory people ; and therefore since God hath scattered the people into atoms and crumbs of society, without temple or priest, without sacrifice or altar, without Urim or Thummin, without prophet

or vision, even communicating with them no way but by ordinary providence, it is but too evident, that God hath nothing to do with them in the matter of that religion, but that it is expired, and no way obligatory to them or pleasing to him which is become impossible to be acted; whereas the Christian religion is as eternal as the soul of a man, and can no more cease than our spirits can die, and can worship upon mountains and caves, in fields and churches, in peace and war, in solitude and society, in persecution and in sun-shine, by night and by day, and be solemnized by clergy and laity in the essential parts of it, and is the perfection of the soul, and the highest reason of man, and the glorification of God.

30. But for the heathen religions it is evidently to be seen, that they are nothing but an abuse of the natural inclination which all men have to worship a God, whom, because they know not, they guess at in the dark; for that they know there is and ought to be something that hath the care and providence of their affairs. But the body of their religion is nothing but little arts of governments, and stratagems of princes, and devices to secure the government of new usurpers, or to make obedience to the laws sure, by being sacred, and to make the yoke that was not natural, pleasant by something that is. But yet for the whole body of it who sees not that their worshippings could not be sacred, because they were done by something that is impure; they appeased their gods with adulteries and impure mixtures, by such things which Cato was ashamed to see, by gluttonous eatings of flesh, and impious drinkings, and they did *litare in humano sanguine*, they sacrificed men and women and children to their dæmons, as is notorious in the rites of Bacchus Omesta amongst the Greeks, and of Jupiter, to whom a Greek and a Greekess, a Galatian and a Galatess were yearly offered; in the answers of the oracles to Calchas, as appears in Homer and Virgil: who sees not that crimes were warranted by the example of their immortal gods, and that what did dishonour themselves, they sang to the honour of their gods, whom they affirmed to be passionate and proud, jealous and revengeful, amorous and lustful, fearful and impatient, drunken and sleepy, weary and wounded; that the religions were made lasting by policy and force, by ignorance, and the force of custom, by the preferring an inveterate error, and loving of a quiet and prosperous evil, by the arguments of pleasure, and the correspondencies of sensuality, by the fraud of oracles, and the patronage of vices, and because they feared every change as an earthquake, as suppos-

ing overturnings of their old error to be the eversion of their well established governments: and it had been ordinarily impossible that ever Christianity should have entered, if the nature and excellency of it had not been such as to enter like rain into a fleece of wool, or the sun into a window without noise or violence, without emotion and disordering the political constitution, without causing trouble to any man but what his own ignorance or peevishness was pleased to spin out of his own bowels, but did establish governments, secure obedience, made the laws firm, and the persons of princes to be sacred; it did not oppose force by force, nor *strike princes for justice*; it defended itself against enemies by patience, and overcame them by kindness; it was the great instrument of God to demonstrate his power in our weaknesses, and to do good to mankind by the imitation of his excellent goodness.

31. Lastly, he that considers concerning the religion and person of Mahomet, that he was a vicious person, lustful and tyrannical, that he propounded incredible and ridiculous propositions to his disciples, that it entered by the sword, by blood and violence, by murder and robbery; that it propounds sensual rewards, and allures to compliance, by bribing our basest lusts; that it conserves itself by the same means it entered; that it is unlearned and foolish, against reason, and the discourses of all wise men; that it did no miracles, and made false prophecies: in short, that in the person that founded it, in the article it persuades, in the manner of prevailing, in the reward it offers, it is unholy and foolish and rude; it must needs appear to be void of all pretence, and that no man of reason can ever be fairly persuaded by arguments, that it is the daughter of God and came down from heaven. Since therefore there is nothing to be said for any other religion, and so very much for Christianity, every one of whose pretences can be proved as well as the things themselves do require, and as all the world expects such things should be proved; it follows that the holy Jesus is the Son of God, that his religion is commanded by God, and is that way by which he will be worshipped and honoured, and that "there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved, but only by the name of the Lord Jesus." He that puts his soul upon this cannot perish; neither can he be reprov'd who hath so much reason and argument for his religion. *Sit anima mea cum Christianis; I pray God my soul may be numbered amongst the Christians.*

A SHORT AND EASY
METHOD WITH THE JEWS:
WHEREIN THE
CERTAINTY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION
IS DEMONSTRATED BY INFALLIBLE PROOF

FROM THE
FOUR RULES
MADE USE OF AGAINST THE DEISTS.

SHEWING,

That these **FOUR RULES** do oblige the **JEWS**, as much or more than
the **DEISTS**, to the Acknowledgment of **CHRIST**.

With an **ANSWER** to the most Material of their **OBJECTIONS**
and **PREJUDICES** against **CHRISTIANITY**.

BY CHARLES LESLIE.

PREFACE.



I. I ENDEAVOURED, when I set my thoughts upon this subject, to find out the most modern objections of the Jews; because my business is with those of the present age. I procured what I could of what they have, of late, published in their defence in Holland and Germany. What Grotius has wrote concerning them in his *De Veritate Relig. Christian.* is well known, because reprinted at Oxford, and translated into English; but the arguments of the Jews are rather there supposed, than told us in their own words. In the year 1644, Hackspan published R. Lippman's book *Nizachon*, and does reason with them upon their principles. Afterwards, in the year 1655, Hornbeck wrote against them; but the latest I find is Limborch, *Anno* 1687, his *Amica Collat. cum Erudit. Judæo*; wherein the Jews defence, arguments, and objections are set down at large, in the Jews own words. Therefore I have made most use of this book, and have taken thence the present principles of the Jews, out of the writings of that learned Jew, which is there inserted verbatim: and indeed he makes the best defence for them that, I think, their cause will bear, and shews himself a man of letters, and of great natural wit and sagacity. Therefore I conclude, that we have here the *jugulum causæ*, the heart of the cause; and, if sufficiently answered, the likeliest method to bring matters to an issue.

II. I have here forbore to enter upon the objections of the Jews concerning the genealogies and chronological niceties which they raise against several passages of the New Testament; because that is done lately by a better hand, and because there are more objections of this sort, which are brought by the Deists against the Old Testament than the New: and therefore the Jews are equally concerned herein with us, against the Deists; and cannot make so many objections against us on this head, as are made against themselves.

But chiefly, because objections are no answers; and, as hereafter shewn, there is no truth, even the existence of a God, against which objections and difficulties may not be started: and herein the Deists are concerned against the Atheists (if they be not the same) as well as the Jew or Christian. It is easier to object than to answer; but if the proof be clear for the truth of any thing, we must submit to it, though we were not able to solve every difficulty; and the chasing of difficulties diverts the question, and often loses it; and they are many times brought for that purpose: besides making books so long and tedious, that few have the leisure or attention to go through with them.

Therefore I have chosen, for once, to put the Deists upon the defensive; and if they cannot answer, they must surrender; for it is not a nicety or objection that I insist upon; but the merits of the cause, to which every one is obliged to answer.

And as to this, I have given them full liberty, and invited them to make all the objections that they can; and I have made the strongest for them that I could think of: let them make stronger.

I have had greater consideration for the Jews (because they deserve it more) and entered more at large upon

their objections and prejudices, which has swelled the second part so much beyond the first.

3. Let me here take notice of the uncertainty of the genealogies now kept of Jewish families. They have intermarried with their proselytes of all nations, and sometimes with others; insomuch that they cannot be sure of one Jew now in the world, who is of the pure and unmixed blood of the Jews. Nay more, whether most of them be not sprung from proselytes of the Heathens, Mahometans, and apostate Christians. Therefore they can never know whether any Messiah, who shall hereafter set up, be of the tribe of Judah, or family of David, according to the prophecies of the Messiah; for they have no certainty of either tribe or family now amongst them.

III. As to the Gentiles, and revealed religion.

1. What is said of the Sybils, I would have so understood, as that I do not put the stress whether those books of the Sybils that we have now, have received no additions or interpolations from what they were in the second century, when quoted by the Fathers: but that, as they were then, and before Christ came, they had most flagrant testimonies to our blessed Saviour, which confounded the Gentiles; and that they were not, at that time, corrupted; as there is no proof that they have been since.

2. Plato, in his Discourse concerning Prayer and the Worship of God, hereafter quoted, concludes, that men, by their natural reason, cannot find out what sort of worship will be acceptable to God; nor can be sure what they ought to pray for according to his will: and that it was safer to forbear sacrifices and prayer, than to venture upon it when we did not know but that we might provoke God thereby, instead of pleasing him.

That therefore it was necessary they should wait til God should send some person from heaven to instruct them in this; and that they did expect such a person to be sent; and they greatly longed to see the time, and that man, who they believed should come. They saw his day, and rejoiced, as Abraham did*; but not so clearly, not having so full and express revelation of him as Abraham had. But from revelation they had it, (and not merely from the strength of their reason) though, perhaps, they knew it not; for they declared that they had it by tradition from their fathers; and in all probability, it had descended through all Adam's posterity, from the first promise of it, Gen. iii. 15, together with the institution of sacrifices; which were ordained, not only as constant remembrances of it, but as visible types of the fulfilling of it; though the original, and full import of the one, as well as the other, had been lost amongst the Heathen. This is brought to shew the expectation that the Gentiles had of a Messiah to come.

But here I would, from this reasoning of Plato's, infer the necessity of revealed religion, against the Deists. Here they see that the wisest of the philosophers did own, that they were wholly at a loss and uncertainty without it.

And withal, it shews that the wisest of the Heathen did not believe the pretended revelations of their gods. And therefore there can lie no comparison betwixt these and the faith which is most surely believed by the Christians. Upon what grounds, is shewn hereafter; and that they are infallible.

* John viii. 56.

A
SHORT AND EASY

M E T H O D

WITH THE

J E W S.



BRETHREN, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. The first part of this discourse was wrote against the Deists, equal enemies to you and us, who deny all instituted and revealed religion; and I have justified the truth of yours, while I have asserted that of the Christian religion: they both stand upon one bottom. They only, of all the revelations that ever were pretended in the world, can shew the four marks before-mentioned; which do infallibly demonstrate the truth of any matter of fact, where they all do meet; and the consequence is as plain, that if the revelation of Moses be true, that of Christ must be true also. And you can never demonstrate the truth of the matters of fact of Moses by any arguments or evidences, which will not as strongly evince the truth of the matters of fact of Christ: and, on the other hand, you cannot overthrow the matters of fact of Christ, but you must, by the same means, destroy those of Moses. So that I hope you are involved under the happy necessity, either to renounce Moses, or to embrace Christ.

But if you will allow (as some of you have done) that the matters of fact of our Lord Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels, are true; but will contend that this does not infer the truth of his doctrine; because, as may be alledged, those seeming miracles which he wrought were done by magic; then, I beseech you, how will you rescue the miracles of Moses from the same objec-

tion? The comparison, in this case, must lie betwixt the miracles of Moses and of Christ; and I believe you will not deny but that those recorded in the Gospel are full as great as those in Exodus.

II. If the Deists think to come in here betwixt us, and conclude both to be false miracles, at least that we cannot be sure they are true miracles, because, as they philosophise, we do not know the utmost extent of the power of nature, and consequently cannot know what exceeds it.

Ans. 1. This is an objection not against the miracles recorded of Moses or of Christ, but against all miracles; and putting it out of God's power to shew any miracle, that ought to be believed of man: which is a contradiction to the principles of the Deists themselves, who allow an eternal Being of infinite power; and yet, by this, would put it out of his power to make any external revelation to men.

2. But, in the next place, their philosophy is not good; for though we could not know the utmost stretch of what nature can do, yet it will not follow that we cannot know what is contrary to nature in those works of nature which we do know. For example; though I cannot tell all the whole nature of fire, and all its operations, yet this I certainly know, that it is of the nature of fire to burn; and therefore if proper fuel be administered unto it, it is contrary to the nature of fire not to consume it. Thus when Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, were thrown into the burning fiery furnace, if that matter of fact be true in all its circumstances, as it is related in the third chapter of Daniel, we can be sure that there was a stop there put to the natural power of fire, which is a miracle. We can be as sure of it, as of any thing we either see or hear. So that the same scepticism which these men advance against miracles, will, as much, take away the certainty of our outward senses; which is the only postulatum they would have taken as undoubted; and to which they reduce all the certainty of which mankind is capable; giving to themselves, by their great sense, little pre-eminence above the condition of brutes; to which they would degrade all the rest of the world with themselves; and some of them have shewn their parts in witty satires upon the subject. But let us leave them with the company they have chosen, and return.

As sure as we can be that it is the nature of fire to burn, (though we may not know every thing else it can do) so sure we

can be that it exceeds the power of nature to raise the dead, by the speaking of a word; to cure the lame, blind, &c. by the same means, or the touch of one's finger, without any other application.

III. Now then, the miracles recorded of Christ, being as great as those recorded of Moses, and carrying along with them the same evidences of their truth, deduced down from that time to this, what reason can be given for the believing of the one, and yet rejecting of the other? There can be none, my friends, only there are some prejudices under which you labour, that stop your way towards receiving of the truth, which you cannot deny, as conceiving it inconsistent with your interpretation of some texts in your law.

But ought we not rather to suspect your own interpretations (especially where the words will favourably bear another) than to reject such an evidence as must undermine your law itself, and destroy its infallible certainty, by disowning the same, in the only case that carries the same demonstration along with it? God cannot contradict himself; and therefore would never have set his own seal (which it is not possible to counterfeit, as before is shewn) to the truth of the Gospel, if it did, in the least iota, contradict or destroy the law: therefore, it behoves you well to consider, whether those things that you take for contradictions are such. In order to which,

1. Consider the difference betwixt destroying and fulfilling. The fulfilling of a prophecy, is not its destruction, but completion. So of all types or shadows, which point at things to come; when the substance is come, the shadow ceases of course.

Now, if the Messiah was prophesied of, and typified in the law, then his coming will indeed put an end to these; but not by way of destroying, which would be contradicting, but of fulfilling them, which is confirming, and attesting to the truth of them. And I suppose you are not ignorant that our Messiah did not pretend to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; and did most strongly assert and confirm it (*a*), to the least iota; and did fulfil it (*b*), in every circumstance, even to his suffering without the gate (*c*), to answer the burning of the body of the expiatory sacrifice, without the camp (*d*), &c. That, as himself said (*e*), "all things might be

(*a*) Matth. v. 17, 18, 19.

(*a'*) Lev. xvi. 27.

(*b*) Luke xvi. 17.

(*c*) Luke xxiv. 44.

(*e*) Heb. xiii. 12.

“ fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the “ Prophets, and in Psalms, concerning him.” Some of which are repeated hereafter, Sect. XII.

2. But I will carry this argument further : That not only there is no contradiction to the law in the Gospel, but that the law cannot be true, unless you allow the truth of the Gospel. For no other way possible is there to reconcile the promises made in the law, but as they are fulfilled in the Gospel ; of which let me give some few instances out of many.

1. (*f*) “ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him “ shall the gathering of the people, (or nations) be.”

This the Chaldee and ancient Jewish interpreters do understand of the Messiah.

And the scepter being long since departed from Judah ; and no other Messiah come, but our Lord Jesus Christ ; to whom the gathering of the nations, or Gentiles, has been ; the rabbies of the Jews, since his coming, have strained their wits to invent salvos and evasions for this prophecy. Some of them say, that by Shiloh here was not meant the Messiah, but Moses. Others say, it was the tabernacle at Shiloh. But others, thinking these interpretations not tenable, and that it cannot be denied to be meant of the Messiah, have fenced about the word scepter, which they contend to be a rod, not of rule, but of correction, which should not depart from Judah till Shiloh, or the Messiah, should come. Others, not liking this, allow it to be a scepter of government ; but then turn it this way, viz. that the scepter should not finally, or for ever, depart from Judah, because the Messiah should come, that is, to restore it. But this being an altering instead of expounding the text, others seeing there could not be any tolerable evasion made from the words of the text, have boldly adventured upon a new way of satisfying it, viz. that the scepter, or dominion, is not yet departed ; that is, not totally ; for that some of them have, somewhere or other, some share or other of government, or jurisdiction more or less ; at least, some that have, some way or other, descended from the tribe of Judah, though it may not be known.

I will not take up time to examine or disprove these pretences. They carry guilt in their face : and being all contradictory to one

another, shew to what a confusion the Jews are brought, in forcing their way through the plain predictions of the Messiah, of which I will go on to more instances.

2. (g) "Thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel: neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to kindle meat-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually:—Thus saith the Lord, if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, my ministers." Now is all this gloriously fulfilled in our Messiah, the Son of David, who is made Lord of heaven and earth, and of whose kingdom there shall be no end. But without this, how is this prophecy fulfilled? What son of David can you produce, who now reigns over the house of Israel? And as for the covenant with Levi, that is as much broken; for instead of sacrifices CONTINUALLY, you have not now, nor have had since the destruction of Jerusalem, about seventeen hundred years, any sacrifice at all. But if you understand these prophecies, as of the kingdom of the Messiah, so of his priesthood, of which that of Levi was a type, and fulfilled in it, then is this prophecy exactly accomplished in the evangelical priesthood, which our Messiah has instituted: and which, we doubt not, will, according to the utmost extent of this prophecy of it, last as long as the covenant of day and night; that is, as our Messiah has again given us his assurance, (h) "even unto the end of the world;" and that "the gates of hell shall never" be able to "prevail against it." Some of the * Jews pretend, that David will be raised from the dead, and made immortal, to fulfil this prophecy. But others, rejecting this interpretation, say, that this is to be meant of the time after the Messiah. sc. That after the Messiah shall come, of the seed of David, there shall no more want of his seed to rule, &c. But the words of the text are, that David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. And putting to this, after the coming of the Messiah, is adding to the text. And the like liberty would leave nothing certain in any text of the Bible, or in any other writing. The next I produce is,

(g) Jer. xxxiii. 17, 18, 20, 21.

(h) Matth. xxviii. 20. xvi. 28.

* Limborch Collatt. p. 73.

3. That most exact description (*i*) of the death and sufferings of the Messiah, with the reason of it, viz. as an expiation and satisfaction for the sins of the people.

And how forced and foreign is that interpretation which some of your modern Jews have put upon this chapter, on purpose to avoid the plain proof of our Messiah therein? As if the person there spoke of were not any particular person, but only a description of the people of the Jews, in the name of a person; of their present dispersion through all nations; with the contempt and misery which they suffer; and withal their making many proselytes to their religion, in this their dispersion.

For their many proselytes, we hear not of them. If the Jews keep their own ground, it is the most that in your present circumstances, you seem to expect: and would be well content to compound for it, not only here, but in all the countries whither you are dispersed. What king, what nation, have you converted? Nay, in our part of the world, what family, what persons? And we hear as little of it from other parts. You boast of many in Spain and Portugal; but they conceal it, and we know them not. But the flowing in of the Gentiles has been to the Christian church. And only so, can the promise of it to your church be verified, that is, as yours was a type of ours; or as ours is truly yours, fulfilled and continued, in the reign of your Messiah, pursuant to all the prophecies which went before of him. Therefore by all that has yet appeared of your dispersion, it is as a just punishment for your own sins, and not for the conversion of the Gentiles. But how for their conversion? When your learned Jew confesses (as hereafter quoted) that you have no arguments against the Gentiles, nor can convince any of them. And in all the prophecies of this your dispersion, (some of which are recited Sect. xi.) there is nothing told of the conversion of the Gentiles as thereby designed, but only as a punishment of your iniquity: and, at the length, for your conversion, as well as that of the Gentiles. As that God will have mercy upon you, and cause your captivity (*k*) to return. That the Redeemer (*l*) shall come to Zion, and turn away iniquity from Jacob. And in the mean time, that you should be rejected for your wickedness, and another people chosen in your place. For thus it is said to you, (*m*) “But ye are they which forsake the Lord—Therefore will I

“ number you to the sword—Because when I called, ye did not
 “ answer ; when I spake, you did not hear”—(ye did not-hearken
 to the words of the Lord, in the mouth of that prophet whom he
 told you he would send) “ Therefore thus saith the Lord God (*n*),
 “ behold my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry ; behold
 “ my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty ; behold my ser-
 “ vants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed ; behold my servants
 “ shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart,
 “ and shall howl for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your
 “ name for a curse unto my chosen : for the Lord God shall slay
 “ thee, and call his servants by another name.” How literally is this
 fulfilled ! God hath chosen the Christians in your place, and called
 his servants by another name. Not that you should be finally
 rejected, but till the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in : and
 then shall you be converted by them, and not they by you.
 Therefore are you fatally deluded, who attribute to yourselves, and
 to your present circumstances, all that righteousness which is spoken
 of the Messiah in the liiid of Isaiah. As, “ By his knowledge shall
 “ my righteous servant justify many, &c.” Was it for this end
 that God foretold your dispersion ? No ; but for your grievous
 iniquities, and for your own conversion. As said by a prophet of
 your own (*o*) “ Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have *some*
 “ that shall escape the sword, among the nations, when ye shall
 “ be scattered through the countries : and they that escape of you
 “ shall remember me among the nations—because I am broken
 “ with their whorish heart, which have departed from me—And
 “ they shall loath themselves for the evils which they have com-
 “ mitted in all their abominations : and they shall know that I
 “ am the Lord, and that I have not said in vain, that I would do
 “ this evil unto them.” Again, (*p*) “ They shall know that I
 “ am the Lord, when I shall scatter them among the nations, and
 “ disperse them in the countries : but I will leave men of num-
 “ ber of them—that they may declare all their abominations
 “ among the Heathen, whither they come, and they shall know
 “ that I am the Lord :” That is, you Jews shall know. It is to
 convince and convert *you*, that you shall be so dispersed, as you are
 this day. Again, (*q*) “ Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians
 “ unto me, O children of Israel, saith the Lord ?—Behold the

(*n*) Deut. xviii. 18, 19.(*o*) Ezek. vi. 8, 9, 10.(*p*) Ibid. xii. 15, 16.(*q*) Amos ix. 7, 8, 9.

“ eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I
 “ will destroy it from off the face of the earth ; saying that I
 “ will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord : for
 “ lo I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all
 “ nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least
 “ grain fall upon the earth.”

You shall be preserved in your dispersion, in order to your repentance, not for your holiness, to convert the nations ; for you are called the sinful kingdom, and as children of the Ethiopians. And God will choose other hands to raise his kingdom among the Heathen ; as it follows, (r) “ In that day I will raise up the
 “ Tabernacle of David that is fallen—That they may possess the
 “ remnant of Edom, and of all the Heathen, which are called
 “ by my name, saith the Lord that doth this.” See that fulfilled this day. Where are the Heathens that are called by the name of the Lord ? Who does possess them but our Messiah, the Son of David, by whose name they are called Christians ? In vain therefore do you expect the Heathen to be converted by *you*. You see it done already, by those whom God has chosen in your room ; and who now seeks to convert you, by persuading of you to hearken to Moses and your own prophets, who have told you of this conversion of the Gentiles, while you remain in your obstinacy. (s) “ I am sought of them that asked not for me ; I am found
 “ of them that sought me not ; I said, behold me, behold me,
 “ unto a nation that was not called by my name.” But unto Israel he saith, “ I have spread out my hands all the day unto a
 “ rebellious and gainsaying people.” Yet you would attribute great holiness to yourselves in this your dispersion, even all that which is spoken of the Messiah in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah.

I have insisted thus long upon it, because this is all you have to say against that wonderful prophecy of the law, outward appearance of the Messiah when he should come ; and of the end of his coming, not fighting, (as you expect) but suffering : not conquering men with the sword, but, as it is there expressed, (ver. 10.) “ Giving up his soul an offering for sin ;” whereby to redeem us from that death denounced (t) against sin : and so conquering him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, to whom we were

(r) Amos ix. 11, 12.

(s) Isaiah lxx. 1, 2.

(t) Gen. ii. 17.

in bondage, lying under the curse, of which he was made the executioner.

And this (till the time should come) was shadowed out to us in several types and representations of it, not only in your law, which was but one of them; for sacrifices (the most express type of the death and sacrifice of the Messiah) were instituted upon the first sin of man, and the promises of the Messiah (*u*) then given, and his conquest of the serpent, and were practised by Cain, Abel, Noah, Abraham, &c. before the law; but most lively expressed (*x*) in the sacrifice of Isaac, upon which the promise of the Messiah was again renewed to Abraham. This salvation by the Messiah was likewise prefigured by the saving of Noah and his family in the ark; as by your passage through the Red-Sea, and deliverance out of Egypt; particularly by the erection of the brazen serpent, as of Christ upon the cross; and your salvation only by looking upon that, as ours by faith in him. But these types may be over-valued, when we rest in them, without looking forward to what they represent. Therefore Hezekiah (*y*) broke that brazen serpent to pieces, and called it *Nehushtan*, a contemptible name, that is, only a bit of brass: and God expresses himself with as much indignation against your sacrifices, as insufficient, of themselves, to reconcile to him. In which sense he declares (*z*) that he hates them; that they are a trouble and an abomination to him, and that he is weary to bear them; and that he will not accept of them, or has required them as a satisfaction for sin. What is it then that he will accept? Even the Messiah (*a*), for whom a body was prepared in which he was to make that atonement, in which the bodies of beasts could not; and which is very particularly described in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and cannot be applied to the Jewish nation (as they would now turn it) under the present sufferings and calamity. It is said, ver. 12. "He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Do the Jews make intercession for the Gentiles? or how do they bear their sins? It is said, ver. 9. "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth; yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, &c." But what is before recited out of your prophets, and much more could be added to the same purpose, shew plainly that you have been

(*u*) Gen. iii. 15.

(*x*) Gen. xxii. 18.

(*y*) 2 Kings xviii. 4.

(*z*) Isaiah i. 11 to 15.

(*a*) Psalm xl. 6, 7.

bruised for your own great wickedness. And the opinion of your own righteousness is not the least part of your delusion, but you oppose yourselves, and set up contrary pretences; for when you come to give an account why your Messiah has delayed his coming so long beyond the time which was limited by the prophets, you have no other answer, but that it is because of your sins; and they must be sins more than ordinary, which have provoked God to break his promises, so oft repeated, concerning the time of the Messiah's coming. So that here you make yourselves the greatest sinners that can be: but in answer to Isaiah liii. then you are righteous altogether, and there is no deceit in your mouth! Your nation is the righteous servant of the Lord there spoke of!

But of that servant it is said, ver. 8. "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." Therefore he was not that people, but he suffered for that people.

The learned Jew * says, that the death which the Christians would infer of the Messiah from this of Isaiah liii. means not a real death, (for they suppose rightly, but misunderstood that their Messiah will live for ever) but only *labores et flagella*, (as he words it) great labours and afflictions which they suppose he may endure, *ante perfectam regni revelationem*, before the full establishment of his kingdom. And he brings as a parallel place, in deaths oft, which the Apostle (b) speaks of himself, but it means no more than dangers.

Answ. 1. The Messiah's undergoing stripes and afflictions, though in order to his kingdom, is as adverse to the Jews notion of the Messiah, as death itself; for they suppose him to go on gloriously in conquests and victory, and not to be scourged, or ignominiously treated.

Answ. 2. Being in deaths, shews itself to be a figurative expression; for a man can be in death but once, therefore not, in that sense, often in deaths: but as a man in battles, or storms at sea, may be said to be often in deaths, so the Apostle in the many dangers which he there repeats. But far otherwise are the expressions concerning the death of the Messiah (c) "He was cut off out of the land of the living:—He made his grave with the wicked:—He poured out his soul unto death." And

* Limbor. Collat. p. 53.

(b) 2 Cor. xi. 23.

(c) Isaiah liii. 8, 9, 12.

Messiah the Prince (*d*) shall be cut off, but not for himself, &c. If these expressions do not signify death, what others can? And the Jews struggling against it, shews only that they are resolved not to be convinced by any words whatsoever that can be spoken. They try all ways, but dare stick to none, for they are contradictory to one another: and if one of their excuses hold, the rest must be false; which confusion, of itself, were enough to convince them, you shall see more of them.

To avoid this, and other prophecies, which speak expressly of the poor and low state in which the Messiah was to appear, (*e*) "Behold thy king cometh unto thee poor," or as we translate it lowly, &c. The modern Jews have framed to themselves two Messiahs: one Ben Joseph, of the tribe of Ephraim, who was to be poor and contemptible, and undergo great indignities: the other Ben David, of the tribe of Judah, who was to be victorious, and conquer all the earth before them, and to live for ever in temporal grandeur: that he was to raise again from the dead all the Israelites of former ages, and among them, the first Messiah Ben Joseph. Thus the Jews shutting fast their eyes, do dream and invent Messiahs, on purpose because they will not be concluded by the plain prophecies of the one and only Messiah. Where do the prophets speak of two Messiahs? But speaking all along of one, and of the Son or Messiah, does necessarily exclude any other. If there were two, one would not be the Messiah; and by the same rule they make two, they may make two score of Messiahs. But this shameless contrivance shews how hard they are put to it to elude the plain prophecies of the Messiah; and is a confirmation of the true import and meaning of these prophecies, which are not answerable, but by such poor and guilty shifts. It is for this reason that I have been so long upon this prophecy of Isaiah, and shewn the dream of your modern rabbies, of two Messiahs, unknown to all your expositors before Christ came, but invented since, on purpose to avoid the plain and undoubted characters which our Jesus bore of the Messiah.

4. The famous prophecy of Daniel's (*f*) seventy weeks; which, according to the prophetic computation of a year for a day, makes four hundred and ninety years. In which time it was then foretold that the Messiah should come, and our Messiah did come within that time; and all there spoken of him were punctually

(*d*) Dan. ix. 25, 26.

(*e*) Zech. ix. 2.

(*f*) Dan. ix. 24, &c.

fulfilled; as, that the Messiah should be cut off; and soon after, that the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary should be destroyed, and the sacrifice and oblation should cease; and that even after all this, desolations were determined against your nation.

And the end of the Messiah's coming is likewise there told; not temporal conquests, as you dream of, but "To finish the transgressions, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness."

This prophecy pinches so close, that the modern Jews, to avoid it, would endeavour to discredit the whole book of Daniel: they dare not quite throw it off, because it was indubitably received by their forefathers before Christ came: and the high rank (g) in which Daniel is put, rather gives him the preference before all the rest of the prophets, than excludes him out of their number. It makes him at least the most highly favoured of God, of all the men living in the world in his time; and his visions of the four great empires of the world, and prophecies of the state-revolutions which followed so remarkably, made his prophecies more noted than those of any of the other prophets. And God (h) sets him forth as the standard of wisdom amongst men: for these reasons, the Jews after Christ could not expunge this book of Daniel; but about a hundred years after Christ, they quite inverted the method of the books of the Old Testament, which to that time had been received amongst them and made a new distribution of them; and a distinction of those they called *Ἁγία γραφα*, or holy writings, but put them in a class below the inspired and canonical Scriptures; and into this lower class they thrust the book of Daniel at the end of the prophets, which before was placed in the middle of them.

But this book of Daniel, if it be not among those which are inspired in the highest degree, it cannot stand among any holy or good writings, but it must be reckoned false and blasphemous, because it speaks of itself all along as immediately inspired by God; and if those visions and revelations there related be not true, then it is telling of lies in the name of the Lord, which is high blasphemy.

Therefore since the modern Jews dare not place the book of Daniel lower than among the holy or pious writings, they confess

(g) Ezek. xiv. 14, 20.

(h) Ibid. xviii. 3.

it to be inspired and canonical: and have discovered their own guilt in seeking to avoid the witness of their own prophets to our Messiah.

5. That promise (*i*) concerning the temple of Solomon, that God's name should be there for ever, and perpetually, cannot be verified, but as it was a type of the Christian church, which shall last for ever. For types, as pictures, are often called by the name of what they represent; and by them is meant that whereof they are the types.

6. As that promise to the temple of Solomon, so neither can that made to the second temple be otherwise verified than as fulfilled in our Messiah; (*k*) that "the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former." And yet it was nothing in comparison of the former. How then should the glory be greater? It is told, because "The desire of all nations should come into it," and "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts." Here was given the eternal peace and reconciliation of God with men, in the person of Jesus Christ, in whom God was, by his means, "reconciling (*l*) the world unto himself."

Some Jews, to avoid the force of this prophecy, do now pretend, that, by the "latter house," ver. 9, is not to be meant that second temple, but some other yet to be built. This is very precarious, and a guilty plea; but it will not bear; for it is plain that it was of that very second temple which the prophet spoke. The comparison, ver. 3, is betwixt that temple which they then saw, and the first temple of Solomon. And ver. 7, God speaking of that temple then built, says, "I will fill this house with glory." And ver. 9, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former." If it were spoken of a third or a fourth temple, the word *former* would not relate to the first temple; and there was no other former, when this prophecy was given forth. It was the second temple that seemed as nothing in the eyes of those who had seen the first, who therefore wept (*m*); and, to comfort these, it was here promised, that the glory of that second house should exceed that of the former.

But there were other glories much greater than that of the building, which the first temple had, and the second had none of them; as your own rabbies* do reckon them under five heads. 1. The

(i) 2 Chron. vii. 16.

(k) Hag. ii. 3, 7, 9.

(l) 2 Cor. v. 19.

(m) Ezr. i. 12.

* R. Kamchi. et R. Solom. in Hag. i. 8. and R. Bechai in Legem, f. 59.

holy ark, wherein were the tables of the covenant, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded: and where God was said to dwell between the cherubims that covered it (*n*). 2. The shechina, or divine presence in the cloud of glory. 3. The miraculous Urim and Thummim. 4. The holy fire that came down from heaven. 5. The gift of prophecy, or of the Holy Ghost. These all ceased under the second temple, which make its glory much more inferior to that of the first, than the difference as to the magnificence of the building. But all these glories were much exceeded under the second temple; they were fulfilled, and more divinely exhibited in their archetype the Messiah, who was the true shechina. God not only appearing in, but personally united to our nature, whose holy Spirit descended miraculously in fire upon his Apostles, the same day (of pentecost) wherein the law was given in fire from Mount Sinai, and filled them with the gifts of tongues, of miracles, and of prophecy, which were now departed from the temple, and placed that infallible Urim and Thummim in their hearts, which was but faintly represented in the breast-plate of your high-priest.

7. Again of this second temple it was said, (*o*) "The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple; even the angel of the covenant whom ye delight in; behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts." Therefore it was necessary that the Messiah should come during the standing of the second temple; and that prophecy can never now be fulfilled.

You have several times attempted to rebuild your temple, in the reigns of Adrian, of Constantine, of Julian; when having gained not only that apostate emperor's consent, but that he was willing to bear the expences of it, and gave orders for the re-building of your temple at Jerusalem, in odium to the Christians, and the Heathens did with great zeal (for the same reason) assist you in it, even then, when you seemed on all hands to have gained your purpose, behold God did immediately himself interpose! and by a terrible earthquake threw up the stones out of the very foundation with that violence, as destroyed many of the workmen and spectators; and by overthrowing the buildings near adjoining to the temple, killed and maimed many more of the Jews, who were there gathered together, for the carrying on of this work.

And when not terrified with this, they again attempted to lay

(*n*) Psal. lxxx. 1.

(*o*) Mal. iii. 1.

the foundations of the temple, globes of fire bursting out of the very foundations, not only destroyed the workmen, but devoured the stones. This is recorded in Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 20. and in Sozom. l. 5. c. 22. who appeals to several witnesses of it, then living. And our Chrysostome (*p*) says, We are all witnesses of this thing. But besides these testimonies of Christians, this is likewise told by Ammianus Marcellinus, who was not a Christian, in his xxiii^d book. Thus the building of the temple was defeated at that time, A. C. 361, and to this day; though if you had a new temple to-morrow, that could not solve the prophecies that were made either to the first or second temple, which last has been destroyed now more than sixteen hundred years; much less could it satisfy all those prophecies that speak so particularly of the time of the Messiah's coming, which are longer since past.

IV. The prophecies of the holy Scriptures concerning the time of the coming of the Messiah, were so noted and known among the Jews, that when it drew near, viz. about the time that our blessed Saviour came into the world, the Jews were generally looking out for him, and expected his coming. Some thought that Herod (who repaired the temple, and made it more glorious) was he, and took the name of Herodians. Others followed Theudas; others Judas of Galilee.

Both of which are mentioned (*q*) in our history of the Acts of the Apostles, and likewise (*r*) by your Josephus: if it was not another Theudas, who, as he tells, pretended to miracles, viz. to divide the river Jordan, by his command, and give his followers passage through it, on dry land. He mentions (*s*) another impostor, who led the Jews into the wilderness, and promised them deliverance, if they would follow him thither; whom Festus destroyed, with all his followers. This our Saviour literally (*t*) foretold, and cautions against following these false Christs and false prophets into the desert: and Josephus says (*u*), that there were at that time (which was about fifty-seven or fifty-eight years after the nativity of Christ) many enchanters and deceivers, who persuaded the common people to follow them into the desert, where they promised to work miracles, &c. He says that the country of Judea was stored with such; so intent were they then to find out their Messiah, and so persuaded that that was the time

(*p*) Orat. 2. contr. Jud.
l. xxviii. c. 1, 2. l. xx. c. 2.
(*u*) Joseph. Antiq. l. xx. c. 6.

(*q*) Acts v. 36, 37.
(*t*) Ibid. c. 7.

(*r*) Joseph. Antiq.
(*t*) Matth. xxiii. 23, 24, 25, 26.

of his coming. The two brothers, (x) Asinæus and Anileus, both weavers, had mighty successes, but were at last destroyed, and were the occasion of the destruction of many of the Jews, who followed them about forty years after the birth of Christ. And (y) about seventy-four years after, another weaver, one Jonathan, led many of the Jews after him into the wilderness, where he promised to shew them signs and wonders. He was burnt alive, and multitudes of the Jews were massacred about Cyrene. This was two years after the destruction of Jerusalem. And Josephus tells (z), that the great cause of that was their expectation of their Messiah then to come: for he says, that the chief thing which incited them to that war (with the Romans) was a doubtful prophecy (as he calls it) found in the holy Scriptures, that, about that time, one of their country should be monarch of the whole world. He said (after the destruction of Jerusalem) that they were deceived in this interpretation of the prophecy, which he (then) applied to the reign of Vespasian, as if fulfilled in him.

V. But what is more remarkable, the Romans themselves had the same notion current among them; and not only they, but all the Eastern part of the world, which may well include all that was then known. Thus says Suetonius, in the Life of Vespasian; *Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus & constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore, Judæa profecti rerum potirentur*, i. e. "That an ancient and constant tradition had obtained throughout all the East, that in the Fates it was decreed, that, about that time, some who should come from Judæa, should obtain the dominion, or government, i. e. of the world, which the Romans then possessed." And Cornelius Tacitus (Hist. l. 5.) speaks almost in the same words; telling of the great prodigies which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, he says, that many understood them as the forerunners of that extraordinary Person whom the ancient books of the priests did foretel should come about that time from Judæa, and obtain the dominion. *Pluribus persuaso inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur.*

These ancient books of the priests must either mean the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, in the hands of the Jewish priests, and which were known to the Romans; and if so, it shews the

(x) Ibid. l. xxviii. c. 12.

(y) Id. de Bell. Jud. l. vii. c. 31.

(z) Bell. Jud. l. vii. c. 12.

sense of the Jews at that time, and before, that that was the time of the Messiah's coming: or otherwise, which is more probable, by these books were meant the oracles of the Sibyls, which were kept with great veneration by the Roman priests, and which very plainly foretold the coming of Christ, and pointed out the very time; and this raised so great an expectation and jealousy in the Roman government, at that time, with a watchful eye, particularly upon the Jews. The same year that Pompey took Jerusalem, one of the Sibyl oracles made a great noise, viz. that nature was about to bring forth a king to the Romans: which, as Suetonius tells in the Life of Augustus, did so terrify the senate, that they made a decree, that "none born that year should be educated: and that those whose wives were with child, did each conceive great hopes, applying the prophecy to themselves.—*Senatum exterritum censuisse, ne quis illo anno genitus educaretur, eos qui gravidas uxores haberent, quod ad se quisque spem traheret, curasse ne senatus consultum ad ærarium deferretur.* And Appian, Plutarch, Sallust, and Cicero, do all say, that it was this prophecy of the Sibyls which stirred up Cornelius Lentullus at that time, he hoping that he was the man who should be king of the Romans. Some applied it to Cæsar, which Cicero (*de Devotione*) after Cæsar's death ridicules, and cautions that those prophecies should not be interpreted of any future king to be in Rome. *Cum antistibus agamus, et quidvis potius ex illis libris, quam regem proferant: quem Romæ post hæc nec Dii, nec homines esse patiuntur.* Virgil, in his famous IVth Eclogue, wrote about the beginning of Herod the Great, compliments the consul Pollio with this prophecy, by supposing it might refer to his son Saloninus, then born; but the words are too great to be verified of any mere mortal man: and speaks of such a golden age, and renovation of all things, as cannot be fulfilled in the reign of any earthly king. And Virgil does express it almost in the words of the holy Scriptures, wherein they tell of the glorious age of the Messiah; of new heavens and a new earth, then to begin and to be finally compleated, at the end of the world, Isaiah lxy. 17. 2 Pet. iii. 13.

*Ultima cumæi venit jam carminis ætas:
Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.
Jam nova progenies cælo demittitur alto.
Tu modo nascenti puero, quæ ferrea primum
Desinet, ac toto surget gens aurea mundo——*

The last age decreed by fate is come ;
And a new frame of all things does begin,
An holy progeny from heaven descends,
Auspicious be his birth, which puts an end
To th' iron age, and from whence shall rise
A golden state, far glorious thro' the earth.

Then the poet runs a division upon the peaceable state of that reign, perfectly a paraphrase of Isaiah lxxv. from ver. 17. which ends ver. 25. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw as the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy, in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

—*nec magnos metuent armenta leones.*
Occidet, et serpens, et fallax herba veneni
Occidet.—

—Nor shall the flocks fierce lions fear.
No serpent shall be there, or herb of pois'nous juice.

Nay, the very atonement for our sins, which Daniel attributed to the Messiah, chap. ix. 24. "To finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity," is thus expressed in his Eclogue :

Te duce, si qua manent scelervis vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras.

By thee, what footsteps of our sins remain
Are blotted out, and the whole world set free
From her perpetual bondage, and her fear.

And the very words of Haggai ii. 6. seem to be literally translated by Virgil. Thus says the prophet of the coming of the Messiah, "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." And thus the poet.

*Aggredere O magnus (aderit jam tempus) honores,
 Chara Deum soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum.
 Aspice concreto natantem pondere mundum,
 Terrasque, tractusque Maris, Cælumque profundum.
 Aspice venturo latentur ut omnia seculo.*

Enter on thy high honour, now's the time,
 Offspring of God, O thou great gift of Jove.
 Behold the world, heaven, earth, and seas do shake.
 Behold how all rejoice to greet that glorious age.

And, as if Virgil had been learned in the doctrine of Christ, he tells, that these glorious times should not begin immediately upon the birth of that wonderful person, then expected to come into the world; but that wickedness should still keep its ground in several places.

*Pauca tamen suberunt priscæ vestigia fraudis.
 ——— erunt etiam altera Bella.*

Yet some remains shall still be left
 Of ancient fraud, and wars shall still go on.

Now how Virgil applied all this is not the matter; whether in part to Augustus, or partly to Pollio, and partly to Saloninus his son, then newly born; but it shews the general expectation that there was at that time of the birth of a most extraordinary person, who should introduce a new and golden age, and both reform and govern the whole world: justly, therefore, called by the prophet the “desire of all nations.”

Now the Sibyls had appointed out the time to be then at hand. And if it should be supposed (though there is no reason for it) that the Jews had forged or interpolated these oracles, and made them speak thus in the language of the holy Scriptures, yet this still shews, that the Jews, at that time, did so understand the prophecies of the Old Testament, concerning the Messiah, as that then was the time prefixed for his coming.

But if these prophecies of the Sibyls be what they speak themselves (against which nothing but presumption has yet appeared) then can they not be denied as a demonstrative proof of our Jesus being the Messiah; for they describe him so personally and so

plainly, that this is made the cause of suspicion against them; as if they could not be genuine, because they speak so very plainly and particularly of Jesus Christ.

This has carried some Christian critics too far, to reject, upon this only presumption, the authority of the Sibyls. And yet they have not (not any of them that I can find) taken into due consideration, the answer which Origen gives to this same objection of theirs, for it is not a new one. It was first objected by the Heathens. Celsus had recourse to this, alleging, that the Christians had interpolated and added several things to the prophecies of the Sibyls. But Origen * appeals to the ancient copies of them, and challenges Celsus, or any of the Heathens, to shew what was added; which, he says, they could not instance; and that certainly they would if they could. Yet some of our critics have declared themselves, in this, for Celsus against Origen; but without answering of Origen's argument, which Celsus could not. And it is not to be imagined that Origen would have put the issue upon such a plain matter of fact, if it had not been true; and which could have been so easily disproved.

But this especially is to be considered, that the primitive fathers of the church, as Justin, Clemens, Theophilus, Athenagoras, Origen, Eusebius, Lactantius, &c. did lay so great stress upon the Sibyls, and quoted them so often against the Heathens, that they called the Christians Sibyllanists. Clemens Alexandrinus, in his Stromat, l. 6. quotes St. Paul (some work of his now lost) in his disputations with the Gentiles, referring them to their own Sibyls. And he lived near to the time of St. Paul; so that we must suppose this to have been at least the current opinion of that early age of St. Clement. This is observed, *obiter*, for the sake of some Christian critics, who seem not to have a due regard for the authority of the primitive fathers of the church.

But as to what concerns you Jews, and the present subject we are upon, there can be no dispute, by what is quoted out of the Sibyls, by several authors, before Christ came, that they spoke of a wonderful person to appear in the world, who should rule all nations: and that it was understood, as well by the then Jews, as Romans, to be about that time in which our Jesus was born.

* Ἀποφηνάμενος, ὅτι παρενεγράψαμεν εἰς τὰ ἐκείνης πολλά καὶ βλάσφημα· καὶ μὴ ἀποδείξας μὴδ' ὅτι παρενεγράψαμεν. Ἀπεδείξε δ' ἂν, εἰ τὰ Ἀρχαιότερα καθαρώτερα εἰδείκνυε, καὶ οὐκ ἔχοντα ἄπερ οἶσται παρενεγράψθαι, μὴ ἀποδείξας δὲ μὴδ' ὅτι βλάσφημά ἐστι ταῦτα. Orig. *contra Cels.* l. 7.

Now there could be none but Jews or Heathens to have made these prophecies of the Sibyls, (there being no Christians then in the world) and, as said before, it is all one, as to our present argument, whether the one or the other made them; for I bring them now only to shew, that there was a general expectation of the Messiah at that time when our Jesus was born; and I have shewn that it was universal all the world over; the greatest part of which was then under the Roman government; who likewise testify, that all the eastern part of the world had the same expectation.

And that, not only at that time, as if then put into their heads (by the craft or artifice of the Jews, as some fanciful men have pleased themselves to imagine) but that they had it all along as an ancient and undoubted tradition, written in the books of fate: and that it should come to pass at that very time. And never but at that time was there any such general expectation.

This universal impulse (if we will call it no more) which was imprinted, in whatever manner, upon the minds of the whole earth, to expect a glorious and wonderful Deliverer, Restorer, and King of the world, at that time, when our blessed Lord and Saviour was born, (and never before or since) cannot be made of less account, than a very extraordinary, and even divine apparatus, or preparing of the way, whereby to introduce the Son of God with the general expectation and commotion of whole nature, into the world!

And, among all these, the expectation was most firm, as there was most reason, with you, the Jews, who had the lively oracles of the holy Scriptures; which punctually pointed out the time wherein God had decreed to send his great Messiah into the world.

This appears with a flagrant evidence, in your setting up, at that time, this and that person for the Messiah (as I have before shewn out of Josephus) and so continued to the destruction of Jerusalem.

And since that time you have not desisted looking out for your Messiah, and following every impostor, that with any, or no pretence set himself up for it; as our Lord, your true Messiah, has foretold to you, that many would come in his name, saying, I am Christ. “Behold (says he) (a) I have told you before;” but you would not believe; and it was turned to your destruction.

(a) Matth. xxiv. 25.

VI. The History of these False Messiahs has been lately wrote by Johannes à Lent, and printed at Herborn 1697, with sufficient vouchers from the rabbies of the Jews themselves. Let me but name them, to shew the succession of delusion in the Jews. You have heard before, out of Josephus, the multitudes of false Messiahs before the destruction of Jerusalem. A. C. 114, you set up another, in the reign of Trajan; one Andrew, which occasioned the destruction of many thousands of you. Again, in the reign of Adrian, another, whom ye called Bar Cochab, *i. e.* the son of a star; alluding to the star of Jacob, Num. xxiv. 17. And again rebelling under this Messiah, caused a most dreadful destruction amongst you, insomuch that, as yourselves have told it in your own books, there was twice the number of Jews that perished upon this occasian more than all those that came out of Egypt; and that you suffered more under Adrian than under Nebuchadnezzar or Titus. When you were at last undeceived (too late) then you changed the name of this false Messiah, from Bar Cochab, the son of a star, to Bar, Cosibah, *i. e.* the son of a lye, as being a false Messiah.

And how oft have you been deceived since? In the year of Christ 434, in the reign of Theodosius the younger, another Pseudo-Messiah arose in the island of Crete, who said, that he was Moses, and sent from heaven to carry the Jews into Crete, on dry ground, through the sea, and persuaded several of them to throw themselves into the sea.

In the year of Christ 520, another Pseudo-Messiah, one Dunaan, arose in Arabia, and, with the Jews who followed him, set upon the bishop and Christians in Negræ, and committed great outrages till he was destroyed.

A. C. 529, the Jews and Samaritans in Palestine were seduced into rebellion by Julian, a Pseudo-Messiah, which occasioned the destruction of many of them.

And when Mahomet appeared, about the year 620, the Jews flocked to him, as their Messiah, to which he at first pretended; and they stuck to him, till, as some say, they saw him eat camel's blood; or, as others tell, for other reasons, they left him. Indeed he left them, and set up other pretences.

After, A. C. 721, they followed a certain Syrian, who said that he was Christ.

A. C. 1137, they followed another in France, which occasioned their banishment out of that country, and the slaughter of great numbers of them.

The year following, viz. A. C. 1138, in Persia, a false Messiah taking arms, brought great mischiefs upon the Jews there.

A. C. 1157, the Jews rising under another Messiah, in Spain, had well nigh all of them been cut off.

A. C. 1167, they suffered much under another Messiah, in the kingdom of Fez.

And the same year, under another in Arabia who gave for a sign, that after his head was cut off by the king of Arabia, he would rise to life; which he did not: but by this escaped a more cruel death. And not long after, in the same 12th century, they suffered much by another beyond Euphrates: who gave for his sign, that he would go to bed at night leprous, and rise sound in the morning.

About the year 1174, another rose in Persia, and led the Jews into rebellion; which occasioned great destruction among them. And one David Almusar occasioned the like to them in Moravia and Germany.

And again, in the same century, another Pseudo-Messiah. All mentioned by Maimonides, and other Jewish rabbins.

Who likewise tells us of that most famous Psuedo-Messiah in Persia, called David El David, alias David Alroy, about the years 1199 or 1200, a great magician, who deluded many of the Jews.

A. C. 1222, many Jews followed a false Messiah in Germany, whom they called the son of David: and the same year expected their Messiah to be born of a woman, then with child, at Worms; but it proved a girl.

A. C. 1465, when the Saracens made such inroads upon Christendom, the Jews then thought their Messiah was come to fight their battles.

And the same year rabbi Abraham Avenaris, a Jewish astrologer, from the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the sign pisces, foretold the coming of the Messiah to be then at hand.

And afterwards R. Aberbanal, in his commentary upon Daniel, p. 84, 86, gathered the time of the Messiah's coming from the like conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in pisces.

About the year 1497, the Jews were again deceived in Ishmael Sopus, whom they took for their Messiah, who having got together an army of vile and profligate men, pursued his victories successfully through Media, Parthia, Persia, Mesopotamia, and Armenia. But at last cheated the Jews, and set up a new sect for Mahomet.

A. C. 1500, rabbi Ascher Lemla appeared in Germany, as the fore-runner of the Messiah; who, he promised, should come and restore the Jews to the land of Canaan that same year. And the Jews generally, every where did believe him; and appointed public fasts and prayers to prepare for the coming of their Messiah.

About the year 1534, a new Messiah rose up in Spain; who was burned by Charles V.

As was another at Mantua, R. Salomo Malcho; whom many of the Jews did believe came again to life after he was burned, and every sabbath visited his wife Zephathi.

But the emperor spared R. David, who called himself one of the emissaries of the Messiah, then soon to come. Who, when he was at Rome, is said to have fasted six days together.

Another Pseudo-Messiah rose up in the East-Indies about the year 1615.

And another in Holland, A. C. 1624.

But the famous Pseudo-Messiah Sabethai Zevi, A. C. 1666; is a story remarkably known; who, after all the expectation of the people of the Jews, turned at last Mahometan, to save his life.

And no longer since than the year 1682, there has got up another false Messiah, R. Mardochai, a German Jew, whom almost all the Jews in Italy, and many in Germany, have owned; but, like wise men, with due respect to the Inquisition; and self-preservation. Whether he be yet alive, or what stress the present Jews do lay upon him, I cannot tell; nor do I suppose they will be willing to own.

But, from the foregoing account, I would lay before them what a strange uncertainty they are at; running after every impostor for their Messiah; having lost all the marks whereby they may know their Messiah; nay, being willing they should be lost; and disputing against them for this only reason; that because all the marks given of the Messiah, in the Old Testament, do meet in our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and can never meet in any other, therefore they would have no marks of him at all.

The learned Jew who disputed with Limborch, *Anno 1687*, (five years after their last or present Messiah, R. Mardochai*; appeared) contends, that the prophets foretold neither the time

* Limb. p. 73.

or place of the nativity of the Messiah; and says *, that miracles were not needful to prove his mission; but only to gather the Jews together from all parts of the world, and to conquer the nations.

Agreeable to this notion, the Pseudo-Messiah before-mentioned, who arose in Persia, A. C. 1138, when desired to shew some miracle to prove his mission, said, that the Messiah was not to be known by miracles, but by his success in conquering the world.

And your famous Maimon † says the same; that the Messiah was not to work miracles, but to fight the Lord's battles, and conquer all before him.

Mahomet ‡ made the like excuse for his not working of miracles. He said, that Moses, Solomon, and Jesus, were sent to shew God's righteousness, wisdom, and clemency, to which miracles were necessary to gain belief: but that he (Mahomet) was sent to shew God's fortitude; to which no miracles were necessary, but to enforce it with the sword; which carried its own conviction.

The guilt and folly of this excuse is apparent. For at the first setting up of any for the Messiah, how shall it be known that he shall have success? We see how often the Jews have been deceived and ruined by it. But do they believe that their Messiah shall have success without interruption, all along from his first setting up? No, the learned Jew § before-mentioned, interpreting the death of the Messiah, which is spoke of Isaiah liii. only of troubles and afflictions which he should endure; says it shall be in the wars with the nations, before he compleat the redemption of the Jews; and then (says the learned Jew) shall be fulfilled that prophecy of Jeremiah, *Et erit dies tribulationis, Jacob, sed ex ea salvabitur*: that the Jews shall suffer great tribulation, but shall be saved out of it: so that, by this rule, they cannot know their Messiah by his success, till he is quite ruined and destroyed, and they confounded, as it has hitherto befallen them.

One would think this enough to open their eyes; that whilst they have obstinately rejected the sure and infallible marks, which God by his prophets has given of the Messiah, they have left to

* Limb. p. 55.

† II. Melac. and Milch. c. 11.

‡ Akoran, c. 2, 3, 4, &c.

§ Limborch, p. 53, and 127.

themselves no marks or rules at all, whereby they can know him, or which do distinguish him from every impostor.

The Jews (*b*) in our Saviour's time, did expect that the Messiah, when he came, would work miracles; many of the false Messiahs pretended to it; and no doubt the present Jews would think it a great confirmation of any who should now set up for their Messiah. Which shews, that they dispute against the necessity of miracles to vouch the Messiah, because they cannot deny those of our Saviour. And it likewise discovers their diffidence in ever having a true Messiah to come (whatever they pretend) because they dare not put it to the issue of a miracle, or trust that they shall have any, who shall be endowed with such a power.

Yet they reject him, who they cannot but own had that power; and confess that they are ready to acknowledge another without that power: that is, they reject the strongest credentials, and will accept of lesser. They cannot deny this to be their case. They will not say, that they do not desire they had a Messiah, who could work miracles to vouch his mission. And their doctors have asserted, that as the Messiah was to be greater than Moses, so when he came, he should work greater miracles than Moses had done. As it is quoted out of R. Levi, Ben Gerson, Parascha, by Theodorick Hackspan, in his edition of R. Lipmann's book *Nizachon*. Ann. 1644, p. 337. Yet now they cry down miracles, as a mark of the Messiah, because they despair of any such; that is indeed, of any Messiah at all to come: for no otherwise can they know him, whenever they suppose that he should come. They confess that they cannot know him by the time when he should come, or by the works he shall do when come, other than by the issue of his battles; which they cannot know before-hand: and consequently can never be sure with whom to join, in time, before it be too late; as they have hitherto experimented in all their false Messiahs.

I would intreat them to think of another thing, as to the time of the Messiah's coming. They never set up any false Messiah, nor did any pretend to it, till near the time that our blessed Saviour came into the world; which was the time foretold by Daniel and the prophets. And since that time, they have been perpetually setting up of false Messiahs, one after ano-

(*b*) John vii. 31.

ther, even to our times. Which shews plainly, that the time wherein our Messiah did come, was the time wherein he was generally expected by the Jews: and that then they understood their law and their prophets in the same sense that we have done, as to the time of the Messiah's coming; though they now would dissemble it.

VII. I come now in the next place to consider (what I have before hinted), the excuse that you have for the delay of your Messiah's coming, beyond the time (as yourselves have confessed) which was foretold by the prophets. And you have so little to say upon this point, that you only pretend your sins have hindered his coming. This is a very bare, and looks like a guilty put-off. Surely it cannot satisfy yourselves: for I pray you to consider, 1. What are those sins you now complain of? They must be more than common sins, that should defeat so many express and solemn prophecies. And by your interpretation of Isaiah liii. (before spoke to) you pretend to be righteous and holy to a superlative degree.

But what are those sins that should prevent the coming of your Messiah? Are they greater than those of which you were formerly guilty in the days of Moses? (c) And from that time to the captivity, (2 Kings xvii. 7 to 24.) in the captivity, and after (Ezra ix. Neh. ix. Ezek. xvi. Dan. ix. Zech. vii. and the whole Prophecy of Malachi.) No you are not now so guilty of these idolatries and vile abominations; you have greatly reformed yourselves from these: and (excepting only your rejecting of your Messiah, and standing out still against him) you have not now, nor have had since his coming, more sins to answer for, or more notorious, than other men. So that this, of your supposing the coming of the Messiah to be delayed for your sins, seems only to be an excuse, because you can find no other.

2. The coming of the Messiah is promised as a remedy for sin. (d) "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." And what is before quoted, Dan. ix. 24. expresses the design of his coming to be, "to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity." So that our sins are so far from being a reason for the deferring of his coming, that they are rather an argument for the hastening of it. The prophet Jeremy,

(c) Read Deut. ix.

(d) Zech. xiii. 1.

speaking of the coming of the Messiah, and the condition of the Jews at that time, recites their most horrible wickedness, (e) and of Judah worse than Israel, and promises the new covenant of the Messiah, as a redemption to the penitent; when God would give them pastors (f) “according to his own heart, which should feed them with knowledge and understanding.” And to shew that this was not the renewing or restoring of the legal dispensation, but the leaving it behind, for one more excellent, it is added; (g) “In those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, the ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done any more.” And this is the time of the great wickedness of Israel. And this is according to the tradition which your rabbi Judah tells in Masoreta, under the title de Synedrio, c. Helec. That at the time of the coming of the Son of David, the temple should be a den of thieves, or unclean persons. And that this should be a time of great dissoluteness is likewise delivered in your Talmud, tit. de Synedrio, et de Ponderibus, &c. and by several of your rabbies. So that this excuse of your Messiah delaying his coming, because of your sins, is against your own expositions and traditions, as well as not only without any ground from, but contrary to the tenure of the holy Scriptures; which I come next to shew yet more expressly.

3. The promises of the coming of the Messiah, are not only positive, and without any condition: but the case is expressly put of the sins of David or of his posterity; and there God declares (h), that though he will punish those sins, yet that because of them, he would not break or alter the promise (i) he had given, concerning the coming of the Messiah.

4. But I have another answer yet to give, and I beseech you seriously to consider of it: that is, whether it would not be as great a punishment to your sins, if God has blinded your eyes, that you should not know your Messiah when he came; and a much greater punishment than if his coming had been delayed? And now consider whether this be not the case. It has been plainly prophesied (k) that your builders would reject the chief

(e) Jer. iii.

(f) Ibid. 15.

(g) Ibid. 16.

(h) 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15, 16.

(i) Psal. lxxxix. 30, 33, to 37.

(k) Ibid. cxviii. 22.

Corner-stone. That he should be (l) “ for a stone of stumbling, “ and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin, “ and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and that many “ among them should stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be “ snared, and be taken.—(m) Stay yourselves and wonder, “ cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; “ they stagger, but not with strong drink; for the Lord hath “ poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed “ your eyes: the prophets, and your rulers the seers hath he “ covered; and the vision of all is become unto you, as the words “ of a book that is sealed.” Is not this literally your case? Are not your prophets now to you, as a book sealed up? Do you understand by them, when you are to expect your Messiah? or what are the signs of his coming? No, they are all long since past; and you are left in the dark, in endless and groundless expectation.

And in this method there is no breach of God’s promises, and yet his judgments have their full scope, and there is still room and hopes of his mercy. When his time comes to open your eyes, then will you return to him, and he will turn to you. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil covers his face from you, *i. e.* the true import, and full end of the law; which veil is done away in Christ. “ For Christ is the end of the law for “ righteousness to every one that believeth.”

5. To avoid all the absurdities of this pretence of yours, some of you have set up another notion, *viz.* that the Messiah did come at the time foretold by the prophets, and has been in the world ever since, and is still; but, for your sins, conceals himself among the lazars or lepers, that sit at the gates of Rome, or elsewhere; others say * that he is in Paradise, but there fettered in a woman’s hair. This we must suppose is by way of allusion to Samson and Delilah. Some of the rabbies put a mystical sense upon this, meaning by the woman’s hair, in which the Messiah is tied, your evil concupiscence, which retards his coming.

How horribly absurd and ridiculous is this? These sort of strained excuses were enough to convert any men of reason amongst you. Besides that they are contradictory, which shews one must be false. For the former pretence overthrows this; and

(l) Isaiah viii. 14, 15.

(m) Ibid. xix. 9, 10, 11.

* Theodor. Hackspan. *ubi supra*. p. 351.

this, if true, destroys that. But what foundation have you for this?

What prophecies have you for such a state of the Messiah?

What, was the end of his coming to keep himself concealed for one thousand six hundred years? And all that time to undergo so miserable and wretched a life, as you would have him?

How was his coming to be a light to the Gentiles so often prophesied of, if the Gentiles had not heard of him from that time to this?

If he has undergone the state of a leper and a beggar now for above one thousand seven hundred years; how do you object the afflictions and low estate of Jesus for thirty-three years, as inconsistent with the glorious state of the Messiah?

But if he be come, and you know him not; and that this, you think, will solve all those prophecies concerning the time of his coming: behold your own conjecture truly fulfilled. He is come, and you have not known him; while the Gentiles have been convinced by his miracles, and submitted to him, even to the uttermost parts of the earth, as was expressly prophesied of him.

Again, if you did not know him, what hinders but that you might likewise persecute him? And why should this seem a thing so impossible to you? Have ye not done the same to almost all of your own prophets? You stoned Zechariah (*n*) in the “court of the house of the Lord:” you persecuted Jeremiah (*o*), till the day that Jerusalem was taken; and the hands of your priests and your prophets were chief in the pursuit of his blood, and after them the “cry of all the people;” as it was in your persecution of your Messiah. How often did you rebel against Moses, against David, against Solomon, against all your prophets? How do they all complain against you? (*p*) “Moreover all the “chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much, “after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the “house of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem: and “the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers— “But they mocked the messengers of God and despised his words, “and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose “against his people, till there was no remedy.” And now it is

(*n*) 2 Chron. xxiv. 21.

(*o*) Jer. xxvi. 8, 9.

(*p*) 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14, 15, 16.

risen a hundred fold more, since your despising and misusing of your Messiah. And your not knowing your Messiah was a just judgment upon you for your rejecting and persecuting all your former prophets. Elijah (*g*) complained that you had slain them all, every one of the prophets, but himself alone; and he was forced to fly for his life, and was miraculously preserved. In the solemn confession (*r*) of the priests and the Levites, and the covenant which they and the princes sealed; they confess that they “slew the prophets who testified against them, to turn them to “the Lord.” This Branch was never forgot in all their confession, for it was notorious; (*s*) “We have not hearkened unto “thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name, to our “kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of “the land.” Why then should it be thought a thing impossible with you, that you should not hearken unto the last prophet, the Messiah, who refused to hearken to any before him? Read all your provocations recorded Psalm cvi. and then your present obstinacy will not appear so strange to you, or so totally disproportionate to your former demeanor. It is said, ver. 7, “Our “fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt.” Then it is possible that you might not understand the wonders of your Messiah.

Your forefathers killed the prophets, and your fathers built their sepulchres: and you say (*t*) “If we had been in the days “of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in “the blood of the prophets: wherefore ye be witnesses unto “yourselves, that ye are the children of them who killed the “prophets.” And how have you “filled up the measures of “your fathers!” As our Messiah told you before-hand that you would do. That he would send you prophets and apostles; and that you would slay and persecute them: “that the blood of all “the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, “might be required of your generation.” And how severely has it been required? Believe in this our Messiah to have been a true prophet; and that this last sin of your crucifying him, and persecuting his apostles and messengers, whom he sent unto you, has been greater, as it has been more grievously punished than all your former provocations: of which that you may be more sensible

(*g*) 1 Kings xix. 10.(*r*) Neh. ix. 26.(*s*) Dan. ix. 6.(*t*) Matt. xxiii. 29, 30, 31, 32.

(for it is a material consideration) I invite you, as the last thing I shall say upon this head, to make the comparison betwixt your former captivities and sufferings, and that much more heavy hand of God which has lain upon you since your crucifying of your Messiah.

6. In the book of Judges (*u*) you are told of the several captivities into which you were sold for your repeated idolatries: first, into the hand of the king of Mesopotamia for eight years; then, secondly, after forty years deliverance, unto the king of Moab for eighteen years: thirdly, unto Jabin, king of Canaan, for twenty years: fourthly, into the land of Midian, for seven years: fifthly, of the Philistines and Ammonites, for eighteen years: sixthly, of the Philistines, for forty years. The seventh was the great and longest captivity of seventy years in Babylon. All these for your idolatry. But, after this, you were cured of your idolatry, and to this day have kept yourselves in the greatest abhorrence of it; and yet now, since your rejecting of our Messiah, and saying, "Let his blood be upon us and our children," you have undergone not a bare captivity, as in Babylon, where you were all together, and prophets sent amongst you to comfort you, and assure you of a restoration, and that in seventy years, but a dispersion over the face of the whole earth, without a king, without any prophet, as a people forsaken of God, and without a temple or sacrifice; and that not only for seventy or seven hundred, but now almost seventeen hundred years.

And if this heavy judgment be come upon you for your not understanding the promises of God, and thereby hardening yourselves against the clear proofs which your Messiah brought of his mission, then is there no appearance of your being delivered, till you shall repent of this greater sin, and more grievously punished than your idolatries, to reject and crucify your Messiah.

The ingenious and learned Jew * before-mentioned answers to this, that the captivity of the ten tribes has been longer than that of the two tribes: and it cannot be said that the captivity or dispersion of the ten tribes was for the rejecting of their Messiah; and therefore that it cannot be concluded that the lesser punishment of the two tribes was for a more heinous sin (*viz.* of crucifying their Messiah) than that sin, (*viz.* of idolatry) for which, principally, the ten tribes were delivered to captivity.

(*u*) Judges iii. 8, 13, 14. c. iv. 3. vi. 1. x. 8. xiii. 7.

* Limbor. p. 99.

Ans. Though the ten tribes were sent into captivity about a hundred and twenty years before the two tribes, yet their captivity has not been so long: for as the temporal punishment of any man ends with his death, so the punishment of a nation, as a nation ceases, when that nation has lost its name, and is scattered or incorporated into other nations. Particular persons who have descended of that nation may suffer, but the nation is no more, and so cannot be said to suffer when it is extinct. As when a regiment is broke, it is no more a regiment, though the soldiers are incorporated into other regiments. Thus in families, a family is said to be extinct when the name is lost, and there are none left to support it, though all the particular persons of that family may live under other names, and in other families. And thus it is that the family of the ten tribes of Israel are long since lost in the world, all the Jews now known being of the family of Judah, as distinct from Israel; but the family of Judah, consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with the Levites, are still preserved to suffer, a visible example of God's just judgment and indignation against them; the very names of all the other tribes of Israel being so far lost, as that not one of them is now known, or any Jew does so much as pretend to be of any of those tribes.

Though it is very probable that many of the ten tribes are incorporated (albeit they may not know it) into the two remaining tribes, yet all go under the name of the two tribes; and therefore the two tribes are they only who are said to suffer, as they only (and such of the ten tribes as were then incorporated with them) were concerned in the rejection and crucifying of their Messiah (*x*).

But as the punishment of the two tribes has been so many hundred years continued longer than that of the ten tribes for this their greater sin of crucifying their Messiah, so there was a plain and visible reason for the at first greater punishment of the ten tribes. 1. They rebelled from under the house of David. 2. They fell into schism against the house of Aaron, and set up new priests of their own. 3. As a consequence of both these, they set up a false worship in the caves of Dan and Bethel, and returned not from their idolatry, their schism, and rebellion, till their extirpation.

(*x*) Lam. iv. 6.

And we may see a very legible hand of God upon them, in great judgments all along from their revolt.

Judah had many bad kings, but some eminently good.

Israel had a succession only of nineteen kings from their defection, among whom there was not one that was good.

And they were carried away captive a hundred and twenty years before the captivity of Judah.

But then the captivity of Judah having been continued so much longer than theirs, (as before has been said) swells up the punishment of Judah now to exceed theirs, as their sin in crucifying their Messiah has far exceeded all the sins of the house of Israel.

Let me add to this, the many and miserable massacres and destructions of the two tribes since our Saviour, under the several false Messiahs whom they set up: in one of which they suffered more than in either of the destructions of Jerusalem, by the Chaldeans or the Romans, as before has been shewn from their own confessions.

Now let us consider that at the day of Judgment there is no representation of nations, but every man suffers for his own sin. National judgments are only in this world.

And hence it is observable, that no wicked nation has ever yet escaped a national judgment in this world. Though God may bear long with them, yet, if they do not repent by a national sorrow and amendment, judgment overtakes them even here; for no where else are there any national, either mercies or judgments.

And as all nations have been wicked in their several degrees, so have they every one been severally punished according to their demerits, even before the sons of men.

But there are no judgments that have befallen any nation so legible as what have been sent upon your nation, particularly upon the two tribes. No nation, since the earth began, has been kept under so long a captivity and dispersion; so wonderfully preserved, and so remarkably punished! Preserved for punishment! And, when God's time shall come for a glorious restoration in the acknowledgment of your only true and divine Messiah, O that this were the time!

But the learned Jew * has another answer, viz. that the Jews

* Limbor. p. 101. n. iv.

have not been free from idolatry since their return from the captivity of Babylon, nor are at this day ; and therefore that the comparison must fail which we draw betwixt the punishments that have come upon them for their former idolatries, and this sixteen hundred years dispersion, after they had forsaken their idolatry, which, he says, they have not yet forsaken. He says * that they have it in the utmost abomination, and avoid it wherever they can ; but that for fear or other base motives, very many of them have turned Mahometans in all the dominions of the Turk, in Africa, in Asia, in Persia and Arabia. But though this be an apostacy, and forsaking of their law, yet he does not charge it as idolatry, because the Mahometans do not worship God by images : but then he returns upon the Christians, and says, that since the idolatry of the church of Rome, multitudes of the Jews have, to avoid persecution, embraced the Popish idolatry in divers countries : and even in our own times (says he) we have fresh experiences of it. He names the whole Neapolitan synagogue of Barcelona, and all the others in Catalonia, who turned to the church of Rome. And in Spain and Portugal they have turned so fast, that he says, *Ex Judæis apostatis fere omnes, et principes, nobiles, et populares, originem ducunt. Quod in iis regionibus adeo notum, ut nemo dubitaverit* : i. e. that almost all of them, princes, nobles, and commons, are sprung from apostate Jews ; which is so well known in those countries, as that none doubt of it : notwithstanding (as he says) for the obtaining of great places and honours, especially ecclesiastical, they are obliged to renounce Judaism, and to bring certificates that they are not descended of the Jews ; which (as we may easily believe him) are attainable at that, as well as other courts, where money is not wanting. This, indeed, does plainly shew the suspicion, at least, that they are descended of the Jewish race. He says, moreover, that many of their clergy, bishops, and even of the inquisitors themselves, are Jews in their hearts, and dissemble Christianity for the avoiding of persecution and to gain honours and preferments, of whom (he says) some do repent and fly, as they can ; and that there are in Spain both bishops, and the gravest of their monks, whose parents, brothers, and sisters, do fly into this country (that is, into Holland) that they may freely profess Judaism. That many of the Friars, Augustines, Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, have there, and in

* Limber. p. 102.

several other countries, renounced their idolatry, i. e. of the church of Rome. This, I suppose, he would make an argument of their returning back to Judaism; but he does not deny that there are many Christian countries who have thrown off the idolatry of the church of Rome, and yet do not Judaize. But now, to consider all this whole excuse:

1. If many Jews, to avoid persecution, submit to idolatrous practices, as this learned Jew confesses, that he himself had often bowed the knee to Baal; for which he begs God's pardon, yet this is still but the defection of particular persons, and cannot be compared to those national idolatries, wherein their kings, and priests, and people did concur, of their own choice, without any force or compulsion; as were their many idolatries before the captivity of Babylon, and none the like since. Their principles were then corrupted, but not since; for they confess that they have idolatry in the greatest abhorrence, though many of them cannot resist unto martyrdom.

2. But this learned Jew has afforded us a very material consideration; for if all Spain and Portugal, or the greatest part of them, and likewise many in other countries, are descended of the stock of the Jews, this may lead us into conjecture what is become of the ten tribes. It is certain they are dispersed among other nations; and though they have lost their name, and consequently their nation, yet their posterity must remain somewhere, under other denominations. It is reasonable to believe that many of them did return to Judæa, after the two tribes were restored to their country, and Jerusalem and their temple were built again; and, consequently, are mixed among them to this day. It will not be so easy, without this, to reconcile the vast numbers of the Jews that were destroyed in the siege of Jerusalem, under their several false Messiahs, and that are now dispersed all over the world. From whence I make these inferences.

1. That many of the ten tribes might be involved in the guilt of crucifying their Messiah, and standing out against him unto this day, though all going then under the name of Judah, or the two tribes; and, consequently, sharing with them in the punishment.

2. If the Spaniards, Portuguese, and other Christians, or of the race of the Jews, they must be of the ten tribes; so far, at least, as they are descended with the two tribes; and they turned more

into other nations than the two tribes, because they have lost their name, and nation, which only survives in the two tribes. Therefore the ten tribes may be said to be more converted to Christianity than the two tribes, who only, by name, of all the tribes, persist in their infidelity against Christ our Lord.

This will make the punishment of the ten tribes, for their idolatry, schism, and rebellion, much less than that of the two tribes for the rejecting and crucifying of their Messiah, and this sin of the two tribes to be much greater than that of their own former idolatries, as the punishment of it has been many ways more remarkably transcendent: which, I pray God, you may lay to heart as you ought.

3. (*y*) Many myriads of the Jews, as well priests as others, were converted to Christianity in the beginning of the Gospel, upon conviction of what they themselves had seen and heard; about three thousand at one sermon; five thousand at another; (*z*) multitudes both of men and women. These, with their religion, lost (in time) their nation, or the name of Jews, having embraced that of Christians in the stead of it; and their posterity are Christians, though of the Jewish race.

Now, by reasonable computation, there are more of these Christian Jews at this day in the world, than of all that are known by the name of Jews.

For the Jews were almost all cut off, and utterly extinct, in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and more afterwards by Adrian, for the adhering to their false Messiah Barcosbas. And all that now go by the name of Jews, are sprung from the small remainders that were left out of these destructions, like brands plucked out of the fire.

Whereas the Christian Jews escaped all these, and all that came upon the other Jews, for their several false Messiahs before-mentioned: and which is wonderfully observable, the Christian Jews that were in Jerusalem when it was besieged, were saved by a miraculous providence, the siege being unaccountably raised for a short time, till the Christian Jews, taking hold of that warning of our Saviour, Matth. xxiv. 16. fled to Pella, a city in the mountains, and thereby escaped that dreadful overthrow which swept away the unbelieving Jews that waited their fate in Jerusalem.

(*y*) Acts xxi. 20. vi. 7.

(*z*) Acts ii. 41. iv. 4. v. 14.

By this it appears that the stock of the Christian Jews has increased and spread much farther than that of the infidel Jews, whose tree was twice cut down by Titus and Adrian even to the ground, and left to spring again out of the old root; besides the many great loppings afterwards, under several others of their false Messiahs. Whereas the believing Jews have increased and multiplied without any of these interruptions, and spread far and wide through the world. From whence we must conclude, that much the greatest number of the Jews are converted, and have embraced the Christian faith, and by this means are delivered from that servitude and dispersion which now lies only as a curse upon those infidel Jews who continue in their obstinacy against the Messiah.

Let me here take notice of another passage in the place before quoted of Limborch, where that learned Jew, speaking of the defection of so many of the Jews to idolatry, to Mahometism, &c. according to the countries where they live, wishes the Jews were as good as this argument of the Christians would suppose them, viz. that they had reformed from their idolatry since their return from the captivity of Babylon, and were in other respects better than before, excepting that sin of rejecting their Messiah, and persisting in it, which this learned Jew will by no means allow; but, to avoid the force of this argument, he makes the Jews now more wicked than ever. Upon which occasion I would mind you of your exposition (before-mentioned) of the fifty-third of Isaiah, which makes them most holy and righteous, (see p. 69) and that their dispersion was for the conversion of the Gentiles by them; whereas now you make them grow more and more wicked, and that they are corrupted every where with the idolatries and delusions of the nations, instead of converting them.

Theodore Hackspan, in his book before quoted, p. 394, cites the Jewish rabbies and Talmud making the ancient Jews much better than the modern. He quotes Jalkut upon the first of Isaiah, and upon these words, that righteousness lodged in Jerusalem. R. Juda, F. R. Simonis, says, "That there was not a man to be found in Jerusalem in whose hands any sin was to be found. But how was this? The daily morning sacrifice did cleanse the sins of the night, and the daily evening sacrifice the sins of each day; so that none was to be found in Jerusalem upon whom there was any sin." Thus he. But of the Jews, after

the daily sacrifice did cease, it is said in the Talmud by Jochanan Massech Joma. cap. 1. that a nail of the former Jews was better than the whole body of the after Jews. Because the daily sacrifice was wanting by which the former Jews were cleansed.

See how vile the modern Jews are here made ever since the destruction of the second Temple! How vile this learned Jew here makes them! And this, that they might find an excuse for the delay of the Messiah thus long after the time foretold by the prophets.

But at another turn, when they apply what is said of the sufferings of the Messiah in the fifty-third of Isaiah to their own present suffering state, then they are the righteous servants of the Lord, and there is no deceit in their lips! Then do they apply to themselves all that righteousness which is there spoken of the Messiah. At one time they are more vile than the Heathen among whom they are mixed; at another time they are righteous above all that are on the earth, and by their righteousness the Gentiles are to be converted.

These contradictory pretences, set up severally as they are pinched, shew the desperateness of their cause. Therefore I will labour this point no further, but proceed to another topic.

VIII. It is strange that you will adhere so obstinately to the letter of those promises made to Levi, which yet you must acknowledge are, (according to the letter) and have been long broken, and yet so easily get over the letter of the promises concerning the Messiah; which can never be fulfilled but in the person of Jesus Christ.

Especially considering that in that famous prophecy of the Messiah, Psal. cx. it is expressly said that he should be a priest, not of the order of Levi, but of Melchizedec. Here was a new priesthood; and a change of the priesthood does necessarily infer a change also of the law. In your sense of the promises to Levi, you make that promise of the future priesthood after another order, to be a contradiction to the promises made to Levi; but in our sense they both stand together, and the one fulfils and compleats the other. If you will admit no change of the Levitical priesthood, you must throw off the Psalms of David, as well as the Gospel of Christ. Then consider, that the promise to the priesthood, of which David then prophesied, was confirmed by an oath, that God would not alter his purpose; "I have sworn, and will not repent." There was no oath to the priesthood

of Levi. Again, the priesthood of the Messiah was declared to be eternal; thou art a priest for ever; and the type of this priesthood in Melchizedec was more noble than that in Levi, because Abraham, the father of Levi, and of all Israel, did pay an acknowledgement to the priesthood of Melchizedec, as superior to his own, in paying of tythes to Melchizedec, instead of receiving tythes from him; and being blessed by Melchizedec, as his superior:

When the flowing in of the Gentiles to the church is described, it is written, (a) "I will take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord:" or, if this were to be understood of the Jews, yet the covenant with Levi would be at an end, if the priesthood were enlarged to let in those of other tribes. And it is promised, (b) "Ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests." This could not be under the Mosaical dispensation, but it is under the evangelical, where the priesthood, which is designed to serve the whole earth, is not, it cannot be confined to one family, or tribe, or nation: and so the whole kingdom of God, which is the whole world, as they that are made capable of the covenant of grace, so also of the priesthood.

And if the whole Gentile world were gathered unto you, (as you expect) then surely one tribe of Levi would not be sufficient for priests to them all. So that according to your own expectation, there must be a change: and yet,

IX. Your great objection is, that God cannot alter any thing that he has once ordained. It is true God is immutable, and cannot change; and what he ordains, must answer the ends for which he has ordained it. He does not always tell us what those ends are, and therefore we cannot always tell when they are accomplished; but when he pleases to make known to us the ends for which he has ordained such things, what it is they tend to, and when they are to be accomplished, then when they are accomplished at the time he has named, to think this any breach of promise, or alteration in God, which is the highest proof of his veracity and unchangeableness, is a great weakness in our understandings, and our great unhappiness, when this betrays us to oppose and fight against the counsel of God, and forfeit our share in his glorious dispensations, all ordained to bring us to bliss.

(a) Isaiah lxvi. 21.

(b) Exod. xix. 6.

1. This objection of yours, which keeps you from Christianity, is that which has divided the Samaritans from you. They stick to the institutions given to the fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and think that what was after commanded to Moses, cannot alter what God had before appointed. “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain,” (said a woman of Samaria (c) to our Messiah) “and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” Our Lord determined the case on your side against the Samaritans, and said that salvation is of the Jews; but by the same argument that you can defend yourselves against the Samaritans, you must yield up the cause to the Christians: for if God could alter his institutions from what he gave to the fathers, to what he commanded by Moses, why not from what he commanded by Moses, to what he instituted by Christ.

2. If you say that the argument will run on to all changes, as from what he instituted to Christ, to what it is pretended he a-new revealed to Mahomet, and so on to the end of the world, and then nothing can be certain.

I answer, that Mahomet could not prove his pretended revelations by those marks as Moses and Christ did; and they only, as shewn in the first part of this discourse. And we may safely venture all the impostors in the world to counterfeit these marks, and to believe them, if they can.

But in the next place, Christ was foretold by Moses, Deut. xviii. 18. Yea, and all prophets that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days in which our Messiah came into the world, and fulfilled all that they had prophesied of him. So that the Gospel is a confirmation and fulfilling of the Law, and bears witness to it.

But though the alcoran does acknowledge both the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and so far bears witness to them, yet it cannot shew that Mahomet was foretold either by Moses or Christ, or by any of the prophets. Nay, Christ has told that he is the last, and none to come after him; and therefore gives us caution to believe none such. So that the Alcoran is in direct opposition both to the Law and the Gospel.

If Moses had said that he himself was the last God would send, then could not you expect any Messiah to come: but since Moses has told us of a prophet (d) that God would send after

(c) John iv. 20.

(d) Deut. xviii. 19.

him, and commanded all to hear him, and threatens God's judgments upon those who will not hearken to the words of God which he shall tell them, what difficulty should you make to hearken unto him who has come with the same attestation and seal of God as Moses himself did?

3. If you say that you are forbidden, Deut. xiii. to trust even miracles against what Moses commanded, that Scripture shall be considered by and bye; and it will be shewn, that it extends only to the worship of false gods; and that they are not true, but seeming miracles, that are there spoke of.

But your Talmud (tit. de Synedrio) gives this as a standing rule, that any command whatsoever may without scruple be transgressed by the command of a prophet; that is, who works miracles to attest his mission.

This is to be understood of those commands which stand only upon positive precepts of God's institution, and have not a moral; which is an indispensable obligation in their own nature.

And of this there are many examples in Scripture, even where no miracles were wrought to warrant them; but they gave place oft-times to cases of necessity and public good.

How oft have the treasures of the Temple, which were hallowed, being dedicated to God, and the very gold upon the doors and pillars of the Temple being given to Heathen and idolatrous kings (when other treasure there was none) to procure peace to the kingdom upon great emergencies? And no censure past upon this.

David, in a case of necessity, eat of the hallowed bread (*e*); and those who were with him, of which it was not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and was blameless.

The command of the sabbath was transgressed as oft as the eighth day, for the circumcision of a child fell upon that day.

Joshua; and all the men of war (*f*), compassed Jericho on the sabbath day.

Circumcision (*g*) (so positively commanded) was omitted forty years in the wilderness.

Samuel (*h*) sacrificed at Mizpeh, and built an altar at Ramah, neither of which was the place that God had appointed; which was contrary to the general command, Deut. xii. 13, 14. And

(*e*) 1 Sam. xxi.

(*f*) Josh. vi.

(*g*) Ibid. vi. 5.

(*h*) 1 Sam. vii. 7, 17.

besides, Samuel was no Levite, and therefore it was death for him to offer sacrifice, by Numb. xviii. 7.

The same did Elijah (*i*), (who was not a Levite) and had God's approbation by a great miracle then shewn.

The place of which Moses spoke, Deut. xii. 5, 6, that God would choose to put his name there, was established at Shiloh, which bore the name of the Messiah, and was called the tabernacle which God had pitched among men, Psalm lxxviii. 60. It remained there from the days of Joshua to Samuel, about four hundred and fifty years; and thither they brought their tythes, sacrifices, &c. and came up yearly to worship, as Moses had commanded, to the house of the Lord, which was there (*k*).

Yet this was altered by the authority of David and Solomon, who set it up at Jerusalem; and moreover, made several changes in the courses of the priests and the Levites, and other parts of the worship of God, which Moses had commanded, particularly as to the time of the Levites service (*l*), which, by the commandment of Moses, was from the age of thirty to fifty. But this, by the last words of David (*m*), was altered, and they were to begin their service at the age of twenty. And the reason is there given, because the manner of their service was changed, not being so laborious as when they were to carry the tabernacle upon their shoulders; the practice of which ceased, when the house of the Lord was built at Shiloh, after the conquest of Canaan, for then the ark (*n*) was fixed; and all the tribes repaired to it at Shiloh, and it was not carried about with them from place to place as formerly. Yet this alteration of the age of the Levites service was not made till the time of David, but served ever after. Ezra iii. 8.

And there was no prophecy going before to warrant these changes, nor had Moses spoke any thing of them.

But he spoke expressly of the Messiah, and implied changes to be made by him: for he gives strict charge (*o*) to hearken to what he should command, and threatens God's judgment, to those who should refuse. Now what occasion was there for this, if he had no more in commission than Moses had, and were to command nothing more or less than Moses had done? If he were only to reinforce what Moses commanded, that was the business of lesser

(*i*) 1 Kings xviii. 38. (*k*) 1 Sam. i. 3, 7. (*l*) Numb. iv. 3, 23. (*m*) 1 Chron. xiii. 27. (*n*) Joshua xviii. 1. 1 Sam. i. 7. iv. 3. (*o*) Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19.

prophets, and would make him less than Moses, which I suppose none of you will say.

But beside Moses, we have the joint voice of all the prophets, which do in express terms declare, that the Messiah would make great changes from what Moses commanded, and introduce a much more glorious state into the church; which Isaiah expresses (*p*) by new heavens and a new earth; and tells that at that time God would throw off the Jews, and make others his chosen: "And ye" (says God to our nation) "shall leave your name for a curse to my chosen; for the Lord shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name." And, (*q*) "In those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, the ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done any more." (*r*) "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." (*s*)

And it is told that the Messiah should be a priest, but not of the order of Levi, as before shewn, p. 69. And as your priesthood, so it is said that God would reject and put an end to your sacrifices, and bring in their place the great and only expiatory sacrifice of the Messiah. (*t*) "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required:" What then: "A body hast thou prepared me," (says the Messiah) "and lo I come to do thy will, O God; in the volume of the book it is so written of me."

Thus it is written of the Messiah, and of the changes which he was to introduce: yet you will have none of them because they are changes, though you make no scruple of the changes by David, Solomon, and others, of which there were no prophecies; nor did they attest their mission, as our Messiah has done, by such a multitude of miracles, and of such a wonderful nature, as never before were shewn upon the earth.

Nay, you yourselves have made alterations, without the command of any prophet that you can produce, or of any miracles to warrant you. For you are commanded (*u*) not to add to what

(*p*) Isaiah lxi. 17. lxvi. 22. lxi. 15.

(*q*) Jer. iii. 16.

(*r*) Jer. xxxi.

31, 32.

(*s*) See Ezek. xvi. 61. Not by thy covenant,

(*t*) Psalm xl. 6, 7.

(*u*) Deut. iv. 2. v. 32. xii. 32.

Moses commanded, as well as not to diminish. Yet how many traditions of your elders do you observe that were never commanded by Moses? as the washing of pots and cups (x), &c. If that were all, for you have traditions quite contrary to the laws of God, and which render them of none effect. Moses said, Honour (that is, support) your father and mother: but ye say, if a man has made a voluntary corban, or gift of what he has, though in reversion to the Temple, or other use of your law, he is free from that part of the fifth command, which you have thus enervated by your tradition. And many other such like things do ye: nay, you have laid an eternal fund of traditions to vie with the written law: these you suppose delivered to Moses, and by him orally conveyed to your elders, of which they have the keeping, and their stock is inexhaustible. And these you make of equal authority with the written law.

What prophet or miracle had you for changing of the posture in eating the passover so positively commanded, Exod. xii. 11? Yet after you were at rest in Canaan, you made your own construction upon the equity of the command, and released yourselves from the trouble of that manner of eating it.

You likewise added a *post-canium* to it, which you observed with as much strictness as the passover itself.

You added baptism to circumcision; and several other things which were not commanded in your law.

Yet you reject your Messiah, because you say he made alterations in the ordinances which Moses delivered.

X. From what has been said, I hope it will not be a difficult task to remove from you all scruple as to that master objection which you most insist upon, grounded upon the xiiith of Deut. ver. 1, 2, 3, where it is said, “If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other Gods, (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.” From hence you will infer, that you are not to believe our Messiah, let his miracles be never so great, because he seeks to turn you after other gods.

Ans. 1. The sign or wonder here mentioned, is not any true and real miracle; but only telling of something which might afterwards come to pass. And this has happened, and may happen many times by chance, which yet may seem a wonder to the people, and it is only against these false and seeming miracles that God here guards his people; which he sometimes permits for the trial of their faith. Therefore observe, the word miracle is not used here; only a sign, a wonder, or a dream.

For none can work a true and real miracle but God. And it cannot without the highest blasphemy be supposed, that God would work a miracle, on purpose to set his seal to a lye. If this were possible, it would destroy all revelation; for how could we know when it were true or false? Therefore where there can be no doubt as to the miracle, there can be no scruple as to the revelation, which that is brought to attest.

Now the miracles of our Jesus were such, as that there can be no matter of doubt concerning them. The most hardened Deist upon the face of the earth, if he allowed the matters of fact, would grant them to be true and real miracles. And you must either allow them to be such, or throw off all those of Moses, which were neither so great nor so many.

This is the first answer I give, which concerns the nature of the sign or wonder that is spoke of, Deut. xiii. The next answer is concerning that thing for which such a sign, or wonder, or dream is produced; and that is, "to go and serve other gods." And as to this, consider:

II. What are these gods here spoke of? It is told, ver. 7, "Namely, the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the earth;" that is, all the gods of the heathen world; and against all these our Jesus is as severe as your Moses, and confirms this very text, and all that Moses commanded against them. They are called devils over and over again, 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. And Christianity, wherever it has come, has rooted out all the pagan idolatry, more than ever the law has done.

Obj. 1. If you say that our Jesus would have men to worship himself. 1. That is, none of the gods mentioned in this place of Deuteronomy; for you will not say that any of the heathen did worship the Messiah. 2dly, You do not refuse worship to the

Messiah: David called him Lord, and said of him (*y*), “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever”—(*z*) And “God, even thy God, hath anointed thee”—And says to the king’s daughter, (that is, the church) “He is thy Lord, and worship thou him.” And God calls him (*a*) his fellow or associate; and commands all the kings of the earth to kiss (that is to worship) the Son (*b*) (for that is an act of worship.) And David speaks of him (*c*) (which can be applied to Solomon, no otherwise than as he was a type of the Messiah) “They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations”—(*d*) “He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and unto the ends of the earth”—(*e*) “All kings shall worship or fall down before him; all nations shall serve him”—“Prayer shall be made ever unto him;” or, he shall ever be adored—“all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him, and all the heathens shall praise him;” these are the very epithets given to the Messiah (*f*) (and can belong properly to no other) why is called the “desire of all nations;” and that “in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed;” and “to him shall the gathering of the Gentiles be:” which is to Christ our Jesus, but was not to Solomon, unless in a very low sense, as he was greatly famed for his wisdom, which made him much respected by many of the heathen; but they had no relation to him, or were gathered unto him as their King or their Saviour, as they are now to our Jesus, whom Solomon did but faintly represent. And if you should apply the worship before-mentioned to Solomon, then surely much more to the Messiah. So that the worship of him is established in your own Scriptures, and comes no way within the prohibition of Deut. xiii. which respects only the worship of the heathen deities. Let me add here what your Talmud (tit. de Synedrio) says, that Jesus is not the name of any idol, nor can be reckoned such, when the Christians do refer the honour they pay to him, to God the Creator of all. And (tit. Schebuoth and Sabboth) agrees with Rabbi Solomo, who upon Gen. xxii. 18. does acknowledge, that God might take upon him human nature, and thinks that he had done it for a time. And the Chaldee Paraphrase (upon Hosea i. 7.

(*y*) Psalm cx. 1.(*z*) Ibid. xlv. 6, 7, 11.(*a*) Zech. xiii. 7.

Psalm ii. 12.

(*b*) Job xxxi. 27.(*c*) 1 Kings xix. 18.(*d*) Hos. xiii. 2.(*e*) Psalm lxxii. 5, 8, 11, 15, 17.(*f*) Hag. xi. 17. Ibid. xi. 7. Gen. xii. 3

xviii. 18. xxii. 18. xl. 19.

and other places) calls the Messiah the "Word of God," the same that our St. John calls him. (John i. 1, &c.) And your Talmud upon Taanith, says from Isaiah xxv. 9. That at that time, God would be pointed at and shewn even with the finger.

The above-quoted Psalms, which speak of the worship of the Messiah, are owned to refer to the Messiah. The second Psalm by David Kimchi, Abraham Esdra, R. Jonathan in Beresith-rabba, and that most learned rabbi Saadia; who owns the same of Psalm cx. as the Chaldee Paraphrase does of Psalm xlv.

But there needs no attestations, for these Scriptures are expressed in such a strain as may indeed be accommodated, at an infinite distance, to transactions here below; but cannot be properly applied nor verified of any but the Messiah. And some are such as can, in no way, be adapted to any other. What other did David call his Lord? What other claims the worship of all the kings upon the earth? Whose kingdom but his is without end? And extends to the "uttermost part of the earth?" All which, in the second Psalm, is given to the Son, but was not given to David. Neither was it given to David that his flesh should not see corruption, as it is promised, Psal. xvi. 9, 10. but was verified of none that ever entered the grave, except only of our Messiah.

Obj. 2. You urge our doctrine of the Holy Trinity, as inferring plurality of Gods: and so be brought within the prohibition, Deut. xiii. But you cannot say that this is any of the gods of the heathen, who only are expressed in that command: when we profess to worship none other but that one only God, who spoke to your fathers in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire; and we detest all thoughts of any other God. Our great Messiah taught us this to be the "first of all the commandments, that the "Lord our God is one Lord (g)." And all expositions of the blessed Trinity, or inferences from it, that do, in the least interfere with this, we condemn as impious and heretical.

But whether this one most simple and uncomponded nature of God may not be communicated to three eternal persons, without either confusion of the persons, or dividing of the substance, does, in no way, interfere with the unity of the nature, because this very hypothesis does suppose the unity of the nature, in the strictest sense that is possible. And if we should be under great difficulty (as how can it be otherwise) in explaining such an un-

fathomable mystery, yet can it not infer polytheism upon us, while we are ready to part with all, rather than to admit of that.

You know, we bring many proofs for this, out of your Scriptures of the Old Testament (some are named hereafter) and you cannot infer from hence, that we do not own these Scriptures (nay this is a proof that we do own them) only that we do not understand them right. And if you should prove against us, that we do not rightly understand (who does?) the divine incomprehensible nature, while we contend, as earnestly as you, for the necessity of its unity, you cannot charge us with polytheism for our mistake in other matters. And therefore this can never come under the prohibition of Deut. xiii.

I say not this, that I would wave entering with you upon this subject; but there is not room for it in this short essay; it would require a discourse by itself, all that I am at present concerned in, is to shew you, that this can be no cause for your rejecting our Messiah. There are some called Christians, who say that we have mistaken our Messiah in this point; but I would be loth to clear you from the objection by that method. Only thus much it shews you, that if we have mistaken the Gospel, so have we the law too, as to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity: and this can be no more an argument that we set up polytheism against the law, than against the Gospel, which as strongly asserts the unity of God as the law, and confirms all that the law says of it. Therefore if you reject the Gospel, because we would infer a Trinity from hence; you must, upon the same account, reject the law too. If our inferences are not just, the Gospel is cleared as well as the law: and if our arguments do hold, then the law does infer a Trinity as well as the Gospel.

Nor is it we Christians alone that would infer a Trinity from your law, your own Cabalists do distinguish God into three lights; and some of them call them by the same names, as the Christians, of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and yet say, that this does not at all break the unity of God. Your famous Philo expresses the same in many places. Upon the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, he says, That God was accompanied with his two supreme virtues of power and goodness: and that God being one, did produce, out of his clear mind, three operations, of which each is unmeasureable or infinite: for that his powers are unlimited. And in his second book of the Husbandry of Noah, he distinguishes these into τὸ ὄν, τὸ δεσποτικὸν τὴν ἰσὺν ὀύμενον; i. e.

being, power, and goodness. In his Allegories, he calls the Word, the name of God, and the Maker of the world, or the great Instrument of God, whereby he made the world, the same as our Gospel, John i. 3. And in his book before quoted of Husbandry, he calls the Word by the same name as we do, Heb. i. 3. *Xapaxlñg*, the express image of God. Moses, the son of Nehemianus, calls him the Angel, the Redeemer, who is called the face of God, that is, says he, God himself, the same that appeared to Jacob at Bethel, and said to Moses in the bush, "I am the God of thy father," &c. the Lord that should come to his temple; and the Angel of the covenant prophesied of. Mal. iii. 1.

Maimonides, in his book of Foundations, and after him, Joseph Albo, distinguish in God, 1. That which knows. 2. That which is known. 3. The knowledge itself.

But I will not detain you here with quotations; our Eusebius, in his book of the Preparation of the Gospel, p. 327. tells you that all your rabbies, after the God of all and his first-born Wisdom, do join in the same divine nature a third, whom they call the Holy Ghost, by whom your inspired persons were enlightened. And you do all generally agree, that this Holy Spirit, was not any thing that was created; and yet you distinguish it from him that sent it. Your Rabbi — tells us, that in the word Elohim, there are three degrees, each distinct by itself, yet all one; joined in one, yet not divided from one another.

And, as you make that Holy Spirit which inspired the prophets, not to be a creature, yet distinct from him who sent him: so you make what you call the Schechina to be a divine thing; and distinguish it not only from God, but from that Holy Spirit. As in your Jerusalem Gemara, of Documents, c. 3. And the Babylonish Gemara, tit. Joma, c. 1. Your R. Jonathan, in the Preface Ecka Rabthi, says, that the Schechina waited three years and a half upon Mount Olivet, expecting the conversion of the Jews.

This was the place where (*h*) our Jesus (the true Schechina) made his abode; and whence he rode into Jerusalem to accomplish his blessed passion. And the time of his preaching was about three years. So long, he said (*i*), he would bear with the ob-

(*h*) Luke xxi. 37. xix. 29.

(*i*) Luke xiii. 7.

sinate Jews. This may be applied (*k*), as to what your high-priest said, though himself knew not the true import of it.

Now then all these forecited testimonies to the Holy Trinity, whether of Jews or Christians, are not the setting up of any other God, but only searching into the nature of that God whom we acknowledge: as to give an example (though any parallel to God must be at an infinite distance) we argue three great faculties in the soul, the understanding, the memory, and the will: and that these may be understood, without either confusion of the faculties, or division of the substance of the soul. And suppose that some should object, that this was making of three souls; I say, that whatever the consequence might be from this hypothesis, yet that no man could be justly charged with holding three souls in man, who professed that he held but one. We are not to be charged with the consequence of an opinion, so as to infer that we do not hold that opinion; for we may not see all the consequences of what we hold: therefore, though three faculties should infer three souls, yet cannot he who holds three faculties, be charged with holding of three souls, while he does but hold one soul; and thinks that the contrary does not follow from his holding of three faculties in the same soul.

Thus, though three Persons did infer three Gods: yet does not he hold three Gods, who holds three persons in one and the self same God.

If you say, that this will excuse all idolatry, as of those who worshipped the sun, &c. because of God's supposed residence there; I answer, no; because supposing of that residence, yet it would be idolatry to worship the sun, or any thing else, merely because of God's residence in it. As you would have thought it idolatry to have worshipped the temple, or the cloud of glory, because of God's special presence, which was there afforded.

But they did not think it to be idolatry, was it therefore none? No, our thoughts cannot alter the nature of things. And there are sins of ignorance. None ever confessed, no, nor, I believe, thought himself to be an idolater: for then, it must be supposed, that he would not continue in it. But he that adores one God in three persons (supposing him mistaken in his judgment) comes not under either of the branches of idolatry. 1. Of a false object. 2. Of a false manner of worship. For the manner, there is no

prétence; that consists in the worship of God by images (which he has forbidden) whether artificial, of our own making, or natural, by any creature of God's making; as any of the host of heaven, sun, moon, or stars; or any thing here below, as of men, birds, beasts, fish, &c. though the worship be referred to God, as represented by them; or from his supposed residence or presence in them. This is idolatry in the manner of our worship. But nothing of this can be applied to the three Persons, which are supposed to be God himself. This was your idolatry in the golden calf, which you did not take to be God himself, that you yourselves had made; nor could such folly be supposed in your Solomon, as to think the images he made to be that God that made him. This was the idolatry forbidden in the second command.

Then, for the first command, which relates to the object of worship. If that be taken for setting up any creature as the Supreme Being: or giving divine honour to angels, or other ministers of God, as inferior or middle deities, betwixt the Supreme Being and us, as the Heathens thought their dæmons, whom therefore they called *Dii Mediorumi*: in neither of these senses can idolatry be applied to three Persons supposed to be the Divine Nature. For 1st, They are not creatures, nor 2dly, any inferior deities, nor so supposed to be; but all equally to partake of the same one Divine Nature; as the three faculties do of the same one and indivisible soul: and therefore whatever mistake may be supposed in the hypothesis, yet it cannot come under any notion of idolatry. And no otherwise can the worship, or paying of divine honour to the Son or Messiah (already proved) be excused from idolatry, than by acknowledging him to be the Word of God (as you yourselves have called him) that is, one of the Divine Persons in the Godhead. And this does avoid all notion of idolatry in the worship of him; and can no ways come under that prohibition of Deut. xiii. against worshipping of the false gods of the Heathen. You lay not this to the charge of your own Talmud and rabbies, who give the same expositions of your Scriptures as we do: and you know how many of them do think that a plurality of powers in the one nature of God is intimated in the very name of God, Elohim, which is the plural number; and in these texts, among others of the Old Testament. Gen. i. 1, 26. iii. 22. xix. 24. Psal. xlv.6. lxxviii. 18. cx. 1. Isaiah ix. 6. xlviii. 16. Jer. xxiii. 6. Mich. v. 2. Zech. ii. 8, 9. iii. 2.

xii. 10. Now may we not reason upon these texts, as you have done, without imputation of polytheism? And so of the texts in the Gospel? And when you come to embrace the Gospel, (God send) we will reason with you, as with some amongst ourselves, upon what proofs are there, answerable to, and explanatory of those texts in the Old Testament, which favour the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; and then, and not till then, will be the proper time to enter with you at large upon this controversy:

But what I have now said, I hope, will be sufficient to remove all scruple from you against the Gospel, from that text of Deut. xiii.

And then that other text, Deut. xviii. 19. will look very terribly upon you, that whoever should not hearken to the Messiah, when he came, God would require it of him. And you feel it severely, that God has required it.

3. But to put an end to this objection from Deut. *xiii. the Jews have yielded it; if they will allow that learned Jew who disputed with Limborch to give their true sense: and that according to their own Talmud, before quoted, (tit. de Synedrio) which says, That any command may be transgressed, by the command of a prophet, *i. e.* who can work miracles to prove his mission.

And says that learned Jew*, If Christ, after he arose from the dead, had publicly said to the whole congregation of Israel, Hear, O Israel, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt: and now have redeemed you from a greater captivity of sin; whom you have sacrilegiously put to death. *Abſ dubio* (says he) without doubt, all Israel had believed, even to this present day. Nor had there been room left for any doubt or suspicion. Thus he; and he thereby yields, that such a miracle as this would have convinced all the Jews to believe Christ, when he called himself God. And therefore he must grant, that, notwithstanding of what is said, Deut. xiii. miracles are sufficient to vouch even the divinity of Christ; and then the dispute must only lie upon the miracles recorded in the Gospel. For the truth of which, I refer to what is said in the first part against the Deists.

XI. I would in this place call upon you to reflect, how very exact and particular God has been in fulfilling all the promises he

* Limbor. Collat. p. 112.

has made unto your nation. One especially, which does confound the Deists, who call for ocular demonstration, and have it, to their astonishment, in seeing at this day the fulfilling of a most wonderful prophecy and promise made to your nation, so many ages past.

The Deists have made you, of all people, their reproach, because you have been called the peculiar people, the holy nation, chosen of God before all nations upon the earth. Yet ye were the "fewest of all people (1.)" And they called you the most inconsiderable and contemptible: and thence argue (in their bold and prophane manner) the injustice and nonsense of God's preferring these to all the great nations and monarchies upon the earth.

They will not believe that God had more regard to the Jews than to any other people; or gave any prophecies concerning you. They say you coined those prophecies after the facts they spake of. But they demand the fulfilling of a prophecy, which they may see; and this that I speak of is obvious to the eyes of all the world; it is recorded Jer. xlvi. 28. "Fear thou not, O Jacob
" my servant, saith the Lord, for I am with thee, for I will
" make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee,
" but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in mea-
" sure, yet will I not utterly cut thee off." You will find the same, chap. xxx. 11. and chap. xxxi. 36, 37. it is written, "If
" those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then
" the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me
" for ever. Thus saith the Lord, if heaven above can be mea-
" sured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath,
" I will also cut off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have
" done, saith the Lord." See the same repeated, chap. xxxiii. 24, 25, 26. and confirmed, Isaiah xxvii. 7. xxix. 7, 8. liv. 9, 10. lxxv. 8. Ezek. vi. 8. xi. 16. xii. 15, 16. Amos ix. 8, 9. Zech. x. 9. And this was pursuant to what was promised in the law. Lev. xxvi. 44. Deut. iv. 31, &c.

Now let us see how literally this is fulfilled at this day. The great and famous monarchies, who, in their turns, governed the world, and successively had destroyed the Jews (the Assyrian, the Babylonian, and the Roman) are all vanished as a dream; there is not one of them left: their very names are lost in the earth. But your nation, though "sifted among all nations (as your prophet

(1) Deut. vii. 7.

“ Amos expresses it, in the place above quoted) like as corn is “ sifted in a sieve,” yet are you preserved a visible distinct people, in all the nations whither you have been scattered. And the rage of many kings and governments have been let loose against you, to root you off from the face of the earth : and you had no helper. Yet the Lord was your helper, and put it out of the power of all the earth (though without any visible opposition) to infringe the promise he had made to you.

The Deists dare not say, that these prophecies were made yesterday, or not before the fall of these monarchies ; especially of the Roman, the greatest of them. And what a folly, as well as vanity had it been in the Jews, to have forged such audacious and provoking prophecies, to have thus dared all the powers of the earth to extirpate them, who hated them, and had them perfectly at mercy ?

And here let the Deists take notice of this wonderful instance, fresh before their eyes, of God’s particular regard to this most despised and contemptible people (in their account) above all the other nations of the earth, how great and honourable soever. This is a standing miracle exhibited to the whole world.

Yet is there no partiality in this, as the Deists weakly reason : for as Moses was a type of the Messiah, so the church of the Jews was of the Christian, whose pales are enlarged to take in the Gentiles, as often promised in your prophets : by which means your nation was indeed a type of the whole world (represented in the long garment of the high-priest, *Wisd. xviii. 24.* Israel called the “ first-fruits of God’s increase.” *Jer. ii. 3.*) And consequently the blessings of which the Jews partook, the promises made to them, and miraculous protection over them, was taking possession in the name, and securing the reversion of the Gentile world, in the same glorious inheritance. And it was indifferent as to the good of the world, which nation had been pitched upon as their type. But God chose the least, that his power and protection over his church might be more visible ; and to shew that she must struggle through many difficulties and temptations ; yet never be extinct (though often distressed) when all the powers and glory of this world shall vanish as smoke before the wind.

Moreover, if God had chosen any of the great and powerful nations of the earth for his peculiar people, to whom if he had given his promise to continue them for ever, the scorers would have blasphemed, and said that God was still on the strongest side :

and they would have ascribed their preservation to their own power and greatness. This is the reason God gives, why he chose the “fewest of all people (*m*),” lest they should say it was through their own power and might that they were preserved. Besides, the peculiar nation being (as before has been said) a type of the Christian church, it was necessary that the odds, as to the world, should be against that nation; which should subsist not by worldly strength and politics, but by signal and miraculous providences: Thus the church was best represented, as greatly **DISTRESSED**; but wonderfully **PRESERVED**!

And here, O ye Jews, behold an equal promise of our Messiah to his church, and as miraculously fulfilled, as that before-mentioned to yours. He promised, as before quoted, that his church should continue “even unto the end of the world;” that he would be all that time with her to preserve her, and that the gates of hell should never prevail against her. And when was this promised? Even at the beginning, when his religion was low and contemptible, hardly yet known in the world. And the devil has been let loose (as against Job) to spare only her life; all things else have been put in his power. All the rage and madness of kings and states, and mobs, have been exerted against her to destroy her, for many ages together; and she was destitute of all human help; nay it was made unlawful for her to help herself, or take arms in her own defence, against her persecuting kings, as it was not permitted to you though an army of 600,000 men (*n*) harnessed, besides a great mixed multitude, against Pharaoh, Ahasuerus, &c. But she was commanded, as you, only to “stand still, and see the salvation of God;” yet still she insisted upon the promise of her preservation made to her by her Messiah; nay more, of her victory at last over all these her enemies; and boasted of it before them, while they were worrying of her without controul; and told them, that it was not in their power to destroy her. Yet all this notwithstanding, how miraculously did our Jesus perform his promise, in his now almost one thousand seven hundred years preserving and supporting her under all her persecutions, and giving her victory and triumph! And she still trusts in that promise, that it can never fail. Could any power less than divine have foretold this preservation, and have effected it for so long a time without human means, without sword or policy? This is not the least of the

(*m*) Deut. vii. 7. viii. 17.

(*n*) Exod. xii. 37, 38. xiii. 18. xiv. 13, 14.

miracles which God has shewn, as to you, so to us, in these promises so full of wonder, so visibly fulfilled, and now every day fulfilling. And this is not a mean argument to join you to us, when you see the same God working so wonderfully for you and us, for us only of all the whole earth; none of whom can boast such promises, and such performances, so uncontestibly true, and so truly miraculous. Therefore I beseech you to hearken at last to the wise reasoning of your own Gamaliel, lest ye be found (o) “fighters against God.” For if this work had not been of God, it could not have so stood. You first spent your rage against this Stone, which your builders refused, and as he foretold you, it has grinded you to powder (p). Will you not yet confess, that “this is the Lord’s doing,” and that it is “marvellous in your eyes!”

And now, O ye people greatly beloved, and grievously punished, did your God ever fail you in any promise that ever he made to you? You are, and have been many centuries, preserved only upon the Almighty power that there is in his promise, too strong for all the armed legions of earth and hell, which have overthrown mighty empires, and every thing else but you, and his church represented by you. Believe it, your preservation since your return from Babylon, has been greater than in it, in Egypt, or in the wilderness. And can you imagine that he who has wrought so many miracles, and still continues them, lest any of his works should fall to the ground; can you think that his great promise of the Messiah, and the time of his coming, so particularly described, is come to nought? As to the time, you confess it has failed, if not fulfilled in our Jesus. And where the time (as of your seventy years captivity, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. Jer. xxix. 10.) is named, there it is impossible that there should be a failure as to the time.

See how exactly your deliverance out of Egypt (q) was fulfilled, even to a day of the promise (r) made to you. And your forty years in the wilderness, to the forty days of your spying out the land. Nor did your many and repeated provocations all along that time, put off God’s promise one day further. See then and consider, how punctually our Messiah’s coming was according to the stated times and ages prefixed, as it is set down in the first chapter of our Gospel according to St. Matthew, ver. 17. The

(o) Acts v. 38, 39.

(p) Matt. xxi. 42, 44.

(q) Exod. xii. 40, 41.

(r) Num. xiv. 34.

generations from Abraham to David fourteen generations; from David to the captivity fourteen generations; and from the captivity to Christ fourteen generations. God's fixed and determinate times are not to be altered.

The time and place of the Messiah's coming, as foretold in the prophets, is one of the surest marks by which we must know him. To that end they were so particularly set down: and if these fail, so may all the rest.

How do you expect to know your Messiah when he does come? He cannot vouch himself from the time of his coming foretold by the prophets, for that is past, and there is no other time prefixed.

Will he prove his mission by miracles? And will he shew greater than our Jesus has done? Can he fulfil the prophecies of the Messiah, by not coming at the time they have named, so much as our Messiah, by fulfilling all the circumstances of the prophecies, as to time, place, &c.?

XII. Born of a virgin (*s*), of the seed of (*t*) David, in the town of (*u*) Bethlehem, within four hundred and ninety (*x*) years of the building of the second temple; before the scepter had quite departed from (*y*) Judah; to whom the gathering of the Gentiles has been, as to their Messiah, as well as the Messiah of the Jews. This is an astonishing mark, and notorious, and insisted upon over and over again in the (*z*) prophets; and of which none that ever took upon them to be the Messiah, except only our Jesus, had the least shadow of a pretence. And consequential to this, that he should make the (*a*) Heathen nations forsake their idolatry, and destroy their idols. No nation of the Heathens was ever brought to this by the Law, but how many have by the Gospel! By the way, you may see by this how unreasonable your exception is against our Messiah, from Deut. xiii. as if he introduced the worship of the Heathen deities, which he only has effectually destroyed. He only stopped the mouths of their oracles, which within a hundred years after his coming, were all totally silenced in the reign of Trajan. He only deposited his (*b*) flesh in the grave, in hope that it should not see corruption. They gave him

(*s*) Isaiah vii. 14. (*t*) Ibid. xi. 10. (*u*) Mic. v. 2. (*x*) Dan. ix. 25.
 (*y*) Gen. xlix. 10. (*z*) Psal. ii. 8. lxxii. 8, 11, 17, cx. 2.
 Isaiah ii. 2. xi. 10. xlix. 6. lii. 15. lv. 5. lx. 3. lxxv. 1. Zech. ix. 10. Hos. ii. 23.
 (*a*) Isaiah ii. 18, 20. xxxi. 7. Ezek. xxx. 13. Zech. xiii. 1, 2. (*b*) Psal. xvi. 9, 10.

(c) gall to eat, and vinegar to drink. They (d) pierced his hands and his feet, and cast lots upon his vesture. They upbraided him in the same (e) words foretold. His very (f) price was foretold, and how the money should be disposed of. That a (g) bone of him should not be broken. Again, the particular manner (h) of his riding into Jerusalem upon an ass, which your most learned Rabbi Saabia expounds of the Messiah; as also the ii. and cx. Psalm, and other Scriptures before quoted. I could enlarge upon this head, and shew many more particulars wherein our Jesus did, and does, exactly answer to the several marks given of the Messiah by the prophets.

Which is so strong an argument, so past all possibility of cheat or contrivance, that the first of our Apostles reckoned it even beyond miracles, or rather as the greatest of miracles, greater than those shewn to our outward eyes. For proving the mission of Jesus, from their being eye-witnesses of his majesty in his miraculous transfiguration, and the voice which then came to him from the excellent glory: (i) "Which voice" (says he) "we heard when we were with him in the holy mount." He adds as a yet further proof, "We have a more sure word of PROPHECY, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." Pray God it may; and that he may open your understanding, as he did of his Apostles (k), that they might understand the Scriptures, that thus it is written, and that "thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third-day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." All which you see fulfilled, yet you will not believe it! You see all fulfilled that he foretold so particularly of the destruction of Jerusalem; and that that age in which he spoke should not pass till it was fulfilled, though there was no appearance of it (l).

XIII. What witchcraft then is it, what heavy judgment lies upon you, that you should harden your hearts against this Messiah, in expectation of another, in whom the prophecies of the Messiah

(c) Psal. lxxix. 21.

(d) Ibid. xxii. 16, 18.

(e) Matt. xxvii. 43.
xii. 46. John xix. 36.

(f) Zech. xi. 15. Matt. xxvii. 6, 7.

(g) Exod.

(h) Zech. ix. 5.

(i) 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18, 19.

(k) Luke xxiv. 49.

(l) See Ezek. xxi. 10, 13. vul. The sword that destroyed Jerusalem, called the scepter of God's Son.

can never meet? For the time is already past, as you yourselves confess, against this Messiah, who shed his blood for you; who died praying for you; who offered up himself a sacrifice to purchase eternal redemption for you; which the blood of bulls and goats could never do. The very institution of sacrifices does declare, that God would require satisfaction for the sins of men; and that without shedding of blood there could be no remission; not of blood less noble than our own, but of the great Messiah, of dignity and merit sufficient to make satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. And now I appeal to yourselves, whether this scheme of God, in Christ, reconciling to himself lapsed humanity, and thus triumphing over all the powers and malice of that serpent the devil, who seduced man into disobedience, be not more worthy of God; a demonstration of greater power, and wisdom, and goodness, and a more literal fulfilling of that first promise of the Messiah, Gen. iii. 15, than giving to any one nation (though it were your own) the conquest over your enemies, and a temporal reign upon earth.

Yet this is the objection you have against your second Moses, as against the first (*m*); Where is the inheritance of fields and vineyards that was promised to us? You hanker after these poor perishing things, and neglect your eternal inheritance, which was figured by them. You long more after an earthly than a heavenly Canaan; and for a little rest there, than a rest for ever. Therefore you reject our spiritual, and choose to yourselves an earthly and fighting Messiah. But you cannot have him; and God, in mercy, has turned you out of your beloved Canaan, and given it the basest of men, to take off your minds from it, and to instruct you, that that is not the end of his promise. And because you prefer it to the glorious purchase that our Messiah has made for us, which the angels desire to look into; but ye think scorn of that pleasant land where there is everlasting victory, and triumph, and sabbath, and jubilee! O shut not your eyes wilfully against your own happiness. Call it to mind, and shew yourselves men. Is not this a more exalted and rational completion and archetype of your law, than the tables for municipal statutes, to distinguish you of some short time from other people? If that be all the import (as you would have it) of the whole glorious dispensation to Moses, was this worth or proportionable to that

astonishing appearance upon Mount Sinai, and all that wonderful œconomy of miracles by which your Law was established ! But if you will look (with us) to the end of your Law, then you will see every tittle and iota of your Law fulfilled, exalted, glorified in the heavenly reign of our Messiah, the second Adam ; the innocent Isaac that was sacrificed ; the Joseph that was sold by his brethren, for their future preservation ; the Moses who delivers us out of Egypt, the slavery and thralldom of sin and hell, and conducts us safe through the wilderness, the temptations and distresses of this wretched life ; our Joshua, who opens our way into the heavenly Canaan, through faith in whose blessed passion and sacrifice for us, when lifted up upon the cross, like the brazen serpent in the wilderness, the mortal biting of our spiritual serpent the devil is cured, and our souls eternally saved. These are the glorious things that were shewn to Moses in the mount, after which pattern (*n*) he was commanded to frame the tabernacle, and all the institutions thereof, as types and shadows of those things which were to be perfected in the heavens, by faith in which the just shall live (*o*). And will you now reject the pattern for the types ? Will you degrade your Law, to mean nothing beyond the outward senses ? Nothing but what is visible and temporary ? To have no spiritual and eternal signification ? Do we therefore make void the Law ? Yea, we establish the Law. We carry it whither it was intended : we shew an eternal and heavenly light shining through it all, and every institution of it : we look with reverence and great veneration upon it, as the school-master that was ordained to bring us unto Christ, as the ladder that was set to climb up into heaven. But you will not climb with us ; you say that the top does not reach to heaven, therefore you stop short upon the lower steps. The patriarchal dispensation before the flood was one step ; the Abrahamic another ; the Mosaic another ; and you still expect another, the last, and most perfect under the Messiah. Yet you reject it now it is come, and there is to be no other.

Be not afraid to lose your Law or your prophets, you will hear them read every day in our churches, and their true and full import explained and fulfilled in the Gospel. For the Gospel is the best comment upon the Law, and the Law is the best expositor of the Gospel. They are like a pair of indentures, they answer in every part : Their harmony is wonderful, and is, of itself, a con-

(*n*) *Exod. xxv. 40.*

(*o*) *Hab. ii. 4.*

viction. No human contrivance could have reached it. There is a divine majesty and foresight in the answer of every ceremony and type to its completion; and there is one yet to be completed. O the glorious day when that shall come! That is, the grafting you in again to your own olive-tree, the fatness, the sweet, the marrow of your Law, fulfilled in the Messiah (*p*). For we do believe that “blindness is happened to Israel but in part, till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so that all Israel shall be saved. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. God hath concluded all; us first, and then you, in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all; that the praise may be to God, and not to us, that no flesh should glory in his presence. 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! For of him, and through him, and to him are all things. To whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

XIV. But though the judgments of God are, in themselves, unsearchable, yet they generally move in the road of second causes: and so far it is lawful for us to look into them, and sometimes necessary, in order to our duty, as being not only brought upon us for our sins, but continued by them. So that by discovering the causes, we may prevent or shorten our judgments.

Therefore I would here enquire a little into some of those most visible causes which have all this time, and do still harden the Jews in their obstinacy against receiving the doctrine of Christ.

And some of these are on the Jews side, and some on the Christian.

I. First for the Jews. They have, since Christ came, quite altered their own doctrine and topics from whence they used to argue before, on purpose to avoid the plain proofs thence drawn for our Jesus being the Messiah. To instance in a few:

1. There are great presumptions that they have altered and corrupted the very text of their own Scriptures of the Old Testament in those places which speak of the Messiah, which gave the marks of him, and pointed out the time of his coming. However this they cannot deny, that whether by the loss of the vowels in the Hebrew tongue, or from whatever cause, that language is now rendered so uncertain, beyond any other in the world, as

that one word bears many different significations, insomuch that every text almost will afford perpetual jangling; which has made some of your most learned Rabbies complain that your Scriptures are become, in the words of the prophet before quoted, as a book sealed up to you; and that the true sense of them will not be known till the coming of the Messiah, who will restore the vowels and right knowledge of the Hebrew tongue.

It is long since the Hebrew has ceased to be the vulgar language of your nation, and consequently to be well understood by the Jews themselves, who now learn it at schools, as other men do. Josephus complains of the loss of the Hebrew tongue among the Jews in his time, and it was so long before.

This occasioned that the Greek translation of the lxx. was publicly read in the Jewish synagogues, many years before the coming of Christ.

This translation they thought to have been divinely inspired, and made great boasts of it, as you may read in Josephus, and many other of your authors: and it continued in this reputation with you, and was read in your synagogues till Christ came, and for about an hundred years after. Then you rejected it, because of the plain proofs that were brought out of it for our Jesus being the Messiah, and set up the spurious Greek translation of Aquila, who was an Heathen, a Christian, and a Jew, which he then made when the Hebrew tongue was so greatly decayed from that purity which it confessedly retained when your lxx. priests made that famous translation for Ptolemy, king of Egypt, about three hundred years before Christ: and was never questioned by any of you, but held in the highest veneration all that time, till after the coming of our Saviour, because of the flagrant testimonies it bore to him. And were it now admitted, as it formerly was amongst you, and as it is truly the best comment, at least, upon the Hebrew text, to determine the sense of it when the words are doubtful, and (because of the present defect in that language) of various and different significations, I say if this were admitted, (which you cannot refuse, without casting reproach upon all your predecessors for three hundred years before Christ, who did admit it; and upon yourselves for so doing, and confessing that you have done it unreasonably) you would not be able to maintain your hold against Christianity. Are not the quotations of your Scriptures, which are in your learned Philo, (who lived in the days of Christ and his Apostles) and of others your chief rabbies before

that time, more according to the translation of the lxx. than of the Hebrew text, as you have it at present? And what reason can you give, why you dare not quote that translation still? But because it renders the sense of the Hebrew so, as leads it directly upon our Saviour, and cannot be extended further; and it cuts off those vain and precarious excuses which you would draw from the present uncertainty of the Hebrew text. Yet none of your latter expositions can pretend to any authority equal to that of the lxx. even yourselves being the judges! This shews that you are not disposed to find out the truth, but bent to shut the door against it.

2. As the Jews have thus manifestly stood out against the conviction of the holy Scriptures, by inventing and using these arts to corrupt them, at least, to hide and obscure their true meaning, so have they for the same reason, viz. in prejudice to our Messiah, altered their former principles and notions, which they had received by tradition from their fathers. Thus finding that the notion of the Λόγος, or word of God, which was universally received amongst the Jews before Christ came, and largely insisted upon by Philo, that learned Jew, even in the Apostolical age, that, as before has been noted, he was God, and yet a distinct Person from God, the Father of all: that he was Χαρακτήρ, the express image of God: the great Δύναμις, instrument or power by which God made the worlds: the Ἀρχιερεὺς, supreme archetypal high-priest and mediator betwixt God and men, of whom the high-priest under the law was a type and figure, by outward communion with whom men were made capable of, and had a title to the inward and spiritual communion with the λόγος, and by him of reconciliation and acceptance with God. From this notion of the λόγος, St. John disputes, according to the received principles of that age: and having proved Christ to be the λόγος, he, in his Gospel, Epistle, and Revelation, gives him the titles which were usually ascribed to the λόγος, of light, and life, and truth; and from having communion with him, infers that we have also communion with the Father. But the Jews finding that these principles led directly to the divinity of our Saviour, and all that is said of him in the Gospel, presently forsook their own principles; and as early as Justin Martyr, began to deny them, as Trypho the Jew did, and put Justin upon the proof of the λόγος, being a divine person, &c. which he did out of Philo, and other approved authors of the Jews,

It is plain that the Jews thus understood it, when they accused our Saviour of blasphemy (*q*), and of making himself God, because he called himself the Son of God; for they called themselves the Sons of God in a large sense, as so adopted, and in fœderal covenant with God; but they knew it was the received notion among them, that the manner how the $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ was the Son or word of God, was natural, as proceeding from the nature of God; and that for any to call himself the Son of God, in this sense, was to make himself God: whence it is plain that they thought the $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ to be God.

3. The Jews finding that the mystical and primary sense of their Law did refer to the Messiah, and were most exactly and particularly fulfilled and compleated in our Saviour, rather than be convinced by this, they have now (as the learned Jew that disputed with * Limborch) denied that the Law was typical, or referred to any more perfect state. The contrary of which is plainly intimated, Exod. xxv. 40. from whence our Apostle convincingly argues, Heb. viii. 5. But the Jews now will have no type in the Law, or the office of the Messiah to extend beyond temporal conquests, to any spiritual or heavenly acquisitions, sticking in the bare letter of the Law.

But Philo and the Jews before him, did largely insist upon the mystical, which they made the principal end and intendment of the Law: as indeed it is, and most apparently so, if we duly consider the Law itself, and the prophets, who often mind us of it; and without which they cannot be verified; (as before is shewn) and their meaning runs low and contemptible, no way answering the magnificence and glories which are there revealed.

Jacob confessed himself (*r*) and his fathers to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Whence our Apostle (*s*) does argue very forcibly, "That they who say such things, declare plainly, that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly." If the land of Canaan had been all their view, and they had understood the promise made to them of Canaan to have had no further meaning than the letter, only the temporal enjoyment of that pleasant country, they needed

(*q*) John x. 33, 36.
(*s*) Heb. xi. 14, 15, 16.

* Limbor. p. 62, et alibi.

(*r*) Gen. xlvii. 9.

not have wandered from it as they did, or they might have had opportunity to have returned to it.

When David (*t*) was in possession, and king of it, he declared himself to be then in a pilgrimage, and a stranger to it.

This shews they had a further prospect, and that they extended the promise made to them of Canaan, to mean principally and ultimately the heavenly Canaan, of which they understood the earthly Canaan only as a type. And if Canaan itself was a type, no doubt Jerusalem must be so too, and the temple with all the service of it, that all is your Law.

Your Cabala makes your outward Law but the cortex or shell of the hidden mysteries that are contained in it.

Yet you are now grown to that violent prejudice against this, (though you would stick to your Cabala too, and think it divinely inspired) because it leads directly upon Christianity, that your learned Jew * has set up this principle, *Quod cultus externus, ut talis, est interno multo perfectior.* And as a just consequence of this, *Quod externus non minus Deo gratus, quam internus, i. e.* “That the outward worship, as such, is more perfect than the internal:” and therefore, “That the outward worship is not less grateful to God than the internal.” These are the titles of his chapters; and the end of setting up these desperate positions is, to obviate the Christian argument, that the inward and spiritual worship is chiefly regarded by God; and consequently the inward and spiritual meaning of the Law is much preferable to the letter and outward observances: that therefore there is a spiritual sense in the Law which exceeds the letter, or which is typified by it: that this is fulfilled in Christ, who has thereby consummated and perfected the Law. To oppose this, the Jews are driven to that extremity as here you see, to prefer the outward worship, as such, to the inward; contrary to the tenor of their own Law, and their prophets, where the inward circumcision of the heart is so often inculcated and preferred to that outward in the flesh. Nay, the outward institutions of the Law, where the inward and spiritual meaning and intendment of them is not regarded, are declared to be hateful and abomination to God (*u*). The inward is not only preferred (*x*), I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings (*y*); sacrifice and offering thou

(*t*) 1 Chron. xxix. 15. * Limbor. Collat. N. xi.—xii. p. 118, 120. (*u*) Isaiah i. 11 to 21. (*x*) Hos. vi. 6. (*y*) Psalm xl. 9.

didst not desire, but mine ears hast thou opened (z) : but in respect to the inward, the outward are said not to have been commanded by God; that is, they were commanded for the sake of the inward; and therefore without respect to the inward, the outward were not commanded.

To rid you out of this perplexity, your learned Jew has advanced a strange sort of an argument to maintain his paradox before-mentioned, of preferring the outward, as such, to the inward worship and sense of the Law, where he explains his foresaid position thus; that the outward is not to be supposed without the inward; and that the outward, as including the inward, is preferable to the inward. But this, instead of solving the case, makes no case at all of it. It is no more than this, whether two be not more than one? Whether both outward and inward be not more than the inward alone? Which nobody will dispute with him. But then this cuts off all comparison betwixt the outward and the inward, and consequently makes no sense of those texts before-mentioned, and many others, where the same comparison is insisted upon. And when the Jew says that the outward, as such, is preferable, &c. what does he mean by *as such*? Is it the outward, as outward? Which any one would take to be the meaning. But his meaning, as he explains it, is the outward, as such, that is, as both outward and inward.

So very thin and contradictory are these strained excuses you have set up against the spiritual, which is the main and principal intendment of your Law, because it cannot be fulfilled but only in our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and his spiritual kingdom.

4. The modern Jews have, since Christ's time, gone away from the constant tradition of their fathers before Christ came, viz. that the Messiah would shew himself to the world, and vouch his commission (a) by miracles, of which sufficient has been said before: and that this contrivance discovers plainly their guilt, that it is not conviction which they want, but that they are resolved not to be convinced.

5. They have not only departed from the traditions of their fathers, but they have invented new and strange conceits, of which their fathers, before Christ came, never dreamt. As of two Messiahs, the one a suffering, the other a triumphing Messiah,

(a) Jer. vii. 22, 23.

(c) John vii. 37.

to answer these two states of suffering and triumphing, which were told of the Messiah, and both fulfilled in our blessed Saviour; to avoid which, the Jews, since his time, have invented these two Messiahs. The Jews in our Saviour's time, even the Apostles themselves, till after his resurrection, had not the true notion of the sufferings of the Messiah, much less of his death. When he spoke of it, his disciples (*b*) rebuked him, and understood (*c*) nothing of it; and the Jews (*d*) told him, "We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, the Son of man must be lift up?" that is, crucified. They were looking out then, as you are now, for a temporal fighting Messiah, who should (*e*) restore again the kingdom to Israel. They thought not then (*f*) of the sufferings of the Messiah; far less did they dream of two Messiahs, one to suffer, the other to conquer. You can shew no footstep of any such doctrine amongst the Jews before Christ came; and it shews the distress your latter Rabbies were driven to, when they could find no shift but so groundless and foolish an invention; which is of a-piece with your other fulsome and ridiculous legends (before-mentioned) of the Messiah's sitting these sixteen hundred years amongst the lepers at the gates of Rome: that he is in paradise, but tied in a woman's hair, that he cannot come. The mad and nonsensical stories of your Behemoth and Leviathan: of God's weeping when your city was destroyed: of his daily study in the reading of your Law: and such other delirious fancies as shew the greatness of your judgment, threatened 2 Thess. ii. 11. and visibly fulfilled upon you more than upon any people, God sending you strong delusion that you should believe such monstrous, and even contradictory lies, because you received not the truth, that ye might be saved, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, in such rabbinical and shameless fopperies, they deserved not to be called forgeries, on purpose to elude the infalible demonstrations which our Jesus gave of his being the Messiah. These are the great, though pitiful obstacles, on the Jews side, which hinder their embracing of Christianity.

II. I come now to other obstacles which lie on the Christian side.

(*b*) Matth. xvi. 22. (*c*) Luke xviii. 34.
(*e*) Acts i. 6. (*f*) Luke xxiv. 26.

(*d*) John xii. 34.

1. The learned Jew * that disputes with Limborch, complains of the great scandal given to the Jews in the popish countries by the idolatry which they see practised there. They cannot bear to see the great God painted like an old man in their churches and mass-books, in their shops and houses, and publicly sold by allowance. This they take to be the sin so strictly prohibited, Deut. iv. 15, 16. and in many other Scriptures; besides their worshipping of saints, angels, &c. See Sandy's *Speculum Europæ*.

2. There is another strange sort of impediment which the Jews have met with in popish countries; that is, that if any of them turned Christians, they forfeited all their estates, on pretence that they, or their ancestors, had got them by usury. Of this several good men in the church of Rome have complained; as Bradwardinus, l. 1. de Causa Dei, c. 1. Corall. part. 32. Cardinalis a Severina in *Catechismo generali pro Catechum.* c. 20. Gasparus Belga, a Jesuit, in *Epist. Ormutina*, (est inter *Epistolas Judaicas*) wrote anno 1549, speaking of one rabbi Solomon, who desired baptism, says, that he and many others would have embraced Christianity, if it had not been for that Law among the Christians, that they should be obliged to restore whatever they had got by usury. This I have taken out of Hornbeck *contra Judæos*. Lugdun. Batav. anno 1655, in *Prolegom*, p. 31, where he cites more authorities; as of Joh. Gerson apud Bochellum, tit. de *Judæis*. And among us, Edwin Sandys, de *statu Relig.* cap. 41. Georgius Theodorus, de *statu Judæorum in Republ. Christian.* cap. 9. He says, that this custom was taken away by a particular bull of pope Paul III. by the council of Basil, Sess. 19.; and of Lateran, under Alexander III. c. 26. How it is at this day at Rome, in Spain, Portugal, and other popish countries, I cannot tell; but Sir Edwin Sandys, in his book before quoted, wrote anno 1599, says, that when he was in Italy, the same forfeitures were still exacted of the Jewish converts, except where the pope gave dispensations, which he knew granted only to some few physicians, their gains not being supposed as got by usury, but it stopped the conversion of others.

II. I come now to the reformed churches, where the Jews meet with neither of these fore-mentioned impediments. But whether many of the Jews do come out of the popish countries, as the

* Limbor. Collat. p. 102.

learned Jew confesses to Limborch, on purpose to avoid the idolatry of the church of Rome, to which many of them are forced to comply to save their lives or estates; and others are tempted to it, and counterfeit Christianity for the sake of preferments, especially in Spain and Portugal, as before has been told; and whence many of them do fly into Holland, where there is universal liberty of conscience; and that they may profess and practise their judaism openly. This has brought so many of them into Holland, more than to other of the countries called reformed.

1. But there is another sort of impediment which they meet with there, that is, the various sects which are tolerated and owned as churches, though most opposite and contradictory to one another. This goes violently athwart the fixed and stated principle of the segullah or peculium, which God delivered to the Jews from the beginning, and implies the true notion of a church, as being a peculium, or select society, gathered from amongst the rest of mankind, under governors and laws, with promises and privileges of their own, peculiar to themselves, and independent of all others upon the earth. Now the Jews cannot think this segullah transferred to a Christian church, where there is no notion of any segullah at all, or such a lame one, as admits and excludes nobody. A park without pales! which reduces the church from a society to a sect, only to believe such things, without being subject to the governors or laws of the society, without a principle of unity. A church without a bishop! a body without a head! this latitudinarian no-principle is so perfectly adverse to the received notion of the Jews all along, that they can as easily believe no faith, as no church; and can never think their faith terminated or fulfilled in that church, whose constitution is not framed like to theirs: for how otherwise was theirs a type of ours? A type is so called from its likeness to what it does represent. And what resemblance is there betwixt the church of Jerusalem, under one high-priest, and in Holland, where episcopacy, of which that was the image, is aboiished? What agreemen betwixt the Temple, into which none were admitted but proselytes to the constitution, as well as faith of the Jews; and that church, whose doors are open to all comers and goers, which has no communion, by admitting of all communions, and makes no communion necessary? How was the one altar of the Jewish church a type of altar against altar

in every parish? Of a hundred opposite altars; that is, communions at Amsterdam, yet all acknowledged to belong to the Christian church? It is true, opposite communions may agree in many things, as all do in some things: but how they can be called one church, is as difficult for a Jew to apprehend, as a church without a communion; that is, a society which has no society. A church, and not a peculium, is an open inclosure; and a society without government is as great a contradiction; and other government than monarchical in the church the Jews never understood, nor did God ever appoint. Not that all churches in the world should have one visible and universal head upon earth, more than all the kingdoms of the earth are to have one universal monarch under God, to whom the whole world is one kingdom, though composed of many different and independent kingdoms: as the one catholic church may consist of many independent churches, which all make one church to Christ. Of each of these under her own bishop, the church of the Jews at Jerusalem (being itself a particular church) was a type, under her high-priest. And as he was a type of Christ, the *ἀρχιεπίσκοπος*, the archetypal and universal high-priest and bishop of the catholic church, so the church of the Jews may be called a type also of the universal church, as that nation was a type of the whole world, of which the high-priest wore a representation as well of the segullah, as before has been observed from Wisd. xviii. 24. For God is king of all the earth, though more especially of his church.

The miraculous performance of that promise of perpetuity which God made to the nation of the Jews, has been discoursed before. But here I would take notice of one great means by which it has been brought to pass; which is, the strict notion that the Jews still retain of the segullah. Those many myriads of them who, at first went over to Christianity, found as strict a notion of the segullah there; and saw how it was transferred, as from the beginning it was intended, from the segullah of Moses to that of the Messiah. It was indeed but the same church, or segullah, under different œconomies, or dispensations; but those whose eyes were blinded, that they saw not this, remained in their infidelity, and stuck to their old segullah; and God, who brings good out of evil, has made this a means, the great means, of keeping them a distinct people to this day. For should the Jews turn

so much latitudinarians, as to lose this notion of the segullah, and grow indifferent in their rites and customs: if they should intermarry with the nations, whither they are scattered, and conform to their customs and manners, they would soon lose both their name and religion; and by being mixed with the rest of the world, grow undistinguished from them, as a river when it is emptied into the ocean.

If it be objected that then the aforesaid promise of God would be broken, of preserving them for ever a distinct people, and therefore that this promise stands in the way against their conversion,

I answer, that it did not stand in the way against their conversion in the beginning of Christianity; for the Jews who then turned Christians, did not at all, for that, lose their name or nation. And they were plainly distinguished from the converts of the Gentiles (*g*).

To make this more clearly understood, let us consider, that when Christ first sent forth his Apostles, their commission was limited to Jews only, in the strictest sense, (*h*) “go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Here the Samaritans, though Jews, are excluded, because they were schismatics, and not strictly within the segullah. And thus it continued all Christ’s life-time. The Gospel went not without the pale of the segullah. After Christ’s resurrection, then he extended their commission further, and bade them (*i*) “go, and preach among all nations,” but still beginning at Jerusalem. To shew that there the Christian segullah was first established; and derived from thence, as from the root, to spread among all nations. But it appears not that the Apostles, even long after that time, understood the full extent of this their commission: for, till the vision of the sheet, Acts x. Peter himself did not know that the Gentiles were capable of being admitted into the Christian segullah: of which he was convinced by a great miracle then shewn in the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Cornelius, &c. which satisfied the rest of the church who contended with him, for his preaching to the Gentiles, Acts xi. So that till this time, the Christian segullah consisted of none but of the Jews only: into which the Gentile proselytes were afterwards admitted, even as

(*g*) Acts vi. 1. xxi. 25.

(*h*) Matt. x. 5.

(*i*) Luke xxiv. 47.

into the Jewish segullah under the law. Christ foretold the future calling of the Gentiles, (*k*) "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice," said Christ to the Jews. And signified to them, that the Gentile converts should at last be made equal to them, and in some respects be preferred before them, in that parable of those called at the eleventh hour (*l*). And that the first called should be last, and the last first. He shewed likewise that his mercy extended even to the Gentiles, by his compassion to the woman of Canaan. But at the same time, he asserted the prerogative of the segullah, or church of the Jews: whom he calls the children (*m*), in comparison of whom the Gentiles were but dogs, that is, out of the segullah, (as it is expressed, Rev. xxii. 15.) "I am not sent (said Christ to her) but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" that is, the segullah was to be set up only with them, to whom only he himself preached; the Gentiles were to come in only as proselytes to the Jews; and that not by the ministry of Jesus himself, but only of his Apostles, after his ascension. In all things the preference was given to the Jews; and the Christian segullah was first fixed among them; they are the natural branches (*n*); theirs is Christ, the Apostles and first Christian church; and we freely confess, as our blessed Lord has taught us (*o*), that "salvation is of the Jews." He revealed not himself to the Gentiles, he would not answer a word to Herod, or Pontius Pilate (*p*); but he declared himself expressly (*q*) to your high-priest and sanhedrim. He did good to all, even to the Gentiles, and healed the sick. His mercy is over all his works: but much more eminently to his church, his segullah. The children's meat is reserved only for them. There only it is to be had. Therefore are all invited to go thither for it. All are capable of being adopted children, by their admission into the segullah; and the children who forsake it, or are justly turned out of it, fall to the condition of dogs, for "without are dogs."

The twelve Apostles were chosen with respect to the segullah of the twelve tribes. Our Saviour himself makes the allusion, when he said to them (*r*), "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And the names of the twelve tribes

(*k*) John x. 16.

(*n*) Rom. xi. 24.
Matt. xxvii. 14.

(*l*) Matt. xx.

(*o*) John iv. 22.

(*q*) Ibid. xxvi. 64.

(*m*) Ibid. xv. 26.

(*p*) Luke xxiii. 9.

(*r*) Matt. xix. 28.

are described (*s*) as written upon the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem; and answering thereunto the names of the twelve Apostles, upon the twelve foundations. Then the calling of the Gentiles after the Jews, was in the like manner signified in the number of the seventy (*t*), whom our Lord ordained some time after the Apostles. For the Jews divided the world into seventy nations, there being just so many sons of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, recorded in the tenth of Genesis, who are said to be divided after their tongues, and after their nations. Thence the Jews conclude, that there was seventy nations and seventy languages: the languages distinguishing the nations: because each sorted to those of his own language; and so those of each language made a distinct nation. It would be hard otherwise to conjecture how the world should be divided into several nations, without such a force and necessity put upon them, and leading them, I may say, irresistibly into it, by the miraculous division of languages. For we cannot very easily suppose, that the whole world should meet together, to canton it out into several nations, by a free and equal vote, and to number out who, and how many should belong to each nation: and to name all the kings or governors of each nation, as it is done in the tenth of Genesis.

Now the Jews believe that this division of the world into seventy nations, was done by God with a particular respect to his *segullah* to be afterwards set up in Israel; whose sons, that descended with him into Egypt, are recorded, Gen. xli. and are just seventy. They think this to be intimated, Deut. xxxii. 8. where it is said “When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people, according to the number of the children of Israel.” And ver. 7. shews this to have been a tradition of the Jews, in the days of Moses.

Therefore, as our blessed Saviour sent out at first twelve Apostles, with respect to the twelve tribes, and limited them to preach to none other: so did he afterwards appoint other seventy also, with respect to the other nations of the world, who were, in time, to be brought into the *segullah*. And it is observable, that in the commission given to the seventy, Luke x. there is no such restriction as is given to the twelve, Matt. x. 5. of not going to the Gentiles, or Samaritans. Though the door was not fully

(*s*) Rev. xxi. 12, 14.

(*t*) Luke x. 1.

opened to the Gentiles, till the vision of the sheet, Acts x. as before has been said.

After this the Gentiles came in abundantly to the segullah. But the first Christian church was wholly of the Jews, and established in Jerusalem; whose bishop did answer to the high-priest; and was the principal of unity to the Christian Jews, as the high-priest was to the other. So that the segullah was preserved intire, only transferred from the Jewish high-priest to the Jewish bishop. It was not the Gentile, who converted the Jews to Christianity, but the Jews converted the Gentiles; and the Gentiles came in to the Christian Jewish church, and appealed to it upon all occasions (*tt*). And thus it continued till after the destruction of Jerusalem. But the name of Jews seems to have been appropriated to the infidel Jews upon their many and notorious rebellions, under their several false Messiahs, in which the Christian Jews were not concerned; nor in the punishments and odium which thereupon followed, and the laws that were made against the Jews, and so, by degrees, came to lose the name of Jews, and became undistinguished from the Gentile Christians; for then the name of Jew grew by custom to be a discrimination of religion, and not only of a nation: so that when a Jew now turns a Christian, he is no longer called a Jew.

But when the time shall come (God send) that there will be a general conversion of the Jews, then there will be no reason to take from them the name of Jews: that name will then only distinguish their nation. And it will then, no doubt, be the most honourable of any upon the earth: to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants (*x*), and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers; and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came.

Then it will no longer be thought a reproach in Spain and Portugal to own, that they are (as before has been quoted from the learned Jew) descended of the race of the Jews; and to take that name upon themselves. And other nations will strive for the same privilege. Then may be fulfilled, even literally, what is written (*y*), "One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob: and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." And thus the name and nation of the Jews will be

(*t*) Act. xv.(*x*) Rom. ix. 4, 5.(*y*) Isaiah xlv. 5.

magnified and exalted above all that are upon the face of the earth ; and perpetuated according to the forementioned promise of God, while sun and moon shall endure. And then, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, the Jews will be the head and not the tail, and, as God has promised you, (z) “ Thou shalt be “ above only ; and thou shalt not be beneath. And the Lord thy “ God shall set thee on high, above all the nations of the “ earth.”

Then shall the ten tribes appear : who now perhaps are the greatest monarchies upon earth, and then will be acknowledged as such.

See what a glorious state of your nation depends upon your conversion ! And it may be more glorious than all this that I have said. Even all that temporal grandeur and empire which you expect. Though, when all that is done, it comes infinitely short of the heavenly and eternal glories, which our Messiah has purchased for us ; and of which all these earthly greatnesses are, in their utmost extent, but faint types and shadows ; and therefore far from the primary and ultimate intendment of the law ; which is already fulfilled in the spiritual conquests and reign of our Messiah over all the powers of hell and death.

I take not upon me to determine, that the preservation of the name and nation of the Jews, upon their conversion, will be just as I have said. But this we may depend upon, that the promise of God will be fulfilled ; and that he will never want means to bring it to pass ; and therefore, that the conversion of the Jews will be no hindrance to the perpetuating of their name and nation, as he has promised.

And let their conversion begin (*cum bono Deo*) in this church and nation ; where the good providence of God has prepared the way, by freeing you Jews here from those obstacles which obstruct your way in other Christian countries. Here you see no images or pictures of the great God in our churches ; nothing in our worship which you can call idolatry or superstition. Here you may see * an episcopacy, presbyters, and deacons, answerable to your high-priest, priests, and Levites : and the segullah of the temple perpetuated and continued in the church : in which, as in the temple, and now in your synagogues, the public service and worship of God is celebrated in the vulgar language of the nation, with

(z) Deut. xxviii. 1, 12.

* Hierom. ad Evagr.

the solemnity and gravity of a well composed and digested liturgy. And lastly, here are no forfeitures or mulcts upon you for your acknowledging and returning to your true Messiah. But you may reasonably presume, that all due encouragement will be given to you towards so glorious a change: and to convince you, that we seek not yours but you, the Lord open your eyes!

2. Let me add, that you will be here free from another great scandal which you have met with more frequently in Holland, that is, Socinianism, to which some that opposed you there made too near approaches: and if they had converted you, it had not been to Christianity, but rather to idolatry, in paying divine honours and adoration to Christ, while they suppose him but a creature. And they deny * any to be Christians who refuse this divine adoration and invocation to Christ. Whereby they have excluded all our English Unitarians (as the Socinians here call themselves) from being Christians, who deny this to Christ; though they (sometimes when they boast of their antiquity and universality) derive themselves from these transmarine Socinians; and pretend to be of one faith with them. But your learned Jew before-mentioned argues against them, that Christ could not be the heavenly King, unless he were God himself; (whatever the Socinians dream to the contrary) because that no mere creature could be present and assist every where. † *Non potest esse Rex Cælestis, nisi fuerit Deus ipse (quicquid Sociniani contrarium somniaverint) et enim nulla pura creatura potest ubique assistere et providere.* This vast prejudice you will likewise avoid in the church of England, where these Socinian heresies, on both sides, are detested and exploded.

If you take scandal that such difference should be amongst those who call themselves Christians, remember that your Sadducees denied the resurrection (a), and both angels and spirits; which takes away the future state of heaven. And this you now believe ‡, and make it a great article of your creed; and say, that it was always the faith of the Jews. Therefore you cannot object it against us, that there should be divisions, even in fundamental points, and schisms amongst us: since there has been the same amongst yourselves, your Samaritans, Sadducees, &c. And you will not think that this hurts the truth, to those who hold it.

* Racov. Catech. Sec. 6. c. 1.

‡ Ibid. p. 105.

† Limbor. Collat. p. 69.

(a) Acts xxiii. 8.

III. There is yet one great and the master-difficulty of all, that stops the way to your conversion, which I have reserved to consider by itself in this last place, because it is the foundation of all those that lie on your side: and which, if clearly removed, will complete your conversion so far, as to leave you no other defence, but plain obstinacy. It is that loose and precarious account which you give of the ground and foundation of your faith, on purpose to avoid that demonstration which there is for the truth of the Gospel, and as said before, there is the same for the truth of the law: but you will rather quit that irrefragable and sure foundation, and lose the certainty of your law, than yield to the same or greater certainty that there is for the Gospel. Or otherwise you have not yet known the true foundation upon which you ought to stand.

For the learned Jew * before mentioned establishes the faith of the Jews, not upon any grounds of certainty of which other men may judge besides the Jews, which are common to all men, and stand upon the general reason and conviction of mankind: but only upon the credit they are to give to their fathers, not as men, but as their fathers, and as they stand in that particular relation to them: for God (says he) does not send us to the Gentiles, to ask of them; but bids us ask only of our fathers, and give full credit to them. And therefore (continues he) if the tradition of our fathers told us the same of Moses, as it does of Christ, that is, that those matters of fact which are written of him in the law, were not so done as he there tells: we should as little believe Moses, or what he wrote, as we do the Gospel; which we disbelieve for the same reason, *viz.* Because our fathers tell us, that those things related in the Gospel, were not so done, as is there related.

Ans. 1. Your fathers have not told you so. They have confessed to the matters of fact recorded in the Gospels: nor can you deny them, without answering the first part of this discourse, and joining with the Deists against all revelations whatsoever, as well those made to Moses, as those given by Christ. Your fathers indeed said, that Christ wrought wonderful works by the power of Beelzebub. But that is confessing to the matter of fact; and may be objected against the miracles of Moses, or any other whatsoever: which is before considered.

* Limbor. Collat. p. 130.

But as your fathers, who believed not in Christ when he came, could not, nor did they deny the matters of fact of Christ; and so give the strongest sort of evidence, that of enemies to the truth of them; and, consequently, to the truth of his doctrine; which they were brought to vouch: so, as before is told, many myriads of your fathers did embrace his doctrine; and by the computation there made, there must be many more myriads of their posterities, than of the infidel Jews. So that here the question is not betwixt the tradition of your fathers and of the Gentiles; but of those of your fathers who did believe, and those who did not believe in Christ: for Christianity is nothing else but a tradition of the Jews, to which the Gentiles did come in. For, as shewn before, the first Christian church was wholly Jewish, without any mixture of the Gentiles for a considerable time.

Now then, since you have the tradition of your fathers on both sides, what method are you to take? What method did you take in the contrary traditions of the ten tribes, which grew among them, in succeeding ages, after their defection to idolatry under Jeroboam? Your learned Jew * gives a good rule, *viz.* To recur to the original pretended of each tradition: and there see upon what foundation it began. That of Moses was grounded upon miracles exhibited before all the people. Not so of Jeroboam, who pretended no such thing; only to give a different exposition of the law of Moses to countenance his idolatry; which exposition became, in time, a tradition to their posterities.

And this is exactly your case, as to Christianity. Your fathers did at first embrace it upon the conviction of those many miracles shewn publicly before their faces. But those of your fathers who did not believe, did not deny the matters of fact; only put a different construction upon them, saying that they were wrought by Beelzebub.

And those Jews who believed, and their posterities, are many more (as before shewn) than those Jews who remained in their infidelity, if that were an argument. For the tradition of two tribes was true, and that of ten was false: therefore we must recur to the original; and that must determine the tradition on either side. And the argument insisted upon in the first part against the Deists stands whole and irrefragably on our side; and besides has the tradition of all your fathers, so far as to acknowledge the mat-

* Limbor. Collat. N. v. p. 138, 140.

ters of fact, (which in consequence is the whole) and the major number were convinced by them. Or if not the major number then, yet certainly much more so now in their posterities; having, by the miraculous providence of God, escaped the dreadful destruction at Jerusalem, and under your several false Messiahs, which pursued those of your fathers only who hardened themselves in their obstinacy against Christ. So that the tradition of your fathers does not lie in your way, to prejudice you against Christianity: the most it can oblige you to, is to examine the several traditions of your fathers; and that is it to which we would invite you. Consider then first the tradition of your Christian fathers, who call themselves by the name of their Messiah, as you have done by the names of your fathers, Heber, and Israel, and Judah. And this was foretold by the prophet, (b) "Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Therefore though these your fathers have lost the name of Jews, yet they may say in the words of the same prophet, (c) "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy name is everlasting." This is an everlasting name by which they are now called, even the name of our God; whereas they were heretofore called only by the name of your fathers in the flesh; but now of your Father in heaven. Consider, I say, the tradition of these your Christian fathers, that it is on the affirmative side; whereas the tradition of your unbelieving fathers is altogether upon the negative: particularly in that great article of our faith, the resurrection of Christ. Which being done in the sight only of a few soldiers who were capable of being bribed, you trust wholly to their *no* evidence, that "his disciples stole him away while they slept." For how could they know this, if they were asleep? Yet this is all the foundation you have for your negative. But for the affirmative, there were (d) many infallible proofs, Christ being "seen of his disciples forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (e) He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part (says our Apostle) remain unto this present," when he wrote. These were too many to be bribed, not with "large money (f)," as you gave to the sol-

(b) Isaiah lxii. 3.

(c) Ibid. lxiii. 16.

(d) Acts. i. 3.

(e) 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6, 7, 8.

(f) Matt. xxviii. 12.

diers; but with stripes and imprisonments, and death, to have concealed such a forgery; when any one of them might not only have avoided these persecutions, but, no doubt, have got much more "large money" than you gave to the soldiers, for such a foolish excuse as they made; for any one of these five hundred could have effectually discovered the contrivance, if it was one, and stifled Christianity in its cradle; and one evidence on that side would, at that time, have borne down five hundred on the other. And the Christians putting you to the trial of this, when these many witnesses were alive; and that not one of them could be tampered with, either by bribes or threats! That all should stand it out, even to the death!

But we have surer evidence than all this; even infallible: and that is, the many miracles which the Apostles shewed in attestation to the truth of this. Miracles as flagrant and notorious as those which Christ himself had wrought; and which have all the four marks before-mentioned, that do infallibly demonstrate the truth of any matter of fact.

These are the grounds of the tradition of your Christian fathers.

And all the ground for the tradition of your unbelieving fathers, is nothing else but that senseless story of the soldiers, sufficiently ridiculous to confute itself, were there no evidence at all on the other side.

Let me add to this, that your Christian fathers had all these difficulties to struggles with, which do now keep you back from Christianity. They hung as much as you upon the expectation of a temporal kingdom of the Messiah. The very Apostles of our Lord were not wrought off of this, all the time that he lived with them; and they resumed their hopes of it after his resurrection (*g*). They were ignorant of his resurrection (*h*). "For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." And so far were they from concerting of this, that they would not believe it, when it was first told them by those who had seen it. (*i*) "Their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." And when all the other Apostles had seen the Lord, yet would not Thomas believe even them; till he had more than even ocular demonstration, to thrust his hand into his side, and put his finger into the print of the nails (*k*).

(*g*) Acts i. 6.

(*h*) John xx. 9.

(*i*) Luke xxiv. 11.

(*k*) John xx. 25, 27.

Nor was this peculiar to Thomas; for when Christ appeared first to the rest, they were as hard to believe. And he afforded them the like demonstration (*l*), not only to see and hear him speak to them, but to handle him, and examine the wounds in his hands and feet, and further to eat before them. And as a yet more forcible conviction, he minded them how he had told them all this before; and that it was agreeable to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. “And he said unto them, these are the words I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures; and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.” Our blessed Lord suffered his disciples to be thus slow in believing, thereby to confirm our faith the more. But he would not permit them to proceed upon their mission, notwithstanding all this evidence, till they should have yet further credentials, such as no man could refuse, without the highest obstinacy, and which is the utmost that God can outwardly exhibit; that is, the power of miracles. “But tarry ye (says he) in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” And this was granted him at first, by a most stupendous miracle, in the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and inspired them, in an instant, with all languages: which was visible not only to the Jews, but to multitudes of other nations, then at Jerusalem (*m*). And the same day about three thousand were converted. And by the many miracles which the Apostles were enabled to work afterwards, many *μυριάδες*, myriads of the Jews, and a great company of your priests were obedient to the faith (*n*). These were your fathers; therefore reject not their tradition. Compare with this, the tradition of your other fathers who believed not; which is built only upon a negative, of which there is no proof at all.

Then I desire you to recollect what has been said before, of your having forsaken the constant tradition of your fathers before Christ came, in so many particulars as are there set down; and

(*l*) Luke xxiv. 39 to 49.

(*m*) Acts ii. 41.

(*n*) Ibid. xxi. 20. vi. 7.

having invented new and contrary traditions, on purpose to prejudice yourselves against Christianity.

And if tradition must take place, why not the most ancient? These sure are most authentic. And they are more traditions than the latter: for it is age that makes tradition. Yet you reject the most ancient traditions of your fathers; while you set up their tradition as your only infallible rule!

This is the first answer I give to your objection of following the tradition of your fathers, upon which you lay so great a stress; and which being removed, you will have little left to say. But though I think this answer very sufficient, yet because this is the main hinge of the controversy, as your learned Jew has stated it; and insists mightily and almost solely upon it, through all his dispute with Limborch: and thence we may reasonably suppose that it is the *jugulum causæ*, the last effort you have to defend yourselves, I will therefore proceed upon it, even as stated by yourselves, and shew further the weakness of it, supposing that none of your fathers had embraced Christianity.

Ans. 2. This, as stated by yourselves, is running into that circle, in which the church of Rome have intangled themselves, of proving the authority of the church by the Scriptures: and the authority of the Scriptures from the church. Which cannot be avoided, while, in this dispute, they consider the church as exercising any act of authority: for that authority must be proved, before it can be acknowledged. And if it be proved from the Scripture; and the Scripture receives its authority from the church; then the authority of the church is proved only from the authority of the church.

But if the church be brought herein only as witnesses, with the rest of mankind, upon the common reason and principles of mankind; the assurance of the senses of mankind and the infallible manner of deducing matters of fact from former ages, and distinguishing the true from the false; and those which are certainly true, from those which only may be true (which is the method taken in the first part of this discourse) then the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and the facts therein contained, being established upon the common principles of mankind; the church may justly build her authority upon what she finds given to her in the Holy Scriptures.

And thus may you justly argue from what you find attribute

to your church by the law: having first vouched the truth of the matters of fact of Moses, as delivered in your law, from the notoriety of the facts, and impossibility of any imposture therein, as is done in the first part.

But if, as this your learned Jew does, you ground the truth of Moses himself, and all that is said of him in your law, and consequently of the law itself, upon that credit only which your law bids you to have to your fathers, as being your fathers, you give up the whole cause; you run into the circle of believing the law for your fathers; and your fathers for the law, which is proving the same thing by itself.

Ans. 3. Your Samaritans vouched the tradition of your fathers and theirs, against you. (o) “ Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

Your ten tribes did vouch likewise the tradition of their fathers (p) for their idolatries, and many vile abominations. Nay even the two tribes, in their captivity, vouched the same. (q) “ We will burn incense unto the queen of heaven; and pour out drink offering unto her, as we have done, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem.”

• If you say, that they deviated in this from the law; and that in this case we must have recourse to the first giving of the law, and the ocular evidence that was then shewn to all the people of its being sent to them from God; as has been before quoted from your learned Jew: I answer, that this is still appealing from the tradition of your fathers; and shews that there is something else to be looked to. This is owning that there may be a corrupt tradition of your fathers.

And therefore, though the Jews were bidden to learn these things from their fathers, who had seen them (there was all the reason in the world for it, for they could learn them from none other) yet the assurance and credibility of what their fathers had seen was not grounded upon that relation in which they stood to them, as being their fathers; but as their fathers were men, and as such could not be deceived in what they saw and heard. And the assurance of that tradition by which these facts were conveyed to after ages, was not solely grounded upon the kindness and af-

(o) John iv. 20.

(p) Jer. ix. 14.

(q) Ibid. xliv. 14.

fection of their fathers, who cannot be supposed willing to impose upon their posterities, as this learned Jew does argue; but upon the nature of the tradition, which was incapable of any imposture, as has been argued in the first part.

For other men will pretend to the same kindness toward their children, as the Jews; and men that are deceived themselves, will transmit their deceits to their children. Thus all errors are continued: therefore we must recur to the original, and there examine the truth upon the common principles of mankind, and see how this has been transmitted to us; and bring the nature of the tradition to the standard of the same common principles.

But if the Jews will stick to the tradition of their fathers, as the ultimate rule, from which there is to be no appeal, then they must stick to all their traditions, right or wrong. For if they pretend to any rule whereby to judge of their traditions, then their traditions are not the ultimate rule.

And it is strange to see how far this false notion has carried the Jews even to acknowledge no other certain proof for the being of a God, but the law of Moses; nor any other for that, but the tradition of their fathers, which I come next to insist upon.

Answ. 4. This foundation which the Jews have given of their faith, can never convert any other people to their religion, because others have the same deference for their fathers, as the Jews have for theirs; and the Jews can give no reason to the contrary. Therefore the Jews insisting only upon the tradition of their fathers, without further proof, give the same liberty to all, in whatsoever they have received from their fathers.

This our learned Jew confesses: for being pressed by Limbörch to shew what arguments the Jews have against the Heathen, he freely owns that they have none at all, and bestows a whole chapter to * prove it: That the Jews can only dispute with the Christians, who acknowledge the books of Moses; for that the Jews have no other topic whereby to prove certainly even that there is a God, nor any other proof for the books of Moses than the tradition of their fathers, who they supposed would not deceive them; and because these books bid them hearken to their fathers, and not to the Heathen. And if any should deny these books, says he, "*Est Atheus, quia non habet aliunde Dei existentiam certissime et indubitanter credit: quamvis ex aliis principiis possit probabi-*

* Limbor. Collat. p. 136.

liter conjectari: neque enim sufficit ratio, neque quod aliquis dixerit, de quo eadem fieret inquisitio. Hunc igitur convincere est impossibile, æque ce Dei existentiam ac Mosis prophetiam, per quam nobis unice constat esse Deum." i. e. "He is an Atheist, because he has no other way whereby certainly to believe the existence of a God: though from other principles it may probably be conjectured: for neither is reason sufficient, nor what any man says, of which the same inquisition is to be made. Therefore it is equally impossible to convince such a one of the existence of a God, as of the prophecy of Moses, by which only it appears to us that there is a God." This is mad work! for there could be no ground to believe Moses, but upon the supposition of the previous notion of a God, who sent him. How else did his miracles vouch his being sent of God? And yet, says the Jew, by the prophecy of Moses ONLY it appears to us that there is a God! and therefore he concludes, that as for a Heathen who rejects both the Law and the Gospel, *Ille neque ad legem Mosis, neque ad evangelium solida ratione convinci queat.* i. e. "That he cannot be convinced by any solid reason, of the truth either of the Law of Moses, or of the Gospel:" and therefore that there is no disputing with such an one. *Contra ethnicum non oportet disputare,* is the title of this chapter; i. e. That we ought not to dispute against an Heathen. For this the Jew confesses freely, when being asked, if an Heathen should deny that Moses was a prophet, only a cunning man who imposed upon the people, by what arguments the Jew could prove the divine mission of Moses, which would not as strongly prove the divine mission likewise of Christ? *Respondeo (says he) me nulla demonstratione Mosis prophetiam divinam esse, contra ethnicum probare posse, quippe id demonstrabile non est.* i. e. "I answer, that I cannot prove by demonstration against an Heathen that the prophecy of Moses is divine, because it is not demonstrable."

And he says the same as to the Mahometans, that they have their tradition, too, derived from their fathers, of the miracles and divine mission of Mahomet; and therefore that they can say to us, *Quod si Mahometi revelationem negaverimus, Mosis etiam et Christi negare possunt, cum nullam rationem producere queamus, quæ suæ sectæ confirmationi non inserviat,* i. e. That if we deny the revelation of Mahomet, they may likewise deny those of Moses and of Christ, seeing that we produce no reason for them that will not serve likewise for the confirmation of their sect. And he grounds all upon this bottom, which he takes as granted; *Quod*

alicujus præteriti nec etiam Dei existentia, ulla ratione demonstrari potest, i. e. That the existence of any thing that is past, no, not of God, can be demonstrated by any reason. *Ideo argumentum nequit esse cum ethnico.* That therefore there cannot be any argument against an Heathen.

Now here I beseech you to consider how you have given up the whole foundation upon which the truth of your Law does stand, lest you should be forced to submit to the truth of the Gospel, which stands upon the same foundation. You have rendered your Law wholly precarious, while you tell all the world that there is no reason to be given for it; that is, none to convince an Heathen, a Mahometan, or any who denies it. For reason is reason to all the world; and nothing can be true for which there is not a reason sufficient to convince gainsayers.

You have by this confirmed both Heathens and Mahometans, as well as Christians, in what you think to be gross errors, and displeasing to God, by allowing them the same foundation for their faith that you have for yours, i. e. the tradition of their fathers. And therefore you think that they have the same reason to stick to theirs as you have to stick to yours; which your learned Jew often confesses: Speaking of the reasons produced on the Christian side, he says *, *Et mea saltem sententia satis bonæ sunt et efficaces, ut Christiani eas amplectantur, et in sua fide roborentur: non vero ut Judæi Christiani fiant, i. e.* “They are, in my opinion, good reasons, and sufficient for the Christians to embrace them, and to be strengthened in their faith: but not for the Jews, that they should become Christians.” This is a strange sort of reasoning; for these reasons cannot be good reasons, unless they are true; and they cannot be true to one, and false to another, if they are rightly apprehended, unless the same reason can be both true and false. It is impossible that both Judaism and Christianity can be true: as impossible as that our Jesus is the Messiah, and that he is not the Messiah. And there can be no good reason for our believing him to be the Messiah, which must not operate as strongly for your believing of it: that is, if it be true, you ought to believe it; and if it be not true, we ought not to believe it. Therefore your yielding that we have sufficient reason to believe it, must conclude inevitably against yourselves, that you think it to be true; otherwise you could not think that we had sufficient reason to believe it.

* Limbor. Collat. p. 132 et alibi passim.

If you say that this was a slip in that learned Jew; that he ought not to have made this concession; and that you are not bound by it: consider that this was all that was left him to say; that he has managed your cause with great subtilty; that he took this way to avoid answering the plain and undeniable reasons which prove the truth of the Gospel, by yielding them to be such as to Christians, but that they are not the same as to the Jews; which turns the cause upon a new foot, and diverts the question.

But if you like not his management, and think you can make a better plea for yourselves, then you must answer the reasons given on the behalf of Christianity, particularly those urged in the first part against the Deists. And this is all that I desire to bring you to. And now you have your choice, whether you will do this, and put your case upon this issue, or otherwise stick to that evasion which this learned Jew has made for you.

There is another thing I would ask you upon this head. You expect the conversion of all the world to your religion, in the reign of your Messiah; and you have given this as one reason of your dispersion, that you might convert all nations among whom you are scattered, as has been taken notice of before.

Now I would ask, how you are to convert them? You confess that there are no arguments to be used against them: you leave the Christians in full possession of their faith, and say, they have sufficient reason for it: and for Heathens, &c. who do not acknowledge the books of Moses, you say they are not to be disputed with. How then are they to be converted by you?

Besides that, your learned Jew complains that the Jews are perverted to the idolatries and other corruptions of the nations where they live, instead of converting these nations.

But suppose that it will be otherwise when your Messiah comes; and that then, or some time before, you will begin to convert the nations, this conversion cannot be by arguments, for you confess you have none against them. How then? There is no other way but that of Mahomet, by the sword; and this is the way it seems that you expect. Your learned Jew * says that there is no other miracle needful for the Messiah, whereby to vouch his mission, but one only, viz. "To gather the Jews out of all countries of the world; to restore the throne of David to its ancient and a greater

* Limbor. Collat. p. 55.

majesty ; and to bring all kings and nations to the true worship of God, and to love and esteem the Jews, which (says he) would be such a miracle, and so notorious, as to leave no room to doubt of it.”

The uncertainty of this mark of your Messiah is shewn before.

In the next place this would be no greater a miracle than the successes of the Romans, and others from a small beginning ; or of Mahomet, who boasts the same ; and to which every wickedness has a title, so it be prosperous enough.

Your Rabbi Menasse (de Resurrectione, l. ii. c. xxi, as quoted by Hornbeck contra Judæos, l. ii. c. 1. p. 114) gives up this argument, and says, *non est tantum miraculum*—“ That it is not so great a miracle if the Messiah should conquer many nations and empires, since we see it often happen, that mean and abject men have arisen to kingdoms and empires, and become lords of many lands.” Yet this learned Jew, who writes later, is forced to come back again to this no miracle, for they can find no other.

And in expectation of this, you reject all the true and indubitable miracles of our Messiah, and his much more miraculous conquests of the Gentile world, as well as of myriads of the Jews, without force of arms, or any allurements to flesh and blood. But on the contrary, by inviting them to self-denial, sufferings, and death ; which sure is a more extraordinary, and more miraculous sort of conquest, and shews more of divine power than what is performed by the arm of flesh, outward force or sensual incitements, like that which you expect, and like that of Mahomet, and other impostors.

But though you should conquer, as you expect, yet it will not follow that you will thereby convert all nations.

It is not in a man’s own power to change his sentiment of things without sufficient reason to convince him, at least what he thinks a sufficient reason ; much less can such a force be put upon him by any other. No outward conquest can reach to the soul, or alter our judgment and understanding.

And therefore, according to what you now profess, that you have no argument on your side, but your long expected conquest, it will not follow, if you obtained it to-morrow, that you should thereby convert any one man in the world to your religion. For perhaps there is not one man in the world that thinks conquest alone to be the true decision of controversies in religion : and if

so, then every man must think that religion to be false, which pretends to no other title but that of conquest.

See how inextricably you have involved yourselves on all sides, in those various shifts you set up to harden yourselves against the flagrant truth of the Christian religion! You have thereby undermined the whole foundation upon which the truth of your Law itself is demonstrable, and which you can never recover by any other means than those which establish the truth of our Jesus being the Messiah; which are the same that establish the truth of Moses, and (as has been said) are not compatible to any impostor whatsoever.

You pretend to us Christians, that you have no arguments against the Deists or Heathen. Why? Because it is impossible for you to bring any arguments for the truth of Moses, which will not likewise demonstrate more strongly the truth of our Jesus.

But to the Heathen you say not so; you pretend to argue with them, when you can get out of sight of Christianity; then you proceed freely upon the certain and indubitable proofs which you have for the truth of Moses, when you are not afraid that Christianity should come in at the same door. This appears in your book *Cosiri*, (whether that story be real or feigned) which contains your arguments against the Heathen. But in the presence of Christianity they are all struck dumb, like the oracles among the Heathen. Not that the arguments for the truth of Moses are fallacious like those oracles but as their deceit was superseded by the brightness of the Gospel, so are you stopped from daring to make use of the truth, because it makes against you; and you are forced to betray the cause of Moses, while you stand out against that of Christ. You cannot be true Jews or disciples of Moses, till you turn Christians: then may you (as we do) freely urge the absolute certainty of the revelation made to Moses: which now you dare not do, because the same topics prove as demonstrably the truth of Christianity: rather than admit of which, you have laid your foundation in the sand of your fathers traditions, so explained, as to give you no advantage above all the traditionary fables of other nations, which you allow to have the same motives of credibility to them, as yours to you; and consequently, to be as true as yours.

This was not the method you took to make proselytes before Christ came. Then you had free use of your arguments, and a success proportionable; but now you seem careless what becomes

of your religion, so you can overthrow Christianity. Therefore having chosen a false and insufficient foundation for your own faith, you would compliment ours with the same.

As your learned Jew * does, when he asks, "What reason there is why a Heathen should believe any who preached to him the Christian faith, and miracles of Christ and his Apostles? The first part of this discourse against the Deists is a direct answer to this question, and serves the Jews as well as the Deists; but this learned Jew did, and all the rest of you must think that question to be unanswerable, and as such it is here proposed. But then will not the question occur, What reason the Christians have to believe it? or the Jews to believe the law and miracles of Moses? Your learned Jew was aware of this, and therefore obviates it thus: *Neque par ratio est de Christianis et Judæis, qui non interrupta traditione, &c.* That there was not the same reason for the belief of the Christians and the Jews, who received it by an uninterrupted tradition from their fathers. This puts the Christian faith upon as good a bottom as the Jewish, that is the same, viz. tradition from their fathers; and if they have no other, they both stand precariously, and have no more to say for themselves even than the Heathen. This the learned Jew does not oppose, and therefore explains himself, that by his question he did not mean those Heathen who had long since believed the Gospel, and so received it by tradition from their fathers. *Sed quare nunc barbaræ gentes, in suis ritibus semper educatæ, nostris traditionibus fidem præstabunt, eo solum quod a nobis proponantur.* i. e. But why the now Heathen nations, who have always been educated in their own rites, should embrace our traditions, merely because they are proposed to them by us? Indeed merely because they are proposed, is a very bad reason; and yet it is all that the Jew thinks there is in the case, as before is shewn. But here he joins the Christian and the Jewish faith together, and makes both stand upon the same bottom, and that the same with the foundation even of the Heathen religion; that rather than not overthrow Christianity, he would sink his own religion with it, and leave no true revealed religion in the world, (all others but these falsely pretending to it) and so serve the ends of the Deists to all intents and purposes.

He endeavours to rivet this, as he thinks, securely, by the long tradition of the popish legends, which, he says †, were believed

* Limbor. Collat. p. 51.

† Ibid. p. 133.

by all Christendom for more than a thousand years, and no less faith given to them than to the Gospel itself. His mistakes in reciting matter of fact I am not now upon; these prevailed only in the Latin church, nor in all that neither, nor for so long a time as he imagines. The greatest part of the Christian church in the East, in Africa, &c. never heard of most of them, nor have to this day; and those of the church of Rome, who, though men of sense, pretended to believe them, yet durst not put them upon the same foot with the holy Gospel. The learned and more knowing among them called them *Piæ Fraudes*, and pleaded for them only as such, as pious cheats to raise the devotion of the simple and more ignorant amongst the people; but (as said before *) none of them can pretend to those four marks set down †, whereby the truth of the miracles of Moses and of Christ are infallibly demonstrated. And therefore if any of these legends were true, in whole or in part, yet we cannot have the same grounds for believing of them as we have for the Law and the Gospel.

IV. Both of which you seem willing to mistake, in your deep prejudice to the Gospel. For the chief end of the coming of the Messiah being (*r*) to bruise the serpent's head, who had seduced man to sin, (*s*) "To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity," you now contend, that men were never under the curse of God. ‡ *Quod neque aliquando fuerunt homines sub Dei maledictione—Quod non constat ex toto sacro textu illa ira Dei contra genus humanum, neque illa æterna maledictio: neque memini in quatuor Evangeliiis me legisse hoc secretum a Christo fuisse detectum: quare putamus id postea inventum, ut aliis dogmatibus fundamentum substerneretur; i. e.* That this wrath of God against mankind, nor that eternal curse, does appear in the whole sacred text: neither do I remember to have read in the four Gospels that the secret was discovered by Christ: therefore we think that it was invented afterwards, to lay a foundation for other opinions. This is a bold and desperate assertion. Let any man read Matth. xxv. 46. and John v. 29. and see whether eternal judgment be not there threatened? And whether these be not as it were repeating the very words of Daniel, chap. xii. 2. That "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to

* Short and Easy Method with the Deists, p. 5.

† Ibid. p. 42.

, (r) Gen. iii. 15.

(s) Dan. ix. 24.

‡ Limbor. Collat. p. 54, 55.

“everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt.” Compare likewise Mark ix. 44. with Isaiah lxvi. 24. and then tell whether there is not a punishment after death for the wicked: and whether this be not revealed as well in the Old Testament as in the New?

If the Jew will criticise (as some Christians have done) upon the words eternal and everlasting, and say, that they mean not a duration without end, I will give two answers.

1. That my business with the Jew is not now about the eternity of hell: but whether there be any punishment at all after death. Because all the ends which the Jew proposes of the Messiah's coming, respect only this life. And they deny any that are dead to have any benefit by the Messiah*. And, if so, then his making reconciliation for iniquity cannot deliver any mortal from the punishment after death.

And this punishment being described in the texts before quoted, and several others of the Old Testament, to be exceedingly greater than we can endure in this life; consequently the greatest benefit that we can receive by the Messiah, is totally frustrated by the Jews. And they cannot deny but that the ends which the Christians propose for the coming of the Messiah are exceedingly more noble and more beneficial than those which they propose: and fully as agreeable to the letter of the text, of bruising the head of the serpent, and making reconciliation for iniquity, and something more so, than our deliverance from worldly enemies, who are not so properly called the serpent as the devil is: and our deliverance from his power is more strictly called a making an end of sin, and finishing of transgression; and more truly an everlasting deliverance (in whatever sense you will take that word) than any temporal deliverance. For if by everlasting you mean only temporal, yet it is the highest expression of temporal, and the greatest of temporal deliverances.

Let me not be mistaken, as if by eternal and everlasting, the worm not dying, and the fire that never will be quenched, &c. I favoured at all their constructions which would make all these to mean nothing but temporary, though a very long duration; but I would not intermix new subjects in this discourse, and expatiate into long digressions; especially where the present controversy does not require it. Therefore I go to my second answer.

* *Limb. Collat. Numb. xvii. p. 70.*

2. If these words, eternal, &c. can be thus turned, or if they cannot, I desire to know from the Jews, what plain text they have in all the law of Moses for everlasting life in heaven, and in order thereunto, for the resurrection of the dead, which they profess firmly to believe? They gather these from texts which, as themselves confess, do bear another, and a temporal meaning, respecting their outward state in this world: but which withal do (they say) typically represent their future glorious state in heaven, their true and everlasting Canaan. Yet they will not allow any thing in their law to be a type of the Messiah! Why? Because the law does not expressly say, that such a thing is a type of the Messiah. Which yet it says as much as that Canaan was a type of heaven: that there will be any resurrection of the dead; or eternal life after that. What express Scripture have they for what Rabbi Manasseh Ben Israel, in his treatise of the Resurrection of the Dead, does affirm to be the common opinion of the rabbins, *viz.* That all the Israelites, even those that are dead, shall be partakers of the kingdom of the Messiah *: and that to this end, all those that are dead, shall be raised again; by which miracle the wicked being converted, shall acknowledge the true God, and forsake their errors: that then there shall be an end of this world, and a new one arise, or a change of this into a much better condition, wherein the moon shall be as bright as the sun, and the light of the sun seven-fold more than it is now: at which time the demons and evil spirits shall be destroyed; and the trees bear fruit every month: and then that God shall make a noble feast to the righteous out of the fish the leviathan: and that there shall be peace among the wild beasts; neither shall they hurt men in that holy land: that then the temple of God shall be built again; and the Holy Land be again divided amongst the tribes: where they shall eat and drink, beget children, and each be married to his own proper wife, &c. This Turks paradise after death, they can gather out of the words of the law. They can find there their sumptuous fish-dinner upon the great whale leviathan! But nothing of the heavenly kingdom of the Messiah! Nothing of their deliverance from sin and hell; but eating and drinking, and lying with women! They should, upon this their scheme of the state after death, answer the question which one of the Sadducees asked our Saviour, concerning the seven brethren

* Limbor. Collat. p. 221, 222.

who had one wife, Whose wife she should be at the resurrection?

And now I beseech you to consider, is it not a fatal delusion this, that you should reject all the plain prophecies of the Messiah, because they do not, in such express words as you would dictate, lay open every particular of his spiritual state and government: and (at the same time) turn these prophecies to such wild and groundless fancies as are no ways typified by your sacrifices, or any institution in your law; nor can fill up, in any tolerable measure, the glories and extent of all those magnificent prophecies concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, wherein God hath prepared for those who shall be thought worthy of it; not wine and women, and eating, such gross carnal pleasures, as we are made capable of in this frail life: but such things as (*t*) “since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen.” Yet because they are not particularly described (which cannot be so as we could understand them) you will not believe them, or that they reach beyond enjoyments of sense! And for this sole reason, you reject your Messiah, because he brings you glories so far beyond all that you looked for. Though that likewise, in the above quoted text, and many others of your Scriptures, has been foretold to you.

And it is likewise shadowed out to you in this, that there was no sacrifice or expiation in your law for the most heinous crimes, such as blasphemy, idolatry, murder, adultery, incest, &c. as your learned Jew confesses*.

Nay lesser sins than these, as that of Eli's (*u*) not effectually restraining, though he reprov'd his sons, were not to be “purged with sacrifice, nor offering for ever.”

Some Jews fancy, that the yearly sacrifice of expiation made an atonement for all their sins.

We see not for this of Eli's, and consequently not for greater sins.

The yearly sacrifice was but a sacrifice, though more solemn than the daily sacrifices; and therefore it purged all those sins only which could be purged by sacrifice.

If all the sins of the Jews had been purged every year, then had they not been remembered, brought to account, and so grievously punished as we have seen, and was often threatened in the law,

(*t*) Isaiah lxiv. 4.

* Limbor. Collat. p. 209.

(*u*) 1 Sam. iii. 14.

in after ages, more than to the third and fourth generation. And it was a noted observation of your fathers, that there was a grain of the golden calf in all your after-judgments, *i. e.* that that sin was never totally forgiven: but still called to remembrance upon every fresh provocation. It is said (*x*), “I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burnt incense to them.” And all the goodness and godly reformation of Josiah could not pacify God for the sins of Manasseh; which (*y*) he would not pardon; but for them removed Judah out of his sight. (*z*) “And surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die, saith the Lord God of Hosts.”

Therefore there were some sins which were not purged by the legal sacrifices; and these were the greatest of their sins. They were but the lesser sort of sins that were purged by them. How then were the greatest purged? If you will say, by repentance only, without any sacrifice,

Ans. The lesser sins require repentance: and do they need sacrifice too; when the greater sins are purged without it? Or are greater sins more easily purged than the lesser?

Here then behold your law declaring of itself, that it is not perfect. That there was a further and more efficacious sacrifice and atonement for sin than what was under the law. And this for the greatest of your sins. Then cast your eye upon that text in your law, (*a*) “Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.” And consider, that there was no atonement or sacrifice in your law for the greatest and most heinous breaches of the law. How then shall you be delivered from this curse? Or can you enter into eternal life without your being purged from this curse? Do you expect to be admitted into heaven, while cursed and in your pollutions? Can any cursed thing enter there? Then reflect upon the desperateness of that position of yours, * *Nos vero nec redemptionem quam expectamus, nec Messiam ipsum pro animarum salute, nec pro gloria aeterna consequenda, necessaria esse credimus. i. e.* We do believe that neither the deliverance which we expect (by our Messiah) nor our Messiah himself, are necessary towards the salvation of our souls, or for the obtaining of eternal glory. Now then if neither

(*x*) Hos. ii. 13.

(*y*) 2 Kings xiii. 26. xxiv. 3, 4.

(*z*) Isaiah xx'ii 14.

(*a*) Deut. xxvii. 26.

* Limbor. Collat. 9. 98. ad finem.

in the law, nor in the future reign which you expect of your Messiah, there will be any propitiation or sacrifice for the greatest of your sins, how do you expect to be purged from them? Or must you enter into heaven before you are purged from them? Or were sacrifices only needless ceremonies, and not effectual for the purging of those sins, which were purgeable by them? Or were greater sins easier purged, that is, by repentance only; than lesser sins, which besides repentance, were not to be purged without sacrifice also?

I confess all this is out of doors, and urged to no purpose, if it be true which you have advanced (as before quoted) that men, by the fall, were never under the curse of God: and therefore needed no deliverance from it. That Israel was an holy nation, because they are so called in Scripture, and that Aaron was commanded to bless them: and God said to Balaam that they were blessed. All which, says your learned Jew *, is so contrary to their being eternally cursed, *ut neque Deus ipse possit ea componere*, that God himself cannot reconcile it.

I suppose he intends to come off by the word eternal, that it is not reconcileable with their being eternally under the curse of God: because there are so many places in the law and the prophets which speak of their great wickedness, and being under the temporal curse of God.

But blessing is as contrary to cursing in this world as in the next: for they are opposites in the nature of the thing. And therefore if the authority of such texts as those before quoted will free them from the eternal, it must also from the temporal curse, or from any curse at all.

But why then are they called holy and blessed, if they be under the curse? I suppose neither Jew nor Christian need be instructed in this, it is so known and common a distinction; men are called holy or blessed upon a personal, or a relative account, as they are holy in themselves, or related to holy things. Thus a nation or people taken into federal covenant with God, more peculiarly than any other nation upon the earth, may be called blessed above all the nations of the earth: and an holy people, in respect of the holiness of their laws, covenant, promises, &c. given to them by God.

* Limbor. Collat. p. 55.

Yet these may be a wicked and a cursed people, in respect to their practice, if they live not pursuant to their holy law. Thus said Moses to your nation, (b) “Understand, therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it, for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people.” And says God himself, (c) “As I live, saith the Lord God, So dom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters—Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins.” And again, (d) “Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.” Yet all this while, that nation was called the holy nation: and Jerusalem the holy city, when it was full of murderers, because there was the temple and stated worship of God. Are these now such contradictions that God himself cannot reconcile! Behold the same people (e) blessed and cursed, at the same time; but not in the same respect. Therefore trust not in your being called the holy people, notwithstanding of which you see you may be cursed: not only here but hereafter! For, as said before, to be blessed and cursed, is as great a contradiction in this life as the next: and for a moment, as for eternity. And you find and complain, that you are cursed here upon many temporal accounts. And urge your great sins as the cause of your Messiah delaying his coming. Now sin is as much a contradiction to holiness, and more than the curse of afflictions and punishment. Therefore if you can reconcile your being the holy people, with your being, at the same time, such great sinners, you have solved the contradiction yourselves, which you thought too hard (when it made against you) for God himself! And you must at last grant, after all your struggling, that, by the fall of Adam, men were put under the curse of God: from which there were no sacrifices in your law sufficient to purge our souls: that therefore another and more efficacious sacrifice than the blood of bulls and of goats was necessary for the purging of our sins. And you reject this sacrifice of our Messiah, upon pretence that it is not clearly and in express words revealed in the Old Testament, without any figurative and dubious phrases. While, at the same time, you build your hopes of heaven, and explain the resurrection of the dead in such a manner, and upon such texts, as

(b) Deut. ix. 6.

(c) Ezek. xvi. 48, 51.

(d) Mal. iii. 9.

(e) Jer. vii. 4.

by no force can be screwed to those wild meanings you put upon them.

And on the other side, when the death and sacrifice of the Messiah, and the satisfaction thereby made to God for our sins are revealed in those plain and express words, (*f*) that he made his soul an offering for sin: that God saw the travel of his soul, and was satisfied: that he laid upon him the iniquity of us all: that he poured out his soul unto death: and was numbered with the transgressors: and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors, &c. Then (as before shewn) death must not mean death, nor must any of those words be taken literally; but you put such forced and figurative interpretations upon them as can by no means bear, which is proved before.

You except against figurative expressions; yet you use them. You turn the plainest words into figures; and then tell us we have no plain words: you deduce consequences (as your notion of the resurrection, &c.) from words which are no ways plain, nor can mean what you infer from them: you raise doctrines, (as of the leviathan, &c.) from no words at all in your Scriptures; yet you require for our doctrines positive words out of your Scriptures! And when you have such, you will not accept of them.

What Scripture can you produce for your monstrous story of Armillus? which Hornbeck (*contra Jud. p. 253.*) relates out of your author Avkat Rochel, sub signo Messiaë septimo apud Hulsium, p. 51. You suppose that a company of most profligate fellows will invent a new sin; that they will take a beautiful stone statue of a woman, that is in Rome, and warming it, will lie with it; that from thence it will conceive, and at last bursting, there will come forth a child, whose name shall be called Armillus; that he shall be twelve cubits high, and the length of a span betwixt his eyes: that he will say to the wicked, I am your Messiah and your God; that they will believe in him, and make him their king; and that to him will be gathered all the posterity of Esau. That your first Messiah, Ben Joseph, of the tribe of Ephraim, will fight against him, with thirty thousand Israelites; and shall have success in the first battle; but in the second battle, that your Messiah will be killed, and his army routed. That the angels will take away the dead body of your Messiah, and keep it with

those of the patriarchs. That after this shall arise your second Messiah, Ben David, of the tribe of Judah, and Elias with him; to whom the Jews that are left shall be gathered, and oppose Armillus. That God shall destroy Armillus and his whole army by fire and brimstone, and great stones cast down upon them from heaven. Then that Michael shall sound a trumpet so loud, as to open the graves, and raise the dead in Jerusalem: and that the first Messiah, Ben Joseph, shall then be raised, who was kept under the gates of Jerusalem. That then the Messiah, Ben David, shall be sent to gather the dispersed of the Jews from amongst all nations: all of whose kings will bring them upon their shoulders, &c.

This is the manner by which you interpret the Scriptures: several of which are quoted in this relation, (as Psal. cx. 1. Zech. xiv. 3. Ezek. xxxviii. 22. Obad. i. 18.) as being to be fulfilled in the above-mentioned story of Armillus.

Which, as it is wholly destitute of truth, or even probability, the mad excursion of groundless imagination: so does it in no sort come up to the prophecies in the Holy Scriptures concerning the Messiah; or the types of him therein exhibited: which are all fulfilled, even to an iota, in our blessed Lord and Saviour.

Yet you reject him, as not being sufficiently revealed in Scripture: while you think you can deduce from thence this beastly and unworthy legend of Armillus!

You have been told before of the strange uncertainty you are at in the marks you have set up, whereby to know your Messiah, when he comes, which you have reduced all to success: which cannot be known till the trial: and that has ended in your destruction, all the way hitherto, in the many experiments you have made under your several false Messiahs. And you can never be sure, in any other who shall hereafter set up.

Nay further, you must be sure to be ruined by whomsoever shall first set up, by this scheme which you have laid down: for your Messiah Ben Joseph must first come and be slain, and your armies routed by Armillus. So that it is not success, but ruin, that must be the mark of your first Messiah. This is great encouragement for any of you to follow whomsoever shall set up next for your Messiah!

You have had many such Messiahs already. And whenever Ben Joseph shall come, he must be another unfortunate Messiah.

You must, by your own reckoning, be once more undone, before your Messiah Ben David can come. And when your Messiah Ben Joseph shall come, and be defeated, how will you know, by that mark, that it is he? That mark you have had in all the Messiahs you ever set up. So that you will be still left to expect a further destruction. Thus deplorable is your state!

Besides, which of these Messiahs, is it Ben Joseph, or Ben David, to whom all those marks given of the Messiah in the Scriptures do belong, as to the time, place, and other circumstances of his coming? Or do some belong to one, and some to the other? Then you must tell which belong to which, or else you may be deceived in both: at least, you can be sure of neither.

XV. Neither of them can possibly now have that mark insisted upon before, of the general expectation of the whole earth, not only of the Roman empire, but of all the east, that a wonderful and extraordinary person should be sent into the world, about that time, who should be universal monarch of all the kings of the earth. And accordingly three kings came out of the east to worship our Jesus, guided by the miraculous leading of a new star raised in heaven to point him out.

But there is no such expectation now in the world, but only amongst you. Therefore none of your Messiahs can come with that mark, which seems even necessary, to introduce such a Saviour into the world.

For to suppose such a person designed by God, from all eternity, to be Universal Lord and Saviour of the whole earth: and that all the dispensations which God ever gave to man, were directed to him, as the center, and completion of all; it would seem necessary and proportionable to such an oeconomy, that so glorious a person should be not only foretold, but pre-figured in types and observances: nay it could not be otherwise, if all the institutions of religion were to be completed in him; for that would naturally infer that they were, that they could be no more than types and fore-runners of him to whom they pointed.

Thus Christ is said to have been promised (g) *πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων*, which words if they should not reach the length of our English translation, *viz.* "before the world began," by which the revelation of the Great Messiah must have been made to

the angels in heaven, before the creation of man, or of this lower world.

Yet this we are sure of, that Moses has told us (*h*) he was promised to Adam and Eve, immediately upon their fall. Then were sacrifices instituted, as types of the great and only sacrifice which could bruise the serpent's head, and make atonement for sin: which by that promise, was reserved for the seed of the woman; and therefore could not be fulfilled in the blood of beasts.

This institution of sacrifices descended from that time, through all the posterities of Adam, as a necessary part of religion, and the worship of God. And even the heathen retained so much of their original institution, that they looked upon them in the nature of a vicarious suffering of others for our sin: and the wisest of them did thence conclude, that there must be some more noble sacrifice than that of beasts, whereby our sin should be purged. This led some of them to human sacrifices: but still that was not blood more noble than our own. And they could go no further.

Yet they were in expectation of the coming of a glorious person from heaven, who should purge their sins; and introduce a new and golden age of justice and all goodness, to extend through the whole earth: and they generally all over the world did expect him then to come at that time when our blessed Jesus was born, as before has been shewn.

But that expectation is now over. There never was such at any time, either before or after that very time. The expectation was always, long before that time: but no time except that time, was the time expected for his coming. Therefore none of your Messiahs, whom you still expect, can possibly enter the world with this necessary and glorious mark of the Messiah. For that time being over, to which the general expectation was determined, it ceased there, and cannot now be taken up again; because, as it could not be begun by concert, through so many distant nations, who hold no correspondence; and its beginning was never known: so for the same reasons, it cannot now be begun again; for then the beginning would be known; and it could not, without a miracle, gain such acceptance as to become universal through the whole world, as it was before.

(*h*) Gen. iii. 15.

And without this, it could not be said, (*i*) “the desire of all nations shall come.” For how was he their desire, if they expected no such person to come?

But as neither of the Messiahs whom you pretend to look for, are expected by any body but yourselves; and that not by all, if any of you, (as we have reason to believe) in good earnest; so, if they were expected according to the scheme that you have drawn, the first would be the contempt, and the second the terror, but neither of them the desire of all nations.

And neither of these motives either of terror or contempt could persuade the Gentiles towards the fulfilling of what is written concerning the Messiah. “The Gentiles shall come to the light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising (*k*).”

This began remarkably to be fulfilled in the coming of the three kings from the east, to the light, whether literal, of the miraculous star, or, what that signified, the light of the Gospel. And these came to the Messiah, not, as you expect, after being reduced by force of arms, and converted by his success in war, but they came “to the brightness of his rising,” to his birth; and (*l*) adored him in his swaddling-cloaths. They rejoiced “with exceeding great joy,” when they saw his signal hung out in the heavens. This joy could not come from contempt or fear. But he was truly the desire of all nations; which neither of your Messiahs can be, by your own account of them.

He was not to come as a terror, but a light to the Gentiles; as he has proved, not by conquering, but converting of them.

And towards this, it was necessary that he should come under all those circumstances which were proper for the obtaining of such an end. To persuade the Gentiles to receive him, as a Legislator sent from heaven, for spiritual and eternal purposes; and not with any design upon their temporal government, or for any secular by-ends of his own.

Therefore he ought not to have come in the outward pomp and grandeur of the world; but the farthest removed from it that was possible: of mean, but virtuous parentage, his life to be led in poverty and afflictions, and his death, ignominious. He must have come in a corrupt and wicked age, to oppose iniquity in its torrent.

(*i*) Hag. ii. 7.

(*k*) Isaiah lx. 3.

(*l*) Matt. ii. 10.

And hence it naturally follows, that he must be persecuted, even to the death. And that his death could not be deferred long, after his beginning to preach publicly; for that a wicked world could not long bear it. Which was the reason Socrates * gave at his trial, why he taught privately so long; for that otherwise he must have perished sooner: and so have been able to do less good.

And we may reasonably suppose that this was one cause why our blessed Saviour (m) did not begin to preach, till he was thirty years of age. And about three years after was crucified.

Plato † describing the character of a perfect just man, says, that he shall be scourged, tormented, fettered, and at last having suffered all manner of evils, that he shall be crucified, or cut in pieces, as the sacrifices were.

And says, ‡ that it is necessary they should wait, till such a one should come, to teach them how they ought to behave themselves towards God, and towards man. “O when shall that time come? (says he) And who shall be that teacher? How greatly do I desire to see that man, who he is?”

And he says, § “that this Lawgiver must be somewhat more than of human race; for that as beasts are governed by men, so must men, by a nature which is superior to their own: and therefore, that this man who was to be the Universal Lawgiver to mankind, must likewise partake of the nature of God. This was the ground of the heathen notion, in feigning their heroes and demons to be begotten by the gods.” So agreeable (but far exceeding) was our Jesus in his nature and all his qualifications, to the notion and expectation of the Gentiles! And therefore have so many of them gladly submitted unto him.

But such a Messiah as you Jews do now describe yours to be, as it was far from what the Gentiles expected; and therefore he could never convert, though he should conquer them: so it seems not indeed, that yourselves do expect any such an one, as you pretend, only for an excuse.

* Plato Apol. Socr.

(m) Matt. iv. 17. Luke iii. 23.

† Ὁ δίκαιος, μαρτυρήσεται, στυγνέσεται—τελευτῶν, πάντα κακὰ παθὼν, ἀναχινδλυθήσεται. De Rupbl. l. 2.

‡ Ἀναγκαῖον οὖν ἔστι περιμένειν ἕως ἂν τις μάθῃ ὡς δεῖ πρὸς Θεοῦς καὶ πρὸς Ἀνθρώπους διακρίσθαι. Πότε οὖν παρέσται ὁ Χρόνος οὗτος; Καὶ τίς ὁ παιδεύων; ἥδιστα γὰρ ἂν μὲν δικῶ ἰδεῖν τοῦτον τὸν ἀνθρώπον τίς ἔστιν. Alcibiad. II. de Precat.

§ De Leg. l. 4.

Some of your rabbies saying, that he is come; some, that he will never come; some, that he will not come in this world, till the resurrection of the dead; others, that his coming is not material, nor to be placed amongst the fundamentals of your faith; others, that his coming is no way desirable, as bringing greater mischief with it, than advantage to the Jews; others, forbidding all enquiry into the time of his coming, as indeed despairing of it.

Of all these particulars see the authorities of your own rabbies, in Hornbeck *contra* Jud. l. 2. p. 114, 115, and 123. There you will find, in *Codice Sanhedrin*, R. Hillel saying, That no Messiah shall be given to Israel, for that they have had him already, in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah. And in your Talmud, R. Ula says of the Messiah, "let him come, but let me not see it:" that is, for the miseries it will bring to the Jews, in gathering them out of all countries, where they are peaceably settled, to forsake their houses and possessions; and follow their Messiah to wars, and the calamities that attend it: Especially considering what has been before said, that they must certainly expect destruction and ruin, under their first Messiah Ben Joseph. For all which, their possessing, at last, the Land of Canaan, will be no sufficient reparation; they living now in countries as good as that, and enjoying both ease and plenty: that the conquests of their Messiah may bring greater glory to him; but no good to the Jews, proportionable to the miseries they must endure in fighting for him. Upon all which considerations, R. Ula had reason to say, "Let him come, but let not me see him." The same said Rabba, and Rabbi John, in *Codice Sanhedrin*.

And the many disappointments you have met with in your Messiahs hitherto, has made you forbid any to inquire into the time of the Messiah's coming; your *Schebet Jehuda*, p. 245, (as quoted by Hornbeck, p. 123.) curses those who set any time for the coming of the Messiah; and gives this reason, "That if the Messiah does not come at that time, the people's hearts do fail; and they think that they are put off with perpetual fruitless hope. Therefore in the Talmud. *Cod. Sanhedrin*, cap. xi. Rabbi Samuelsays, in the words of Rabbi Jonathan, "Let their bones be broken, who compute the periods of the times." And this may the better be forbid, because R. Josephus Albo has struck this article concerning the coming of the Messiah out of the number

of your fundamental doctrines. So that now you may believe it, or not, as you please.

And how then will the Gentiles be converted by you? You have confessed (as before shewn,) that you have no arguments against them; and now you seem to despair, even of conquering them. Though if that were done, it would rather obstruct their conversion, as has been urged before.

And plain reason does evince, that the qualifications of a Messiah for the conversion of the Gentiles, could be no other than what were found in our Jesus; and such a one they did expect; and therefore so readily did give up their names to him.

As his miracles were so flagrant and undoubted, as to vouch him sent of God; so could not malice itself find out the least possibility of any sinister or self-end in him. Therefore he lived poor, and persecuted, and poured out his soul unto death, as a demonstration, that his Kingdom was not of this world.

He chose followers that were poor, and unlearned: and this was necessary to obviate the objection, that either interest or craft had any part in the framing of his doctrine. He enjoined to all his disciples the doctrine of self-denial, and the cross; and bade them look for nothing but afflictions in this world; and this was necessary, to obviate the objection, as if either lust, pleasure, or ambition, had any part in the framing of his doctrine. He was rejected by you, of his own nation; and this was necessary, to obviate the objection, as if he sought to gain you on his side, upon the account of obtaining the dominion over you; and then to turn your arms against the Gentiles.

His conquest of the Gentiles, by their conversion, did not begin, till after his ascension: and this was necessary, to obviate the objection, as if he had sought the temporal rule over them; as Mahomet did over his converts; and as you propose of your Messiah.

And not in the first conversion of the Gentiles, nor for three hundred years after, were any of their kings or states brought in to Christianity; and this was necessary, to obviate the objection, as if the forgery of the Gospel had been supported by human authority; which rendered it hazardous for any to have detected the deceit. This was so necessary, as that we see the Deists, for want of this, have yet the impudence to suppose it, contrary to all

truth, *viz.* that * authority and laws being on the Christian side, was the cause that its deceit was not detected, at the beginning; which is now too late to be done, for the distance of the ages.

Therefore, we may now see the wonderful providence of God, in this conduct; for if the Deists had the argument (as they foolishly pretend it) of the Gospel being abetted by kings or states, in its infancy; or before it was fully settled, and spread over the earth; we should never get their mouths stopped, and it would bear a great face of suspicion, that some cheat might have been put upon us, when none who knew it, durst discover it, without apparent hazard to themselves.

And again, kings and states might have come, by this time of day, to think that their authority had something to do in settling of the church; and that the Gospel was beholden to them; at least sycophants and flatterers would so have complimented them; and Erastianism would have had a plausible plea. It is a branch of Deism. It stands and falls with that. And if it had such an umbrage as this, it would over-run us; for it keeps its ground without it.

But Christ would not permit kings to become his servants, till he had first endured three hundred years of their persecution; to teach them that his church was not built upon their shoulders, nor depended upon their authority: and to stop the mouths of these several sorts of Deists.

In all things, in every step of his conduct, there does appear such divine wisdom and foresight, as that if any part had been otherwise than it is, the whole would have been visibly defective; and consequently not from God. Not that many things defective may not be from God. He makes every thing perfect, in its kind; to the end for which he has ordained it: but he makes some things for higher ends than others; and in comparison, one thing is more perfect than another.

Thus the law of Moses was perfect in its kind, for those ends and purposes to which it was designed: but Moses was not designed for the ultimate and universal lawgiver: he never pretended to it; but, on the contrary, he pointed out (*n*) to one who was to come after him; and denounces God's judgments against those who should not hearken unto him.

* Taland's *Life of Milton*, p. 91, 92. Printed anno 1699. (*n*) Deut. xviii, 13, 19.

Moses was not designed, nor his law calculated for the conversion of the Gentiles.

And he had few of those qualifications which the Gentiles required in the Supreme and Universal law-giver. He was bred up at Pharaoh's court; the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter; and learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, who were then the most learned nation upon the face of the earth: he was mighty in words and in deeds. He marched out of Egypt, at the head of 600,000 men: (o) and having rescued his own nation, he became their king. Therefore he was not free from the suspicion of design in the case: and was a man every way qualified, both for wisdom, courage, and education, to have contrived and effected it.

And after him, his disciples went on according to his example, conquering with the sword. And now you tell us, that they had no other design, but to gain that pleasant country to themselves: that the law which Moses gave them, proposed nothing to them beyond this: and that you hope for no more from the Messiah whom you expect, but temporal conquests, to restore you to that land again; and to subdue the whole world under you, by force of arms. That there is nothing at all spiritual or heavenly in his kingdom; but only a temporal earthly grandeur. That it was not meant to carry you to heaven, but to make you great upon earth. That the offices of the Messiah respect only temporal things; and are no ways necessary towards the salvation of our souls, or eternal life, as your learned Jew *, before quoted, has asserted.

Now what would Socrates, or Plato, or any of the wise men among the Gentiles say to this notion of a Messiah? Would they not have detested it, as vicious, as recommending of pride, ambition, covetousness, and the vanity of this world; against which they fought, and thought them unworthy of a philosopher, or a truly virtuous person? Therefore such a Messiah could never have concerted them.

But on the other hand, there is not any one circumstance or qualification which they could desire in a Messiah which is not filled up, nay far exceeded, in their own way, beyond what they could have contrived, as to the strictest rules of virtue, in the person, life, and death of our Messiah, and in all his conduct:

(o) Deut. xxxiii. 5.

* Limbor. Collat. n. iv. p. 53, and n. xiv. p. 66.

shewing, beyond the possibility of a deceit, or a face of suspicion, that he was a Legislator sent from heaven, without any temporal designs; First, To give the sanction of God to morality; which, though these philosophers taught truly, yet could they not stamp upon it such a seal of divine authority: and Secondly, To carry them further, and teach them the true worship of God; and expiation of their sins; with the assurance of everlasting life; and the means of obtaining it. All which they confessed they wanted; and that they did expect such a Messiah, or a person anointed, a Christ, that is, delegated and authorized by God, to be born into the world, who should teach this Gospel or glad tidings unto them. And he came with such demonstration of his commission, and divinely wise conduct in all his administration, that a Socrates, a Pythagoras, or a Plato, could not only have found no objection, but must have admired and adored, as so far exceeding whatever they imperfectly had conjectured, though they were assisted with the greatest wisdom and virtue that was in all the Gentile world.

Thus you see that the objections which the Jews, and some of the lewd and foolish Deists, have made against the poverty, sufferings, and death of our Messiah, turn all into demonstrations of his truth; and were so necessary, that, as he could not have fulfilled the Law without them, so could he never any otherwise have been received of the Gentiles.

For God forces not, though he governs the wills of men. That would be to destroy the creature he had made: for without the freedom of will, man would not be a reasonable animal; and the wisdom of God is chiefly known, in so disposing of things, as to bring his own purposes to pass, and yet leaving men to the full freedom of their own wills.

This was one reason why our Jesus would not suffer the devils to confess him; and charged several whom he cured, not to make it known till the time should come that he was to suffer: for that would have hastened his sufferings before the time, for the reason before given out of Socrates's defence.

It was in his power to have forced the Jews to a confession of him, but then they had not acted freely. Therefore having given them all reasonable conviction of his mission, he left them to their freedom, whether they would acknowledge him or not: and their obstinacy did harden them still more, and depraved their judgment, which was a just punishment of their obstinacy, as well as a natural effect of it. For sin does always punish itself; it is its own ac-

cuser, judge, and executioner. This blinded the obstinate among the Jews, that they knew not their Messiah; for had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. And thus that wonderful œconomy for the salvation of man was brought about by the greatest conduct of wisdom and goodness that was possible.

And by the same means the conversion of the Gentiles was contrived; for had the Jews all generally followed Christ, the Gentiles, being left to their own freedom, would never have received him, because they would have looked upon him as a legislator sent only to the Jews, whose Law kept them at the utmost distance and detestation of the Gentiles: (*p*) whom therefore the Gentiles hated and despised, and thought it abomination so much as to eat with them, and therefore would have disdained to have received a lawgiver from them, who pretended to a right and a promise to conquer and overcome all the whole Gentile world, and subdue them under their Messiah, which they understood was to be by force of arms. And though such Messiah had set up with never so much guise of humility and meekness, and put out the most specious declarations, (as other conquerors have at first done) if he had led the whole body of the Jews after him, the Gentiles would have looked upon all this as a trick to disarm them, by rendering them secure, and would not have so been caught.

On the other hand, the Jews could never have received a Messiah from the Gentiles: that was contrary to all the promises made to them in their Law.

Therefore as it was necessary, with respect to the segullah, that the Messiah should be of the Jews, so was it necessary, in respect of the Gentiles, that he should be rejected by the chief of the Jews: that he should be persecuted and destroyed by them. He could not otherwise have become an universal law-giver both to the Jews and the Gentiles.

And let me say, in respect of the Deists, it was necessary that there should be a segullah, or peculiar church of God set up somewhere, in some one nation of the world, else the whole earth would have been irrecoverably sunk in idolatry: and there could never, in such a frame of things, be any expiation for the sins of mankind, who therefore were all represented in the nation of the

segullah, and to be, by degrees, incorporated into them, and converted by them.

And it was likewise necessary that this nation of the segullah should be the fewest and most neglected people of the earth.

And it was necessary that the Messiah should have been rejected by the chief and governing part of the Jews, the chief priests and sanhedrin: so was it as necessary that he should have been received and followed by others of the meanest and less noticed of the Jews, because the Gentiles were to be converted by the Jews, and brought into their segullah.

And these Jews who at first followed Christ, were to be but few and inconsiderable during his life: to take away all umbrage from the Gentiles as well as the governing part of the Jews, that he designed any infraction upon their civil rights and liberties.

Therefore the great flowing in of the Jews first, particularly of their priests, (*g*) and afterwards of the Gentiles, was not till after the ascension of our blessed Lord, to put them out of all fear of his going about to set up a temporal kingdom after his resurrection, (as his disciples expected, Acts i. 6.) For that had made a great noise, and given the alarm both to the high-priest and governors of the Jews, as well as to the Gentiles; therefore, though he shewed himself openly, after his resurrection, and to so many, and at sundry times, and by such infallible proofs, as to confirm the truth of it past all possibility of a deceit, or ground of scruple to after ages, yet he shewed not himself (*r*) “openly to all the people.” That would have set the whole world in a flame all on the sudden, who were not prepared, for they knew not as yet the design of his kingdom, that it was to be spiritual and heavenly, till he should in a long tract of time, and by degrees, bring over the whole kingdom of the world to his subjection, in the belief of his Gospel; not by force of arms, (for that could not have done it) but according to the full freedom of their own wills by a rational conviction.

And it is observable, that though one great article of the apostolical office (*s*) at first, was particularly to be witnesses of the resurrection of Christ; that this, at first, was necessary to the constitution of an Apostle, and therefore Christ did shew himself, in a miraculous manner, to St. Paul, to qualify him for that

(*g*) Acts vi. 7.

(*r*) Acts x. 40, 41.

(*s*) Acts i. 22.

office; yet, as himself says, it was “last of all, as one born out of due time.” For he was constituted to be the Apostle of the Gentiles, who came in to the Gospel last of all, as born out of due time.

And he was the only man among the Apostles who had acquired learning by study and education; therefore he was not admitted till the Gospel had been first preached by the others, and fully established; and he was, at first, a persecutor of it, to take away the least suspicion that his parts or learning had any share in the contrivance of the Gospel. And then his coming in at last, did remove the prejudice that no men of learning and sagacity had embraced it. He broke the ice for the Gentiles, who were admirers of learning, and for this they valued him the more, and hearkened to him.

I could enlarge in many other particulars, indeed in every particular, through the whole œconomy of the Gospel, to shew the wonderful conduct, and most minute proportion that there is in every part; which, of itself, were sufficient to convince any considering person that the whole contrivance was divine, and that no lesser wisdom could have so disposed of it.

But that would require a treatise by itself: and thus much I thought necessary for my present subject, to shew how we Gentiles were drawn into the belief of the Gospel by the cords of a man, by such methods as overcame our reason, without destroying the freedom of our will. Such as gave us the utmost demonstration of the wisdom and goodness of God without the interposition of his almighty power, by which he governs the unthinking part of his creation.

And as the Jews first brought us into the Gospel, so would we now provoke them to emulation by the same methods in which God has dealt with us; by shewing them the beauty, the harmony, and irrefragable demonstration of fact that has convinced us of the truth of the Gospel.

The infidelity of so many of you Jews was necessary towards our receiving the Gospel, till the fulness of the Gentiles should come in.

(*t*) And if the casting away of you be the reconciling of the world, what shall the reconciling of you be, but life from the dead! Amen.

XVI. Let me now conclude, and apply all that has been said, by a short recapitulation and enforcement of the principal parts of it.

You have given up all the credibility that there is for the truth of Moses and your Law, rather than admit of the same credibility (and stronger) that there is for Christ and the Gospel. So that, as was said before, and has been proved, you have involved yourselves under the necessity either of rejecting Moses, or embracing of Christianity.

Your objections have been answered *ex abundantia*; for after the full proof of the Miracles of Christ and his Apostles, there needed no more to have been said, as to receiving the doctrine which they taught, and those expositions they gave of the Law, which stand upon as sure a foundation, and carry the same infallible credentials of divine authority as the Law itself.

And these cannot be overthrown by ever so great a cloud of difficulties or objections, though they could not be answered to satisfaction, without disproving the motives of credibility upon which they are received.

For we may have sufficient reason to believe many things, and yet not be able to solve all the difficulties that may arise concerning them.

As in natural things, we cannot explain the manner and conveyance of sensible objects through our outward organs to our soul, nor the thousandth part of those difficulties which are started concerning the soul itself, yet no man doubts but that he has a soul, that he sees, hears, thinks, reasons, &c.

So in supernatural things, who can solve all that may be asked concerning the being and operations of God? Yet all this is no argument against the belief of a first cause, and its essential perfections, because it is forced upon us by undeniable reason.

Therefore, unless you can shew the fallacy of those four marks which in the first part are set down to ascertain the truth of matters of fact; or secondly, shew that the matters of fact of Christ want any of them, all your objections borrowed from other topics, can signify nothing against the truth of Christianity.

And if you can shew the uncertainty of these marks, or that they are wanting to the evidence of Christianity, then down comes your Law with it, and we must altogether turn Deists.

You say (as has been before quoted) that if Christ, after he rose from the dead, had appeared to the whole congregation of Israel,

&c. that this would have removed all scruple from you, and that you would, without all doubt, have believed him.

And now, I beseech you, have you not had as miraculous confirmation of him, as even this which you require? Was not the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon him at his baptism, and the audible voice from heaven, before all the people, telling them from the mouth of God, "This is my beloved Son, &c." was not this a much stronger indication from God, than if a man formerly dead, had appeared? Might not one man be like another? Have not many been deceived upon that point? Were not the Apostles hardly brought to believe it, even by many miracles? Would there not be more questions to be asked in that case, than in such a visible apparition from heaven, before the eyes of so many people, and of words spoke from heaven in all their hearing?

Our blessed Saviour said to some of your fathers, (*u*) that "if they heard not Moses and the Prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." And the reason is plain, because the proofs for Moses, &c. are more indubitable than the apparition of the dead man.

But do you want even this proof? Did not Christ appear, after his resurrection, to above five hundred of your fathers at once? And has not this been attested by a multitude of miracles wrought by those of your fathers, who saw him; who eat with him, and conversed forty days with him, after he rose from the dead? Did he not appear to Paul from heaven after his ascension? If not, would not some of those Jews who then journied with him, who saw that light, above the brightness of the sun, and heard the voice, though not the distinct words of him that spoke to Paul, who were struck down to the earth, and greatly terrified, who saw Paul struck blind upon the spot, and led him by the hand into Damascus: would none of these have discovered the cheat, if all this story had been a mere invention and forgery of Paul's? Would none of these have done it, who were so far from being favourable to the Christian side, that they were then going along with Paul to persecute that way, even unto the death? Would they not have done it, when Paul trumpit it up, and the Christians laid such stress upon it, that it is told at large in three several places of the Acts, chap. ix. xxii. and xxvi.? When Paul, within three days,

(*u*) Luke xvi. 31.

began to preach Christ in Damascus, and confounded the Jews there, where those who journeyed with him were then present, and might have confounded him, if they had denied that matter of fact, when he adduced them as witnesses of it. But above all, the miracles which Paul wrought, as great even as this, do vouch his truth in this matter; seeing they are deduced to us with all the four marks before mentioned, which do infallibly demonstrate the certainty of any matter of fact.

Moreover consider, that all these witnesses to the resurrection of Christ were Jews, and none other. It has been before observed that Christ preached to none but the Jews before his death; so after his resurrection he shewed himself to none other but to them. And from the Jews only have we Gentiles received the knowledge of his resurrection, and of all the Gospel. This is a tradition of the Jews, and deduced through a greater number of them and their posterities, (as before has been shewn) than there are Jews who now stand out against it. These reject the tradition of their fathers, upon which they now lay the whole stress of their religion, and are proof against those convictions which have converted the Gentiles. The Christian Jews did not set up Christ for their Messiah; (x) they chose not him but he chose them. They knew him not to be the Messiah, till they were convinced by many miracles; they understood not the nature of his kingdom, but were brought by him from their notion of reigning, to that of suffering with him upon the earth. Therefore these are to be less suspected than those others of your fathers who set up Messiahs for themselves, in hopes to reign with them in the land of Canaan, and have been as often deceived, and suffered miserable destruction by it.

But as before has been argued, there is no such visible means in the world to bring them to that temporal grandeur which they expect, and the nation of the Jews to that universal honour, supereminence, and dominion through the whole earth, as their conversion to Christianity. Then will Christ be not only a light to the Gentiles, but the glory of his people Israel.

But chiefly, and above all, I earnestly recommend to you Jews the consideration of your eternal state, towards which you expect no benefit from your Messiah, and yet without whom you can give no account how you shall be delivered and purged from those

(x) John xv. 16.

sins for which there were no sacrifices or expiation under the Law, as has been discoursed before.

There was none for those who fled to the cities of refuge. (y) Nothing could deliver them from thence, but the death of the high-priest; which was a plain type that nothing but the death of our great high-priest can deliver us from the guilt of sin. The like parallel might be carried on through every branch of your Law, pointing to the Messiah, but that would divert too much. You have only a few instances here; the whole would take up a discourse longer than all I have written to you.

I wish even the temporal glory of Israel, and should rejoice that, in the day of their conversion, I should be found among those who are sprung from their stock, and shall exult to re-assume our ancient and most honourable name of Jews.

And let the chiefest glory, as in heaven, so on earth be to those of you who shall lead the way, and be instrumental in the restoration of the families of Jacob.

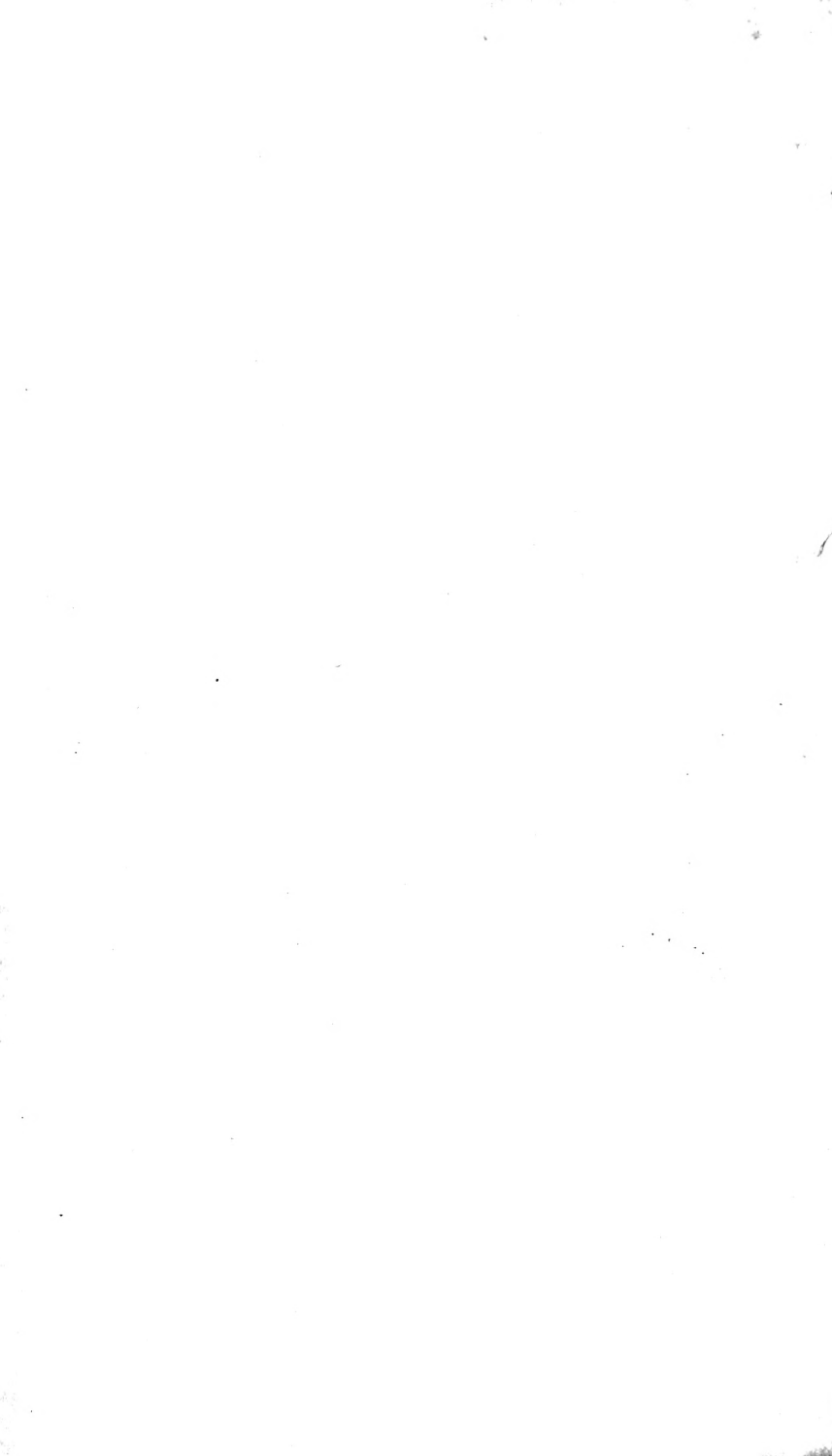
Towards which I will with these my small endeavours, join my hearty prayers, made more effectual as offered up in the communion of the holy Catholic church, that part of it especially in England which prays for you, on this blessed day, to your God, and our God, through the mediation and satisfaction made for us by your and our only Messiah; and after his holy example, who, this day, poured forth his blood, with his prayers for you upon the cross. O Lord, that this were the time when they should be heard! Amen. Lord Jesus, come quickly.

(y) Num. xxxiv. 25, 28.

GOOD-FRIDAY,
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