

THE
S E Q U E L
OF THE
RESURRECTION
OF
J E S U S
CONSIDERED:

In Answer to the

S E Q U E L
OF THE
Trial of the Witnesses.

Revis'd by the Author of, The Resurrection Consider'd,

Peter Annet

*Si hoc fieri potuisse dicis, doceas oportet, quomodo, nec fabellas
aniles proferas.*

CICERO de Natura Deorum.

*If Christ be not risen, then is our Preaching vain, and your Faith
is also vain.*

1 Cor. xv. 14.

L O N D O N :

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The SEQUEL of the Resurrection of *Jesus* Consider'd, &c.

AS the RESURRECTION OF JESUS CONSIDERED is an irrefutable Answer to the TRIAL OF THE WITNESSES OF THE RESURRECTION; so THE SEQUEL OF THE TRIAL OF THE WITNESSES, being the very same as THE RESURRECTION CLEAR'D, only a new Title-Page: THE RESURRECTION RE-CONSIDERED is the very same Answer to it that it was before, and as unanswerable as ever; and will continue to be so till the GENERAL RESURRECTION. However, to corroborate this Answer, I here produce so much, as perhaps may safely appear, from THE RESURRECTION DEMONSTRATED TO HAVE NO PROOF: Written by the only Advocate that dared to come forth on my Side, and dared too much; therefore was obliged to drop into Obscurity. Who that Gentleman of Wit and Learning was, I never could find out. The Work had two Faults, which I must suppress. It contained Expressions, 1st, too bold; 2^{dly}, too much in my Favour. *Necessity* and *Modesty* will therefore plead for me, in giving my Readers only that Part of it which follows.

HOW do those, that have long been kept in Darkness, fear the Day ; what Pain it gives them, when it beams upon them. A Bat driven from its Shed, does not know where to go, and aches, 'till it finds another obscure Hole to hide its Weakness and Deformity ; but Eagle-eyes are born to look upwards, and bear, and welcome the direct Rays of the Sun of Reason.

I must take the CLEARER to Task, for calling the Resurrection a *serious* Argument ; for 'tis not serious, if not true, of however great Seriousness it would be, if it was true : To prove by Example ; if a Man was to tell me I was to be made Emperor of *Peru* and *Mexico*, upon my going to the *Indies* ; to be Emperor of *Peru* and *Mexico*, would be prodigious great Fortune to me ; but the Nonsense and Ridiculousness of the Promise would be so palpable and apparent, that I should treat it with the utmost Contempt and Laughter, and should not go, whatever he could say ; but even more might that Improbability in the Nature of Things arrive, than a Resurrection, that is *out* of the Nature of Things ; whatever *Utopian* Importance and political Use it may be of : Therefore, his serious Argument is a pitiful begging the Question.

He commends the CONSIDERER of the Resurrection for two very certain true Assertions, in which he does him a Piece of Justice ; which is to be noted, for 'tis the only one. In my Opinion, says the Philosopher, great Judgment and great Faith are such Contradictions, that they never meet, so as to unite in one Person.—No ; when did they ever unite ? In the CLEARER they don't, I am sure.

The CONSIDERER's other Assertion is this : Every real Miracle is an Absurdity to common Sense and Understanding, and contrary to the At-
tributes

tributes of God. Well ; and is it not so? Does God convince Men from the Topicks of Reason, or play with their Senses? For, *quod extra rationem est, non cum ratione est* ; a Maxim the CLEARER ought to be acquainted with. But why, the CONSIDERER is unqualified for examining, whether a Miracle is real, or no, because a real Miracle does not arise from the Attributes of God ; only this clear-sighted Mortal can see.

Did the CONSIDERER call the Faith, which the Gospel proposes, in Christ Jesus, a divine Hag, with her pious Witchcrafts? He was a naughty Man. But do not you perceive, Mr. CLEARER, with all this holding to the Passions, when you have nothing else to hold to, that you are persuading People to believe, as having an Interest to believe ; and are begging the Question in calling it the Faith of the Gospel? And you pity him for it ;—canting Hypocrisy*!

The Author of the Tryal's Question, how the Story of the Resurrection came first to gain Credit in the World, may be easily answered, *sc.* By the Earnestness of the Maintainers. Were half a dozen Men, says *Fontenelle*, to affirm, so as to seem strongly persuaded, that the Sun does not make the Day, I do not doubt, they would procure Converts to their Opinion. But to a wonderful Tale, especially, Men give an easy Ear ; *prodigiis mulcetur hominum genus*. Men believe Stories calculated for Manhood ; and the Boy is hung upon his Nurse's Tongue, when she relates with the Circumstances of anile Horror, how a Ghost was seen to walk over the Church-yard : He devours the Words out of her Mouth, nay, in her Mouth, and feels a Fear not barren of Delight. But, what if there is an Interest wove into it ; as, you shall be this,

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* He pities him, and at same time endeavours to move the Civil Power against him.

and you shall be that, if you believe; look ye, without knowing why, nor wherefore; for happy are those who believe, and do not see. When all this is laid together, with the cunning Addition of, this is all you have to do; if you do rise again, you are to stand upon this Ground; and, if you do not, *Cave verearis, ne mortui illi philosophi tibi irrideant*: When these Influences are united, whatever of Nature would stand out, is pressed into the Service, and we are willing Dupes, and give up our Hands to every Absurdity. Then there is the Charm of Novelty; a Beauty, that strikes the first Sight, as Custom wins upon you, by long Conversation. Both of them operate strongly: And upon whom did the former operate? Was it not upon the stupid, childish Nation of the *Jews*, that was always flinging away its Rattles, after it had used them a Day; that To-day would have a Calf, and To-morrow Jehovah; whose Successor was a Calf again. Was it a Wonder any thing struck these People, that was carried on with any slight Appearance? And all of them it did not strike, as we see very plainly; hardly any but *Babes**. And no Man upon Earth can be so absurd, as to imagine, they had Testimony of his being the Son of God, believed him so to be, and opposed him, or endeavoured it; or could think it significant. What if a Man was to form a Judgment of this knowing Age, from *Whitfield's* Mob, and the Credit he gains among us; many Peltings that righteous Person has stood from Husbands, furious for the Elopement of their Wives, but never has been knocked down; O, the *rare* Hand of *Providence*! Was any Man, I say, to weigh us all in the Scale of *Whitfield's* Mob,

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* *In Understanding*; for *Jesus* himself own'd, that the *wise* and *prudent* saw not the Gospel Light; and piously thank'd God for it. *Luke x. 21.*

we should complain heavily of the Usage, and say much the same Things, which the *Pharisees*, were they in Being, would say : But if a Miracle-monger was to set up, I wonder how he would stand the Shrift of these Days. There are Reasons enough for the Story of the Resurrection's being credited *then* ; but what can be a Reason for its being believed by an Age that would then have seen through it, and only have it upon Trust from the Parties themselves, who make their own Story good, or it is strange ; who even do not that, and were the Scum of a Nation, that was the Contempt and Blot of the whole Earth. But pleasing Wonderfulness, Uncommonness, might win Applause to it, from a gaping and ignorant Mob : Novelty made it take with some ; Example insinuated it into others ; and since, Custom has fasten'd it upon those that believe it, and do not reason upon it. And is it not strange, that an Incident, which was to be the Foundation of a Faith, that was to prevail with *Jew* and *Gentile*, should be so *buddled* over, as to convince neither *Jew* nor *Gentile* ? I mean the Majority.

The Christian Religion leaves both *Jews* and *Gentiles* in the Dark, and being of a restless Nature, that it must be in Motion, and not able to go forwards, it e'en contents itself, and goes backwards : It always was of this pacific Disposition *without* a *Sword*, and its Revilers may say what they will ; but when it has no Power, it is guilty of as few Acts of Violence, as any RELIGION, I would have them to know, upon the Face of the Earth. *Nefarii homines hæc audiant.* *Mahometanism* has gained Ground of the *Christian* Religion considerably ; and how finely this *Light* *lightens* the World, which not a hundredth Part of the World sees, and ten to one of those, who do see, refute, ridicule, and laugh at ; if it is a Light, it

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is the Dark-lanthorn Light of the *Quakers* ; which is all within itself, or communicated to a little Circle of Whiners and Mumpers only. And whatever *Virtues* it has besides, it has a most *damning Virtue*, I am sure, if all are to be cursed, that do not believe it. Is it useless to Mankind ; and why the unnecessary Pains of bringing it down ? Useful ; and why is it not better implanted ? If the Religion came from God, would he not take care to establish it, but leave it at the Will of the Lords of the Earth to fondle or destroy it, by many unacknowledged, by more unknown ? Won't you say, that at this rate, Christ might as well have laid quiet in his Grave, and given his Wounds Time to *heal*.

There is another Assertion, which why the CONSIDERER omits, or the CLEARER insults upon, I cannot see : Believing Truth, the CONSIDERER had said, for Company's Sake, is no more meritorious than believing Error. And 'tis self-evident it is not. The Merit lies solely in the Motive ; in the rational Conviction ; but he, that believes a Thing is so, because other People believe it to be so, has been no more rationally convinced, than he that believes the contrary for the same No-reason ; therefore the Merit is absolutely equal, or rather none at all on either Side. He, that believes the Sun moves round the Earth, with that Ignorant of Nature, *Moses* ; and he, that believes the Earth moves round the Sun, with that Unfolder of Nature, *Newton*, only because *Moses* or *Newton* believes so, are just upon the same Footing ; forasmuch as neither have used the Method of Demonstration necessary to bring to a Conclusion ; Reason does not undeceive the one, nor confirm the other ; the one does not believe against Conviction, nor the other with Conviction : In short, they neither of them know any Thing of the Matter, and their

Merits

Merits are quite the same. That the Merits consist in the Motive of the Action, and not in the Action, is so commonly known, and said, that one would have thought it might have reach'd even the CLEARER's Ears; and what he means by trifling so himself, or making other People trifle so, I cannot tell.

And now am I ashamed of his poor, boyish Dealing, and catching, like a sinking Man, to every Twig: The CONSIDERER says, 'tis argued, the Apostles were sincere, therefore what they reported was true, But he does not, as the CLEARER owns, charge the Author of the Tryal with arguing so: And therefore, what does it signify? To be sure, one Quality is not predicable of another Quality; a Man's Sincerity, which is one, makes no Implication of his Understanding, which is another: That the one is clear, does not at all induce that the other is not imposed upon.

'Tis silly to argue, that if Miracles are preserved, (in Memorials) would not repeating them in succeeding Ages, be unnecessary? For Miracles cannot be preserved; they are like a Glass of Spirits, thrown upon Fire; which gives a Flash then, but lost for ever after. He that is told of Miracles, knows, nor sees nothing of them; but is drove, at best, to believe a Reporter; who might be blinded by Interest, if he was not depraved by Roguery; and Men have, or make themselves an Interest in continuing in an absurd Party, they have chosen, and die, frequently, rather than renounce it; as *Indians*, and People of all Religions have done. And one dying for Fame-sake, which carries beyond the Grave its enchanting Influence, (and made *Curtius* ride into the Chasm to be praised, tho' to live, no more,) piques others to follow him: Shall we, say they, suffer less courageously than he has done, and shew ourselves dastard

Temporizers? They die too: And we have Plenty of Martyrs, if that is to prove the Thing is true; which does not even prove, they believe it to be so; for Men may die for a Lie, rather than own it. It is with Difficulty we prevail upon ourselves to acknowledge a Shame, we are conscious of. Dying proves nothing, but that a Man is sincere, and a Fool; or otherwise moved, and a Rogue. Even *a little Hope, a little Praise* may catch some Minds, and be a Motive sufficient. I repeat, that a Man, who believes a Report of a Miracle, believes a Man, and not a Miracle; which he has not seen: And if it signified a Farthing who had it, why should not this Age have the same Evidence as another; as it has just the same Interest to be saved, and Souls every whit as precious?

The Instance the CLEARER brings afterwards of Mis-Quotation of the Trial, is very inconsiderable; since, if the Passage quoted is not the Author of the Trial's Sentiment, nor started by him, it is plain, he admits it. I refer to the Book: It is impossible to have Leisure to be minute with so trifling a Writer. But what does he mean by saying, Believers are not to wait for the Evidence of Prophecy, 'till *Infidels* will see it. What are they? What are *Believers*? They must have more *Folly*: I am sure, they have not more *Interest* than Infidels, to believe, and find, all is true; and I do not imagine there is an Unbeliever in the Land, that would not give all he has, and die without Hesitation, to reanimate, and enter upon a Heaven: But what signifies that? That won't make him swallow down all the wild Lies of Biographers, and give Credit to unsupported Improbabilities. He is too wise to let his Passions flatter him, and a senseless Chimera of Interest deceive him. He opposes *Reason* to a
Delusion,

Delusion, gilded with Interest; and *ETERNAL TRUTH* to the *variable Doctrines of Religion*.

As to what the *CONSIDERER* has urged, and misquoted about Prophecy, the *CLEARER* sees, and acknowledges, it is not material to the Question; and all, that can be said upon it, is, that the *CONSIDERER* has exposed himself more than he need to have done, and gone out of the irrefutable Strength of his Argument.

The Fear, that acted the High-Priests, was the most rational Fear in the World; and I know not of any Thing preposterous, but the Author of the Trial's Inference, that therefore they were convinced of the Truth of the Miracles. That a *Deceiver* should work real Miracles, they were not afraid; (for so they esteemed him) that would have been nonsensical, preposterous, and all you can say of it; and a real Resurrection, if they were afraid of, they could not prevent. What did they apprehend, then? And what could they prevent? A *shamm'd* one. Now, they knew, if this was cleanly done, all was over with them; they might shut up the Doors of their Synagogues: The whole World would go after the Apostles, and desert them; the Torrent would overwhelm them then; it would be in vain to think of stopping it. And if the Scene was acted in the present Days, I would fain know, if our Priests would not carry themselves in the same Manner. If any one, in the Person of a *Whitfield*, or any other Body of equal Sanctity, was to take away the Church-mob; which I estimate by Understanding, and not by Fortune, and leave the Parsons to preach by themselves, and the Seats to pay themselves; if he was to speak up for Virtue and Religion, naked and miserable, unrewarded, unvested with comfortable Bishopricks and Deaneries, getting himself only a few cha-

ritable Pence ; if, in Confirmation of this most unorthodox Doctrine, a Man was to do seeming Miracles in this Age, which is not given to gape for them, but more given to detect them ; but if he was to do a Miracle, that was not to be prevaricated ; if he was to make a Church jump two or three Miles in the Air, and come down safe, Wind and Limb ; I-faith, the high and the low Priests might cry their Throats out ; all the World would leave them, and follow this incontestable Miracle-worker. But, to go on with the Case, I was putting ; if he was to keep playing out of Sight ; and, when they asked him for a Miracle, tell them, they *tempted* him ; how would they tear and rave ; how many Cheats they would call him ; they would tell him, they believed they tempted him ; that he would give his Ears to do it, if he could. Phoooh, phoooh, cries my Man, *an adulterous Generation asks for a Sign*. And what but an adulterous Generation needs it, would they reply with Vivacity : If we are holden with our Sins, and you have the Power of calling us to Virtue, and loosing us, by granting our reasonable Demand, why do not you do it ? Remember your Maxim ; *The Sick need a Physician*. We are the Sick ; pray cure us. Why should we be damned, who are ready to be convinced, if you give us the least Reason so to be : Make our Senses Judges, as well as you have made other People's ? Don't be partial ; and we will believe you. Here is a Request not to be denied : And I need not tell you what this Man would be set down for, if he would not perform before capable Judges, that could not be imposed upon. And don't think to put us off with that old stale Demand ; Are you to prescribe to God ? Yes ; the most reasonable way he would take, or he is no reasonable Being. I only say, in this Case our Parsons would be as very High-Priests as ever were

were in the World. For I know the Men ; without a Living they cannot live.

A strong Prepossession of Faith, is a necessary Ingredient in the Composition of a Wonder-witness, the Want of which would spoil all the Miracles in the World. But if Unbelievers were not the Sick that needed a Physician, who were ? The Believers sure had no occasion for one : They were in good Condition enough ; for *by Faith we shall be saved*. However, sick they (the Unbelievers) might be, and be damn'd, if they would, they were sure not to be cured. Says *Matthew*, He did not *many* mighty Works in such a Place, because of their Unbelief. But, *δυνάμεις πολλὰς*, many Miracles, is the best : He did some Miracles, but not enough to do any good : They needed a Physician ; and therefore they were not to have one. You can't find an Instance of a juster Behaviour.

The CONSIDERER, says the CLEARER, treats the Writers of the *New Testament* as Impostors and Cheats, and void even of Cunning to tell their own Story plausibly. Let the Case be weigh'd, and Judgment given. Allowing Negligence, I mean the common Omission of trifling Circumstances, is therefore failing to mention the most important Incidents excusable, in Composers, who had the Matter at Heart, and not so much to carry in their Heads, only one poor Life to write, a Kind of Penny History ? Is it to be accounted for, that you find some Decency, tho' a Wildness in the Expressions of the three first, but that the Fourth and the Last should come, and with one Bound overleap all Bounds ; should swagger, and say, Odd, if I was to write you all, it would be more than you could read, I can assure you : Nay, it would be more than your whole World would hold.

*Above the Stars exalt your Stile ;
You yet are low ten thousand Mile.*

If *John* was desired to write the Story, he did it to some Purpose, and thwacks the Conclusion with ample Provision for all, whom the same Solicitations should prevail upon to be Story-tellers after him.

Before the **CLEARER** comes, as he says, to the Points, which more immediately affect the Evidence of the Resurrection, he takes Notice of a Remark of the **CONSIDERER**, That that which is the Foundation of any, much less of every false Religion, cannot be the Foundation of the true. Not the proper Foundation to be sure ; for Truth and Falshood would then change Sides, be undistinguishable, nay, the same ; and *Peter* and *Paul*, working Miracles in Support of their opposite Parts of the Question, would prove their opposite Parts both true ; Error would be Truth, and Truth in its Turn Error : *Peter* would work a Miracle, and *Paul* would be in an egregious Mistake ; *Paul* would take up the Ball, and the Mistake would be turn'd upon *Peter* : *Peter* would go again to his Miracle Gift, and *Paul* would not have one Word of Truth on his Side ; *Paul* would come round *Peter* a second Time with an All-fair, and faith *Peter* would lye like the Devil ; and so on, as long as you pleased. And here is a fine Proof for any Side, that is a Proof for every Side, that is, a Proof for no Side : The **CLEARER** knows of a Maxim in the Schools, *Quod nimis probat, nihil probat* ; Miracles then prove nothing at all. How plain is this ; and how dark is this **CLEARER**'s Sight ; Miracles would be nothing, if we had them : But it is scandalously foolish to take them upon Trust, and the Credit of a History ; and when we

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see Nature operating constantly and undisturbedly, to think her Operations were disturbed just then, because such a Story tells so: That a Man should impose, or be imposed upon, is *in* the Nature of Things; but that those Events should happen, is *out* of the Nature of Things, which we daily experience; and the believing a Thing of common Contingency is preferable surely to believing a Thing never competent to Nature. Revelation and Miracles, which are here, and there, and every where, and, 'tis likely, no where, and every Religion claims by, are the Characteristic of none, and prove Falshood as well as Truth, which cannot be; therefore they do not prove at all. A clear Deduction of Reason is the only Revelation from Heaven; and God, a rational Being, orders every Thing in the Course of Reason; and a Pretence of any Thing else is true Impiety.

Every idle Tale will disturb him, who has not philosophized himself into the Calm of Reason, τὰς δόξας ξιλαύνων, ἃς ὡς πλείους τὰς ψυχὰς καταλαμβάνει θόρυβος: They, that affirm it, they see Apparitions, are crack-brain'd People, silly Women, or ignorant Men, where the Imagination runs away with the Judgment; but they that believe their Story are a Kind of second-hand Fools below them, that there is no Name for. Reason emancipates the Mind from simple Credulity, and vain Fears; a strong inviolable Light, that shines upon Truth, and detects Error, by the Exertion of which only we can be different from Brutes, acting they don't know why, and even follow the Advice of an Apostle, to prove all Things, and hold fast that which is best.

The CLEARER begins the Points which more directly affect the Resurrection with a detach'd Sentence of the CONSIDERER's, *viz. If the Resurrection be a Fraud, Evidence forged, what Books have we to prove it so?* Which, in the Archness of his Imagination, he thinks is a mighty Matter for the Resurrection;

urrection ; but, I conceive, nothing can be more against it : For what does it shew, but that the Story was like the Tale of a Ghost, no Body troubled their Heads to contradict it ; to those, who made use of their Reason, it carried Refutation along with it ; and to those, who did not, the Application of Reason was very vain.

The CLEARER puts a very unparallel Case : If the CONSIDERER was to take it in his Head to prove, *Cæsar* was not killed in the Senate-House, all the Evidence would be against him ; but, while Evidence reports natural Things, while it urges only what is probable, does any one take it in his Head to contradict it ? But does not the vouching Improbabilities invalidate Evidence ? If all the Evidence had said, as unanswered as you will, that after *Cæsar* was dead to a Demonstration, he rose and walked ; would they have been regarded ? Do not we do so in the case of *Cæsar* ? Don't we distinguish between what is reported of probable, and what of improbable in this Story ? Don't we give our Assent to the one, and refuse it to the other ? When *Plutarch* tells us, *Cæsar* died by the Wounds of the Senators, we believe him : There is nothing in the Story, which contradicts Probability ; and the Report of a Person not apparently interested, joined with Probability, is to be believed : But when he talks of Apparitions, (mind the unwary Instance) taking a Walk upon that Occasion, without any visible Business, we say, with a dissenting Smile, *the Writer had a little Love for the Marvellous*. Witnesses destroy their own Evidence, that report Improbabilities : And saying an Historian is sacred, is nothing at all ; that's taking a Thing for granted again, and *absurdum per absurdum*.

How willing is the CLEARER to tack in his Learning about the Ages of *Celsus* and *Porphyry*, when he obliges the CONSIDERER, so unnecessarily

cessarily for the Sense of the Words, to say, There were Fragments of *Porphyry* in *Origen*. The Words of the CONSIDERER do no more than import, There were Books written against Christianity : *Celsus* and *Porphyry's*, for Instance ; Fragments of some of which (plainly referable to either of the Antecedents) are to be found in *Origen*. It is true, but he with a Candour, or Wisdom truly ecclesiastic, fixes these Words to the Fragments of *Porphyry* ; and triumphs upon this : I am ashamed of him.

The CLEARER shuts his Eyes wilfully, to the Difference between possible Facts, and Absurdities refuting themselves : And he asks, if the Credit of any History is the worse, because it is wantonly contradicted ? No ; but it is much worse, and evidently destroyed, by relating Things that contradict continual Experience, and common Sense ; then it bears the strongest Testimony against itself, and needs no other to subvert its Authority. Incidents that are untrue, but contingent to Nature, must be shewn to be *so* untrue, by a Medium, by Grounds evictive of their Falsity ; but a History of Miracles, is a History of palpable Extravagance. If *Livy* is mistaken, in telling, how *Decius Mus* dreamed, he saw a large Figure of a Man, larger than Men are, and of an Appearance auguster than human, and that in the Sacrifice the Head of the Liver was cut ; upon the Information of which, he devoted himself for the People of *Rome*, and died precipitated among the thickest of his Enemies ; we will believe all this that he says, because it might all very possibly happen ; the first might be the Wildness of the Brain, the second a Slip of the Priest's Knife, and the third the Patriotism of a *Roman* ; at least, 'till contrary Evidence comes, we will believe it : But, when he relates, that *Castor* and *Pollux* fought the *Roman* Battle a long Time after they had

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ceased.

ceased to live, we don't wait for contrary Evidence ; we give him the Lye from our own Experience of Things ; because 'tis a little out of Nature for Men (for all they are *reputed* to be Gods) to pop up, either fighting, or praying, after their Death ; they act those ridiculous Parts enough while they are alive, and Nature is tired of the Comedy : How do the best Historians ; *Livy*, lye, when they speak of *Religion*, as if it made a Man lye whether he would or no. My Lord *Clarendon*, that is a credible Historian, we do not believe, when he tells the Story of an *Apparition* : It's an unnecessary Trouble to refute a Thing, that brings its own Refutation. But you will say, tho' the Impossibility appear'd, the Story was believ'd. Well, and after all the Arguing in the World, the Impossibility could but appear ; and if that was not a Reason for the Story's being disbeliev'd, it would still be believ'd. Arguing could make the Case no clearer, and was to no purpose. But that is a glaringly foolish History, whose Credit is overthrown by its own Relations. The Reason, no Discourse was thought fit to be directed against it, was this ; and *Celsus* took the best Way to expose it, by shewing, it was as inconsistent with itself, as with Reason. Can it be supposed, says the CLEARER, that *Celsus* would have admitted the Miracles of Christ, as real Facts, had he not been compelled to it by the universal Consent of all Men in the Age he lived ? Yes, he would, to make it appear, that upon the utmost Stretch of Romance and Absurdity, upon that's being admitted, the End proposed would not be attained ; that Power, extended as far as you can fable, is no Sort of Presumption of Wisdom, another Attribute ; that Strength does not imply Wit, nor Beauty Valour ; and that therefore it was impertinent to the Question, if the Christian Religion came from God, a
reasonable

reasonable Being, to urge Miracles in Proof of the Affirmative, which do not prove Reason, but an Attribute distinct from it. Miracles go for no more than they are; they are Marks of Power, and they prove nothing else.

Celsus, says the CDEARER, is preserved, and *Origen's* Answer is not a general Reply to *Celsus*, but a minute Examination of all his Objections, even of those, which appeared to *Origen* most frivolous: But who knows, if he did not chuse the most frivolous, and how well he fulfill'd his Friend's Request? I don't doubt, *Celsus* had stronger, which have perished with him: I don't doubt it, I say, from the Age he lived in, his confessed great Abilities, and his Zeal for Truth. The Work of an Antagonist is not usually the most safe and advantageous Repository of an Author; it may preserve him, but, like clouded Amber, it obscures him at the same Time: that a Man is safe in his Enemy's Hands, only this Person of clear Sight can see. The CONSIDERER would be VASTLY safe, if Time (his Eyes put out by Fortune) was to mow down his Writing, and Posterity was to read him, as he is represented by the CLEARER, criticized, uncomprehended; and refuted, unanswered; the strong Arguments totally passed by, or slubbered over with the greatest Haste and Inaccuracy; trivial Remarks upon a few Mis-quotations, and Expressions ridiculously wrested to a Sense, which the Context makes them incapable of: As we need go no further than the next Leaf for an Instance of. Can it be expected, says the CONSIDERER, that an equitable Issue should be obtained from what may be fairly reasoned out of their own (the Evangelists) Report? The CLEARER queries, Did he propose to reason something out of it unfairly? But, in God's Name, why so witty? The CONSIDERER's Words are, Can it be expected, it should be obtained;

not, can it be obtained ; he shews it can be ; but, is it not, wou'd he say, a little too sanguine to hope it ; to expect to find such unwary Historians, that had but one Point to keep in view, the little complex Life of *Jesus*, as to manage their Matters so ill, that instead of corroborating, they should unwittingly invalidate one another's Testimony, and tell *different* Stories ; which, let me inform the CLEARER, is not *contrary* Stories, for all he does not see the Difference ; and charges the CONSIDERER with the Product of his own puzzled Head. A Story that has more or fewer Circumstances than another Story of a Thing, is a *different* Story ; but a *contrary* Story, is a Story composed of quite opposite Circumstances, incompatible with one another ; it is a Genius, which contains different, a Species ; a Story that contradicts, must differ ; but a Story that differs, need not contradict. The CONSIDERER's Logic is just, and the CLEARER's Understanding very bad. The Evangelists did not see the Consequences of telling *different* Stories, but *contrary* Stories ; and their Consequences were too plain to be overlooked by THEM. They knew Black was not White, and that if they had affirmed 'em both the same Thing, the World would have said upon it immediately, that they gave one another the Lye ; but they did not attend to what would follow from one of 'em's predicating of a Thing, that it was Black, and White in Part ; and another, that it was White ; or one, that it was White, and another, that it was Black, and White in Part ; which is more or less Circumstances, or telling different Stories. The CONSIDERER says, Can it be EXPECTED an equitable Issue should be obtained ? But he makes it appear, it CAN be obtained ; and the more beyond our Expectation, the more welcome its Conviction.

Can that, says the CONSIDERER, be esteemed a fair Tryal, where the Evidences are only on one Side of the Question? Was full and clear Evidence ever rejected, queries the CLEARER, because there was no Evidence to be produced against it? Very clear Evidence, truly;—and that's fine Evidence that pretends to vouch an Absurdity. What would ten or a hundred Men signify bearing Witness, of a Loaf in a Baker's Shop, swelling to such a Bigness, that the House could not contain it? Especially, if it appeared too, they got the Mob to listen to their Story, or sold the FULL and TRUE Account of it; or any way gratified their Vanity, or their Interest? Common Sense is enough to destroy all the Evidence in the World of a Thing, that is against it. That the Miracles, their Fame, went thro' *Judea*, you may believe them. Whatever *Whitfield* was to do, would go through *England*; and if he was to open any Body's Eyes, as miraculously as *Jesus* did, we should hear enough of it, I make no Question; but, for all that, our High-Priests would not believe it, unless they saw it; and their Bishopricks might possibly harden their Hearts THEN. Miracles have ceased; what, are People given over? But Faith has ceased, and you know Miracles could never be worked without it. The Witnesses of the Coronation of *Henry VIII.* urges the CLEARER, *very pertinently*, are all of a Side; would you call it into Question upon that? But that's a poor Parson's Cunning of putting a Thing *in* Nature, in the Place of a Thing *out* of Nature, and representing them upon the same Footing: But, when he was a comparing it, why did not he compare it to *Gertrix*, the *Irish* Miracle-worker, no Body concerned himself to refute his Wonders? The Evidence is all of a Side; and all for 'em; and yet no body believes them.

The

The CLEARER asks, how you know the Witnesses of the Resurrection are partial? Let him ask Mr. *Whitfield*, if charitable Collections, and common Purse-Money, are not very good Things? If that HOLY, HOLY, HOLY Christian, should be at a stand, still he himself will know, whether he does not toast himself with great Pleasure over a Fire lit by the Folly of the People; broach his Wine, and laugh at the Gulls. We shall know these Things from our Knowledge of human Nature.

With as much Wisdom the CLEARER enquires, why the Witnesses are called combined? Is not it his (the CONSIDERER's) Drift, says he, to shew, they contradict one another? But where is the Contradiction of that? Are not Witnesses often combined to maintain a Cause, and yet sound their Notes so ill together, that they detect and refute one another, and shew what a Parcel of Fools they all are? He did not mean, and the Word does not enforce, they were associated with Skill and Judgment; he supposes they combined in mutual, tho' ill-judged Endeavours; but, if preferring the Goad of Death to the Rack of Shame, which must have arose from the Confession of Fraudulency, and Cowardice; and to a sorry, contemptible Life; if dying for the Vanity of Religion is a Proof of it, the Crocodile of *Nile* will come in for his Share with the Lord of Hosts. As both the CONSIDERER and the CLEARER are rightly of Opinion, that the Nature of Christ's Kingdom is of no Concern to the present Question, I shall say but this of it: It is plain, that *Jesus* encouraged the Notion of his being *King of the Jews* in the Sense of the *Jews*, while he could think of acting that most difficult Part of the Character of *Messiah* (for he adapted himself to the Prophecy,) with the least Probability of Success; and never relinquished that; 'till all Hopes relinquished him.

What

What a Compliment he unawares makes them upon the Question's being put to him, why he still kept the worst Company, and associated himself with Publicans and Sinners, the lowest and meanest of the People? *The Whole*, says he, *need not a Physician, but those that are Sick*; but who so sick, as those, who did not believe a Thing he did, nor a Word he said? And whose Hearts were to be so divinely hardened, that they were to work the Death of this judicious Orator?

The Author of the Trial thinks, the *Jews* saw some Reason to doubt, the Miracles of *Jesus* were true, or they would not have regarded his Prophecy of a Resurrection: But they might disbelieve the Miracles; and tho' they did not fear a true Resurrection, they could not be void of the Apprehension of a false one. They took Measures to prevent that; not a real one; which they never could think to disappoint. How plain is it, that the *Pharisees* spoke their Sentiments, in saying, *We remember, that Deceiver said*—they wanted nothing else but to yield to a Miracle fairly, and truly done. They always came to him with the Demand of a Sign, the Conviction other People had; and he always put it off with, *A wicked Generation seeks after a Sign; but no Sign shall be given them*. They treated him consequently with the greatest Indignation and Contempt; and it would be the Case, if it was to be acted over and over never so often in the World: It is the most evident Thing upon Earth.

When the Chief Priests made their Speech to *Pilate*, he did not misunderstand them at all; and had more Sense than to ask them, if they thought him a Deceiver, why they guarded against him; but that very Speech informed him, they did not apprehend a Resurrection in good Earnest, but some Practising about one; and in that Case they feared,

feared, the last Error of the People in imagining a Resurrection of *Jesus*, would be of a worse Consequence than the first had been, in imagining a Resurrection of *Lazarus*. And this was highly agreeable, nay, consequent to their thinking him a *Deceiver*; and their Request upon those Fears for a Guard, was too reasonable to be denied; but that they were not at the Sepulchre, to see how he fulfilled his Word, is an infallible Sign Things were hurried over, before they expected: But the Seal was broke; needs there any more? Why did not the Body go out, and leave the Seal whole, as it passed through the Door, to make a real Miracle of it? Why were not the Sick cured of this Disease of Infidelity? Let the Parsons answer.

The CLEARER urges in Disproof of an Assertion of the CONSIDERER's, *that the Jews* (meaning the Chief, or those that adhered to Judaism) *did not believe, Jesus performed any Wonders in his Life*, which, according to him, he lays down against the united Authority of all the Evangelists; Mighty Authority; Men, that you don't know: In Disproof of this he urges *Matthew's* Puff, *that Jesus healed all manner of Diseases among the People, and that his Fame went through all Syria——and that there followed him great Multitudes of People from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan*: For which you have the Word of that veracious Biographer.

Were the Chief Priests, demands the CLEARER, the only Persons unacquainted with them? Unacquainted with them! No; they were acquainted with them, to be sure; they heard the Shouts, which would never have moved them with Indignation, nor Concern, if they had not seen the Effect it had on the People: Why their Anger to him otherwise? *They took Counsel against him, how they*
might

might destroy him ; which they would have had no Thought, nor Pretence for, nor Imagination of effecting, if they had been persuaded of the Reality of his Miracles ; but themselves, it appears plainly, have gone over to him, and been the most fervent of his Followers. But nothing is more probable, than that when they were deafned with the Noise of his Miracles, they ascribed them to the Devil, when Men are told a Feat they can't account for : *Never tell us, say they ; he could not do this without the Help of the Devil.* This is common, when People are plagued with an absurd Thing ; which to disprove, as 'tis negative, is hard ; and the best Disproof of it, is, its Contradiction to Nature, common Sense, and the orderly Course of Things, which, whatever Whims Men take into their Heads, is seen to be invariable. If the Words ascribing the Miracles to the Devil dropp'd from the Mouths of the High Priests, it was in this Way ; but *Matthew* gave us what Representation of them he pleased, in his History. *In the very Temple itself, the Blind and the Lame came to him, and he healed them.* Look ye, the Temple was a wide Place ; it was in some Corner of it, to be sure ; had the *Pharisees* seen, it might have converted them. It follows ; *When the High Priests saw the wonderful Things that Jesus did, &c.* How could that be ; for they desired to see, and were always denied their Request. We have not even the Grounds, which the *Pharisees* had ; what do we believe for ? Well ; *when they saw these Things, they were displeased* : But why displeased ? Because *Jesus* worked real Miracles ; impossible to have been displeased at that ; it would have been the Foundation of something quite different from Displeasure. The very Enquiry about the Man that was said to to be born blind, and ejecting him, manifested their Disbelief of it : Had they acknowledged any Miracles to be done

by him ; they would have admitted this without Difficulty.

It is most undoubted, the Chief Priests were alarmed at the Progress *Jesus* made with the People, and would have taken away his Life, since he avoided to give them an Occasion to detect him, and so frustrate him. As in his evasive Answer to their Question, *Is it lawful to give Tribute to Cæsar, or not?* Had he answered it categorically, in one Case they would have been at Ease ; in the other, they must have taken Measures against him, for their own and the public Safety. The Truth of the Miracles would have operated upon them differently, and made them his Followers, not his Persecutors. This is plain enough to need nothing to be said of it. But when they had gained so easy a mastery over him, the Chief Priest addressed a Question to him in the Spirit of Railery, the Height of which lies in a well observed Solemnity : *I adjure thee, by the living God, said they with a covered Sneer, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God?* *Jesus* saw the extreme Game he made of him, and answered to it accordingly. Otherwise there is no Sense in his Reply, *Thou hast said, or thou hast jeered, he answered ; nevertheless* (that is, for all thy Jeer) *thou shalt see the Son of Man sitting on the Right-hand of Power, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven ;* still encouraging them to believe he should be victorious one of those Days. But they went on sneering him, after they had struck him, saying, *Prophecy unto us, who it is, that smote thee.* The Question was not put seriously, but temptingly, according to the old way of tempting him to difficult Matters. It was Railery, tho' the Evangelist was not of a Pitch to understand it ; a Jest, that is not hid, but at first seen through, is not Railery ; but may be distinguished by the Name of Banter. To

Barabbas would he have used this Question? The CLEARER asks. Wise truly: To be sure, he would not; because upon *Barabbas* the Railery would not have stuck; it could not be applied, but to one that pretended to the Character of *Messiah*; and here, I think, are abundant Marks to shew, he did not at all apprehend *Jesus* was the *Messiah*, but took him for a *Deceiver*.

The Chief Priests said of *Jesus*, when he was hanging upon the Cross, *He saved others, himself he cannot save. He saved others*, the CLEARER repeats with a bustle; *what do they mean, he never wrought any Miracles; as the CONSIDERER supposes? Quite otherwise.* But he is quite out. It was with the greatest and keenest Mockery they said, *he saved others*, reproaching him for having pretended to save others, and at the same time the People indirectly, for having ever believed him, when it was visible now to them, that he hung upon the Cross, unable to help himself, or any other Body. This was indeed a Triumph to them; and so they went on triumphing, not because they were delivered from the King of *Israel*, as the CLEARER would have it, from whom (had they thought him so) they would have well known they could not have been delivered; that would have been a mad Occasion of Triumph indeed; but that is in the CLEARER's cloudy Brain. Had they believed the first Part of their Speech, it would have spoiled their Joking, they could not possibly have made themselves merry about a Person that had done such Things; they could not have told where his Power might end, nor how they might be deceived in thinking, it did end, any more than they could tell how it came to him; MORE, I affirm, they never would have intended it; neither persecuting him, nor joking upon him; but have been the readiest to come in to him, em-

brace his Faith, and stand up in his Defence. Why should they not? Heaven was as good for them, as for others; and, if there was a Heaven, why should they not use Means to attain it? But to think, they believed his Miracles, yet were not influenced by that Belief to attach themselves to him, nor even to forbear persecuting him; is, (let me turn it upon the CLEARER) to be little acquainted with human Nature indeed.

You see plainly, his Miracles never met with Reception, nor gained him Esteem, enough to preserve him from the bitterest Insults, and the Passers-by, saying to him in his Teeth, with a Shake of their Heads, *Thou that destroyest the Temple, and rebuildest it in three Days, save thyself; if thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross.* However that Speech was understood, it is plain, they thought it romantic, they did not believe what he had done; they wanted more Evidence; therefore those Miracles were wrought to no Effect; which is enough to discredit the whole Story; for acting without Effect, is not the Character of Divinity. O that when he was thus challenged, he had come down; but then, say the Parsons, there would have been no Merit in believing. Is there Merit only then in believing without reasonable Foundation? And is Man to be rewarded for being irrational, and worthless! Nature by degenerating is it ennobled! Is the Way to Incorruptibility, Corruption?

As Miracle-mad, as the *Jews* were, and as much as every Wonder run away with them, they had yet received so little Conviction, and Impression from the Gospel-miracles, that the whole People made no Scruple to take the Blood of *Jesus* upon them, and their Children; even when *Pilate*, to raise Parties among the *Jews*, and play them against one another, politicly gave out, their Rage was

ill-founded against him, and that he was innocent ; which shews, that *Jesus*, besides his Miracles, had given them Hopes that he was the triumphant *Messiah* ; and when he peremptorily declared off, and deceived their Expectations, they were not able to bear it ; from hence followed the Resentment of the Populace, which otherwise would have been most preposterous. There are fine Decorations to the Story, the Eclipse, and the Earthquake, and the splitting Temple ; when they saw this ; *This was the Son of God, to be sure*, they said ; yet the People of the *Jews* then were, and their Posterity since have been, immoveable in Opinion of the contrary. And why *Jesus* came to convince, and did not convince, it would pose one to tell. The *Pharisees* provided with the greatest Wisdom against a fraudulent Design of stealing the Body, which they professed to *Pilate* their Apprehension of ; the Body they knew would disappear, and then the Disciples would bear them down, he was risen from the Dead ; there would be no contradicting them by producing the Corpse ; that would be far enough out of the Way. The Disciples Forehead, they were well apprized, was a sure Card to them ; they did not want Instances of that ; and had one of a recent Date, in *Peter's* denying, and cursing and swearing into the Bargain, *That he did not belong to Jesus, nor know the man*. They sealed up the Sepulchre, and can any Thing be so plain, as that they intended to be there at the Time of the predicted Opening of it, to convince People of the Falsity of the foretold Resurrection ? Therefore the Time was certainly not, as they understood it ; so that the Body did not walk away at the appointed Time, as the CLEARER would have it believed, according to the Apprehension of the *Jews*. The Chief Priests set a *Roman* Guard upon the Sepulchre ; a Prevention of Design, one would think ; but let

us take a View of the Policy of those Times, and see upon what Springs *Pilate* acted. The *Jews* were very numerous in *Palestine*, by far outnumbering the *Romans*. Had the former rose, the latter, it is true, could have checked them by Force; but the *Roman* Policy, which was the exactest in the World, did not chuse to waste its Strength, where it might be spared, but governed by Art, when it could. *Pilate* upon this Maxim took occasion carefully to foment and spread a Dissention, that would take off the Action of the *Jews*, as a united Body, which would have proved too hard for the *Romans* in the Country. Thus he gave Life to Commotions, he seemed active to suppress, and with Joy gratified a Sedition, yielding in Appearance reluctantly to it. You would have thought him forced to deliver up *Jesus* by a Riot, he was glad to see go forward. He projected still further. The Innocency of *Jesus* was insinuated by him, when he condemned him; and you will find this to be the finest Management, and greatest Reach of human Policy. If *Jesus* had died with no Parade, like a common Malefactor, it might have killed all the Efforts, and Hopes of his Party. *Pilate's* Aim was not there; he drew too great Advantages from it, to desire the Destruction of it. He saw how it tore, and wasted the *Jews*: He wanted to keep it alive, but not to have it victorious; for then there would have been a general Union, a Position his Art employed itself ever to keep off. Thus he would make neither Side complain, and neither Side get the better of one another. He gave Force sometimes to one, and sometimes to another, and administered a due Vigour. When the Chief Priests told him of *Jesus's* Prophecy, he knew what to do immediately; and he shall make it good, thinks he, if it is in my Power; so he gave the Word to the Guard, (which he could not deny

to the *Pharisees* Request) to overlook or assist, if they could, any Proceedings on the Part of the Apostles, to sham and persuade a Resurrection. This Policy of *Pilate*, the Author of the Trial, Politician as he is, has not weighed ; but thinks it an arch Question, *Whether the Roman Soldiers received the Word to wink at the Apostles Practices ?* This is the Way, you must explain *Pilate's* Conduct. Thus his Wife dreamed, like *Calphurnia*, which Thought he took up, as a *Roman* ; and there were all the pretended Things in the World. But what means *Matthew*, and who does he think to get to believe him, when he says, *The Chief Priests gave the Soldiers Money to say, the Body of Jesus was stolen away, and that it was a common Report among the Jews, to this Day ?* Ver. 15. the last Chapter. What, did they believe a real Resurrection, and not that have an Effect upon them neither ? 'Tis putting Things down one's Throat, that would not delude an Idiot. Nothing was commonly reported then, nor is now, among the *Jews*, but that *Jesus* was a *Deceiver*. The Chief Priests could not refuse themselves to the Conviction of this, if they really believed it ; and it is being most stupidly credulous to think it. What Credit therefore is to be given to those who would impose such a Thing, as this ? Which is what I was to shew.

The Evangelists writ, says the CLEARER, *to supply one another's Defects* : They were very defective for inspired Writers, it will be confess'd ; but then why do they repeat the same foolish Things over again, and absurd Speeches ? And why does *John*, instead of supplying Defects, make 'em ? I am sure, he wanted somebody to come after HIM. It is very strange, the other Evangelists should ALL miss mentioning the Completion of so remarkable a Prophecy as we find cited, *Chap. xix. Ver. 36. of John ; These Things were done, that the*
Scripture

Scripture should be fulfilled. A Bone of him shall not be broken. It is certainly to be concluded, that a great deal was wanting sure, to fortify the Cause of the Faith, or *John* would never have thought this necessary.

And now ; did *Jesus* come to give a Religion to the World ? Did he obtain his End ? The Part of the World, that professes Christianity, is it not inconsiderable with regard to the World ? Being frustrated, what does it mark ? If Men are to be benefited by Performances, they have no Concurrence in, why would not his immortal Power have done the Business as well as his mortal Passion ? If Men are to be saved by a Merit not their own, why not by a Word not their own, which would be the same thing ? Do Advantages arise to those prodigious populous Countries, *China* and *Japan*, from Christianity, which they hoot, and stick the Preachers of upon Forks ? What Sort of Distribution is it, that the little Speck of *Europe* is to be possess'd of such *eminent* Felicity ? When our Parsons have answered these Questions, I will ask them some more. I will put one, or two Questions to the CLEARER : As God created the World out of nothing (for I don't suppose he holds another self-existent Being) and could overcome the seeming Impossibility of producing something where nothing was, why did not he strike out a nothing-extracted Stability to add to his nothing-extracted Creation, and how he came to make his Composition of Materials that wanted *mending*, as he says ; with what Sneer let People JUDGE ; and what is the Result of the whole, arguing Chance, or Design ?

Was not God to chuse who he would have, Witnesses of the Resurrection ? The CLEARER demands. It is worse to be left to Choice, if Choice is ill made : And was he to chuse in such a manner too, that no
Body

Body was to be Witness of the Resurrection, but whom no Body would believe? The old Strain of Management; but which might always as well have been spared, and the Thing itself omitted. As Parties are never Evidences, there can be said to be no Evidences of the Resurrection. We will sooner believe, a Man makes a false Report, than our Senses make a false Report; and that a Thing is, which contradicts the common Experience and Course of Nature; but we may assure ourselves, that NATURE IS, AS IT EVER WAS, AND IS EVER LIKELY TO CONTINUE.

Lay these Things together, and you will bring it to this Conclusion: Every Hypothesis that is not founded in Nature, is absurd—so not the Object of rational Belief.

Let us emancipate ourselves from vain and foolish Fears, and as vain and foolish Hopes, and be sure, that he, that has not philosophized himself into Ease, will know none; Religion will take a thousand Shapes to fright him; ghastly in all, she will torment his Days; and his Nights will be still more hideous. The Parson gets on, when the Nurse gets off, (unless he rides double) and the saddled Beast is guided about at Will. But Philosophy builds that Liberty, that Repose, no Alarm approaches, nor Terror shakes; and THE GREATEST GOOD IS WISDOM. This one Stroke while Liberty remains, or is *said* to remain; when it dies, we have but to die with it.

THUS ends my PHILOSOPHICAL FRIEND, who plainly shews, that he thinks *Disbelief not criminal*. Whether it be or no, is the main point our Adversaries ought to prove; for if it be not, why should men suffer for it here, or hereafter? If it be criminal, the with-holding or not giving the necessary
E Evidence

Evidence of Conviction is much more so; unless it be a crime, not to be credulous. This point ought to be contested freely. If an Enquirer cannot find what is called Truth, to be Truth; should he own that he sees what he don't? Or, acknowledge that to be true, which does not appear to him to be so? Or, ought he to stifle with silence the Truth he has discovered? Is it most commendable, to vindicate the *Liberty* of Truth, or submit to the *Slavery* of Error, and suppose the Enquirer can not see Truth where it is to be seen; is it criminal to want mental or bodily optics? What is the want of true faith, but not being able to see truth in a true light? This inability must either be owing to *the nature of the man*, which he cannot help; for all men, *Enquirers* at least, would see what is right if they could, or it must be owing to the Means by which, or Medium thro' which Truth is to be seen, either the *one* lead wrong, or the *other* makes a *false* Appearance, or obscures the *true*; neither of these can the Enquirer prevent: So that his not seeing Truth, is not a *moral*, but a *physical* fault; and *believing* without *seeing*, that is without *evidence*, is Nonsense and Absurdity.—In what manner soever this point is examined, it will appear that Belief is no Virtue, or Faith is not Righteousness and Unbelief, or Disbelief, or what is reproachingly call'd *Infidelity*, is no *Sin*, no breach of any moral law.

The CLEARER is perhaps one of the most unfair Writers that ever attempted to manage an Argument. He spends all his Wit to pervert my meaning, making me *say* things I never *thought*; and then invidiously harangues thereon; and this with so much wire-drawing Art, as almost to persuade me, I had *expressed* what I never *intended*. So that he appears to be as one of those *false Prophets*, that can deceive, if possible, the very elect.

In every place where he sees the *latter* edition different from the *former*, he strains the *former* to mean something erroneous, to exult and harangue upon ; (tho' I was not conscious to myself, that the Alterations I made were, as he represents them, but to express myself in a clearer and better manner in the beginning, which I think I have done ;) to this end, he wilfully misrepresents my *meaning*, to accuse me of *blundering*.

Because I expressed my *own sense* in the words of the Trial, or in the words inverted, or referred by a parity of reasoning from one case to another, he calls it the *artful abuse of language, perverting, altering, and misapplying the sense*.

At first setting out, he quotes these words of mine, to shew my design in writing THE RESURRECTION CONSIDERED.

“ My design is to promote that veneration for
 “ WISDOM and VIRTUE, which has been debas'd
 “ and degraded by *Faith*; by a Faith which has not
 “ sent *Peace* on Earth, but a *Sword*.—Where this
 “ foolish faith bears sway, the Tree of Knowledge
 “ produces damning fruit; but under the *benign*
 “ *Influence* of GEORGE OUR KING, in this glori-
 “ ous day of *Light* and *Liberty*, this divine Hag,
 “ and her pious Witchcrafts, which were brought
 “ forth in *Darkness*, and nourished by *Obscurity*, faint
 “ at the approach of day, and vanish upon sight.”
 And, so great is his Indignation, that he makes thereon the following Remarks:

The Faith which the Gospel proposes in Christ Jesus, the ever blessed son of God, and the only Name under Heaven by which we may be saved, is here with an astonishing degree of Impiety call'd a divine Hag with pious Witchcrafts. Unhappy man! what could he mean by this? I pity him from my heart. But what could he mean by abusing the King, unless he
had

bad a mind to shew, that he is just as good a subject as he is a Christian.

Every serious man will read these passages with Abhorrence ; and they are a warning to every Reader to be upon his guard against the Representations made of the Doctrines of the Gospel, and the Evidences of Christianity, by so determined, and so inveterate an Enemy to both.

I shall only say to this, 'Tis evident that to be reveng'd of me, he gives up the Cause of the Gospel, acknowledging that *pernicious Faith* which I had described, is that *Faith* which he calls *Gospel*, and contends for. And to make me odious, for saying, that under the influence of HIS PRESENT MAJESTY, whom God long preserve, *this Faith faints and vanishes away, which has debased and degraded WISDOM and VIRTUE, and which has not brought Peace on Earth, but a Sword ;* he asks, *What I mean by abusing the King ?* Now judge all ye People, whether I abuse the KING, or he abuses QUEEN COMMON-SENSE ? By this judge of the rest of his *determined and inveterate misconstructions.*

F I N I S.