







THERON and *ASPASIO*:

O R, A

S E R I E S

O F

D I A L O G U E S

A N D

L E T T E R S,

U P O N T H E

Most *Important* and *Interesting* Subjects.

I N T H R E E V O L U M E S.

By JAMES HERVEY, A.M.
Rector of *Weston-Favell*, in *Northamptonshire*.

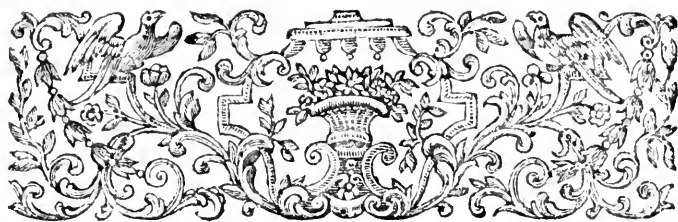
*The Memorial of thine abundant Kindness shall be shewed, and
Men shall sing of thy Righteousness. Psal. cxlv. 7.*

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:

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M D C C L V.




T O

The Right Honourable

Lady FRANCES SHIRLEY.

M A D A M,

F Christianity was inconsistent with true *Politeness*, or prejudicial to real *Happiness*, I should be extremely injudicious, and inexcusably ungrateful, in presenting these Essays to your LADYSHIP. But as the Religion of *JESUS* is the grand Ornament of our Nature, and a Source of the sublimest Joy, the Purport of the following Pages, cannot be unworthy the Countenance and Protection of the

most accomplished Person. Neither can there be a Wish, more suitable to the Obligations or the Dictates of a *grateful* Heart, than that You may experience what You read, and *be* what You patronize.

DID Religion consist in a *formal* Round of external Observances, or a *forced* Submission to some rigorous Austerities, I should not scruple to join with the Infidel and the Sensualist, to dread it in one View, and despise it in another. You need not be informed, MADAM, that it is as much superior to all such *low* and *forbidding* Singularities, as the Heavens are higher than the Earth. It is described by an Author, who learnt its Theory in the Regions of Paradise, and who displayed its Efficacy in his own most exemplary Conversation.—It is thus described by that incomparable Author; *The Kingdom of God, is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the HOLY GHOST.*

To be reconciled to the Omnipotent GOD
—To be interested in the unsearchable Riches of CHRIST——To be renewed in our Hearts, and influenced in our Lives, by the sanctifying Operations of the Divine SPIRIT—This

is *evangelical* Righteousness. This is *genuine* Religion. This, MADAM, is the Kingdom of GOD established in the Soul.—How benign and inviting is such an Institution! How honourable and advantageous such a State! And from such Privileges, what other Effects can flow, but that *Peace, which passeth all Understanding?* That *Joy, which is unspeakable and glorious?*

Is there any Thing in the Amusements of the Gay and Pursuits of the Ambitious, of greater, of equal, of comparable Value? Is not all that *Wealth* can purchase, all that *Grandeur* can bestow, somewhat like those glittering Bubbles, which when viewed are *Emptiness*, when grasped are *Nothing?* Whereas, the Comforts, the Benefits, the Hopes of Christianity, are at once supremely excellent, and infinitely durable. A Portion, suited to the Dignity of a rational Soul; large as its Faculties, and immortal as its Being.

ALL these Blessings are centered in *CHRIST*; were purchased by *CHRIST*; are communicated from *CHRIST*.—It is for want of know-

ing those boundless and everlasting Treasures of *pardoning, justifying, saving* Merit, which the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* possesses, and which He freely dispenses even to Sinners, that so many *unthinking* Persons are attached to ignoble Objects, and beguiled by delusory Pleasures. *Unhappy* Creatures! What can they do, but catch at Shadows, and stoop to Trifles, while they are ignorant of the grand, the substantial, the exalted Good?—It is for want of duly attending to that Fulness of Grace, and that Plenteousness of Redemption, which dwell in our most adorable SAVIOUR, that so many *serious* Persons are Strangers to the Tranquility and Sweetness of Religion: are subject to all its Restraints, but enjoy few, if any, of its Delights. *Mistaken* Zealots! How can they avoid the gloomy Situation and the uncomfortable Circumstance, so long as they withdraw themselves from the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS and his all-cheering Beams?

MAY your LADYSHIP live continually under his heavenly Light and healing Wings! Be more fully assured of his dying Love, and have brighter, still brighter Manifestations of his
his

his immense Perfections! By these delightful Views, and by that precious Faith, may your Heart be transformed into his *holy*, his *amiable*, his *divine* Image! Your Happiness will then be just such as is wished, but far greater than can be expressed by,

MADAM,

Your most obliged, and


Most obedient humble Servant,

Weston-Favell,
Jan. 6. 1755.

JAMES HERVEY.



P R E F A C E.

 *HE Reader will probably expect some Account of the ensuing Work; and, to gratify Him in this Particular, will be a real Pleasure to the Author.*

*The Beauty and Excellency of the Scriptures—The Ruin and Depravity of human Nature—Its happy Recovery, founded on the Atonement, and effected by the SPIRIT of CHRIST—These are some of the chief Points, vindicated, illustrated, and applied in the following Sheets.—But the grand Article, that which makes the principal Figure, is the IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS of our divine LORD; from whence arises our Justification before GOD, and our renewed Title to every
heavenly*

heavenly Blessing. *An Article, which, though eminent for its Importance, seems to be little understood, and less regarded; if not much mistaken, and almost forgotten.*

*The Dignity and Importance of this great evangelical Doctrine—how worthy it is of the most attentive Consideration, and of universal Acceptance—is hinted in the second Dialogue. So that I need, in this Place, do nothing more, than give the Sense of a Passage from Witfius, which is there introduced in the Notes.—“ The Doctrine
“ of Justification, says that excellent Author,
“ spreads itself through the whole System of Divi-
“ nity. As this is either solidly established, or su-
“ perficially touched; fully stated, or slightly dis-
“ missed; accordingly, the whole Structure of Re-
“ ligion, either rises graceful and magnificent, su-
“ perior to Assault, and beyond the Power of De-
“ cay; or else it appears disproportionate and de-
“ fective, totters on its Foundation, and threatens
“ an opprobrious Fall *.”*

*The Design is executed in the Form of Dialogue. Those Parts only excepted, in which it was not easy to carry on a Conversation, and assign to each Person a proper Degree of Significancy. Here, to avoid the common Imputation, of bringing upon the
Stage*

* See p. 70.

Stage a Mute or a Shadow—one who fights without Weapons, and submits without a Contest—the Scene shifts. Our Gentlemen separate; and, instead of conversing, enter upon an epistolary Correspondence.

The Dialogue Form seems, on many Considerations, a very eligible Way of Writing.—Hereby, the Author gives an Air both of Dignity and of Modesty to his Sentiments. Of Dignity; by delivering them from the Mouths of Persons, in every respect superior to Himself. Of Modesty; because We no longer consider Him in the raised, but invidious Capacity of a Teacher. Instead of calling Us to his Feet, and dictating his Precepts, He gratifies our Curiosity. He turns back a Curtain, and admits Us to some remarkable Interviews, or interesting Conferences. We over-hear, by a kind of innocent or imaginary Stealth, the Debates which pass in the Recesses of Privacy; which are carried on, with the most unrestrained Freedom of Speech, and Openness of Heart.—A Circumstance, which will apologize for some Peculiarities, that might otherwise be inconsistent with Humility, or offensive to Delicacy. Particularly, it may obviate the Disgust, which generally, and indeed deservedly, attends the frequent Intrusion of that ambitious and usurping little Monosyllable, I.

The

The Names of the Persons are prefixed, each to his respective Share of the Discourse; in Imitation of Cicero, and for the Reasons which he assigns. Quasi enim ipsos induxi loquentes: ne Inquam & Inquit sæpius interponerentur. Atque id eo feci, ut tanquam præsentibus coram haberi Sermo videretur. This Method, He very justly intimates, is removed farthest from the Narrative, and makes the nearest Approaches to Life and Reality. It quite secretes the Author; and, by introducing the Persons themselves, renders all that passes intirely their own.—It prevents likewise the Repetition of those interlocutory Words, He said, He replied. Which, unless the Speeches are very long, must frequently recur, and have no pleasing Effect upon the Ear. And if the Speeches are long, the Spirit of Conversation is lost. The Associates are no longer talking; but one of them, or the Author, is lecturing.*

Though I have so much to say in Behalf of the Model, I have very little to say with regard to the Execution—unless it be to confess the Deficiency. There is not, I am sensible, that peculiar Air and distinguishing Turn, which should mark and characterize each Speaker. This is what the Nature of finished Dialogue requires, and what the

* *De Amicitia.*

the Author applauds in some very superior Writers. But, not having the Ability to copy it, He has not the Vanity to affect it.—Nevertheless, the attentive Reader will, all along, perceive a Difference in the Sentiment, if not in the Language. The Materials vary, even when they run into the same Mould, and take the same Form.—In the Diction also there must be some Diversity. Because, several of the Objections are proposed in the very Words of one or two eminent Writers, who have appeared on the other Side of the Question. These are not particularized by the Mark of Quotation; because, the Man of Reading will have no Occasion for the Assistance of such an Index, and the Man of Taste will probably discern them by the Singularity of the Style.

Some of the following Pieces, it must be acknowledged, are of the controversial Kind. A Species of Writing, least susceptible of the Graces, which embellish Composition; or rather most destitute of the Attractives, which engage Attention, and create Delight.—Yet I have sometimes thought, that it is not absolutely impossible, to make even the stern Face of Controversy wear a Smile; and to reap some valuable Fruit, from the rugged Furrows of Disputation. Whether this is effected in
the

the present Work, the Public must judge; that it has been attempted, the Author may be permitted to declare.

To soften the Asperities of Argument, Views of Nature are interspersed. That, if the former should carry the Appearance of a rude intangled Forest, or of a frowning gloomy Recess, there may be some agreeable Openings, and lightsome Avenues, to admit a Prospect of the Country: which is always arrayed in Charms, and never fails to please.

The Author confesses a very peculiar Fondness for the amiable Scenes of Creation. It is therefore not at all improbable, but his Excursions on this Topic may be of the diffusive Kind, and his Descriptions somewhat luxuriant. It is hoped, however, that the benevolent Reader will indulge Him in this favourite Foible.—If any should feel the same prevailing Passion for the Beauties of Nature, 'tis possible these Persons may be inclined, not only to excuse, but approve the Fault; and take Part with the Lover, even in Opposition to the Critic.

Farther to diversify the Piece, Sketches of Philosophy are introduced. Easy to be understood, and calculated to entertain the Imagination, as

well

well as to improve the Heart. More particularly, to display the wise and beneficent Design of Providence, in the various Appearances and numberless Productions of the material World. Neither are these Remarks altogether foreign to the main Point. But, as far as the Wonders of Creation may comport with the Riches of Grace, subserve the general End.

As to the Choice of my Subjects—Some People have desired to see an *Invective*, against the fashionable and predominant Vices of the Age. This, I apprehend, would be like picking off the Leaves, or clipping away the Twigs, of some overgrown and noxious Tree. Waving this tedious and ineffectual Toil, I would rather lay my Axe to the Root. Let the Knowledge and Love of CHRIST take place in the Heart, and not only a few of the Branches, but the whole Body of Sin will fall at once.

Some would have the Author insist upon the conscientious Observation of the Sabbath, inculcate the daily Worship of GOD in the Family, and urge a devout Attendance on the public Ordinances of Religion.—But when a Person is convinced of Sin, and made sensible of Misery; when he has
tasted

tasted the good Word of GOD*, and seen by Faith the LORD's CHRIST†; *He will want no Solicitation or Incitement, to these Means of Grace, and Exercises of Godliness. He will have just the same Disposition to them all, as the hungry Appetite has to wholesome Food, or the new-born Babe ‡ to the Milk of the Breast.*

Others may imagine, that I have neglected the Interests of Morality; because, here is no professed Attempt to delineate its Duties, or inforce its Practice.—Let these Persons remember, that Morality never makes such vigorous Shoots, never produces such generous Fruit, as when ingrafted on evangelical Principles.—And if I do not crop the Pink, the Rose, and the Carnation; if I do not gather the Peach, the Nectarine, and the Pine-Apple; and put them into my Reader's Hand, for his immediate Enjoy-

* Heb. vi. 5.

† Luke ii. 26.

‡ 1 Pet. ii. 2. This Comparison is, perhaps, the most exact and expressive, that Words can form, or Fancy conceive. Babes covet nothing but the Milk of the Breast: They are indifferent about all other Things. Give them Riches, give them Honours, give them whatever you please, without this rich, delicious, balmy Nutriment, they will not, they cannot be satisfied.—How finely does this illustrate, and how forcibly inculcate, what our LORD styles, *The single Eye*, and *The One Thing needful!* Or, the salutary Doctrines, and delightful Privileges of the Gospel; together with that supreme Value for them, and undivided Complacency in them, which are the distinguishing Character of *the Christian!*

Enjoyment : I am endeavouring to sow the Seeds, and plant the Roots in his Garden ; which, if cherished by the favourable Influence of Heaven, will yield Him, not an occasional, but a constant Supply of all.

As several Texts of Scripture come under Consideration, Criticisms upon the Original are frequently subjoined. In order to clear up some Difficulties, to rectify some Mistranslations, or point out the many delicate and masterly Strokes, which occur in the BIBLE.—And glad should I be, extremely glad, if I might recommend and endear that invaluable Book. If, as the divine REDEEMER rideth on in the Word of Truth, of Meekness, and Righteousness, this Hand might scatter a Palm Branch, or this Performance might lie as a Flowret, to strew his Way †, and solemnize his Triumph.*

In the Course of the Disputation, I dare not suppose, that I have discussed all the Arguments, which Sagacity may devise, or Sophistry urge. Perhaps, I have not removed all the Scruples, which may awaken Prejudice, or embarrass Integrity. This, however, I may venture to affirm, that I myself have met with no considerable Objection, which is

* *Psal.* xlv. 4.

† Alluding to *Matt.* xxi. 8.

not either expressly answered, or virtually refuted, in these Conferences.—And, though I should neither satisfy nor silence the Gainsayer, I shall think my Endeavours happily employed, if they may throw Light upon the dim Apprehension; establish the wavering Faith; or comfort the afflicted Conscience.

If any should burlesque or ridicule these venerable Truths, and exalted Privileges, I shall only say with my Divine MASTER; O! that Thou hadst known, in this thy Day, the Things that belong to thy Peace! But now they are hid, it is evident from such a Procedure, they are hid from thine Eyes.—Should any, in the Spirit of Decency and Candor, either start new, or revive old Objections, I doubt not, but they will receive both a due Examination and a proper Reply. As these Doctrines enter into the very Essence of the Gospel, and constitute the Glory of our Religion, they can never want a Succession of Advocates, so long as the Sun and Moon endure. For my own Part, I must beg Leave to retire from the Lists, and lay down the Weapons of Controversy. Virgil's Language is my Resolution;*

Discedam, explebo Numerum, reddarque
Tenebris.

* Luke xix. 42.

This Declaration is made, not from any the least Suspicion, that my Tenets are indefensible. But because I would apprize my Friends, and the Friends of our common Christianity, that the Field is clear and open for them to advance; that I resign to others the glorious Combat; and shall content myself with wishing them Success in the Name of the LORD.—Because, it becomes a Person in my declining State, to be more peculiarly intent upon encountering a different Adversary; who is sure to overcome, and never allows Quarter. Yet, by this Word of my Testimony, and by the Blood of the LAMB, I hope to triumph even when I fall; and to be more than Conqueror, through JEHOUVAH my Righteousness.*

Should any Thing be urged, forcible enough to overthrow my Arguments, or detect a Mistake in my Sentiments, the World may depend upon seeing a free and undissembled Retraction. I shall look upon it as a Duty, which I owe to my Conscience, to my Readers, and to my GOD, publicly to acknowledge the Error.—It is one Thing to be silent; another to be obstinate. As I shall inflexibly adhere to the first; I would, with equal Steadiness, renounce the last. Though I withdraw from the Strife of Pens and of Tongues, I shall take

care to preserve a Mind, ever accessible to Truth, ever open to Conviction. A Mind, infinitely more concerned for the Purity and Prosperity of the everlasting Gospel, than for the Prevalence of my own Opinion, or the Credit of my own Performance.

As I have the Happiness of being a Member, and the Honour of being a Minister, of the reformed established Church; I cannot but reflect, with a peculiar Pleasure, that every Doctrine of Note, maintained in these Dialogues and Letters, is either implied in our Liturgy, asserted in our Articles, or taught in our Homilies.—It affords me likewise some Degree of Satisfaction to observe, that the most material of the Sentiments, have been adopted by Milton; are incorporated into his Paradise Lost; and add Dignity to the sublimest Poem in the World.—To have the highest Authority, and the first Genius of the Nation on a Writer's Side, is no contemptible Support. This must surely give a Sanction, where-ever our religious Establishment is revered, or polite Literature is held in Repute. Yet even this Sanction, compared with the Oracle of Revelation, is only like a Range of Cyphers, connected with the initial Figure. Which, were they detached, would be insignificant; but, in such a Subordination, are considerable.

Perhaps,

Perhaps, it should be farther acknowledged, that I have not always confined myself to the Method of our Systematic Writers, nor followed their Train of Thoughts with a scrupulous Regularity. I would conduct my Fellow-creature to the supreme and eternal Good, CHRIST JESUS. I have chosen the Path, which seemed most agreeable and inviting, rather than most beaten and frequented. If this leads, with equal Certainty, to the great and desirable End, I dare promise myself an easy Excuse.—However, that Method and Order, in the doctrinal Parts of the Plan, are not wholly neglected, the following Summary of Contents may show.

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LET-

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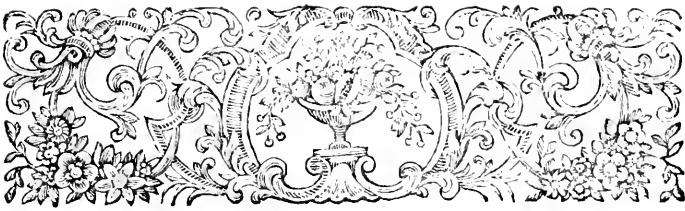
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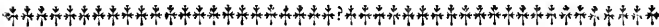
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A
S E R I E S
O F
D I A L O G U E S.



D I A L O G U E I.



HERON, was a Gentleman of fine Taste ; of accurate, rather than extensive Reading ; and particularly charmed with the Study of Nature. He traced the Planets in their Courses, and examined the Formation of the meanest Vegetable ; not merely to gratify a *refined* Curiosity, but chiefly to cultivate the *nobler* Principles of Religion and

VOL. I.

B

Morality.

Morality. Several Discoveries He made, and every Discovery He improved, to this important End—to raise in his Mind, more *exalted* Apprehensions of the SUPREME Being—and to enlarge his Affections, with a *disinterested* Benevolence; conformable, in some Degree, to that boundless Liberality, which pervades and animates the whole Creation.

ASPASIO, was not without his Share of polite Literature, and philosophical Knowledge. He had taken a Tour through the Circle of the Sciences; and, having transiently surveyed the Productions of *human* Learning, devoted his final Attention to the *inspired* Writings. These He studied, with the unbiassed Impartiality of a Critic; yet with the reverential Simplicity of a Christian. These He regarded, as the *unerring* Standard of Duty—the *authentic* Charter of Salvation—and the *brightest* Mirror of the DEITY; affording the most satisfactory and sublime Display of all the divine Attributes.

Theron, was somewhat *warm* in his Temper; and would, upon Occasion, make Use of a little innocent Rallery; not to expose his Friend, but to enliven the Conversation. Sometimes *disguising* his real Sentiments; in order to sift the Subject, or discover the Opinion of others.—*Aspasio* seldom indulges the humorous or satyrical Vein, but argues with
Meek-

Meekness of Wisdom *. Never puts on the Appearance of Guile, but always speaks the Dictates of his Heart.

Aspasio was on a Visit at *Theron's* Seat.— One Evening, when some neighbouring Gentlemen were just gone, and had left them alone, the Conversation took the following Turn.

Asp.—I would always be ready, both to acknowledge and applaud, whatever is amiable in the Conduct of Others. The Gentlemen, who gave Us their Company at Dinner, seem to be all of a *different* Character. Yet each, in his own Way, is extremely agreeable.

Lysander has lively Parts, and is quick at Repartee. But He never abuses his Wit, to create Uneasiness in the honest Heart, or flush the modest Cheek with Confusion.—What Solidity of Judgment, and Depth of Penetration, appear in *Crito* ! Yet, how free are his Discourses, from the magisterial Tone, or the dictatorial Solemnity !—*Philenor's* Taste in the polite Arts, is remarkably correct : yet, without the least Tincture of Vanity, or any weak Fondness for Applause. He never interrupts the Progress, or wrests the Topic of Conver-

* ——— *Mitis Sapientia Leli,* HOR.

Is a most amiable Character, and delicately drawn. But is, I think, expressed with greater Strength, and superior Beauty, by the sacred Penman ; *Let Him shew out of a good Conversation his Works with Meekness of Wisdom.* *Jam.* iii. 13.

Conversation; in order to shine in his particular Province.—*Trebonius*, I find, has signalized his Valour, in several Campaigns. Though a Warrior and a Traveler, He gives Himself no overbearing or ostentatious Airs. In *Trebonius*, You see the brave Officer, regulated by all the Decency of the Academic, and sweetened with all the Affability of the Courtier.

No one affects a *morose* Silence, or assumes an *immoderate* Loquacity*. To engross the Talk, is tyrannical: to seal up the Lips, is monkish. Every one, therefore, from a Fund of good Sense, contributes his Quota: and each speaks, not with an Ambition to *set off* Himself, but from a Desire to *please* the Company.

Ther. Indeed, *Aspasio*, I think myself happy, in this accomplished Set of Acquaintance. Who add all the Complaisance and Politeness of the Gentleman, to the Benevolence and Fidelity of the Friend.

Their Conversation is as innocent, as their Taste is refined.—They have a noble Abhorrence of *Slander*, and detest the low ungenerous Artifices of *Detraction*.—No *loose Jest*, has either

* *Zeno* being present, where a Person of this loquacious Disposition played Himself off, said, with an Air of Concern in his Countenance; *That poor Gentleman is ill, He has a violent Flux upon Him.* The Company was alarmed, and the Rhetorician stopped in his Career. *Yes*; added the Philosopher, *The Flux is so violent, that it has carried his Ears into his Tongue.*

either the Service of their Tongue, or the Sanction of their Smile. Was You to be with them, even in their freest Moments; You would hear Nothing, that borders upon *Profaneness*, or is in the least injurious to *Purity of Morals*.

Asp. There is but *one* Qualification wanting, to render your Friends completely valuable; and their social Interviews a continual Blessing.

Ther. Pray, what is that?

Asp. A Turn for *more serious* Conferences.— Their literary Debates are beautiful Sketches, of whatever is most curious in the Sciences, or most delicate in the Arts. From their Remarks on our national Affairs, and on foreign Occurrences, a Person may almost form a System of Politics.—But, they never touch upon any Topic of *Morality*; never celebrate the *sublime Perfections* of the DEITY; never illustrate the Beauties, nor enforce the Truths—

Ther. Fie upon You, *Alpasio*, for your unpolite Hint! Who can forbear interrupting an Harangue, that pleads for such an outrageous Violation of the *Mode*? Would introduce *edifying* Talk into our *fashionable* Assemblies!— How is it that You, who, in other Instances, are a Gentleman of Refinement, can be so strangely inelegant in this Particular?

6 D I A L O G U E I.

Asp. For such a Practice, *Theron*, We have no inconsiderable Precedents.—Thus *Socrates**, the wisest of the *Athenian* Sages, thus *Scipio* †, the most accomplished of the *Roman* Generals, conversed.—Thus *Cicero* ‡, the Prince of Orators, improved his elegant Retirement at the *Tusculan* Villa.—And *Horace* ||, the brightest Genius in the Court of *Augustus*, formed the most agreeable Hours of his Conversation, upon this very Plan.

Was I to enumerate all the Patrons of this, forgive me if I say, *more honourable* Mode; the most illustrious Names of Antiquity, would appear on the List.

Ther. This Practice, however extolled by the philosophic Gentry of ancient Times; would make a very *singular* Figure, in the present Age.

Asp. And should not the *Copy*, after which the Generality of Mankind write, be *singularly correct*? Persons of exalted Fortune, are the Pattern for general Imitation: are the *Copy*, in Conformity to which, the inferior World adjust

* Vid. *Socratis Memorabilia*, per Xenoph.

† See *Cicero's* Dialogue *De Amicitia*. In which we are informed, That it was a customary Practice with *Scipio*, with his polite Friend *Lælius*, and some of the most distinguished Nobility of *Rome*, to discourse upon the Interests of the Republic, and Immortality of the Soul.

‡ Vid. *Tuscul. Quæst.*

|| Such were the Interviews, of which he speaks with a Kind of Rapture,

O Noces Cœlestes Deum!

adjust their Manners, and regulate their Behaviour. *They*, therefore, are under the strongest Obligations, not to give a *contemptible* Stamp to the Fashion.—Benevolence to their Fellow-creatures calls loudly upon them, a Concern for the public Good challenges it at their Hands, that *they* signalize themselves by a Pre-eminence in all that is excellent.

Ther. Away, away with these *austere* Notions! Such a Strain of Conversation, would *damp* the Gaiety of our Spirits, and *flatten* the Relish of Society. It would turn the Assembly into a Conventicle, and make it Lent all the Year round.

Asp. Can it then be an austere Practice, to cultivate the Understanding, and improve the Heart?—Can it damp the Gaiety of our Spirits, to refine them upon the Plan of the highest Perfection?—Or, will it flatten the Relish of Society, to secure and anticipate everlasting Delights?

Ther. Everlasting Delights, *Aspasio*!—To talk of such a Subject, would be termed, in every Circle of Wit and Gallantry, an Usurpation of the Parson's Office. A *low* Method, of retailing by Scraps, in the Parlour; what the Man in Black, vends by wholesale, from the Pulpit.—It would infallibly mark Us out for *Pedants*. And, for aught I know, might expose Us to the Suspicion of *Enthusiasm*.

Asp. Your Men of Wit must excuse me, if I cannot persuade myself to admire, either the *Delicacy* of their Language, or the *Justness* of their Opinion.

The first, be it ever so *humane* and *graceful*, I resign to themselves.—As for the other, I would beg Leave to inquire; “Are the Clergy, then, the *only* Persons, who should act the *becoming* Part, and converse like *rational* Beings? Is solid Wisdom, and sacred Truth, the Privilege of their Order? While nothing is left for You and me, but the Play of Fancy, or the Luxuries of Sense.”

I would farther ask the Circles of Gallantry; “Where is the Impropriety, of interweaving the *noble* Doctrines, displayed by the Preacher, with our common Discourse? Or, what the Inconvenience, of introducing the *amiable* Graces, recommended by his Lectures, into our ordinary Practice?”

Will *such* an Exercise of our Speech, rank Us among Pedants? Is *this* the Badge of Enthusiasm? A splendid and honourable Badge truly! Such as must add Weight to any Cause, and Worth to any Character.

Ther. This would curb the sprightly Sallies of *Wit*; and extinguish that engaging Glow of *Good-humour*, which enlivens our genteel Intercourses. Accordingly, You may observe, that if any *formal Creature*, takes upon Him to mention,

tion, in polite Company, a religious Truth, or a Text of Scripture; the pretty Chat, though ever so profusely flowing, stagnates in an Instant. Each voluble and facetious Tongue seems to be struck with a sudden Palsy. Every one wonders at the strange Man's Face; and they all conclude Him, either *mad*, or a *Methodist*.

Asp. Agreeable Strokes of Wit, are by no Means incompatible with useful Conversation. Unless we mistake an *insipid* Vivacity, or *fantastic* Levity, for Wit and Facetiousness.—Neither have I heard, that, among all our Acts of Parliament, any one has passed to *divorce* Good Sense and Good-humour. Why may they not both reside on the same Lips, and both circulate through the same Assembly?—For my own Part, I would neither have our Discourse *soured* with Austerity, nor *evaporate* into Imper-tinence: but unite (as a judicious Antient advises) the Benefits of Improvement, with the Blandishments of Pleasantry*.—And as to your polite People; if they can find more Music, in the *Magpie's* Voice, than in the *Nightingale's* Note; I must own myself as much surpris'd at *their* Ears, as they are at the strange Man's Face.

Ther. With all your grey-headed Authorities, I fancy, You will find very few Profelytes, among the Professors of modern Refinement.

Fashion

* *Cum quadam Illiccebrá ac Voluptate utiles.* Aul. Gel.

Fashion is, with the World, the Standard of Morals, as well as of Clothes. And He must be of a very *peculiar* Turn indeed, who would choose to be ridiculous in either.

Asp. Rather, *Theron*, He must be of a very *pliant* Turn, who tamely delivers up his Conduct, to be moulded by a Fashion; which has neither true Elegance to dignify it, nor the least Usefulness to recommend it.

And which, I beseech You, is most ridiculous?—He, who fervilely imitates every *idle* Fashion, and is the very *Ape* of corrupt Custom?—Or He, who asserts his native Liberty; and resolutely follows, where *Wisdom* and *Truth* lead the Way.

Ther. Would you then obtrude religious Discourse, upon every Company? Consider, *Aspasio*, what a *motley* Figure this would make.—A Wedding, and a Sermon!—Quadrille, and *St. Paul*!—The last new Play, and primitive Christianity!

Asp. You know the Rule, *Theron*, which is given by the great “MASTER of our Assemblies;” *Cast not your Pearls before Swine* *. Some there are, so immersed in Sensuality, that they can relish nothing, but the coarsest Hulks of Conversation. To these, neither offer your Pearls, nor prostitute your Intimacy.

But,

* *Matt.* vii. 6.

But, when Persons of a liberal Education, and elevated Sentiments—when *these* meet together; why should not their Discourse be suitable, to the Eminence of their Rank, and the Superiority of their Genius? Raised, far above the Level of that *trite* and *effeminate* Strain—“ Upon my Honour, the Actress topt her Part. Heavens! How charmingly she sung! How gracefully she trod the Stage!”

Ther. Indeed, my *Aspasio*, I am intirely in your Way of Thinking; however I have hitherto put on the Mask.—The Gift of Speech, is one great *Prerogative* of our rational Nature. And 'tis Pity, that such a superior Faculty, should be debased to the meanest Purposes.

Suppose, all our stately Vessels, that pass and repass the Ocean, were to carry out nothing but Tinsel, and theatrical Decorations; were to import nothing but glittering Baubles, and nicely-fansied Toys. Would such a Method of Trading, be well-judged in itself, or beneficial in its Consequences?—Articulate Speech, is the Instrument of a much nobler Commerce; intended to transmit and diffuse the Treasures of the Mind. And will not the Practice be altogether *as injudicious*, must not the Issue be infinitely *more detrimental*, if this Vehicle of intellectual Wealth, is freighted only with *pleasing Fopperies*?

Asp.

Asp. Such Folly and Extravagance, would be hissed out of the *commercial* World. Why then are they admitted and cherished in the *social*?

Ther. Why indeed? He must be far more acute than your *Theron*, who can assign a single Reason to countenance them. To explode them, ten thousand Arguments occur.—A continual Round of gay and trifling Conversation*, of Visits quite modish, and Entertainments not moral, must give an indolent Turn to the Mind. Such as will *enervate* its Powers; *indispose* it for generous Action; and gradually *sap* the very Foundation of Virtue.—Whereas, a frequent Conference on the Glories of the GODHEAD, or the Wonders of Creation, would invigorate and ennoble the Soul. Would enlarge her Faculties, and elevate her Desires.

Asp. Did not our Hearts burn within us, said the Travelers at *Emmaus*, while HE talked with us by the Way †? Those Discourses, 'tis true, were conducted with a Spirit, and enforced with an Energy, absolutely unequalled. Yet, the same happy Effects would, in *some* inferior Degree,

* The Significancy and Importance of such Conversation, was smartly represented by the Philosopher. Who, being asked, How he left the Company employed, made Answer; *Some in milking the Ram, Others in holding the Pail,*

† *Luke* xxiv. 32.

Degree, result from our friendly Conferences, if they turned upon the same important Points. We also should feel our Hearts, *warmed* with holy Zeal, and *glowing* with heavenly Love.

Ther. Such Conferences would not only be productive of *present* Advantage; but yield a renewed Pleasure, in the Retrospect. We might *reflect*, with real Complacency, on Hours spent in so rational a Manner. And who would not prefer the silent Applause of the Heart, to all those tumultuous Joys; which wanton Jest create, or the circling Glass inspires?

Asp. One *, who thoroughly knew Mankind, and had tried the Merits of the jovial Board, very pertinently compares such Flashes of Mirth, to the *Crackling of Thorns under a Pot* †. The transient Blaze of the One, and the senseless Noise of the Other, continue but for a Moment; and then expire, *that* in Smoke and Darkness, *this* in Spleen and Melancholy.

I said, *Spleen and Melancholy*.—For, however jauntie and alert the various Methods of modish Trifling may seem, whatever Ease and Grace they are supposed to give the Conversation; sure I am, it will be afflictive, to *look back* upon Interviews, squandered away in very Vanity; and shocking, to *look forward* upon the

* King *Solomon*.

† *Ecclef.* vii. 6.

the Account, which We muſt all ſhortly render.—What Figure will *ſuch* an Article make, in the final Reckoning, and at the deciſive Bar?

“ Our ſocial Hours, which might have promoted our mutual Edification, and been ſubſervient to our CREATOR’s Glory, all *loſt* in Merriment and Whim; or *worſe than loſt*, in Flattery and Detraction. A *Blank*, or a *Blot*.”

Ther. Venus, we find, has her zealous Knight-Errants, and *Bacchus* his profeſſed Votaries, in almoſt every Company. And is it not truly deplorable, that the GOD of Nature alone, has none to aſſert his Honour, none to celebrate his Perfections? Though He is the *Original* of all *Beauty*, and the *Parent* of all *Good*.

When I have taken my Morning Walk, amidſt Dews and Flowers; with the Sun ſhedding Luſtre round Him, and unveiling the happy Landſcape; how has my Eye been charmed, with the lovely Proſpect! How has my Ear been raviſhed, with the Muſic of the Grove! Methought, every Note was a *Tribute* of Harmony; and all Nature ſeemed one *grand Chorus*, ſwelling with the CREATOR’s Praise.—But, how has the Scene been reverſed; when, leaving my rural Elyſium, I entered the Haunts of Men! Where I ſaw Faculties divine, meanly engaged in Trifles. Where I heard the Tongue, prompt to utter, and fluent

ent to express, every Thing but its MAKER's Glory.

I assure you, I have often been chagrined on this Occasion: and sometimes said within myself—"What! Shall *Trifles* be regarded, " and the *Majesty* of *Heaven* neglected? Shall " every Friend, and every Visitant, receive " his Share of Respect? And no Acknow- " ledgments be paid to that exalted Being, " who is worthy, more than worthy, of all " our Veneration?"

Asp. This will be still more afflictive to an ingenuous Mind, if we consider, That the infinite and glorious GOD is *present* at all our Interviews: vouchsafes to express his Satisfaction, and acknowledge Himself *magnified*; when, with Admiration and Love, We talk of his transcendent Excellencies.—Nay: We are assured, that the LORD of all Lords, not only hearkens, but keeps a *Book of Remembrance*; and will distinguish such Persons, at the Day of universal Retribution. When the loose Train of licentious Talkers, are driven away as the despicable *Chaff*; these shall be selected for his peculiar Treasure, and numbered among the *Jewels* of JEHOVAH*.

Ther.

* *Malach.* iii. 16, 17. This is a Passage, much to be observed. A most emphatical Recommendation of religious Discourse! Perhaps, the most *emphatical*, that ever was used; and the most *endearing*, that can possibly be conceived.

Ther. If the Gentlemen, who make high Pretensions to Reason, think themselves discharged from these Doctrines of Revelation; they should not forget *their own* Scriptures.—A *Philosopher* will tell them the *Duty* of employing their Time, as in the awful Presence, and under the immediate Inspection, of the SUPREME Being *.—An *Orator* will shew them the egregious *Impropriety*, of wasting their friendly Interviews, in the Fumes of Drollery, or the Froth of Impertinence †.

Asp. Who then, that is wise, would not habituate Himself to a Practice; which comes recommended by the Voice of Reason, and is enforced by the Authority of GOD?—A Practice, which will administer *present Good*—will afford *pleasing Reviews*—and terminate in *everlasting Honour*?

Ther. 'Tis strange, that Subjects, which deserve to be received, as the universal Topic, are almost universally banished from our Discourse.—Was this Cabinet enriched, with a
Series

* *Sic certe vivendum est, tanquam in Conspectu vivamus: sic cogitandum, tanquam aliquis in Pectus intimum inspicere possit: & potest. Quid enim profit ab Homine aliquid esse secretum? Nihil Deo clausum est. Interest Animis nostris, & Cogitationibus mediis intervenit.* Senec. Epist. 83.

† Cicero says, with an Air of graceful Indignation; *Quasi vero clarorum Virorum aut tacitos Congressus esse oporteat, aut ludicros Sermones, aut Rerum Colloquia leviorum.*

Series of antique *Medals*, or a Collection of the finest *Gems*; my Friends would naturally expect to be entertained, with a Sight of those Rarities, and an Explanation of their Meaning. Why should we not as naturally expect, and as constantly agree, to entertain each other with Remarks on those *admirable Curiosities*, which are deposited in the boundless *Museum** of the Universe?

When a *General* has won some important Victory, or an *Admiral* has destroyed the Enemy's Fleet; every Company resounds with their Achievements; every Tongue is the Trumpet of their Fame. And why should We not celebrate, with equal Delight and Ardour, that **ALMIGHTY Hand**; which formed the Structure, and furnished the Regions, of this stupendous System?

Asp. Especially, if to his *immensely glorious*, We add his *supremely amiable* Perfections.—When the victorious Commander is our most cordial Friend: when He has professed the tenderest Love; done Us the most signal Good; and promised Us a perpetual Enjoyment of his Favours; it will be impossible to neglect such an *illustrious and generous* Person. His Name must be engraven upon our Hearts; must

* *Museum*—Alluding to a remarkable Edifice in the City of *Oxford*, distinguished by this Name; and appropriated to the Reception of *Curiosities*, both natural and artificial.

must slide insensibly into our Tongues; and be as Music to our Ears.

Is not all this true, and in the most super-eminent Degree, with regard to the blessed GOD?—Can greater *Kindness* be exercised, or greater *Love* be conceived; than to deliver up his own SON to Torments and Death, for the Expiation of our Sins?—Can *Benefits*, more desirable, be granted; than to adopt Us for his Children, and sanctify Us by his SPIRIT?—Can *Promises*, more invaluable, be made; than those, which insure to Us the Preferments of Heaven, and the Riches of Eternity?

All this is attested, concerning the ALMIGHTY Majesty, in the Scriptures of Truth. What a rich Fund, therefore, for refined Conversation, are *the Scriptures!*

Ther. Here also I have the Pleasure, to concur with my *Aspasio*. Though I believe, He suspects me to be somewhat wavering or defective, in my Veneration for the Scriptures.

Asp. No, *Theron*: I have a better Opinion of your Taste and Discernment, than to harbour any such Suspicion.

Ther. The Scriptures are certainly an inexhaustible Fund of Materials, for the most delightful and ennobling Discourse. When we consider the Author of those sacred Books—that they came originally from *Heaven*—were dictated

dictated by *divine* Wisdom—have the same *consummate* Excellence, as the Works of Creation—It is really surprising, that We are not always searching, by Study, by Meditation, or Converse, into one or other of those grand Volumes.

Asp. When *Secker* preaches, or *Murray* pleads; the Church is crowded, and the Bar thronged. When *Spence* produces the Refinements of Criticism, or *Young* displays the Graces of Poetry; the Press toils, yet is scarce able to supply the Demands of the Public.—Are We *eager* to hear, and *impatient* to purchase, what proceeds from such eloquent Tongues, and masterly Pens? And can We be *coldly indifferent*, when—not the most accomplished of Mankind—not the most exalted of Creatures—but the ADORABLE Author of all Wisdom, speaks in his revealed Word? Strange! that our Attention does not *hang* * upon the venerable Accents, and our Talk *dwell* upon the incomparable Truths!

Ther. I admire, I must confess, the very *Language* of the Bible. In this, methinks, I discern a Conformity, between the *Book of Nature*, and the *Book of Scripture*.

In

* *St. Luke*, in his evangelical History, uses this beautiful Image, ἐξέχευματο. The People *hung upon* the Lips of their all-wise Teacher. *Luke* xix. 48. Which implies two very strong Ideas—an *Attention*, that nothing could interrupt—and an *Eagerness*, scarce ever to be satisfied.

—————*Pendetque loquentis ab Ore.*

VIRG.

In the Book of Nature, the divine TEACHER speaks, not barely to our Ears, but to all our Senses. And it is very remarkable, how He *varies* his Address!—Observe his grand and august Works. In these, he uses the Style of Majesty. We may call it, the true *Sublime*. It strikes with Awe, and transports the Mind.—View his ordinary Operations. Here, He descends to a plainer Dialect. This may be termed, the *familiar* Style. We comprehend it with Ease, and attend to it with Pleasure.—In the more ornamented Parts of the Creation, He clothes his Meaning with Elegance. All is rich and brilliant. We are delighted; We are charmed. And what is this, but the *florid* Style?

A Variety, somewhat similar, runs through the Scriptures.—Would You see *History*, in all her *Simplicity*, and all her *Force*; most beautifully easy, yet irresistibly striking?—See Her, or rather *feel* her Energy, touching the nicest Movements of the Soul, and triumphing over our Passions, in the inimitable Narrative of *Joseph's* Life.—The Representation of *Esau's* bitter Distress*; the Conversation-Pieces of *Jonathan*, and his gallant Friend †; the memorable Journal of the Disciples going to *Emmaus* ‡; are finished Models of the *Impassioned* and

* *Gen.* xxvii. 30, &c.

† *1 Sam.* xviii, xix, xx.

‡ *Luke* xxiv. 13, &c.

and *Affecting*.—Here is nothing studied; no Flights of Fancy; no Embellishments of Oration. Yet, how inferior is the Episode of *Nisus* and *Eurialus*, though worked up by the most masterly Hand in the World, to the undissembled artless Fervency of these scriptural Sketches*!

Are We pleased with the Elevation and Dignity of an *Heroic Poem*; or the Tenderness and Perplexity of a *Dramatic Performance*? In the Book of *Job*, they are both united, and both unequalled.—Conformably to the exactest Rules of Art, as the Action advances, the Incidents are more alarming, and the Images more magnificent. The Language glows, and the Pathos swells. Till, at last, the DEITY Himself makes his Entrance. He speaks from the Whirlwind, and summons the Creation: summons Heaven, and all its shining Host; the Elements, and their most wonderful Productions; to vouch for the Wisdom of his providential Dispensations.—His Word strikes
 Terror,

* Let a Person of true Taste, peruse, in a *critical View*, the two first Chapters of *St. Luke*. He will there find a Series of the most surprising Incidents, related with the greatest *Simplicity*, yet with the utmost *Majesty*.—All which, wonderfully affecting in themselves, are *heightened* and *illuminated*, by a judicious Intermixture of the sublimest Pieces of Poetry. For my own Part, I know not how to characterize them more properly, than by *Solemon's* elegant Comparison.—*They are as gold Rings set with the Beryl, or as bright Ivory overlaid with Sapphires.* Cantic. v. 14.

Terror, and flashes Conviction: decides the momentous Controversy, and closes the august Drama, with all possible Solemnity and Grandeur.

If We sometimes choose a *plaintive* Strain; such as softens the Mind, and sooths an agreeable Melancholy: are any of the antient Tragedies superior, in the Eloquence of Mourning, to *David's* pathetic Elegy on his beloved *Jonathan**; to his most passionate and inconsolable Moan †, over the lovely but unhappy *Abfalom*;

* 2 Sam. i. 19, &c.

† 2 Sam. xviii. 33. *The King was vehemently affected (***), and went up to the Chamber, and wept: and as He went, He said; O my son Abfalom! my son, my Son Abfalom! Would to GOD I had died for Thee! O Abfalom, my Son, my Son!*—Such a Picture, and so much Pathos; so artless both, and both so exquisite; I must acknowledge, I never met with, among all the Representations of Dignity in Distress.—The King's Troops had gained a signal Victory. His Crown and his Life were rescued from the most imminent Danger. Yet all these joyful Tidings were obliterated by the over-whelming Impetuosity of his Grievs.—The News of *Abfalom's* Death, struck Him like a Dagger. He starts from his Seat. He hastens into Retirement, there to pour out his Soul in copious Lamentation. But his Anguish is too impetuous, to bear a Moment's Restraint. He bursts immediately into a Flood of Tears; and cries, as He goes; *O Abfalom, &c.*

What says *Alexandrius*, when his Son is slain? When, to sharpen his Sorrow, the pale Corpse, the miserable Spectacle, is before his Eyes, and within his Arms? The most pathetic Word He utters, is

——— *Heu! nunc misero mihi: demum
Exilium infelix, nunc alte Vulnus adærum.*

How languid is *Virgil*! How *ineffectual* the Prince of *Latin* Poetry! compared with the royal Mourner in *Israel*! Most evident,

Abfalom; or to that melodious Woe, which warbles and bleeds, in every Line of *Jeremiab's* Lamentations?

Would We be entertained with the daring Sublimity of *Homer*, or the correct Majesty of *Virgil*? With the expreffive Delicacy of *Horace*, or the rapid Excursions of *Pindar*? Behold them joined, behold them excelled, in the Odes of *Mofes*, and the euchariftic Hymn of *Deborah*; in the exalted Devotion of the Pfalms, and the glorious Enthusiafm of the Prophets.

Afp. Only with this Difference, that the former are *tuneful Triflers* *, and amufe the Fancy with empty Fiction: the latter are Teachers fent from GOD, and make the Soul *wife unto Salvation*.—The Bible, is not only the brighteft Ornament, but the moft invaluable Depositum. On a right, a practical Knowledge of thefe *lively Oracles*, depends the prefent Comfort, and the endlefs Felicity of Mankind. Whatever, therefore, in Study or Converfation, has no Connection with their divine Contents; may be reckoned among the *Toys* of Literature, or the *Cyphers* of Difcourfe.

Tber. Here again the Book of Scripture, is fomewhat like the Magazine of Nature. What can We defire, for our *Accommodation* and *De-*
light,

evident, from this and many other Inftances, is the Superiority of the Scriptures, in copying Nature, and painting the Paflions.

* *Ludit amabiliter.*

light, which this Store-House of Conveniences does not afford? What can We wish, for our *Edification* and *Improvement*, which that Fund of Knowledge does not supply? Of these We may truly affirm, each, in its respective Kind, *is profitable unto all Things*.

Are We Admirers of *Antiquity*?—Here, We are led back, beyond the universal Deluge, and far beyond the Date of any other Annals.—We are introduced among the earliest Inhabitants of the Earth. We take a View of Mankind, in their undisguised primitive Plainness; when the Days of their Life were but little short of a *thousand Years*.—We are brought acquainted with the Original of Nations; with the Creation of the World; and with the Birth of Time itself.

Are We delighted with *vast* Atchievements?—Where is any Thing comparable to the Miracles in *Egypt*, and the Wonders in the Field of *Zoan*? To the Memoirs of the *Israelites*, passing through the Depths of the Sea; sojourning in the inhospitable Desarts; and conquering the Kingdoms of *Canaan*?—Where shall We meet with Instances of martial Bravery, equal to the prodigious Exploits of the *Judges*; or the adventurous Deeds of *Jesse's* valiant Son, and his matchless Band of *Worthies*?—Here, We behold the fundamental Laws of the Universe, sometimes suspended,
some-

sometimes reversed: and not only the Current of *Jordan*, but the Course of Nature controul- ed. In short; when We enter the Field of Scripture, We tread—on *enchanted*, shall I say? rather—on *consecrated* Ground. Where Astonishment and Awe are awakened, at every Turn. Where is all, more than all, the *Marvelous* of Romance*; connected with all the Precision and Sanctity of Truth.

If We want *Maxims* of *Wisdom*, or have a Taste for the *Laconic Style*; how copiously may our Wants be supplied, and how delicately our Taste gratified! Especially, in the Book of *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and some of the *minor* Prophets.—Here, are the most sage Lessons of Instruction; adapted to every Circumstance of Life; formed upon the Experience of all preceding Ages; and perfected by the unerring SPIRIT of Inspiration.—These delivered, with such remarkable Conciseness; that One might venture to say, every Word is a Sentence †. At least, every Sentence may be called an *Apothegm*; sparkling with Brightness of Thought, or weighty with Solidity of Sense. The whole, like a Profu-
sion

* ————*Heroum Fabula veris
 Vincitur Historiis.*

† What *Cicero* said of *Thucydides*, is more eminently true, concerning our royal Moralist, and his rich Collection of Ethics; concerning our evangelical Historians, and their copious Variety of Facts. *Eum adeo esse Rebus plenum referuntque, ut prope Verborum Numerum Numero Rerum æquet.*

fion of Pearls—*each* containing, in a very small Compass, a Value almost immense— *all* heaped up (as an ingenious Critic speaks) with a confused Magnificence, above all Order.

If We look for the *Strength of Reasoning*, and the *Warmth of Exhortation*: the *Insinuating Arts* of genteel Address, or the *manly Boldness* of impartial Reproof: all the Thunder of the Orator, without any of his Ostentation; all the Politeness of the Courtier, without any of his Flattery:—let Us have Recourse to the Acts of the Apostles, and to the Epistles of St. Paul*. These are a *Specimen*, or rather these are the *Standard*, of them all.

I do not wonder, therefore, that a Taste so refined, and a Judgment so correct as *Milton's*, should discern higher Attractives in the Volume

* Another very remarkable Instance of Propriety in St. Paul's Writings, is, That though *diffuse* in the *doctrinal*, they are *concise* in the *preceptive* Parts. On the former, it was absolutely necessary to enlarge. On the latter, it is always judicious to be short. The celebrated Rule of *Horace*,

Quicquid præcipies, esto brevis,

Was never more exactly observed, nor more finely exemplified, than by our Apostolic Author. See that noble String of Precepts, 1 *Thess.* v. 16, 17, &c.—See another choice Collection of the same Kind, *Rom.* xii. 9, 10, &c. In which the *Energy* of the Diction is no less admirable, than the *Conciseness* of the Sentence. Αποσυγκυτες—κολλωμενοι—Φιλοςεργοι—ζεοντες—προσκαιρηροντες—διωκοντες—are some of the most *vigorous* Words, that Language can furnish; and form the most *animated* Meaning, that Imagination can conceive.

lume of Inspiration, than in the most celebrated Authors of *Greece* and *Rome*.

————— *Yet not the more*

*Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt
Clear Spring, or shady Grove, or sunny Hill,
Smit with the Love of sacred Song : but CHIEF
Thee Sion, and the flowery Banks beneath,
That wash thy hallowed Feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit*.*

Asp. Another Recommendation of the Scriptures, is, That they afford the most *awful* and most *amiable* Manifestations of the GODHEAD. His Glory shines, and his Goodness smiles, in those divine Pages, with unparalleled Lustre.—Here, We have a satisfactory Explanation of *our own State*. The Origin of Evil is traced ; the Cause of all our Misery discovered ; and the Remedy, the *infallible* Remedy, both clearly shewn, and freely offered.—The Merits of the bleeding *JESUS*, lay a firm Foundation for all our Hopes : while Gratitude for his dying Love, suggests the most winning Incitement to every Duty.—Morality, *Theron, your* (and let me add, *my*) admired Morality, is delineated in all

* That is, “ He still was pleased to study the Beauties of
“ the antient Poets ; but his highest Delight was in the
“ Songs of *Sion*, in the holy Scriptures, and in these He
“ meditated Day and Night.”

See Dr. *Newton's* Edit.

all its Branches. Is placed upon its proper Basis, and raised to its highest Elevation.—The SPIRIT of GOD is promised, to enlighten the Darkness of our Understandings, and strengthen the Imbecillity of our Wills. What an ample—Can you indulge me, on this favourite Topic ?

Ther. It is, I assure You, equally pleasing to myself. Your Enlargements, therefore, need no Apology.

Asp. What ample Provision is made, by these blessed Books, for *all* our spiritual Wants ! And, in this Respect, how indisputable is their Superiority to all other Compositions !

Is any One convinced of *Guilt*, as provoking Heaven, and ruining the Soul?—Let Him ask *Reason*, to point out a Means of Reconciliation, and a Refuge of Safety. Reason hesitates, as She replies ; “ The DEITY “ *may*, perhaps, accept our Supplications, and “ grant Forgiveness.”—But the Scriptures leave Us not to the *sad Uncertainty* of Conjecture. They speak the Language of clear Assurance. GOD *has* set forth a Propitiation* : He *does* forgive our Iniquities † : He *will* remember our Sins no more ‡.

Are We *assaulted* by Temptation, or *averse* to Duty?—*Philosophy* may attempt to parry the Thrust, or to stir up the reluctant Mind ;
by

* *Rom.* iii. 25. † *Psal.* ciii. 3. ‡ *Heb.* viii. 12.

by disclosing the *Deformity* of Vice, and urging the *Fitness* of Things. Feeble Expedients! Just as well calculated, to accomplish the Ends proposed; as the flimsy Fortification of a Cobweb, to defend Us from the Ball of a Cannon; or, as the gentle Vibrations of a Lady's Fan, to make a Wind-bound Navy fail.—The Bible recommends no such incompetent Succours. *My Grace*, says its almighty Author, *is sufficient for Thee**.—*Sin shall not have Dominion over You* †.—The great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlasting Strength, *He worketh in Us both to will, and to do, of his good Pleasure* ‡.

Should We be visited with *Sickness*, or overtaken by any *Calamity*, the Consolation which *Plato* offers, is; That such Dispensations coincide with the universal Plan of divine Government. *Virgil* will tell Us, for our Relief; That afflictive Visitations are, more or less, the unavoidable Lot of all Men. Another *Moralist* whispers in the dejected Sufferer's Ear, "Impatience adds to the Load: whereas, " a calm Submission renders it more support-
" able."—Does the Word of Revelation dispense such *spiritless* and *fugitive* Cordials? No: Those sacred Pages inform Us, That Tribulations are fatherly Chastisements; Tokens of our MAKER's Love, and Fruits of
his

* 2 Cor. xii. 9. † Rom. vi. 15. ‡ Phil. ii. 13.

his Care. That they are intended to work *in Us*, the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness; and to work out *for Us*, an eternal Weight of Glory*.

Should We, under the Summons of *Death*, have Recourse to the most celebrated *Comforters* in the Heathen World; they would increase our Apprehensions, rather than mitigate our Dread. Death is represented, by the great Master of their Schools; as “The most formidable of all Evils.” They were not able *positively* to determine, Whether the Soul survived; and never so much as *dreamt* of the Resurrection of the Body.—Whereas, the Book of GOD strips the Monster of his Horrors, or turns Him into a Messenger of Peace: gives Him an Angel’s Face, and a Deliverer’s Hand. Ascending to the *Souls* of the Righteous, an immediate *Translation* into the Regions of Bliss; and ensuring to
their

* 2 Cor. iv. 17. What are *all* the *consolatory* Expedients, prescribed in all the Volumes of Heathen Morality, compared with this *one* Recipe of Revelation? They are, in Point of cheering Efficacy, somewhat like the *Froth* on the Conflux of a thousand rapid Streams, compared with a single Draught of *Homer’s Nephenthe*. Which, He tells Us, was

*Temper’d with Drugs of sov’reign Use, t’ assuage
The boiling Bojom of tumultuous Rage;
To clear the cloudy Front of wrinkled Care,
And dry the tearful Sluices of Despair.
Charm’d with that virtuous Draught, th’ exalted Mind
All Sense of Woe delivers to the Wind.*

Odyss. IV.

their *Bodies*, a most advantageous *Revival*, at the Restoration of all Things.

Inestimable Book! It heals the Maladies of Life, and subdues the Fear of Death. It strikes a lightfome Vista, through the Gloom of the Grave; and opens a charming, a glorious Prospect of Immortality in the Heavens.

These, with many other Excellencies peculiar to the Scriptures, One would imagine more than sufficient, to engage every *sensible* Heart in their Favour; and introduce them, with the *highest Esteem*, into every improved Conversation.—They had such an Effect upon the *finest* Genius, and *most accomplished** Person, that former or latter Ages can boast. In-
fomuch,

* If we consider *David*, in the great Variety of his fine Qualifications—The Ornaments of his Person, and the far more illustrious Endowments of his Mind—The surprizing Revolutions in his Fortune; sometimes, reduced to the lowest Ebb of Adversity; sometimes, riding upon the highest Tide of Prosperity—His singular Dexterity, in extricating Himself from Difficulties; and peculiar Felicity, in accommodating Himself to all Circumstances—The Prizes He won, as a youthful Champion; and the Victories He gained, as an experienced General—His masterly Hand upon the Harp, and his inimitable Talent for Poetry—The admirable Regulations of his royal Government, and the incomparable Usefulness of his public Writings—The Depth of his Repentance, and the Height of his Devotion—The Vigour of his Faith in the divine Promises, and the Ardour of his Love to the divine Majesty—If We consider these, with several other Marks of Honour and Grace, which enoble the History of his Life; We shall see such an *Assemblage* of shining Qualities, as perhaps were never united in any *other* merely human Character.

This

ſomuch, that He made, while living, this public Declaration; and left it, when He died, upon everlaſting Record—*Thy Words are ſweeter to my Mouth, than Honey**.—*Thy Law is my Meditation all the Day†*.—*I will ſpeak of thy Teſtimonies, even before Kings‡*.—If David taſted ſo much Sweetneſs in a *ſmall*, and that the *leaſt* valuable, Part of the divine Word; how much richer is the Feaſt to Us! Since the Goſpel is added to the Law, and the Canon of Scripture completed! Since (to borrow the Words of a Prophet) the LORD GOD *has ſealed up the Sum*; has put the laſt Hand to his Work; and rendered it *full of Wiſdom, and perfect in Beauty*||.

Ther. Another very diſtinguiſhing Peculiarity of the ſacred Writings, juſt occurs to my Mind—The Method, of communicating Advice, or adminiſtering Reproof, by *Parables*. A Method, which levels itſelf to the *loweſt* Apprehenſion, without giving Offence to the *moſt ſupercilious* Temper. Yet, is as much ſuperior, to plain unornamented Precept; as the enlivened Scenes of a well-wrought Tragedy,

This Obſervation was expunged. But, upon maturer Thoughts, it is offered to the Public. In order to convince a *polite* Reader, That the Love of the Scriptures, and the Exerciſe of Devotion, are by no Means the low Peculiarities of a *vulgar* Mind.

* *Pſal.* cxix. 103. † *Pſal.* cxix. 97. ‡ *Pſal.* cxix. 46.
 || *Ezek.* xxviii. 12.

gedy, are more impressive and affecting, than a simple Narration of the Plot.

Our LORD was asked, by a Student of the *Jewish* Law, *Who is my Neighbour?* Which implied another Question, *How is he to be loved?*—The Inquirer was *conceited* of Himself; yet, *ignorant* of the Truth, and *deficient* in his Duty. Had the wise Instructor of Mankind abruptly declared, *You neither know the former, nor fulfil the latter.* Probably, the Querist would have reddened with Indignation, and departed in a Rage.—Therefore, to teach, and not disgust; to *convince* the Man of his Error, and not *exasperate* his Mind; the blessed *JESUS* frames a Reply, as amiable in the Manner, as it was pertinent to the Purpose.

A certain Person, going down from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, fell among Thieves*. Not content to rob Him of his Treasure, they strip Him of his Garments; wound Him with great Barbarity; and leave Him half dead.—Soon after this calamitous Accident, a Traveler happens to come along that very Road. And, what renders Him more likely to administer Relief, He is one of the *sacred Order*. One, who taught others the lovely Lessons of Humanity and Charity; and was, therefore, under the strongest Obligations, to exemplify them
in

* *Luke* x. 30.

in his own Practice. He juſt glances an Eye upon the deplorable Object : ſees Him ſtretched on the cold Ground, and weltering in his Blood. But, takes no farther Notice. Nay, to avoid the Trouble of an Inquiry, paſſes by on the other Side.—Scarce was He departed, when a *Levite* approaches. This Man *comes nearer, and looks on* the miſerable Spectacle. Takes a leiſurely and attentive Survey * of the Caſe. And, though every Gaſh in the bleeding Fleſh, cried and pleaded for Compaſſion ; this Miniſter of the Sanctuary, neither ſpeaks a Word to comfort, nor moves a Hand to help.—Laſt comes a *Samaritan* † ; one of the
 abhorred

* This ſeems to be the Import of *ελθων και ιδων*. *Luke* x. 32. This *diverſifies* the Idea, and *heightens* the Deſcription of *Jewiſh* Inhumanity.

† If this was a Parable, We cannot but admire the Accuracy of our LORD, both in *laying* the Scene, and *ſelecting* the Circumſtances.—It is the Maxim of a great Critic,

Fieſta Voluptatis Cauſa ſunt proxima veris.

And how very apparent is the Air of *Probability*, in this ſacred Apologue!—The Way from *Jeruſalem* to *Jericho*, lying through a Deſart, was much infeſted by Thieves, and too commodious for their Purpoſes of Violence.—What could be more likely to happen, than the Paſſage of a *Prieſt* and *Levite* along that Road ? Since *Jericho* was a City, appropriated to the *Levitical* Order ; and contained no leſs than twelve thouſand Attendants, on the Service of the Temple.

How judiciously is the *principal* Figure circumſtanced!—Had the *Calamity* befallen a *Samaritan*, it would have made but *feeble* Impreſſions of Pity ; and thoſe, perhaps, immediately effaced by *ſtronger* Emotions of Hate. But, when it was a *Jew*, that lay bleeding to Death ; the Representation was ſure to *interreſt* the Hearer in the Diſtreſs, and awaken

abhorred Nation; whom the *Jew* hated with the most implacable Malignity. Though the *Levite* had neglected an expiring Brother: though the Priest had with-held his Pity, from one of the LORD's peculiar People: the very Moment this *Samaritan* sees the unhappy Sufferer, He melts into Commiseration. He forgets the *imbittered Foe*, and considers only the *distressed Fellow-creature*. He springs from his Horse, and resolves to intermit his Journey. The Oil and Wine, intended for his own Refreshment, He freely converts into healing Unguents. He binds up the Wounds; sets

a tender Concern.—Had the *Relief* been administered by a *Jew*, the Benevolence would have shone, but in a much fainter Light. Whereas, when it came from the Hands of a *Samaritan*, whom all the *Jews* had agreed to abjure, to execrate, and rank with the very Fiends of Hell, how bright—how charmingly and irresistibly bright—was the Lustre of *such* Charity!

Let the Reader consider the Temper, expressed in that *rancorous* Reflection; *Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a Devil*, John viii. 48.—Let Him compare that inveterate Malevolence, with the *benign* and *compassionate* Spirit of our amiable Traveler.—Then, let Him say; Whether he ever beheld a finer or a bolder Contrast? Whether, upon the Whole, He ever saw the *Ordonnance* of descriptive Painting, more *justly designed*, or more *happily executed*?

I would beg Leave to observe farther, That the *virulent* Animosity of the *Jew* discovers itself, even in the Lawyer's Reply; *He that shewed Mercy on Him*. He will not so much as name the *Samaritan*. Especially in a Case, where He could not be named without an honourable Distinction.—So strongly marked, and so exactly preserved, are the *τὰ ἴδη*. the *Manners* or distinguishing Qualities of each Person, in the sacred Narrations!

fets the disabled Stranger, upon his own Beast, and, with all the *Affiduity* of a *Servant*, with all the *Tenderness* of a *Brother*, conducts Him to an Inn. There, He deposits Money, for his present Use: charges the Host to omit nothing, that might conduce to the Comfort of his Guest: and promises, to defray the whole Expence of his Lodging, his Maintenance, and his Cure.

What a lively Picture this, of the most *disinterested* and *active* Benevolence! A Benevolence, which excludes no Persons, not even Strangers or Enemies, from its tender Regards. Which disdains no Condescension, grudges no Cost, in its Labours of Love.— Could any Method of Conviction have been *more forcible*, and at the same Time *more pleasing*, than the Interrogatory, proposed by our LORD, and deduced from the Story? *Which now of these Three, thinkest Thou, was Neighbour unto Him, that fell among the Thieves?*—Or, can there be an Advice, more *suitable* to the Occasion; more *important* in its Nature; or expressed with a more *sententious* Energy; than *Go Thou, and do likewise?*—In this Case, the Learner instructs, the Delinquent condemns, Himself. *Bigotry* hears away its Prejudice; and *Pride* (when the Moral so sweetly, so imperceptibly insinuates) even *Pride* itself lends a willing Ear to Admonition.

Asp.

Asp. It has been very justly remarked, That this *Eloquence of Similitudes*, is equally affecting to the Wise, and intelligible to the Ignorant.—It *shows* *, rather than *relates*, the Point to be illustrated.—It has been admired, by the best Judges, in all Ages. But, never was carried to its *highest Perfection*, till our LORD spoke the Parable of the *Prodigal* †.—Which has a *Beauty*, that no Paraphrase can heighten: a *Perस्पicuity*, that renders all Interpretation needless: and a *Force*, which every Reader, not totally insensible, must feel.

Ther. The Condescension and Goodness of GOD are, every where, conspicuous.—In the Productions of Nature, He conveys to Us the most *valuable* Fruits, by the Intervention of the *loveliest* Blossoms. Though the Present is, in itself, extremely acceptable; He has given it an *additional Endearment*, by the Beauties which array it, or the Perfumes which surround it.—In the Pages of Revelation likewise, He has communicated to Us the most *glorious Truths*, adorned with all the *Graces of Composition*. Such as may polish the Man of Genius, and improve the Man of Worth. Such as highly delight our Imagination, even while

* *Discentem*, says *Seneca* upon the Subject, & *audientem in rem presentem adducunt*. Epist. lix.

† *Luke* xv. 11.

while they cultivate and refine our Morals. —So that they really are, as one of their divine Authors very elegantly speaks; *Like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver* *.

Asp. Who then would not gladly receive that gracious Exhortation? *Let the Word of CHRIST dwell in You richly* †. Who would not willingly obey that benign Command? *Thou shalt talk of it, when Thou sittest in thine House, and when Thou walkest by the Way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up* ‡.

When I consider the *Language* of the Scriptures, and sometimes experience their Energy on my Soul; I am inclined to say—“ Other
“ Writings, though polished with the nicest
“ Touches of Art, only *tinkle* on the Ear,
“ or affect Us like the Shepherd’s Reed. But
“ these,

* *Prov. xxv. 11.*—*Theron* follows the received Translation. I should prefer the Exposition of *Glassius*; who supposes *רְשֵׁתֵי כֶסֶף* to signify, *Keticula argentea, in quibus Oculi sunt minutissimi, penetrabiles tamen Visu.* According to this Interpretation, the Passage will present Us with *Apples of Gold in Net-work, or Lattice-work, of Silver.* Where the exquisitely fine Fruit, receives a new Charm, by shewing itself through the elegant Apertures of the Silver.

† *Coloss. iii. 16.* *The Word of CHRIST*; is the Apostle calls the whole inspired Writings, and thereby asserts the Divinity of his MASTER—*Dwell*; not make a short Stay, or an occasional Visit, but take up a fixed and stated Residence—*Richly*; in the largest Measure, and with the greatest Efficacy; so as to fill the Memory; sway the Will; and aduate all the Affections.

‡ *Deut. vi. 7.*

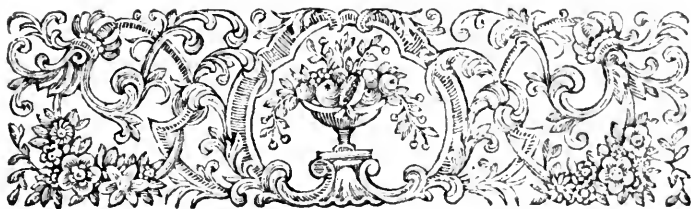
“ these, even amidst all their noble Negli-
 “ gence, *strike—alarm—transport Us—some-*
 “ what like the Voice of Thunder, or the
 “ Arch-Angel’s Trumpet.”

When I consider the *Contents* of the Scrip-
 tures; and believe myself interested, in the
 Promises they make, and the Privileges they
 confer; I am induced to cry out—“ What
 “ are all the other Books in the World, com-
 “ pared with these invaluable Volumes? No
 “ more than an *entertaining* Novel, or a few
 “ *prudential* Rules for domestic Oeconomy,
 “ compared with a *Parent’s Will*; a *royal*
 “ *Charter*; or an *imperial* Grant of Titles and
 “ Manors.”

All these Circumstances remind me of an
Encomium, most deservedly given to the BIBLE.
 Which, though quite *artless*, is, I think,
 abundantly more expressive, than the most la-
 boured Efforts of Rhetoric.—It came from
 the Lips of a Martyr. Who, being condemned
 to die, for his inviolable Adherence to the
 Doctrines of Scripture; when he arrived at
 the Stake, and had composed Himself for Exe-
 cution, took his final Leave in these affecting
 Words: “ Farewel Sun and Moon! Farewel
 “ all the Beauties of Creation, and Comforts
 “ of Life! Farewel my honoured Friends!
 “ Farewel my beloved Relations! And fare-
 “ wel thou *precious, precious Book of GOD!*”

Alpasio had scarce uttered the last Sentence, when a Servant came to let them know; “Supper was upon the Table.”—Very opportunely, said *Theron*, has our Repast waited, till our Conference is ended. We have shewed, what a large Field of delightful Speculation, the Scriptures open; and what ample Materials for the most refined Discourse*, they afford. As nothing can be more ungraceful, than to neglect in our own Conduct, what We recommend to the Practice of Others; let Us, this very Night, begin to ennoble our Interviews with these improving Subjects. Let Us endeavour to make religious Conversation, which is in all Respects desirable, in some Degree fashionable.

* Should the serious Reader want any further Persuasives, to this most beneficial Practice; He may see—How particularly our divine MASTER observes the Strain of our Conversation; *Luke xxiv. 17.*—How strictly He has commanded such social Communications, as may tend to the Use of Edifying, *Eph. iv. 29.*—And what an Evidence will arise from this Article, either for our Acquittal or Condemnation, at the Day of everlasting Judgment, *Matt. xii. 36, 37.*



DIALOGUE II.



THE next Morning, when Breakfast was over, *Theron* and *Aspasio* took a Walk into the Garden— Their Spirits cheared, and their Imaginations lively— Gratitude glowing in their Hearts, and the whole Creation smiling around them.

The Spot adjoining to the House, was appropriated to the Cultivation of *Flowers*.—In a Variety of handsome Compartments, were assembled the choicest Beauties of blooming Nature. Here, the *Hyacinth* hung her filken Bells, or the *Lilies* reared their silver Pyramids. There, stood the neat *Narcissus*, loosely * attired in a Mantle of snowy Lustre; or the splendid *Ranunculus* wore a full-trimmed Suit of radiant Scarlet. *Pinks* were rising to enamel the Borders; *Roses* were opening to dress the Walls; furrounded, on all Sides, with a Profusion of beauteous Forms, either latent in the

* ———— *Hiantem Floræ decoræ
Narcissum.*

the Stalk, or bursting the Buds, or blown into full Expansion.

This was bounded by a slight Partition; a Sort of verdant Parapet. Through which they descend by an easy Flight of Steps; and are presented with the elegant Simplicity of the *Kitchen-Garden*.—In one Place, You might see the *Marigold* flowering, or the *Beans* in Blossom. In another, the *Endive* curled her Leaves, and the Lettuce thickened her Tufts: *Collyflowers* sheltered their fair Complexion, under a green Umbrella; while the *Burrage* dishevelled * her Locks, and braided them with blooming Jewels, of a finer Azure than the finest Saphires.—On the *sunny Slopes*, the *Cucumber* and *Melon* lay basking in the collected Beams. On the *raised Beds*, the *Artichoke* seemed to be erecting a Standard, while the *Asparagus* shot † into Ranks of Spears. The *level Ground* produced all Manner of cooling Sallets and nourishing Esculents. Nothing was wanting to furnish out the wholesome Luxury of an *Antediluvian* Banquet.

Soon, a high Wall intervenes. Through which a Wicket opens, and transmits them into the regular and equi-distant Rows of an *Orchard*.—This Plantation is so nicely adjusted, that

* Referring to the *loose irregular* Manner of its Foliation.

† Alluding, not only to the *Shape*, but also to the *Growth* of this Plant; which is so unusually quick, that it may almost be said to *start*, rather than to *rise* out of the Earth.

that it looks like an Arrangement of rural Piazzas, or a Collection of diversified Villas. The Eye is, every where, entertained with the exactest Uniformity; and darts, with unobstructed Ease, from one End of the branching Files to the Other.—On all the Boughs, lay a lovely Evolution of *Blossoms*; arrayed in milky White, or tinged with the softest Red. Crouding into one general Cluster, without relinquishing any vacant Space for Leaves, they formed the fairest, the gayest, the grandest Alcove, that Fancy itself can imagine.—It is really like the *Court* of the *Graces*. None can approach it, without finding his Ideas brightened, and feeling his Temper exhilarated.

Contiguous to this correct Disposition of Things, Nature had thrown a *Wilderness*; hoary, grotesque, and magnificently confused. It stretched itself, with a large circular Sweep, to the North; and secured both the Olitory and the Orchard from incommoding Winds.—Copses of Hazel, and flowering Shrubs, filled the lower Spaces. While Poplars quivered aloft in Air, and Pines pierced the Clouds with their leafy Spires. Here, grew Clumps of Fir, clad in everlasting Green: there, stood Groves of Oak, that had weathered, for Ages, the wintry Storm.—Amidst this woody Theatre, ran a *winding Walk*; lined with Elms of insuperable Height: whose Branches, uniting at
the

the Top, reared a stately Arch, and projected a solemn Shade. It was impossible to enter this lofty Labyrinth, without being struck with a *pleasing Dread*. As they proceed, every Inflection discloses a deeper Gloom, and awakens a more pensive Attention.

Having strolled in this darksome Avenue, without a Speck of Sunshine, without a Glimpse of the Heavens; on a sudden, they step into open Day—Surprising! cries *Aspasio*. What a Change is this! What *delightful Enchantment* is Here!—One Instant, whelmed in *Trophonius's Cave**; where Horror frowns, and Darkness lours. Transported, the next, into the romantic Scenes of *Arcadia*; where all is lightsome, and all is gay.—Quick as Thought †, the Arches of Heaven expand their Azure.

* The Reader may find a *curious* Account of this *Cave*, together with a very *humorous*, and (which should always accompany Humour, or else it will be like a Sting without the Honey,) an *improving* Description of its Effects. *Spect.* Vol. VIII. N^o 598, 599.

† Such a sudden Alteration of the Prospect, is beautifully described by *Milton*;

*As when a Scout,
Through dark and desert Ways, with Peril gone
All Night, at last by Break of chearful Dawn
Obtains the Brow of some high-climbing Hill,
Which to his Eye discovers unaware
The goodly Prospect of some foreign Land,
First seen; or some renown'd Metropolis,
With glistening Spires and Pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising Sun gilds with his Beams.*

Azure. Turrets and Spires shoot into the Skies. Towns, with their spacious Edifices, spread themselves to the admiring View.—Those Lawns, green with freshest Herbage; those Fields, rich with undulating Corn; where were they all, a Moment ago?—It brings to my Mind that remarkable Situation of the *Jewish* Law-giver; when, elevated on the Summit of *Pisgab*, He surveyed the goodly Land of Promise—surveyed *the Rivers, the Floods, the Brooks of Honey and Butter*—surveyed *the Mountains dropping with Wine, and the Hills flowing with Milk**—Surveyed all with those Eyes, which, for forty tedious Years, had been confined to dry Sands, ragged Rocks, and the irksome Wastes of a desolate howling Wilderness.

Here they seated themselves, on the first *mossy † Hillock*, which offered its Couch. The rising Sun had visited the Spot, to dry up the Dews, and exhale the Damps, that might endanger Health; to open the Violets, and expand

* This is the Language of the Book of *Job*, and the Prophecy of *Joel*. A Language, like the Scene it describes, not beautiful only, but beautiful and rich even to *Luxuriancy*.—One would almost suspect, the *Lyric* Poet had read these Passages, and attempted an Imitation of their Delicacies.

Vinique Fontem, Lactis & uberes

Cantare Rivos, atque truncis

Lapsa cavis iterare Mellis.

Lib. II. Od. 19.

† *Horace* would have called it, *Cespes fortuitus*.

pand the Primroses, that decked the Green. The whole Shade of the Wood was collected *behind* them; and a beautiful, extensive, diversified Landſchape ſpread itſelf *before* them.

Theron, according to his uſual Cuſtom, made many improving Remarks on the Proſpect, and its Furniture. He traced the Footſteps of an *all-comprehending* Contrivance, and pointed out the Strokes of *inimitable* Skill. He obſerved the *grand Exertions* of Power, and the *rich Exuberance* of Goodneſs, moſt ſignally, moſt charmingly conſpicuous through the Whole.— Upon one Circumſtance He enlarged, with a particular Satisfaction.

Ther. See! *Alpaſio*; how all is calculated, to adminiſter the higheſt *Delight* to Mankind.— Thoſe Trees and Hedges, which ſkirt the Extremities of the Landſchape; ſtealing away from their real Bulk, and leſſening by gentle Diminutions; appear like elegant *Pictures* in *Miniature*. Thoſe, which occupy the nearer Situations, are a Set of noble *Images*; ſwelling upon the Eye, in *full Proportion*, and in a Variety of graceful Attitudes. Both of them *ornamenting* the ſeveral Apartments of our common Abode, with a Mixture of Delicacy and Grandeur.

The *Bloſſoms*, that array the Branches; the *Flowers*, that embroider the Mead; addreſs and entertain *our* Eyes with every Charm of Beau-

Beauty *. Whereas, to *other* Creatures, they are destitute of all those Attractives; which result from a Combination of the loveliest Colours, and most alluring Forms.—Yonder *Streams*, that glide, with smooth Serenity, along the Valleys; glittering to the distant View, like Sheets of polished Crystal; or soothing the attentive Ear, with the Softness of aquatic Murmurs; are no less *exhilarating* to the Fancy, than to the Soul, through which they pass.—The huge enormous *Mountain*; the steep and dizzy *Precipice*; the pendent Horrors of the craggy *Promontory*: wild and tremendous as they are, furnish out an agreeable Entertainment to the human Mind; and *please*, even while they *terrify*. Whereas, the Beasts take no other Notice of those

* Therefore, when the Prophet describes the Christian Church, adorned with all the *Beauties of Holiness*, He borrows his Imagery from these amiable Objects. *Israel shall bud and blossom*, Itai. xxvii. 6.—Nay, *the very Wilderness*, even the Gentile Nations, being converted unto *CHRIST*, shall blossom as a *Rose*, Itai. xxxv. 1.—*I will be as the Dew unto Israel; He shall blossom as the Lily, and cast forth his Roots as Lebanon*, Hof. xiv. 6. What an elegant Picture! And what a comfortable Promise! Here is the Queen of Flowers, and the Prince of Trees. Nothing fairer than the full-blown Lily: nothing firmer than the deep-rooted Cedars. Yet these are a Representation (and but a faint Representation) of the *Comeliness*, which the all-gracious REDEEMER puts upon his People; and of the *Stability*, which they derive from his inviolable Faithfulness.

N. B. The fourteenth of *Hofea*, is one of those Chapters, which, for their *peculiar* Importance and Excellency, deserve not only to have a *Turn* in our Reading, but a *Place* in our Memory.

those majestic Deformities, than only to avoid the Dangers, they threaten.

Alp. How wonderfully do such Considerations *exalt* our Idea of the CREATOR's Goodness; his very *distinguishing* Goodness to Mankind! And should they not proportionably *endeavour* that eternal Benefactor to our Affections? — His ever-bountiful Hand has scattered Blessings, and with profuse Liberality, among all the Ranks of animated Existence. But to *Us* He exercises a Beneficence of a very superior Kind. *We* are treated as his peculiar Favourites. *We* are admitted to Scenes of Delight, which none but Ourselves are capable of relishing.

Ther. Another Remark, though very obvious, is equally important. The Destination of all these external Things, is no less *advantageous*, than their Formation is *beautiful*. — The Bloom, which engages the Eye with its delicate Hues, is cherishing the *Embryo Fruit*; and forming, within its silken Folds, the Rudiments of a *future Dessert*. — Those Streams, which shine from afar, like fluid Silver, are much more valuable in their Productions, and beneficial in their Services, than they are amiable in their Appearance. They distribute, as they roll along their winding Banks, *Cleanliness* to our Houses, and *Fruitfulness* to our Lands. They nourish, and at their own Expence, a
never-

never-failing Supply of the *finest Fish*. They visit our Cities, and attend our Wharfs, as so many *public Vehicles*, ready to set out at all Hours.

Those Sheep, which give their Udders to be drained by the busy frisking Lambs, are fattening their Flesh for *our Support*; and while they fill their own Fleeces, are providing for *our comfortable Clothing*.—Yonder Kine, some of which are browsing upon the tender Herb; others, satiated with Pasturage, ruminates under the shady Covert; though conscious of no such Design, are concocting for our Use, one of the *softest, purest, healthiest* Liquors in the World.—The Bees, that fly humming about our Seat, and pursue their Work on the fragrant Blossoms, are collecting Balm and Sweetness, to compose the richest of Syrups. Which, though the Produce of *their Toil*, is intended for *our Good*.

Nature, and her whole Family, are our *obsequious* Servants, our *ever-active* Labourers. They bring the Fruits of their united Industry, and pour them into our Lap, or deposit them in our Store-Rooms.

Asp. Who can ever sufficiently admire this immense Benignity?—The SUPREME Disposer of Events, has commanded Delight and Profit to walk Hand in Hand, through his ample Creation: making all Things so *per-*

fectly pleasing, as if Beauty was their only End; yet all Things so *eminently servicable* *, as if Usefulness had been their sole Design.—And, as a most winning Invitation to our Gratitude, He has rendered Man the Center, in which all the *Emanations* of his Beneficence, diffused through this Terrestrial System, finally *terminate*.

But, my dear *Theron*, is not this apparent, in a much more wonderful Manner, throughout the whole Oeconomy of REDEMPTION?—It were a small Thing for this inferior Class of *unintelligent* Creatures, to be continually employing themselves for our Benefit. Even the *Son of the most High GOD*, through all his incarnate State, acted the very same Part.—He took Flesh, and bore the Infirmities of human Nature, not for Himself, but *for Us Men, and our Salvation*. He suffered Want, and endured Misery in all its Forms; that *We* might possess the Fulness of Joy, and abound in Pleasures for evermore.—When he poured out his Soul in Agonies, under the Curse of an *avenging* Law; what other End had He in View, but to make *Us* Partakers of eternal Blessedness? When He fulfilled, perfectly fulfilled the whole *commanding* Law; was it not

on

* *Omnes Mundi Partes ita constitutæ sunt, ut neque ad Usus meliores esse poterint, neque ad Speciem pulchriores.*

on purpose, that his Merits might be imputed to Us? That *We*, by *his* Obedience, might be made righteous? Yes;

—————*For Us He liv'd,*

Toil'd for our Ease, and for our Safety bled.

Nothing in the whole Course——

Ther. Pardon me for interrupting You, *Assasio*. I have no Objection to the general Drift of your Discourse. But that particular Notion of *imputed Righteousness*, has always appeared to me in a very ridiculous Light. And I must say, that such a *Puritanical Nostrum* makes a very unbecoming Figure, amongst your other manly and correct Sentiments of Religion.

Assp. You know, *Theron*, I have long ago disfavoured that *ignoble* Prejudice, which rejects Doctrines, or despises Persons, because they happen to be branded with contemptible Names. 'Tis true, the Writers styled *Puritans*; are remarkable for their Attachment to this *Peculiarity* of the Gospel. 'It runs through all their Theological Works; and very eminently distinguishes them, from the Generality of our modern Treatises.—But, must it *therefore* be wrong, because maintained by that particular Set of People? Or, are they the *only* Advocates for this important Truth?

Ther. Aye: it is as I suspected. I have lately conjectured, from several Hints in my *Assasio's*

Discourse, that He has been warping to the low ungentleman-like Peculiarities of those whimsical Fanatics.

Asp. I cannot conceive, why You should call them *whimsical*.—To settle Faith on its *proper Basis*, the meritorious Righteousness of the REDEEMER; and to deduce Obedience from its *true Origin*, the Love of GOD shed abroad in the Heart—To *search* the Conscience, and *convince* the Judgment—To *awaken* the lethargic, and *comfort* the afflicted Soul—And all, from a thorough Knowledge, joined to a masterly Application, of the divine Word—These, sure, are not *whimsical* Talents, but *real* Excellencies. Yet these, if We may credit History, entered into the Preaching; these, if We will examine impartially, are to be found in the Writings of the Puritans.—And a *Pearl*, you will please to remember, is a Pearl still, though it should hang in the *Ethiopian's* Ear.

Ther. *Ethiopian* indeed! You have truly characterized, that *demure* and *gloomy* Generation. I hope, You don't intend to introduce their Solemnity and Reserve, into your easy and engaging Conversation. Though, for aught I can judge, this would be no more ungraceful, than to patch such *antiquated* Notions on your own *refined* Scheme of Christianity.

Asp. My dear Friend, You are too ludicrous; and I begin to catch the Infection.

We

We had better return to our first Topic. Let us contemplate the Wonders of Creation; and as We *admire* the Works, learn to *adore* the Maker.

Ther. None of your Evasions, good *Aspasio*. You must not think to put me off at this Rate. I have wanted an Opportunity, to rally you upon this Head; and to argue or laugh You, out of these *religious Oddities*.

Asp. If You will not agree to Terms of Peace; I hope, you will allow some Cessation of Arms. At least, till I can muster my Forces, and prepare for the Vindication of my Principles.

Ther. No: upon the Spot, and out of Hand, You are required to answer for yourself, and these same queer Opinions.—I shall serve You, as the *Roman Consul* served the *procrastinating Monarch*. When He demurred about his Reply to the Demands of the Senate, and said, *He would consider of the Matter*: the resolute Ambassador drew a Circle round him with his Cane, and insisted upon a positive Answer, before he stepped over those Limits.

Asp. This, however, You will give me Leave to observe, That the Affair is of a *very serious Nature*. Upon Condition, that you will dismiss your Flourishes of Wit, and Strokes of Satyr; I will acquaint You with the Reasons, which have made me a thorough Convert to

this Doctrine.—Once, I held it in the utmost Contempt; and pitied the Simplicity of (as I then styled them) its *deluded* Admirers. But, I am now become *such* a Fool, that I may be *truly* wife, and *substantially* happy. I have seen my *ruined* State; and I bless GOD for this sovereign *Restorative*. It is the Source of my strongest Consolations, and the very Foundation of my eternal Hopes.

Ther. Excuse me, *Aspasio*; if the Vivacity of my Temper, and the seemingly uncouth Tenet, kindled me into a more humorous Gaiety, than became the Occasion. You speak of the Point, with so much Seriousness, and in such weighty Terms, as check my Levity, and command my Respect. Be pleased to execute, what You have promised; and the most *engaged* Attention of my Mind, shall atone for the *petulant* Sallies of my Tongue.

Asp. To conceive a Dislike of any Doctrine, only because Persons of a particular Denomination, have been very officious to promote its Reception; this is hardly consistent with an *impartial* Inquiry after Truth.

Ther. I grant it, *Aspasio*. And I should be ashamed of my Opposition, if it was founded on so slight a Bottom. But, abstracted from all *Party-Considerations*, I can see nothing in this supposed Article of our Faith, that may

recommend it to the unprejudiced Inquirer.—What can be more *awkward* than the Term, or more *irrational* than the Sentiment?

Asp. The Word *imputed*, when used in this Connection, may possibly convey a disagreeable Sound to the Ears of some People. Because, they look upon it, as the peculiar Phraseology of a few *superstitious Sectarists*; and reject it, merely on the Foot of that unreasonable Surmise.—But, how can *You* be disgusted at the Expression, *Theron*; who have so often read it, in the most approved and judicious Writers? *St. Paul*, who might affirm with Relation to his Epistles, much more truly than the Painter concerning his Pourtraits, *I write for Eternity**; scruples not to use this awkward Language, several Times in the same Chapter †. *Milton*, the Correctness of whose Taste, and the Propriety of whose Style, no Person of Genius will ever question; delights to copy, in various Parts of his incomparable Poem, the Apostle's Diction.—Authorized by *such* Precedents, it is superior to Cavil, and warranted beyond all Exception.

As

* Alluding to the Painter, who, apologizing for the *slow* Procedure and scrupulously *nice* Touches of his Pencil, said; *Æternitati pingo, I paint for eternity*. And those Strokes had need be correct, which are intended to survive, so long as Time itself shall last.

† See *Rom. iv.* In which single Chapter, some Branch of the Word λογίζεσθαι, *to be imputed*, occurs no less than ten or eleven Times.

As to the *Sentiment*, I take it to be the *very fundamental* Article of the Gospel: and I believe, whoever is acquainted with ecclesiastical History, will allow, that it bore the *principal Sway*, in extricating Us from Popish Darkeness, and introducing the *Reformation*.—What says our LORD, with regard to the Love of GOD, and the Love of our Neighbour? *On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets*. Much the same would I venture to say, concerning the Imputation of our Sins to *CHRIST*, and the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness to Us: *On these two Doctrines hang all the Privileges and the whole Glory of the Gospel*.

Ther. In our last Conversation, I must own, I saw a strong Resemblance between the *Works* and the *Word* of GOD. But I never observed any Thing in Nature, that bore the least *Analogy* to imputed Sin, or imputed Righteousness.—To me your two Doctrines seem very unaccountable and irrational.

Asp. That our Sins should be charged upon the only begotten Son of GOD, and that his Righteousness should be made over to sinful Worms, is strange, exceeding strange. The Psalmist calls it, *marvellous Loving-Kindness* *. The Apostle styles it, *Love that passeth Knowledge* †. And it has sometimes, I must freely confess,

* *Psal.* xvii. 7.

† *Eph.* iii. 19.

confess, been almost ready to stagger my Belief.—However, I have found myself relieved in this Perplexity, not only by the *Testimonies of Scripture*, but even from the *Contemplation of Nature*. All Nature is full of strange and mysterious Effects; consequently, is a Voucher for the mysterious Truths of Christianity.

How surprising are the Experiments of *Electricity*, and the occult Qualities of the *Loadstone*! How surprising those countless Legions of *Effluvia*, which transpire from a small odoriferous Body! and those infinite Myriads of *luminous Particles*, which issue from a smaller flaming Substance*! There's not a Blade of Grass, but surpasses the Comprehension of all Mankind; and not a single Atom, but is big with Wonders.—Insomuch, that the *intelligent* Observer can no where fix his Thoughts, without being astonished, transported, and even lost in Admiration.

Since the Procedure of Providence in this visible System, is a continued Series of *stupendous* and *unsearchable* Operations; need We be
alarmed,

* Dr. *Nieuwentyt* has computed, That, from a lighted Candle, about the Size of six to the Pound, there issues, in the Second of a Minute, an Effusion of Particles, vastly more than ten hundred thousand million Times the Number of Sands, which the whole Globe of the Earth contains.—To call this a *very great* Multitude, would be saying little. It nonplusses our *Thoughts*, and exceeds the utmost Stretch of *Imagination*!

alarmed, can We reasonably be offended, if the Scheme of Redemption is equally stupendous, is far more amazing? Yet, though *amazing*, I hope, it will not appear, what You was pleased to insinuate, *irrational*.

Suppose, We *state* the Signification of the *Terms*; and adjust the Boundaries of our Subject, before We enter upon a Survey of its Contents?

Ther. Such a Caution would have prevented, at least have shortened, many a vehement and tedious Controversy.—You see, on yonder Heath, the Preparations for an approaching Race. There stand the *Posts*, which are to mark out the Limits of the Course. Without this previous *restrictive* Care, how irregular would be the Excursions of the contending Steeds! How *difficult*, rather how *impossible*, to declare the Conqueror, and award the Prize!—A clear Definition of Terms, seems equally necessary for candid Disputants. Without it, they may *wrangle* for Ages, and never come to a *Determination*.

Asp. *Justification* is an Act of GOD Almighty's Grace; whereby He acquits his People from Guilt, and accounts them righteous*,
for

* Should any Reader object to the Definition; apprehending, that Justification implies no more, than *the Pardon of Sins*; I would desire Him to suspend his Judgment, till He has perused Dialogue X, where this Point is more circumstantially considered.

for the Sake of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, which was wrought out for them, and is imputed to them.

Ther. Two of your Terms want some further Explication. What do You understand by *CHRIST*'s Righteousness? And what is the Meaning of *imputed*?

Asp. By *CHRIST*'s Righteousness I understand, all the various Instances of his *active* and *passive* Obedience; springing from the perfect Holiness of his Heart; continued through the whole Progress of his Life; and extending to the very last Pang of his Death.—By the Word *imputed* I would signify, That this Righteousness, though performed by our LORD, is *placed to our Account*; is reckoned or adjudged by GOD as *our own*. Inasmuch, that We may *plead* it, and *rely* on it, for the Pardon of our Sins; for Adoption into his Family; and for the Enjoyment of Life eternal.—Shall I illustrate my Meaning by a well attested Fact?

Ther. Nothing gives Us so easy a Conception of any difficult Point, as this Method of explaining, by *parallel* Facts, or proper Similitudes.

Asp. I don't say the Case is parallel. I only produce it, to aid our Conceptions.—*Onesimus*, You know, was *Philemon's* Slave*.

He

* See the Epistle to *Philemon*,

He had perfidiously deserted his Master's Service, and still more perfidiously stole his Goods. The Fugitive, in his guilty Rambles, providentially meets with *St. Paul*. He is charmed and captivated with that gracious Gospel, which proclaims Mercy even for the vilest of Sinners. He becomes a thorough Convert to the Religion of *JESUS*, and is received into the spiritual Patronage of the Apostle. Who, learning his criminal Conduct, and obnoxious State, undertakes to bring about a Reconciliation, with his offended Master: dispatches Him, for this Purpose, with a Letter to *Philemon*: and amongst other Persuasives, writes thus in the poor Criminal's Behalf; *If He hath wronged Thee, or oweth Thee aught, put that on mine Account. I Paul have written it with mine own Hand; I will repay; . . .*

That, which the zealous Preacher of Christianity *offered*, the adored Author of Christianity *executed*.—*We* had revolted from the LORD of all Lords, and broke his holy Commandments. The Son of GOD, infinitely compassionate, vouchsafes to become our Mediator. That nothing might be wanting, to render his Mediation successful, He places Himself in our Stead. The Punishment, which *We* deserved, *He* endures. The Obedience, which *We* owed, *He* fulfils.—Both which, being imputed to Us, and accepted for Us, are the

the Foundation of our Pardon, are the procuring Cause of our Justification.

Ther. Is this the exact Signification of the original Word, which We translate *imputed*?

Asp. In the Book of *Numbers*, We meet with this Phrase; and in such a Connection, as clears up its Meaning.—JEHOVAH enacts a Decree concerning the *Levites*; who had no Vintages to gather, nor any Harvests to reap. He directs them, to present the tenth Part of their Tythes, in the Form of a Heave-Offering: adding, *And this your Heave-Offering shall be reckoned * unto You, as though it were the Corn of the Threshing-Floor, and as the Fulness of*

* *Numb.* xviii. 27. וְהָיָה exactly answers to *St. Paul's* ἐλογισθη, *Rom.* iv. 9.—The same Phrase is used, and the same Doctrine taught, *Levit.* xvii. 3, 4. *What Man soever there be of the House of Israel that killeth an Ox, or Lamb, or Goat in the Camp, or that killeth it out of the Camp; and bringeth it not unto the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, to offer unto the LORD an Offering before the Tabernacle of the LORD, Blood shall be imputed to that Man; He hath shed Blood; and that Man shall be cut off from among his People.*—Here was no Murder committed by the Offender, yet the Crime of Murder is charged, or as the Scripture speaks, *Blood is imputed to Him.* Lest Any should mistake the Meaning of this Expression, or not understand it in its due Latitude, the divine Law-giver is his own Interpreter; *He hath in the Eye of my Justice shed Blood: He shall pass for a Murderer, and be punished as a Murderer; He shall be cut off from among his People.*—Thus also saith the eternal Judge concerning the Believers in *CHRIST*; “The Righteousness of my Son *is imputed* to them: they
“are in the Eye of my Justice *righteous*: they shall be dealt
“with, as righteous Persons; and made Partakers of the
“Kingdom of Heaven”

*of the Wine-Press: as satisfactory to me, and as beneficial to You, as if it was the Tenth of your own Labours, and the Tythe of your own Increase.---*So, the expiatory Sufferings, which *CHRIST* endured; the complete Obedience, which He performed; are reckoned to true Believers. And are altogether *as effectual*, for obtaining their Salvation, as if they were their own personal Qualifications.

Ther. The Imputation mentioned in your Passage, is the Imputation of something done by the *Levites themselves*, not of something done by *Another*. This, I apprehend, is the true Import of the Word, when it occurs affirmatively in Scripture.

Assp. This is *always* the Import—should have been said, in order to make the Objection forcible. But You could not so soon forget the Instance, just now alledged. *St. Paul*, speaking of the Crimes, which *Onesimus* had committed; and of the Injuries, which *Philemon* had sustained; says, “ Charge them all
“ on me*. I will be responsible, for the one,
“ and for the other; as much, as if the whole
“ Guilt had been of my own contracting.”--- Here is supposed, not the Imputation of something done by the Apostle *Himself*, but of *Another's* criminal Behaviour.

Under

* Εμοι ελλογεις.

Under the Law, *Aaron* is commanded to put the Iniquities of *Israel* upon the Scape-Goat*.—The same Sentiment is re-*in*culcated, when the Goat is said to bear the Iniquities of the People †. This was plainly an Imputation; yet, could not possibly be the Imputation of any Thing done by the devoted Animal.—The Effects which took Place upon the Execution of the Ordinance, indicate a Translocation of Guilt. For, the Congregation was cleansed, but the Goat polluted. The Congregation *so* cleansed, that their Iniquities were conveyed away, and to be found no more. The Goat *so* polluted, that it communicated Defilement to the Person, who conducted it into the Land not inhabited.---All this was GOD's own Appointment; and designed, like the whole System of *Mosaic* Ceremonies, to instruct his Church in the Knowledge of the great MEDIATOR: in whose Person and Office that was done *really*, which elsewhere could be done no otherwise than *typically*.

Ther. If this is your Meaning, *Aspasio*; I am apt to think, it will be a difficult Matter to make me a Profelyte. I must be content to pass for one of the stiff-necked Generation. Since, I can see neither *Wisdom* nor *Equity*, in ascribing

* *Levit.* xvi. 21.† *Levit.* xvi. 22.

ascribing to a Person, what He *has* not ; or imputing to Him, what He *does* not.

Asp. It was not *Aspasio*, but his Friend, who set out with a View of making Profelytes. If I can maintain my Ground, and vindicate my own Belief, it will be no inconsiderable Acquisition.—However, I shall not despair of seeing the Partner of my Heart, become a Sharer of my Faith. When We are convinced of our *numberless* Sins ; when We feel the *Depravity* of our *Nature* ; and begin to discern the *inconceivable Sanctity* of our Judge ; THEN, perhaps, this exploded Article may be found worthy of Acceptance—its Constitution admired, as the Wisdom of GOD—and its Privilege coveted, as the Consolation of our Souls.

Ther. I shall wave at present, an Examination of each Particular ; and only make some *remote* Observations. Which seem, nevertheless, pretty nearly to affect your Scheme.—Many Persons, have scarce so much as *heard* of your Terms ; have no manner of Acquaintance with your Doctrine. Will you strike off all these from the List of Christians ? Will you condemn all these as desperate Infidels ?

Asp. Not heard of them !—In a Protestant Nation !—Where the Gospel is publicly preached, and the Bible in every One's Hand !—This, if true, is *much* to be lamented.

In

In Answer to your Question—It is not my Custom, much less is it my Prerogative, to *condemn* Others. Has GOD committed all Judgment unto me? That I should presume to anticipate the decisive Sentence, or launch the Thunder-bolts of eternal Vengeance?—Neither do I affirm the Condition of such Persons to be desperate. There may be *Those*, who have no *explicit* Knowledge of the Doctrine; who are even *disgusted* at the Expressions; yet live under the Belief of the Truth, and in the Exercise of the Duty.—“ They
 “ are never diverted, by the Splendor of any
 “ Thing that is *great*, or by the Conceit of
 “ any Thing that is *good* in them, from look-
 “ ing upon themselves as *sinful* Dust and
 “ Ashes.” Their whole Dependence is upon that *JUST ONE*, who expired on the Cross, and whom the Heavens have received. They seek the sanctifying SPIRIT, in consequence of their Saviour’s Death; and give all Diligence, to *add to their Faith Virtue**.

Ther. If People may be safe, and their eternal Interests secure, without any Knowledge of these Particularities; why should you offer to puzzle their Heads, about a few unnecessary *scholastic* Terms?

Asp. *Scriptural* Terms, You should have said,
Theron.—However, We are not very solicitous,

as

* 2 *Pet.* i. 5.

as to the Credit, or the Use, of any particular Set of Phrases. Only let Men be humbled, as *repenting Criminals*, at the REDEEMER'S Feet: Let them rely, as *devoted Penitents*, on his precious Merits: and they are undoubtedly in the Way to a blissful Immortality.—Yet, will their Way be less clear, and their Steps more embarrassed, by not distinctly understanding the benign Genius of the Gospel. A proper Information in this Important Point, would shed *Light* upon their Paths, and *encourage* them in their Journey; would further their Progress in vital Holiness, and increase their Joy in the LORD.

Ther. The Followers of your Opinion, I have observed, are perpetually dwelling upon this *one favourite* Topic; to the Exclusion of that grand and truly essential Part of Christianity, *Sanctification*.

Asp. If You have ever taken notice of such a Conduct, You are unquestionably right, in with-holding your Approbation. It is a manifest *Incongruity*, and deserves your *Censure*. But, assure Yourself, it proceeds from a Misapprehension in the Persons, and has no Connection with the Nature of the Doctrine.

I am far, very far from reducing the *various* Parts of Christianity, (which, when connected, make up so well-proportioned a System) to this *single*, however distinguished Branch.

Branch. Sanctification is *equally necessary*, both to our present Peace, and to our final Felicity. Indeed, they are as reciprocally necessary, for the Purposes of *intellectual* and *eternal* Happiness; as the *Heart* and the *Lungs* are, to the Subsistence of the animal Oeconomy. The former must transmit, the latter must refine, the vital Fluid; or else, Disease will take Place, and Death will ensue.—My Intention is, that those *fundamental Truths* of the Gospel, like these *Master-Organs* in the Body, may have *each* its proper Office assigned; each concur to support the better Health, and to promote the spiritual Growth, of the Christian.

Ther. Other of your zealous Folks I have known, who are all for the *sanctifying* Influence of the SPIRIT; and reckon this Affiance on the SAVIOUR'S Merits, among the beggarly Elements of Religion. They scarce ever mention, What *CHRIST* has done *for Us*; but insist wholly upon what He does *in Us*.—When the religious People are so divided among themselves*, how can a Stranger act? Which Opinion shall He choose?

Assp.

* *Theron's* Inquiry concerning these *two* Particulars, is sometimes made an Objection against *all* Religion.—But have the Gentlemen, who adopt this Objection, never seen the *Naturalists* divided in their Judgment; with relation to the Design and Use of several Appearances in the material,

Asp. Which, *Theron!* Let Him discard neither, but *associate* both.—If the all-gracious REDEEMER has poured out his Blood on the Cross, that my Guilt may be expiated; and presents his Intercession in Heaven, that I may be endued with the SPIRIT:—If He will be the *meritorious Cause* of my Justification, and the *operative Principle* of my Sanctification:—Why should I scruple to receive Him, in either, in both Capacities? Who would lop off the Right-hand, in order to impart the higher Dignity, or the greater Importance to the left? I would be no *Partialist* in Christianity: neither diminish her Dowry, nor mutilate her Privileges.

Ther. You seem, if not to mutilate, yet to *split* the Merits of *CHRIST*, and *parcel out* the Efficacy of his mediatorial Undertaking; ascribing so much to his active, and so much to his passive Righteousness; Pardon to *this*, and Life to *that*.

Asp. Some, I believe, are pleased with this Way of stating the Matter. But, it is a Method, that I neither attempt to defend, nor wish to imitate.—To *distinguish* between the
active

the vegetable, the animal Creation? While One decries as a *Nuisance*, what another admires as a *Beauty*.—Yet no One, I believe, ever took it into his Head, from such a Diversity of Opinions, to *doubt* whether the Frame of Nature is a just, a regular, and a finished System: or to *deny*, That Power, Goodness, and Wisdom, support, pervade, and
act the Whole.

active and passive Righteousness, I think, is not amiss. Because, this sets the Fulness of our LORD's Merit in the clearest Light; and gives the completest Honour to GOD's holy Law.—But to *divide* them into detached Portions, independent on each other, seems to be fanfiful, rather than judicious. For, had *either* Part of the mediatorial Obedience been wanting; I apprehend, neither Pardon, nor Acceptance, nor any spiritual Blessing, could have been vouchsafed to fallen Man.

The two *Parts* are inseparable; making, in their Connection, a necessary and noble *Whole* for the Accomplishment of our Salvation. Just as the Light and the Heat of yonder Sun, blend their Operation; to produce this delightful Day, and this fruitful Weather.—However, therefore, I may happen to express myself, I never consider them as acting in the *exclusive* Sense; but would always have them understood, as a grand and glorious *Aggregate*. Looking upon our SAVIOUR's universal Obedience, which commenced at his Incarnation; was carried on through his Life; and terminated in his Death;---looking upon all this, in its *collective* Form, as the Object of my Faith, and the Foundation of my Hopes*.

Ther.

* In this Opinion, *Aspasio* has *Milton's* Arch-Angel for his Precedent. *Michael* speaking of his LORD and our LORD, says;

Ther. I think, You lay too much Strefs, upon this controverted, and perhaps *merely speculative* Point.

Asp. Merely speculative! Say not thus, my dear Friend.—“ How I may be justified “ before GOD, my Maker, my Governor, “ and my Judge ?” Is an Inquiry, of all others, the *most interesting* and *important*. It is the main Hinge, on which every Instance of practical Religion turns*. True Comfort, willing Obedience, holy Communion with the divine Majesty, *all* depend upon this capital Point.

Far from being a merely speculative Point, it ascribes the most *undivided* Glory to the ever-blessed GOD, and his free Grace.—It administers the most *serene* and *substantial* Satisfactions to frail, but believing Men.—It cherishes,

The Law of GOD exact he shall fulfil,
Both by Obedience and by Love, though Love
Alone fulfil the Law; thy Punishment
He shall endure, by coming in the Flesh
To a reproachful Life and cursed Death;
Proclaiming Life to all who shall believe
In his Redemption.

B. XII. 402.

According to the Tenour of these very valuable Lines, our LORD's Fulfilling the Law, and Enduring the Punishment, are the *concurring* Causes, or the one *compound Cause*, of Life and Redemption to Sinners.

* *Diffundit se*, says the judicious *Witsius*, *Justificationis Doctrina per totum Theologicæ Corpus; & prout Fundamenta hic, vel bene, vel male, jacta sunt, eo unversum Edificium vel solidius angustiusque ascendit, vel male statuminatum sæclans sinitatur Ruinam.*

De Oecon.

cherishes, with the most kindly Influence, that *pure* and *undefiled* Religion, which has its Seat in the Heart; has its Birth from Love; and is a real Antepast, both of the Business and the Bliss of Saints in Light.

Can We, then, lay too much Strefs upon a Doctrine, so greatly momentous; upon a Privilege, so extensively beneficial?

Ther. When all this is *proved*, then for my Reply, *Aspasio*. Nay, then You shall have more than a Reply; I promise You my cordial Assent.

Asp. And if all this be incapable of Proof, I assure You, *Theron*, I will not solicit *your* Assent. Nay more, I will revoke and renounce *my own*.

Ther. At present, I believe, We must go in, and prepare for our Visitants. Some other Interview will give Us an Opportunity, to canvass this Question more minutely.

Asp. Though I have never much Inclination, even when there is the most Leisure, for Controversy; yet, if You insist upon it, I shall not absolutely refuse to engage in a Debate with my *Theron*. Because, He will come to the amicable Rencounter, without bringing *angry Passions* for his Second.—My Reasons will be impartially weighed, not artfully eluded, much less answered with Invec-

tive.—If some inadvertent Expression should drop from my Lips, He will not rigorously prosecute the Slip ; nor aggravate an unguarded Sentence into the Crime of Heresy.—Candour will form his Judgment, and Goodnature dictate his Expressions.

Ther. I thank You, my dear *Aspasio*, for your genteel Admonition. What *I am*, in the Language of Complaisance, means, What *I should be*.—Well : I will endeavour to take your Hint, and check this my Impetuosity of Spirit. I have often admired, O ! that I could imitate, the beautiful Example of *St. Paul*. When *Festus*, forgetting the Dignity of the Governor, and the Politeness of the Gentleman, uttered that indecent Reflection ; *Paul*, *thou art beside thyself : much Learning doth make Thee mad*. Did the great Preacher of Christianity kindle into Resentment ?---The Charge was *unjust* and *abusive*. But the Apostle, with the most perfect Command of Himself, returned the *softest*, yet the *most spirited* Answer imaginable. *I am not mad, most noble Festus ; but speak the Words of Truth and Soberness**.—Inexpressibly graceful was this calm and obliging

* See *Acts* xxvi. Where We have an *Apology*, the noblest, perhaps, that ever was made ; eminent for *fine* Address, *clear* Reasoning, and the most *important* Truth. Which, notwithstanding all these very superior Recommendations, is deemed *Madness* : and that, by a Nobleman from *Rome* ;
the

ling Reply. Though short, infinitely more convincing than a whole Torrent of *bitter* or *recriminating* Words. It disarmed the Judge of his rising Displeasure; it conciliated the Favour of his royal Assessor; and brought Honour to the christian Cause.

This amiable *Self-Regimen*, and Moderation of Temper, I shall be sure to see exemplified in my Friend's Conversation; however I may fail of it myself, or be Proof against all his Arguments.

Asp. Ah! *Theron*, We want no Monitor, to remind Us of our *supposed* Excellencies. And if You begin with your Compliments, it is Time to put an End to our Discourse.

Only let me just observe, That *divine Truths* cannot be properly discerned, but by the enlightening Influences of the *divine SPIRIT*. We must address Ourselves to this Inquiry, not only with unprejudiced Minds, but likewise with praying Hearts. We must bring to this Dispute, not barely the Quiver of Logic, but that *Unction from the HOLY ONE*, which may teach Us all Things*.—Let Us then adopt the Poet's Aspiration;

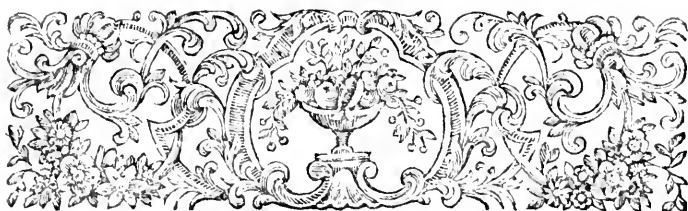
—*Thou*

the Seat of Science, and Fountain-Head of polite Literature.—A Proof this, no less demonstrative than deplorable, of the Apostle's Assertion; *The natural Man*, however ingenious or accomplished, *receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of GOD*; for they are Foolishness unto Him, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

* 1 John ii. 20, 27.

—————*Thou celestial Light,*
Shine inward, and the Mind through all her
Powers
Irradiate; there plant Eyes; all Mist from
thence
Purge and disperse!

Milton, B. III. 51.



DIALOGUE III.

T H E R O N .

WE are now, *Aspasio*, about two Miles distant from my House. The Horse-Road lies through a narrow dusty Lane. The Foot-Path leads along a spacious pleasant *Meadow*. Suppose, We deliver our Horses to the Servant, and walk the Remainder of the Way?

Asp. Nothing can be more suitable to my Inclination. Especially, as the Air is become cool, and the Walk is so inviting.

What a magnificent and charming Scene? — *Hills*, on either Side, gently rising, and widely spreading. Their *Summits*, crowned with scattered Villages, and clustering Trees. Their *Slopes*, divided into a beautiful Chequer-Work; consisting partly of Tillage, with its waving Crops; partly of Pasturage, with its grazing

grazing Herds.—*Before Us*, the Trefoil, the Clover, and a Variety of grassy Plants, differently bladed, and differently branched, weave themselves into a *Carpet* of living Green. Can any of the Manufactures formed in the Looms, or extended in the Palaces of *Persia*, vie with the Covering of this ample Area? Vie with it, in *Grandeur* of Size, or *Delicacy* of Decoration?

What a Profusion of the gayest Flowers, fringing the Banks, and embroidering the Plain!

Nature Here

*Wantons as in her Prime, and plays at Will
Her Virgin-fancies, pouring forth more Sweet,
Wild above Rule or Art, enormous Blis*!*

Nothing can be brighter, than the Lustre of those silver *Daisies*; nothing deeper, than the Tinge of those golden *Crowfoots*. Yet, both seem to acquire additional Beauty, by succeeding to the Deformity of Winter, and flourishing amidst so much surrounding Verdure.

Ther. Nature is truly in *her Prime*.—The vegetable Tribes are putting on their richest Attire. Those *Chestnuts*, on our Right-hand, begin to rear their flowering Pyramids; those *Willows*, on our left, are tipt with Tassels of Grey; and yonder *Poplars*, that overlook
the

* *Milton*, B. V.

the River, and seem to command the Meadows, are pointed with Rolls of Silver.

The *Hawthorn*, in every Hedge, is partly turgid with silken Gems, partly diffused into a milk-white Bloom. Not a stragling *Furze*, nor a solitary *Thicket*, but wears a rural Noddy. All is a delightful Display of present Fertility, and a joyous Pledge of future Plenty. — Now we experience what the royal Poet, in very agreeable Imagery, describes: *The Winter is past; the Rain is over and gone. The Flowers appear on the Earth; the Time of the Singing of Birds is come; and the Voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land. The Fig-Tree putteth forth her Green Figs; and the Vine with the tender Grapes give a good Smell**.

Asp. Your Quotation and the Scene remind me of a Remark, that should have been admitted into our last Night's Discourse. When we were enumerating the Excellencies of the sacred Writings, methinks, we might have added;—Are you fond of *Pastoral*, in all its flowery Graces, and blooming Honours? Never have we seen such exquisite Touches of rural Painting, or such sweet Images of endeared Affection, as in the *Song of Songs which is Solomon's*. All the brilliant and amiable Appearances in Nature are employed, to delineate the Tendernefs of *his* Heart, who is *Love* itself—

* *Cant.* ii. 11, 12, 13:

itself—to pourtray the Beauty of *his* Person, who is *The chiefest among ten thousand*—and describe the Happiness of *those* Souls, whose *Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST* *.

See! *Theron*, what the chearing Warmth and the genial Showers of Spring have done! *Such* a Change, so pleasing and so ennobling, the Gospel of *CHRIST* introduces into the Soul.—Not a Day, scarce an Hour passes, but this Season of universal Fecundity produces Something *new*. And is there any State, or any Circumstance of Life, on which the Faith of *CHRIST* does not exert a similar Efficacy, and bring forth Fruit unto *GOD*?

This is supposed to be the spiritual Meaning of that fine descriptive Picture, which You have borrowed from the *Canticles*. It displays the *benign Agency* of Grace and its Doctrines; especially, of our *LORD*'s Satisfaction for Sin, and of his Righteousness imputed to Sinners. These operate, with much the same favourable and happy Energy, both on our Morals and our Comforts; as the *sweet Influences* of the vernal Sun operate, on the sprouting Herbs, and opening Flowers.

Ther. If *such* were the Effects of your Doctrine, it would stand the fairer Chance for general Acceptation.—But there are several weighty

* I *John* i. 3.

weighty Scruples to be removed, before Persons of a *liberal* and *enlarged* Way of Thinking, can acquiesce in your Opinion. Who, for Instance, can persuade Himself, that what You call *The Satisfaction of CHRIST*, is consistent with the Dictates of Reason, or with the Perfections of the DEITY?

Ans. Let Gentlemen be candid in their Inquiries, and *truly* liberal in their Way of Thinking; then, I flatter myself, these Scruples may be removed, without much Difficulty.

GOD, the almighty Creator, and supreme Governor of the World, having made Man, gave Him a Law; with a *Penalty* annexed, in Case of Disobedience.—This sacred Law our Fore-father *Adam* presumptuously broke; and We, his Posterity, were *involved* in his Guilt. Or, should that Point be controverted, We have undeniably made, by many personal Transgressions, *his* Apostacy *our own*.—Inasmuch, that all have sinned; have forfeited their Happiness, and rendered themselves obnoxious to Punishment.

Man being thus ruined, none could recover Him, except his injured Maker. But shall He be recovered, shall He be restored, without suffering the Punishment, *due* to his Crime, and *threatened* by his Creator?—What then will become of the *Justice* of the divine Law-giver? And how shall the *Honour* of his holy
Law

Law be maintained? At this rate, who would reverence its Authority, or fear to violate its Precepts?—Sinners might be emboldened to multiply their Transgressions; and tempted to think, that the GOD of immaculate Holiness, the GOD of unchangeable Veracity, is *altogether such an One as themselves* *.

Does it not appear needful, that *some* Expedient be devised, in order to prevent these dishonourable and horrid Consequences?

Uter. Proceed to inform Us, what the Expedient is.

Asp. To ascertain the Dignity of the supreme Administration, yet *rescue* Mankind from utter Destruction, this admirable Purpose was formed, and in the Fulness of Time executed. The second Person of the ever-blessed TRINITY unites the human Nature to the Divine; *submits* Himself to the Obligations of his People; and becomes *responsible* for all their Guilt. In this Capacity, He performs a perfect Obedience, and undergoes the Sentence of Death: makes a full Expiation of their Sins, and re-establishes their Title to Life.—By which means, the Law is satisfied; Justice is magnified; and the richest Grace exercised. Man enjoys

* This was actually the Case, as We are informed by the Searcher of Hearts, when, on a particular Occasion, Punishment was only *retarded*. How much more would such impious Opinions have prevailed, if, on this grand Act of Disobedience, Punishment had been intirely *forborne*? Psal, l, 21.

enjoys a *great Salvation*, not to the Discredit of *any*, but to the unspeakable Glory of *all*, the divine Attributes.

This is what We mean by *CHRIST's Satisfaction*. And this, I should imagine, wants no Recommendation to our *unprejudiced Reason*; as, I am sure, it is most delightfully accommodated to our *distressed Condition*.—It is also confirmed by many express Passages of Scripture, and illustrated by a Variety of very significant Images.

Ther. Pray, let me be favoured with some of your scriptural Images.—After which, We may inquire, whether your Doctrine will stand the Test of Reason.

Asp. What is your Notion of a *Ransom*? When *Priam* redeemed the dead Body of *Hector* from the victorious *Achilles*, how was it done?

Ther. By paying a *Price**.—Thus *Fabius* recovered the Captives, that were taken by *Hannibal*. He transmitted the Sum required, and they were discharged from their Confinement.

Asp. Such is the Redemption, procured for Sinners by our LORD *JESUS CHRIST*. Of such a Nature, (though incomparably more grand

* ————— *Φερον τ' ἀπεραιων ἀνάστα,*
an infinitely rich Price. *Hyperbolical* dist, as applied by *Isaiah*: strictly true, when referred to *CHRIST*.

grand and august in all its Circumstances) and expressed by the very same Word*. *The Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and to give his Life a Ransom for Many.*

CHRIST also paid a Price—a real Price—a most *satisfactory* Price. In Consideration of which, our Freedom from every penal Evil is granted. *Ye are redeemed †*, says the Apostle, *not with corruptible Things, Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of CHRIST.*—Let me add one Text more; which, in the same Style of *commutative* Justice, asserts the same Truth. *CHRIST has redeemed Us ‡*, hath brought Us off, *from the Curse of the Law.*—Yes, my Friend,

The

* *Αυτρον, απολυτρον*, are used in this *precise* Signification, by the most approved Authors of *Greece*.—*Απεπεμψε τα λυτρα τω Αντιθα, η̄ τας αιχμαλωτας απελαβε*, says *Plutarch*. Ο υῑος τ̄ς ανθρωπι η̄λθε δευαι την ψυχην αυτη λυτρον αυτη πολλων, says our blessed Saviour, *Matt. xx. 28.*—*Απελυτρωσε ταλαντιων εννεα*, is the Language of *Demosthenes*. *Εν ω εχομεν την απολυτρωσιν δια τ̄ς αιματ̄ος αυτη*, are the Words of *St. Paul*. *Eph. i. 7.*—To *establish* this important Point, and to *familiarize* the comfortable Idea to our Minds, the sacred Writers abound in this Phraseology. See *Luke i. 68. ii. 38. xxiv. 21.*—*Rom. iii. 34.*—*Tit. ii. 24.*—*Heb. ix. 12.*

† *1 Pet. i. 18.* We have an *equivalent* Expression, used in the same Signification, by one of the correctest Writers in the World;

Et Fratrem Pollux alterna Morte redemit. VIRG.

‡ *Gal. iii. 13.* *Εξηγορασεν*—We are said to be *bought*, *1 Cor. vi. 20.* Not in a metaphorical Sense, but really and properly For, here the Price is *mentioned*; and by *St. Peter* the Price is *specified*, *1 Pet. i. 18, 19.*

*The Ransom was paid down. The Fund of
Heav'n,*

*Heav'n's inexhaustible exhausted Fund,
Amazing and amaz'd, pour'd forth the Price,
All Price beyond. Though curious to compute
Arch-Angels fail'd to cast the mighty Sum*.*

Ther. Hold a little, good *Aspasio*. Consider the Consequence of what You maintain. If there was a Ransom in the Case, to *Whom* was it paid?—The *Devil* had led Sinners captive. They are said to be the Slaves of Satan. And shall the blessed *JESUS* pay his Life to that accursed Fiend? Shocking to imagine!—Yet, shocking as it is, it must follow from your own, and your Poet's Assertion.

Asp. You misapprehend the Case, *Theron*. The Ransom was paid to GOD. *Thou hast redeemed Us to GOD †*, is the Confession of the Saints in Light.—Satisfaction was made to the divine *Law*, and to the divine *Justice*. The one of which was offended; the other violated; and both concurred to denounce the Transgressor's Doom.—Of which Doom *Satan* was only the destined Executioner. Whose Malignity, and implacable Rage, GOD is pleased to make the Instrument of inflicting his Vengeance. As He formerly used the idolatrous Kings of *Affyria* and *Babylon*, to chastise the disobedient *Israelites*.

When

* *Night-Thoughts*, N^o. IV.

† *Rev.* v. 6.

*When We were without Strength**, utterly ruined, yet absolutely helpless—when None, in Heaven or Earth, could afford Us any Succour—*then* our LORD *JESUS CHRIST* most graciously and most seasonably interposed. He *said*, as it is very emphatically represented by *Elibu*; *Deliver them from going down into the Pit; I have found a Ransom †*. He *did*, what is very beautifully described by our *English Classic*;

————— *So Man, as is most just,*
Shall satisfy for Man, be judg'd, and die;
And dying rise, and rising with Him raise
His Brethren, ransom'd with his own dear
Life ‡.

Ther. But pray, do not You allow, that *CHRIST* is truly and properly *GOD*?

Assp. We not only allow it, but We insist upon it, and make our Boast of it. This is the very Foundation of *his* Merit, and the Support of *our* Hope.

Ther. This may aggrandize the Merit of *CHRIST*, but it will increase the Difficulty of your Task. For, according to this Opinion, *CHRIST* must make Satisfaction to *Himself*. And is not this a Practice quite unprecedented? A Notion perfectly absurd?

Assp.

* *Rom.* v. 9.

† *Job xxxiv.* 24.

‡ *Milton*, B. III, 294.

Asp. It is quite unprecedented, You say.—
 On this Point, I shall not vehemently contend. Only let me mention one Instance. *Zaleucus*, You know, the Prince of the *Locrians*, made a Decree, That whoever was convicted of Adultery, should be punished with the Loss of both his Eyes. Soon after this Establishment, the Legislator's own Son was apprehended in the very Fact, and brought to a public Tryal.—How could the Father acquit Himself, in so tender and delicate a Conjunction?—Should He execute the Law, in all its Rigour? This would be worse than Death to the unhappy Youth.—Should He pardon so notorious a Delinquent? This would defeat the Design of his salutary Institution.—To avoid both these Inconveniencies, He ordered one of his own Eyes to be pulled out, and one of his Son's. By which means, the Rights of Justice were preserved inviolate; yet the Tenderness of a Parent was remarkably indulged. And may We not venture to say, That, in this Case, *Zaleucus* both received and made the Satisfaction?—received it, as a Magistrate; even while He made it, as a Father.

Ther. I cannot see, how this Suffering of the Father was, in any Degree, *satisfactory* to the Law: since the Father and the Son could not be considered, as *one* and the *same* Person. It may pass for an extraordinary Instance of

parental Indulgence. It may strike the benevolent and compassionate Hearer. But, if tried at the Bar of Equity and Reason, it will hardly be admitted as any legal Satisfaction: it will probably be condemned, as a Breach of Nature's first and fundamental Law, Self-Preservation.

Alp. What You observe, *Theron*, I must confess, has Weight. It will oblige me to give up my Illustration.—Nevertheless, what You urge against the *Propriety* of the Comparison, tends to establish the *Certainty* of the Doctrine. For, *CHRIST* and his People are actually considered, as one and the same Person. They are *one* mystical *Body*: He the Head, they the Members: so intimately united to Him, that they are *Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh**. —By virtue of which Union, their Sins were punished in Him; and *by his Stripes they are healed* †, they obtain Impunity and Life.

Though there may be nothing in the Procedure of Men, which bears any Resemblance to this Miracle of heavenly Goodness; it receives a sufficient Confirmation from the Language of Scripture. He, who wrote as an Amanuensis to the unerring SPIRIT, has declared; That *GOD was in CHRIST, reconciling the World*—unto Whom? Unto some third Party? No; but reconciling it, by the Death and

* *Eph.* v. 30.

† *Ijai.* liii. 5.

and Obedience of *CHRIST*, unto *Himself* *. And I can very readily grant, that this divine Exertion of Benignity and Wisdom, should be without a *Precedent*, and without a *Parallel* †.

Difficulties, I own, may attend the Explication of this Article, or be interwoven with its Consequences.—At the same Time I must affirm, That our Apprehensions of heavenly Things are so *obscure*, and our Ideas of the divine Benevolence so *scanty*, that We may very possibly mistake; and fancy that to be absurd, which is only great, wonderful, and incomprehensible ‡.—Nor shall I be thought presumptuous in adding; That it will be impossible, for all the Sagacity in the World, to
 prove

* 2 *Cor.* v. 19. *Col.* i. 20.

† *Fancy*, in the Person of *Horace*, said of *Jupiter* and his fabulous Exploits,

Cui nihil viget simile aut secundum.

Much more will *Reason*, in the Character of a *Believer*, say the same of *JEHOVAH* and his marvelous *Grace*.

‡ Its *unparalleled*, nay, its *incomprehensible* Nature, is no Objection to its Truth and Reality. This is rather a Circumstance, which perfectly agrees with the *Testimony* of the inspired Writers; and affords, in my Opinion, an unanswerable Argument for the divine Origin of Christianity.

It agrees with the Testimony of the inspired Writers; who call it, not only *GOD's Wisdom*, by Way of supereminent Distinction, but *his Wisdom in a Mystery*, even *his hidden Wisdom*: which could not possibly have been conceived by any finite Mind, however enlarged or sagacious.—*Is an Argument for the divine Origin of Christianity.* Since it was infinitely too deep for the Contrivance of Men, and absolutely undiscoverable by the Penetration of Angels; how could it be known, but by Manifestation from above? *Whence* could it take its Rise, but from an *especial Revelation*?

prove this Doctrine *an Absurdity*, though it should ever remain *an inexplicable* Mystery.— How many Phænomena in the Constitution of external Nature, are confessedly mysterious and inexplicable! They challenge, they command our Assent; yet *baffle* all our Researches, and *defy* our utmost Penetration. If then We find this Truth, fully and incontestably revealed in the Bible, We must renounce the Philosopher, before We can *consistently* act the Sceptic,

Ther. Let Us see then, Whether it be so fully and incontestably revealed in the Bible.— You have given me, as yet, but *one* of your scriptural Images.

Assp. I have another at your Service.— *CHRIST* is called an *High-Priest*. What do You take to be the Nature of the Priestly Office?

Ther. The Business of the Priest was, I apprehend, To *offer Sacrifices*, and to *make Intercession* for the People.

Assp. Very true: and *CHRIST* could not, with any Propriety, receive this Appellation, if He had been defective in performing *either* of the sacerdotal Functions.—Now, that he offered no such Victim as slain Beasts, is universally acknowledged. We might presume therefore, even though We had not the Authority of an Apostle to assure Us, That *He*
offered

offered HIMSELF, through the eternal SPIRIT, to GOD*.

The Cross, shall I say †? Rather his divine Nature was the *Altar*. His Soul and Body, each immaculately pure, were the *Holocaust*. These He resigned; the one, to deadly Wounds; the other, to inexpressible Anguish; and both, to be instead of all *whole Burnt-Offerings*.—On this invaluable Oblation, his *Intercession* at the Right-hand of his FATHER is founded: from this it derives that prevailing Efficacy, which is the Security of his *standing*, and the Recovery of his *fallen* Disciples.

Give me Leave to ask farther; What is your Idea of a *Sacrifice*? When *Iphigenia* was slain at the Altar, What was the Import of that memorable Action?

Ther. It was intended, if We may credit *Virgil's* Account ‡, to *appease* the Indignation of the superior Powers; and to obtain a *propitious*

* *Heb.* ix. 14.

† The *Cross* is, by some Authors, stiled The *Altar*. But, I think, improperly. This Notion seems to have sprung from, or given rise to, the *Papish* Practice of idolizing the *Crucifix*. At least, it countenances such a Kind of foppish or sacrilegious Devotion, more than a Protestant Writer could wish.—It was the Property of the Altar, to *sanctify the Gift*. This therefore, when referred to our LORD's Sacrifice, is a far more exalted Office, than We dare ascribe to the *Instrument* of his suffering. This must be the Honour and Prerogative of his *divine Nature*, which did indeed sanctify the great Oblation: gave it a Dignity, a Merit, an Efficacy, unspeakable and everlasting.

‡ *Sanguine placenti Ventos, & Virgine cœsa.*

pitious Gale for the wind-bound Fleet, and confederate Forces of *Greece*. But, I hope, You would not make that solemn Butchery of the royal Virgin, a Pattern for the supreme Goodness; nor the Practice of gross Idolaters, a Model for the Religion of the holy *JESUS*.

Asp. By no means, *Theron*. Only I would observe—That the Custom of offering Sacrifices obtained, among the most cultivated Nations of the Heathen World—That these Sacrifices were frequently of the *vicarious* * Kind; in

* *Seneca* says, alluding to the Custom of Sacrifices, and the prevailing Opinion concerning them; *Fuerim tantum nunquam amplius dolituræ Domus Piamentum*.—What we are to understand by *Piamentum*, our Author himself explains, in the preceding Clause; *Quicquid Matri dolendum fuerit, in me transferit; quicquid Avic, in me*. To which his judicious Commentator *Lipsius*, from an extensive Knowledge of Antiquity, adds; *καθαρὰ ἢ ἴσως ἱερατικῆς ἱεροθύτης*. Sen. ad Helv.

The same Writer, in the same consolatory Epistle, has another Sentence, still more to our Purpose; *Nobilitatur omnium Carminibus, quæ se pro Conjuge vicariam dedit*.—*Juvenal*, speaking of this very Fact, expresses Himself in very remarkable Language. Such as shews Us, with the utmost *Clearness* and *Precision*, what the Antients meant, when they affirmed of a suffering or dying Person, That *He gave Himself for Another*.

—————*Speelat subeuntem Fata Mariti*

Alcestim, & similis si Permatatio detur. Sat. VI.

There is a Passage in *Livy*, which most of all deserves our Notice. As it seems to imply a popular Belief of the Dignity, the more than human Dignity, of the Sacrifice which was necessary to appease the Wrath of Heaven. It relates to *Decius*, devoting Himself for the public Good; *Conspectus ab utraque Acie*, aliquanto augustior humano Visu, *sicuti Cæli missus, Piaculum omnis Deorum Iræ*.

Lib. VIII. c. 9.

in which the Victim was substituted, instead of the Offerer; and the One being cut off, the Other was discharged from Punishment—Consequently, that the *Classic* Authors would (in case there was any Need of such Auxiliaries) join with the sacred Writers, to declare the *Expediency*, and explain the *Nature* of Sacrifices.—This also You will permit me to add, That, if the Heathens talk sensibly on any Part of religious Worship, it is on the Subject of Sacrifices. Their Sentiments concerning expiatory Oblations, seem to be the *faint* and *distant* Echo of Revelation. And I have usually considered them, not as the Institutions of mere Reason, but as the Remains of some broken Tradition.

However, the truest and most authentic Signification of a Sacrifice, is to be learned from the Jewish Ritual, explained by the Gospel Comment. Do You remember the *Mosaic* Account of that Ordinance?

Ther. You are much better acquainted, *Aspasio*, with those *sacred Antiquities*; and can give the most satisfactory Information, with regard to this Particular. Only let me remind You, That *Alms* are styled *Offerings*; and *Praises*, both in the prophetical and evangelical Writings, come under the Denomination of *Sacrifices*.

Asp. Though Praises and Alms are styled Sacrifices, they are not of the *propitiatory*, but *eucharistic* Kind. They are never said to *expiate* Transgressions, only are represented as *acceptable* to GOD through *JESUS CHRIST*; that divinely precious Victim, whose Merits both cancel our Guilt, and commend our Services! According to—

Ther. Stay a Moment, *Aspasio*.—Let me recollect myself.—This may be the Meaning of Sacrifices, as ordained by *Moses*, and solemnized among the *Jews*.—“Sacrifices were—
“ a symbolical Address to GOD; intended to
“ express before Him the Devotion, Affec-
“ tions, Dispositions, and Desires of the Heart
“ by significative and emblematical Actions.”—
Or thus; “The Priest made Atonement for
“ Sin, by sacrificing a Beast, only as that was
“ a Sign and Testimony of the Sacrificer’s
“ pure and upright Heart.”

Asp. Sacrifices, I acknowledge, were a symbolical Address to GOD.—But would You confine their Efficacy, *only* to the Death of the Animal, and the Purity of the Offerer? No, *Theron*: they always had a Reference to the great Sacrifice—ordained in the eternal Counsels of JEHOVAH—prepared, when the co-eternal SON was made Flesh—offered, when the blessed *JESUS* surrendered Himself, to be led as a Lamb to the Slaughter.—

They

They were so far from being *independent* on this divine Oblation, that they acted in *perpetual* Subserviency to it, and derived *all* their Virtue from it. They were the Shadow, but the Body was *CHRIST*.

They expressed, You say, the Devotion, Affections, Dispositions, and Desires of the Heart. But I rather think, they expressed the Guilt and the Faith of the Offerer.—*His Guilt*; for this seems to be intimated, by the very *Names* of the propitiatory Sacrifices. The Sin and the Sacrifice, the offending Action and the expiatory Rite, being signified by one and the same Word*. It is somewhat more than intimated, by the *Occasion* of the *Offering*, and the *State* of the Offerer. Since it was only on account of Guilt contracted, that peculiar Oblations were made; and only from a guilty Person, that they were required.—*His Faith*; or firm Belief, that *ceremonial* Guilt, which shut Him out from the Communion of the visible Church, and subjected Him to the Infliction of temporal Judgments, was removed by *these*; but that *moral* Guilt, which defiles the Soul, and excludes from Heaven, should be purged by *some better Sacrifice than these* †.

In

* *הטאת* denotes a *Sin*, and *Sin-Offering*. Levit. iv. 3, 24. *זבחים* signifies the *Trespass*, and the *Trespass-Offering*. Levit. v. 15, 19.

† They *sanctified to the purifying of the Flesh*, Heb. ix. 13. But could not make Him that did the Service perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience. Heb. ix. 9.

In the Exercise of this Faith, *Abel* offered up a more acceptable Sacrifice than *Cain*; and without this Faith, exercised in some Degree, it is impossible to please GOD.

If Sacrifices were intended to bespeak *Integrity of Heart*, methinks, the State of *Innocency* had been the properest Period, for their Institution and Oblation. But We never hear of this awful Ceremony, till Man is fallen, and Sin committed.—If intended to denote *Purity of Heart*, why should they be particularly enjoined on that solemn Day, when Confession was made of *all the Sins* *, of the whole Congregation? An oddly concerted Device this! In which the Tongue must contradict, what the Ceremony would recognize.—Or, how could it be proper, after the Violation of some Law, or the *Neglect* of some Ordinance, immediately to go and offer a Sacrifice? What would be the Language of such a Practice? “ I have done wickedly, but my Heart is pure “ and upright.” Is this consistent with the Spirit of Humility, of Modesty, or of common Ingenuity? Is this the Way of *giving Glory* to GOD, or of *taking Shame* to ourselves?—Whereas, let the Sacrifice be a typical Expiation, and this is the Significancy of the Action. “ LORD, I confess myself guilty. “ Punishment and Death are *my Due*. Let
“ them

* *Levit. xvi. 21.*

“ them fall, I beseech Thee, on *my Victim* *.
 “ That thy Justice being glorified, and thy
 “ Law satisfied, thy Mercy may be honourably
 “ displayed in my Forgiveness.”

Besides, *Theron*; What *Likeness*, what *Agreement* is there, between the Profession of Integrity, and an Animal mortally wounded; wallowing in its own Blood; and struggling in the Agonies of Death?—Whereas, between these dying Pangs, and the Punishment due to Sin, or the Sorrows sustained by the crucified SAVIOUR, there is an *apparent*, a *striking*, and, in various Respects, an *edifying* Resemblance.

Ther. They declared, perhaps, the Sacrificer's Readiness and Resolution, to slay the Brute in Himself, and to lay down his Life in Adherence to GOD.

Asp. I don't remember any Assertion of this Kind in the Bible, or any Hint to countenance such an Interpretation. It seems, in some Cases, to be *incompatible* with the very Nature of Things, and *contrary* to the express Declarations of Scripture.—*Doves*, You know, *Lambs*, and *Sheep* were offered in Sacrifice. But shall We slay the Lamb, the Dove, the Sheep in Ourselves? So far from it, that

CHRIST'S

* What says, that Prodigy of oriental Learning, *Bochart*?
Hoc eodem Ritu Iram Dei Peccator deprecabatur, eamque im-
mitti petebat in illius Victimæ Caput, quam suo Loco ponebat.

CHRIST's Disciples are either described by these Creatures, or commanded to imitate their Properties. *Be ye harmless as Doves* *. Peter, *feed my Lambs* †. *My Sheep, bear my Voice* ‡.

Supposing, however, that this might be a subordinate Design, or a valuable Improvement of the sacrificial Acts; yet their *primary* Intention, and *ultimate* End, were widely different: were much more significant of the divine Compassions, and much better adapted to the Comfort of Mankind. They were—
An *awful Indication*, that Death was the Wages of Sin: At the same Time, a *cheering Declaration*, that GOD was pleased to accept the Death of the Animal, instead of the Sinner's: a *figurative Representation* || also of that illustrious PERSON, who was *to bear the Sin of many, and pour out his Soul for Transgressors*.

Theo. Since Sacrifices were of a religious Nature, they should not only be instructive and beneficial in their Tendency; but have their *due Effects*, with regard to GOD, to Sin, and to the Person who brought them.

Asp.

* *Matt.* x. 16. † *John* xxi. 15. ‡ *John* x. 27.

|| What says *Milton* upon this Subject of Sacrifices, and with reference to their *principal* Design? He calls them

—————*Religious Rites*
Of Sacrifice; informing Men by Types
And Shadows, of that destin'd Seed to bruise
The Serpent, by what means He shall achieve
Mankind's Deliverance,

B. XII. 231.

Asp. They had their Effects *with regard to* GOD; that his Justice might be magnified, and his Anger appeas'd—to *Sin*; that its Demerit might be displayed, yet its Guilt be done away—to *the Person who brought them*; that he might obtain Pardon, be exempted from Punishment, and exercise his Faith on the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.

Ther. There are so many Sorts of Sacrifice, appointed in the *Jewish* Rubric, that I am at a loss for a *distinct* Idea; unless some one be singled out, and separately considered.

Asp. Among all the Sacrifices instituted by *Moses*, none more circumstantially typified the blessed *JESUS*, or more appositely expressed the Benefits of his Oblation, than the *Paschal Lamb*, and the *Sin-Offering*.

An Expofitor, who cannot be mistaken, has given Us this Interpretation of the Paschal Lamb; *CHRIST our Passover is sacrificed for Us* *. Declaring hereby—That *CHRIST* is

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* *1 Cor. v. 7.* Would any One venture to say? *Paul our Passover is sacrificed for Us.* Yet this, I think, *may be*, or rather *is* in effect said, by the Account which some Persons give of *CHRIST's* Satisfaction.—The very Thought of such a blasphemous Absurdity, is too *painful* and *offensive* for the serious Christian to dwell upon. I would therefore divert his Attention to a more pleasing Object. Let Him observe the exquisite Skill, which, here and every where, conducts the Zeal of the inspired Writer.—The Odes of *Pindar* are celebrated for their *fine Transitions*; which, though bold

a *real* Sacrifice—That He was *prefigured*, in this Capacity, by the Paschal Lamb—That the *Circumstances*, which distinguished it, met in Him; and the *Advantages*, which resulted from it, were procured by Him: *those*, in their truest Import; *these*, in their largest Extent.—The Words of the Apostle speak this Sense, to the plainest simplest Reader. Whereas, to extort any other Signification from them, what Subtilty of Wit, and what Refinement, or rather Violence of Criticism, must be used!

The Paschal Lamb was *without Blemish*. Such was the Lamb of GOD: free from all Taint of original Sin, and from every Spot of actual Transgression.—A Lamb of *the first Year*, in all the Sprightliness and Floridity of Youth. *CHRIST* also laid down his Life, not when worn with Age, and scarce worth the keeping; but in the very Prime of his Days; amidst all the Bloom and Vigour of Manhood.—The Lamb was to be slain in such a Manner, as might occasion the most *copious Effusion* of its Blood. And was not this very exactly fulfilled in our suffering SAVIOUR?

His

and surprizing, are perfectly natural. We have, in this Place, a very masterly Stroke of the same beautiful Kind. The Apostle, speaking of the *incestuous* Criminal, passes, by a most artful Digression, to his darling Topic, a *crucified* SAVIOUR. Who would have expected it, on such an Occasion? Yet, when *thus* admitted, who does not see and admire, both the Propriety of the Subject, and the Delicacy of its Introduction?

His Blood flowed out, in vast Abundance, by the amazing *Sweat* in the Garden; by the rending Lashes of the *Scourge*; by the lacerating Points of the *Thorns*; by the dreadful *Nails*, which cleft his Hands and his Feet; by the deadly *Spear*, which ripped open his Side, and cut its Way to his Heart.—Though the Blood was to be so liberally spilt, *a Bone of the Lamb was not to be broken*. And You cannot but recollect, You cannot but admire, the wonderful Interposition of Providence, to accomplish this *emblematical Prediction*. When the Soldiers had received a Command, to break the Legs of the three crucified Persons; when they had actually broke the Legs of each Malefactor, that hung on the right Side of our LORD and on the left; their Minds were over-ruled (by a divine Influence, no doubt) to spare the blessed JESUS, and to leave all his Bones *unhurt, untouched*.

The Lamb was to be killed *before the whole Assembly*; in the Presence, either of the whole Congregation of *Israel*, or else of that particular Society, which concurred in eating the Flesh. And did not the whole Multitude of the *Jews* conspire against our REDEEMER, to put Him to Death? Did they not all cry out, as with one Voice? *Crucify Him! Crucify Him!* Was He not executed, at one of their grand Festivals, and in the Sight of the *whole*

assembled Nation?—The Blood was not to be poured heedlessly upon the Ground, but received carefully into a Basin; and *sprinkled*, with the utmost Punctuality, *upon the Door-Posts*. In like Manner, the Blood of the heavenly Lamb, is not to be trampled under Foot, by a contemptuous Disregard. It is the Treasure of the Church, and the Medicine of Life. To be *received* therefore by an humble Faith, and devoutly *applied* to our Consciences.—The Sprinkling of that Blood *secured* every *Israelitish* Family, from the *destroying Angel's* Sword. So, the Merits of the slaughtered SAVIOUR * screen every believing Sinner, from the Stroke of offended Justice, and from the Pains of eternal Death. What must have become of the *Israelite*, who, trusting to the Uprightness of his Heart, should neglect to make use of this *divinely appointed* Safeguard? He

* Both St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* speak of *The Blood of Sprinkling*. 1 Pet. i. 2. Heb. xii. 24. Intimating, by this remarkable Form of Speech, that the Death of *CHRIST* will be of *no Advantage* to the Sinner, unless it be *applied* to his Heart. As the Blood of the Paschal Lamb was no Protection to an *Israelite*, till it had tinged the Posts of his Door.—*Isaiah*, using the same Phrase, and alluding to the same Custom, says of our LORD *JESUS CHRIST*, *He shall sprinkle many Nations*. lii. 15. Not only initiate them into his Church by Baptism; but also, by the Application of his Blood, shall *cleanse* them from their *Guilt*, and *deliver* them from the *Wrath* to come.—If We admit the generally received Doctrine, this Metaphor is clear and easy: if We reject the Doctrine of real Atonement, the Language is obscure, the Sense embarrassed, hardly if at all intelligible.

He must inevitably have been punished with the Death of his First-born. Equally certain, but infinitely more dreadful, will be *his* *Condemnation*; who, before the omniscient Judge, shall presume to plead his own Integrity, or confide in his own Repentance, and reject the Atonement of the dying *JESUS*.

Ther. Now, if You please, for the *Sin-Offering**. Which seems to have been the most eminent Sacrifice of them all.

Asp. It was the most *comprehensive*; because, it shadowed forth not only the Death of *CHRIST*, but his Resurrection from the Dead, and his Ascension into Heaven.—As the various Actions of some illustrious Personage, which cannot be exhibited by the Painter in a single Draught, are displayed in *several Compartments*; yet all constitute one and the same grand *historical Picture*. So, these glorious Events, which could not possibly be typified by any *single Animal*, were represented by *two Kids of the Goats*: which nevertheless were reputed, but as *one* † Offering.

These

* For the Circumstances relating to the *Sin-Offering*, the Reader will consult *Levit.* xvi.—For those which concern the *Paschal Lamb*, He will have recourse to *Exod.* xii.

† How runs the divine Command? *He* (the High-Priest) shall take of the Congregation *two Kids of the Goats* for a *Sin-Offering*. *Levit.* xvi. 5. Are not these two Kids styled, in the *singular* Number and *collective* Sense, an *Offering*?—That We might not mistake, GOD is pleased to add;

These Goats were brought to the Door of the Tabernacle, and there presented before the LORD. *CHRIST* also presented Himself before GOD, when *He went up to Jerusalem, that all Things written by the Prophets concerning Him might be accomplished**.—The Goat, on which *the LORD's Lot fell*, was devoted to Death. *CHRIST* also being delivered by the *determina. Counsel and Fore-knowledge of GOD*†, was crucified and slain.—The Body *was burnt without the Camp*. Which pointed at the very Place, and pictured out the very Nature, of
our

And one Ram for a Burnt-Offering. Here He names *one*, to prevent a Misapprehension of his Meaning, when He had before said *two*.—That We might be still more secure from all Misconception, and regard this Goat as joined in the *same* Offering with the other; the LORD, contrary to his own Rule in all other Cases, orders the High-Priest to *lay his Hands upon the Head of the Scape-Goat*, not upon the Head of the Goat devoted to Death. He *divides* the necessary Circumstances of a Sacrifice between them *both*. To intimate, in the clearest Manner, that neither the One nor the Other *separate*, but both *taken together*, were the one sacrificial Oblation, appointed for this distinguished Solemnity.

If this be true, I think, the Passage is a pretty considerable Proof, That *Atonement* was made by suffering *vicarious* Punishment; notwithstanding what has been urged against it, from the tenth Verse of the Chapter.—If We require human Authority for the Support of this Interpretation, one of the greatest human Authorities may be seen in the celebrated *Witsius: Uterque Hircus pertinebat ad unum Sacrificium pro Peccato, Hostiæ unius loco. Uterque erat Pecus piacularis, vicaria Israeliti Peccatori, jusque Peccatum ferens.* De Oecon. Lib. IV. Cap. vi.

* Luke xviii. 31.

† Acts ii. 23.

our LORD's Sufferings. For *He suffered without the Gate* * : was there exposed to the Rage of Men, and the Wrath of GOD; under the most exquisite Pains of Body, and the most insupportable Agonies of Soul. All significantly typified, by the Flame of a devouring *Fire*. Than which nothing is more fierce, more penetrating, or more severely tormenting.

As the Animal that was *slaughtered*, shewed forth the REDEEMER *dying for our Sins*; that which *escaped*, prefigured the same SAVIOUR, *rising again for our Justification*.—The High-Priest put his Hands upon the Head of the Scape-Goat, and with great Solemnity, *confessed* the Sins of the whole Congregation. The Import of this Ceremony is expressly declared in the sacred Canon; *The Goat shall bear upon Him their Iniquity* †. It is charmingly explained by the Prophet, *The LORD laid on HIM the Iniquity of Us all* ‡; and most delightfully confirmed by the Apostle, *He Himself bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree* ||.

This done, the Goat was dismissed into a *Land not inhabited*: a Place separated from all Resort of Men: where he was never likely to be found any more. To teach Us, That
our

* *Heb.* xiii. 12.

† It is observable, that whereas the Scape-Goat is said to bear כִּשְׂרֵי the Sins of Israel, *Levit.* xvi. 22. the very same Phrase is applied to *CHRIST*, *I. ai.* liii. 12.

‡ *I. sai.* liiii. 6.

|| *1 Pet.* ii. 24.

our Offences, having been expiated by the bleeding *JESUS*, are intircly done away; shall never rise up in Judgment against Us; but, according to the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, *When the Iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, there shall be none; and the Sins of Judah, they shall not be found**.—It is farther enjoined, That *Aaron shall confess all the Iniquities of the Children of Israel, and all their Transgressions, in all their Sins. Iniquities, Transgressions, Sins*, are particularized; and, to this Group of Expressions, the Word *all* is added. To inform Us, that the *least* Sins need the Atonement of *CHRIST*'s Death; to assure Us, that the *greatest* Sins are not beyond the Compass of its Efficacy; and that *all* Sins, be they ever so heinous, or ever so numerous, are forgiven to the true Believer.

The High-Priest carried the Blood of the Victim into the second Tabernacle, even *within the Veil*. So *CHRIST* entered with his own Blood, not into the Holy Places made with Hands, but *into Heaven itself*†.—The Blood was sprinkled *before* the Mercy-Seat; sprinkled *upon* the Mercy-Seat; and *left* in the Holy of Holies, that it might always remain before the LORD. And does not *CHRIST* always appear in the Presence of GOD for Us? Does He not *ever live* to make
Inter-

* *Jer.* i. 20.† *Heb.* ix. 24.

Intercession for Us? To plead his all-sufficient Propitiation in our behalf; that the Benefits procured thereby, may be communicated, ratified, and perpetuated to his People?

Ther. These Benefits, *Aspasio*, are ascribed in Scripture, to Repentance and Reformation of Life, Qualifications of *our own*; not to any such Cause as a vicarious Sacrifice; where the Merit must necessarily subsist *in another*. What says the Apostle *Peter*, when He had just received his Instructions from the HOLY GHOST? *Repent and be converted*, not look unto an Atonement, or depend upon a Propitiation, *that your Sins may be blotted out* *.

Asp. 'Tis true, the Benefits of the new Covenant are promised to Penitents, as their *happy Portion*; but never assigned to their Repentance, as the *procuring Cause*. Never to their Repentance, but to the Blood of the great High-Priest, called therefore *The Blood of the everlasting Covenant* †: being the Condition stipulated in it, required by it, and in Consequence of which, all its unspeakable Privileges are bestowed.

Besides; the Qualifications You suppose, are the Gift of Heaven. We are not able to exercise, till *CHRIST*, who is exalted for this very Purpose, *gives* Repentance ‡.—A Conversion

* *Acts* iii. 19.

† *Heb.* xiii. 20.

‡ *Acts* v. 31.

version to GOD, and a Newness of Life, are not the Effect of human Abilities, but the Work of the *divine* SPIRIT, and the Fruit of the REDEEMER's Death.—Indeed, this Death is the Purchase of *every* heavenly Blessing. This opens the Hand, opens the Heart of GOD, and all the Stores of his inexhaustible Bounty.

Ther. You begin to be in Raptures, *Aspasio!*

Asp. Excuse me, *Theron.* It is not easy to repress the Sallies of Delight and Devotion, when we muse upon such amazing Loving-kindness, and are touched with a Sense of such immensely rich Benefits.—A great High-Priest! Who is *higher than the Heavens**; yet *humbled* Himself to Death, even the Death of the Cross! Who is *consecrated for evermore*†; and pleads *all* his Merit, improves *all* his Influence, for *our* consummate Felicity!

What Heart of Stone but glows at Thoughts like These?

Such Contemplations mount Us, and should mount The Mind still higher; nor ever glance on Man: Unraptur'd, uninflam'd ‡.

But I check myself; and will either reply to your Objections, or listen to your Sentiments. Listen as attentively, as You Yourself attend to the Music of that *shrill-tongued Thrush.*

Ther.

* *Heb.* vii. 26. † *Heb.* vii. 28.

‡ *Night-Thoughts*, N^o IV.

Ther. Its sweetly-modulated Lays, eminent even in the Symphony of Spring, have indeed attracted my Ears. But my Mind is disengaged, and free for your Conversation.

Assp. I can repeat a Song, sweeter far than this, or all the Melody of the Wood-land Choirs. A Song, that has Harmony enough, to make the Brow of *Melancholy* wear a Smile, or to sooth away the *Sorrows* of Death itself. *Who shall lay any Thing to the Charge of GOD's Elect? It is GOD that justifieth; who is He that condemneth? It is CHRIST that died; yea rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right Hand of GOD; who also maketh Intercession for Us**.—According to my Friend's Principles, the Strain of this triumphant Exclamation was ill-judged, and should have run in the following Manner: “Who shall lay any thing to our Charge? We have endeavoured to preserve a Rectitude of Disposition, and to persist in a laudable Course of Action. Wherever We failed, We have been sorry for the Fault, and have implored Pardon from the divine MAJESTY. What then shall dismay Us? Or who shall condemn Us.”—Your Topics of Consolation would be complete, without having Recourse to the *Death* of *CHRIST*, as an Atonement for Sin; or to the *Resurrection* of *CHRIST*, as an Evidence that
the

* *Rom.* viii. 33, 34.

the Atonement is accepted; or to the *Intercession* of *CHRIST*, as the Cause of our Interest in that transcendent Blessing.

Ther. Since You so frequently mention, and so earnestly insist upon *Atonement*, I should be glad to know the precise Signification of the Word. I am told, the original Phrase has nothing to do with the Idea of making Satisfaction.

Asp. We may learn the precise Signification of Atonement, by considering The *Means*; the *Effect*; and the *Manner*, whereby the Means accomplish the Effect.—The Effect of Atonement, is *Pardon*—The Means of obtaining it, are the *Death* of *CHRIST*—The Way or Manner, whereby the Death of *CHRIST* becomes efficacious for this blessed Purpose, is the sovereign *Appointment* of his Father; the infinite *Dignity* of his Person; and especially the *vicarious* Nature of his Sufferings, or their being undergone in the Stead of Sinners.

The original Word, which We translate *Atonement*, implies, in its primary Acceptation, the Notion of *Covering*. Thus the Ark was covered*, *was overlaid with Pitch, within and without*: that all its Chinks might be secured, against

* כִּפֶּרֶת Thou shalt besmear, cover, or overlay. Gen. vi. 14. This is the first Place, in which our Word occurs. And it is supposed to give Us the genuine and native Sense of the Phrase.—Perhaps, the *English* Expression *cover*, may be derived from the Participle כִּפֶּר *cophër*.

against the insinuating Attempts of the Water; and all its Timber defended, from the Injuries of the liquid Element.—When an Object, in this or any other Manner, is covered over for Safety; the Covering *receives* every Shock, and *sustains* all Damages, that would otherwise fall upon the Thing covered. The Image, therefore, is very pertinently used, to express the true *evangelical* Nature of Atonement; and it is applied, with apparent Propriety, to HIM *who* is indeed *the anointed Cherub, that covereth* * : covereth from the Wrath of GOD, and the Stroke of Justice, by bearing both in our Stead.

Now We have inquired into the exact Signification of the Hebrew Word, give me Leave to add, That its Meaning is very *extensive*, and not unworthy of our particular Regard. It denotes—The Exercise of divine Mercy †—The Pardon of Sin ‡—A Cleansing from Guilt §—Purging from Transgression ¶—Reconciliation for Iniquity ¶¶—The Pacifying of Wrath.

* *Ezek. xxviii. 14.* This is spoken of the King of Tyre, who was probably a Type of *Anti-Christ*. The Passage describes, What He presumed to *think Himself*; and what He attempted to *pass for*, in the Estimation of the World. If so, I believe, *Aspasio* may very justly apply it to the LORD *JESUS*. It is a Jewel of the mediatorial Crown: and since it has been sacrilegiously stolen, surely it should be restored to its proper Owner, and replaced upon the REDEEMER's Diadem.

† *Deut. xxxii. 43.* ‡ *Deut. xxi. 8.* 2 *Chron. xxx. 18.*
 § *Numb. xxxv. 33.* ¶ *Psal. lxxv. 3.* ¶¶ *Dan. ix. 24.*

Wrath*.—Do not these Passages, (which are expressed by some Branch of the *Verb*, that conveys to Us the Idea of *atoning*) plainly intimate—That the Atonement of *CHRIST* is the meritorious Cause of all these desirable Effects; is the Foundation of every Act of divine Goodness; and the Origin of every Blessing vouchsafed to Sinners?

Ther. After all, *this* is the Consideration, that principally offends and perplexes me—GOD is a wise, a sublime, an infinitely pure Spirit. How then can He take Pleasure, in the Effusion of Blood, or the Burning of Flesh? How can any such *low carnal* Inducements, make Him merciful to Sinners; or appease, what You call, his Wrath?

Asp. Rather, what the *Scriptures* call his Wrath.—You mistake our Doctrine, my dear *Theron*. We never maintain, that any Sacrifice whatever, not even the Propitiation of *CHRIST*'s Death, was intended to *make* GOD merciful. Only to *make Way* for his eternal Purposes of Mercy, without any Prejudice either to the Demands of his Law, or the Rights of his Justice.—Our Sentiments on this Head, are exactly consonant to his own *Declaration*, and his own *Procedure*, in the Case of *Job*'s Friends †. Though displeas'd with their Conduct,

* *Ezek.* xvi. 63.

† See *Job* xlii. 7, 8.

duct, He was merciful to their Persons. Nevertheless, He would not exercise that Mercy, till they had first offered a Sacrifice, and acted Faith in a dying SAVIOUR.

Neither is it ever supposed, That the infinitely wise and pure GOD can take Pleasure in the Effusion of Blood, or the Burning of Flesh, *simply* considered. Only as they had a Reference to that *noble* and *inestimable* Sacrifice, which brings the highest Honour to his Name; which those slaughtered Animals exhibited in a Figure; and to which every true *Israelite* had a believing Regard.

I say, had *a believing Regard*. For, it is affirmed by the Author to the *Hebrews*, That the Gospel was preached to the *Israelites* in the Wilderness*.—*What* does He mean by the Gospel? The very Essence of this benevolent Scheme, according to the Apostle's own Definition, is, That *CHRIST* died for our Sins †.—*How* was this Gospel preached to our Fathers in the Wilderness? By significant Emblems; especially, by slaughtered Animals, and bleeding Victims. By which *CHRIST* was almost continually, though not so evidently as in these latter Times, set forth crucified among them ‡.

In this Sense alone, those carnal Usages were worthy the Wisdom of GOD to appoint, and the Majesty of GOD to accept.—This gave them

* *Heb.* iii. 2. † *1 Cor.* xv. 3. ‡ *Gal.* iii. 1.

them a peculiar *Dignity* and *Importance*; and set them far above all the simular Observances, used in the Heathen Worship.—They were also, when thus explained, thus improved, extremely profitable to Believers; as they directed their Contemplation to the *future* Sufferings of a SAVIOUR, and ratified to their Faith the Benefits of his *ever-operating* Sacrifice. Which, We are assured by an infallible Voice, was effectual *for the Redemption of the Transgressions under the first Covenant* *.

Ther.

* When I reflect on these Words, I wonder how any One can assert, That *all the Jews died under the Curse of the Law*.—Died under the Curse of the Law! Even though the Apostle has warranted it for a Truth, That *All these* (meaning *Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, &c.*) *died in Faith*. Heb. xi. 13.—Even though He has elsewhere laid it down as a Maxim, *So then they which are of Faith*, in whatever Period of Time they live, or under whatever Dispensation of Religion they worship, *are blessed with faithful Abraham*. Gal. iii. 3.—Even though the Psalmist, in one Place, affirms, *Blessed are they whose Unrighteousnesses are forgiven, and whose Sin is covered*. And, in another Place, declares concerning Himself and his pious Cotemporaries; *Look how wide the East is from the West! So far hath He set our Sins from Us*, Psal. xxxii. 1. Psal. ciii. 12.

From these and many other Texts, I think, it is evident, That the faithful *Jews* no more died under the Curse of the Law, than the faithful *Christians*. The Death of *CHRIST* procured the *Pardon* and *Acceptance* of Believers, even before He came in the Flesh. From the Beginning, He had covenanted with the *FATHER*, as their *MEDIATOR*: and *GOD*, to whom all Things are present, saw the certain Accomplishment of his Undertaking. He was therefore, by virtue of the divine Decree, and in Point of saving Efficacy, *A Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*. Though He laid down his Life in the Reign of *Tiberius*, He was a real *REDEEMER* in all Ages.

Ther. So You apprehend, that, in those Usages, practised by the antient *Jews*, the Gospel was *emblematically* preached, and *CHRIST* in a *Figure* exhibited.

Asp. Most certainly, *Theron*. And for this Cause, under the Law, *almost all Things were purged with Blood**. The Multiplicity, the Variety, the Constancy of their Sacrifices, were all designed to impress upon their Minds, and familiarize to their Thoughts, this great evangelical Truth.—Was any One overtaken by a *Fault*? He must present a Victim, and the Priest must slay it, by way of *Trespas-Offering*. To signify, that the Guilt which was contracted, could be done away only by the atoning Death of *CHRIST*.—Had any One received a signal *Blessing*? A Beast was slain by way of *Peace-Offering*; as a public Expression of Gratitude for the Mercy, and also as an emphatical Declaration, that all Good vouchsafed to fallen Man, is owing to the *REDEEMER's* Ransom.

And not only by their solemn sacrificial Acts, but even by their *ordinary* Meals, this grand Lesson was inculcated. They were forbidden to eat the Blood, in order to awaken and preserve in their Consciences, a *reverential* and *fiducial* Regard to the precious Blood of *CHRIST*. The *HOLY GHOST*, assigning a Reason for
this

* *Heb.* ix. 22.

this sacred Prohibition, says expressly, *Because the Blood maketh an Atonement for Your* Souls*: the Blood of Beasts typically, the Blood of *CHRIST* effectually.—O! that *Christians* would, in this Particular, learn of *Jews*. Learn, at least, from *Jewish* Ordinances, to have their Attention incessantly fixed on that divine High-Priest, who, *by one Offering, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified* †.

Ther. Another odd Circumstance has often given me Disgust, and been apt to prejudice me against the Institutions of the Old Testament. Many of them are mean, contemptible, and perfectly *puerile*. “ Can these, I have said “ within myself, be ordained by a GOD of infinite Wisdom, and transcendent Glory? Can “ We reasonably imagine, that a Mandate “ should be issued from the Court of Heaven, “ on purpose to forbid the *Boiling*, and injoin “ the *Roasting* ‡, of a particular Piece of Meat? “ —Will the great Ruler of the Skies, concern “ Himself about the precise Manner of *killing* “ one Bird, and *releasing* another ||?—Will “ He, who claims the Worship of the Heart, “ have such an especial Regard to a Drop “ or two of despicable Blood, put upon the “ *Tip of the Right-ear*, or the *Thumb* of the “ *Right-hand* §?—Surely, such childish Ceremonies

* *Levit.* xvii. 11. † *Heb.* x. 14. ‡ *Exod.* xii. 9.

|| *Levit.* xiv. 4, 5, 6, 7. § *Exod.* xxix. 20.

“ monies are too minute and trivial for the
 “ *Notice*, much more for the *solemn* Appoint-
 “ ment, of the SUPREME Majesty!”

Assp. You will please to remember, that, when those Ceremonies were ordained, it was the *Infancy**, at least the *Minority* of the Church. And We have Reason to admire the *Condescension* of the great CREATOR, in adapting his Revelation to the State of his People; *speaking unto them, even as unto Babies* †.—The Institutions, at which You hint, were undoubtedly mean and trifling, if considered *in themselves*. But, contemplate them in their Relation to the ever-blessed MEDIATOR, some of whose *Offices, Merits, or Sufferings*, they shadowed forth; then they acquire a real Magnificence, and impart the most salutary Instruction.

The Blood put upon the Tip of the Ear, and Thumb of the Hand, denotes our *personal* Application of the Death of *CHRIST*. Without which all its Virtue, though boundless and inconceivable, will profit Us nothing. Those particular Parts of the Body, may signify the *perceptive* and *executive* Faculties: in both which We offend, and for both which We need the great Propitiation.—Of the two
 Birds

* St. Paul calls the Church of those Times, $\nu\eta\pi\iota\sigma$, An *Infant* or *Babe*. Gal. iv. 1, 3.

† 1 Cor. iii. 1.

Birds You mention, one was to be *killed*, the other was to *fly away*, after it had been *dipped* in the Blood of its Fellow. Thus the *LORD JESUS* was crucified for our Sins: and We being *washed* in his Blood; being interested in the Atonement of our holy Victim, and elder Brother; are acquitted from Guilt, and *escape* Condemnation. — Concerning the Paschal Lamb it was particularly enjoined, That the Flesh *should not be eaten raw, nor sodden with Water, but roasted with Fire*; and of every Burnt-Offering, the Fat and the Inwards were delivered up to the devouring Flame. All this was an Emblem of that tremendous Indignation, which *is poured out like Fire* *; which *seized* our immaculate Sacrifice, that it might *spare* polluted Sinners; and which must have consumed utterly any MEDIATOR, who was less than infinite, or other than divine.

Had You beheld our renowned *Newton* blowing up, with great Assiduity and Attention, his little *watery Vesicles* into the Air; You would, perhaps, have despised the venerable Philosopher, and have thought him little better than a *boary Idiot*. But when You was told, that, in every one of these volatile soapy Bubbles, He discovered the *beauteous Colours* of the *Rain-bow*; and from this seemingly childish Experiment, He explained the Nature
of

* *Nab. i. 6.*

of that wonderful Arch; You would then entertain a different Notion, both of the Man and of his Employ.—So, when You discern the blessed *JESUS* looking through these Windows, and flourishing through these Lattices* of the Jewish Oeconomy; You will, I hope, conceive a higher Opinion of them, and derive richer Advantage from them.

Ther. There are several *Persons*, as well as ritual Observances, of a very singular Character, mentioned in the *Mosaic* Law. The *Leper*, for Instance, the *Nazarite*, with others of the same antiquated and grotesque Stamp. Which seem, to me at least, so many *unmeaning* Narratives; that convey no manner of Edification to Readers in the present Age.—I have frequently had an Inclination, and now I have a proper Opportunity, to ask your Opinion upon these Points.

Assp. I thank You, *Theron*, for giving me the Hint. What You propose, is by no means foreign to the Topic of our Discourse.—Those Persons were truly remarkable; neither are the Circumstances of their Case recorded in vain. They picture out, in *dismal* and *delightful* Colours, the Sinner and the SAVIOUR.—To know Ourselves, and to know *CHRIST*, is true

* *Cantic.* ii. 9. The ceremonial Institutions of the *Jewish* Law are, with as much Truth as Ingenuity, called—*Evangelium elementare & præliminare.*

true Wisdom; is indeed the Consummation of all Knowledge. Here, We have a Lecture of hieroglyphical Instruction, on both those important Subjects.

The *Leper* * was an Emblem of a *Sinner*.—His Disease extremely *afflictive* to Himself, and intolerably *loathsome* to others. Sin likewise is the *source* of all Miseries, to the Wretch who commits it; and most *detestably* odious, to the GOD who forbids it.—The Leper was secluded from the *Benefits* of *Society*, and all Communication with his Fellow-citizens. The Sinner also, while impenitent and unpardoned, is an *Alien* from the Commonwealth of *Israel* †; without any Enjoyment of the Comforts, or any Interest in the Privileges of the Gospel. If He dies in this Condition, He must be for ever *shut out* from the Kingdom of Heaven; for ever *cut off* from the Presence of the LORD.

The Contagion was sometimes so *pestilent*, that it not only tainted the Clothes of the Diseased, but spread itself over the Walls of his House, and infected the Timber of the Beams. It was sometimes so *inveterate*, that it could be eradicated no other Way, but by burning the Garment, and demolishing the Building. Does not this give Us a clear, but melancholy View, of *original* Corruption? Which has transfused

* See *Levit.* Chap. xiii, xiv. † *Eph.* ii. 12.

fused its Poison, through *all* the Faculties of the Soul, and *all* the Members of the Body. Nor will ever be *intirely* expelled, till Death releases the former, and consigns the latter to the Dust.

What could cure this terrible Distemper, even in its *mildest* State? Not all the Balm of *Gilead*; not all the Drugs on a thousand Hills; nothing but the *consecrated* Oil and *sacrificial* Blood, duly applied by the High-Priest. And what can heal the Disorders of our fallen Souls? So far heal them, as to purge away their Guilt, and subdue the Prevalence of their Iniquities? No Acts of Mortification, no Vigilance, nor any Efforts of our own; nothing but the *atoning* Death, and *sanctifying* Spirit of the blessed *JESUS*. The Malignity and Virulence of this Plague of the Heart, are absolutely incorrigible by any other Expedient. But, blessed be divine Grace, this Remedy, provided by our great High-Priest, and administered by our great Physician, is *sovereign* and *never fails*.

The Case of the *Nazarites* * was the very reverse of the State of the *Lepers*. *Her Nazarites*, Jeremiah says, *were purer than Snow, they were whiter than Milk; they were more ruddy in Body than Rubies, their Polishing was of Sapphires* †. A faint Representation of the only begotten SON, who is *the fairest among ten thousand*;

* See *Numb.* Chap. vi.

† *Lam.* iv. 7.

thousand; the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person; both GOD and Man in one sacred, wonderful, adorable SAVIOUR.—*They*, during the Time of their Separation, abstained from Wine; withdrew from secular Business; avoided every Kind of Pollution; and dedicated themselves, in an especial Manner, to the Service of GOD. A Type of that *glorious Nazarite*, who was separated, for a Season, from the Fruitions of Heaven: who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, both in his Nature and all his Conversation: who sanctified Himself, and devoted his Life and Labours, his Soul and Body, to the Glory of his Father, and the Redemption of his People.—The *Nazarites*, even when they had discharged their Vow, and were ceremonially clean, yet were obliged to offer a *Sin-Offering*, a *Burnt-Offering*, and a *Peace-Offering*. So, the great REDEEMER, though He had *perfectly obeyed* all the preceptive Parts of the divine Law, yet was required to offer up a Sacrifice—even the *incomparably precious* Sacrifice of Himself—in order to consummate the Work of our Salvation.

Ther. Have You a sufficient Warrant, *Assa-*
sio, for this Strain of Interpretation? Is it
sound, is it *rational*, or conformable to any *au-*
thentic Standard of scriptural Exposition? Me-
thinks,

thinks, it looks more like the Child of Fancy, than the Offspring of Judgment; more like the Sally of a sportive Imagination, than the Result of a sober Disquisition.

You cannot be ignorant, how the ruling Passion tinctures the whole Conduct. Hence it is, I apprehend, that your *religious Inamoratoes* find heavenly Beauties, where Scripture intended no more than natural Truths. Hence it is, that they turn plain Facts into profound Figures, and allegorize *common Sense* into *pious Absurdity*.—Have You never seen the *mystic* Interpretations of some antient, and I may add, some modern Divines? The Honesty of their Design is transparent, and the Piety of their Lives is unquestionable; otherwise, We should be tempted to suspect, that they meant to burlesque the Scriptures, and disgrace their Author.

Who can ever persuade Himself, that the supremely wise GOD, would send Us to search for a *Body of Divinity*, in a *Bundle of Rods*? Or set Us to spin all the Mysteries of Christianity, from a few Fleeces of Wool, *ring-straked, speckled, and spotted**? Thus to expound the Scriptures, is, not to open them clearly, and apply them judiciously, but rather to whip them into Froth †.

Asp.

* *Gen. xxxi.*

† *Luther* used to call such far-fetched and unnatural Allegories, *Spumam Scripturæ*.

Afp. We have the Authority of our LORD Himself. Who has informed Us—That the *brazen Serpent* lifted up in the Wilderness *, was figurative of his own Suspension and Death on the Cross.—That the *Temple*, built on Mount *Sion*, was typical of his immaculate Body, in which dwelt all the Fulness of the GODHEAD †.—That the Prophet *Jonah*, lodged in the Belly of the Whale, and discharged from that strange Confinement, on the third Day ‡; was an Emblem of his own descending into the Grave, and rising again before his Flesh saw Corruption.

We have also the Testimony and the Practice of the chiefest of the Apostles, for our Warrant. He assures Us, That the *Rock* smitten by *Moses*, had a Reference to *CHRIST* ||; who was wounded for our Sins, and is the Foundation of our Hopes. That the *Waters*, issuing at the Stroke, were significative of those spiritual Blessings, which flow from a crucified SAVIOUR. That, as the former followed the Sons of *Jacob*, through all the Circumvolutions of their tedious Journey; the latter accompany the Disciples of *JESUS*, in every Stage of their earthly Pilgrimage.—Let the great Teacher of the *Gentiles* be our Expofitor, and We shall see the *Veil* of the *Temple*

* *John* iii. 14.
 † *Matt.* xii. 39, 40.

‡ *John* ii. 19, 21. *Col.* ii. 9,
 || *I Cor.* x. 4.

ple dignified with a Significancy, richer far than its costly Materials, and curious Workmanship. Its Silk and Embroidery exhibit, to the Eye of Faith, the pure and spotless Flesh of *CHRIST**. As, by rending the material Veil, the Holy of Holies became *visible* and *accessible*; so, by piercing the Body, and spilling the Blood of *CHRIST*, the GOD of Heaven was *manifested*, and the Way to Heaven *opened*.

Every Reader must admire those *divided Waves*; which, instead of overwhelming the *Israelites* with a resistless Deluge, stood like a Wall of Defence on their Right-hand, and on their left, as they marched through the Depths of the Sea.—Every Reader must admire that *wonderful Cloud*, which hung like a wide extended Canopy over the Hosts of *Israel*; and screened them from the annoying Sun-beams, as they passed through the sultry Desert.—Our Admiration must be heightened, when We find *ibat*, which was a Cloud by Day, becoming a *Pillar of Fire* by Night; and illuminating their Camp with the most amazing, as well as the most cheering Splendor.—But *St. Paul* discerned a greater Glory, and a deeper Design, in these unparalleled Events. The People, He says, *were baptized unto Moses, in the Cloud and in the Sea* †. These symbolically represented, The Baptism of *Water*

* *Heb.* x. 20.† *1 Cor.* x. 2.

ter and of *Fire*; or the Application of *CHRIST*'s Blood to our Souls, and the Efficacy of his *SPIRIT* on our Hearts. In the former of which, consists our Justification; from the latter of which, proceeds our Sanctification.

I fear, You will think my Discourse, somewhat like the Journey just now mentioned; but I must not wholly omit the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. Which, of all others, is the most unexceptionable Vindication, as well as the faultless Model, of allegorical Exposition.—It is delightful to observe, what Propriety of Address, the inspired Writer uses. He speaks to the *Jews*, in *their own Way*: alludes to their own Usages, Ordinances, and Ceremonies: proves them to be Types of, and Guides to, a more clear, a more benign, and in all respects a more excellent *Oeconomy. More parti-

* He styles the legal Oblations, and indeed the whole Service of the *Jewish* Sanctuary, *The Example and Shadow of heavenly Things*; or of *CHRIST JESUS*, and *evangelical Worship*, and *spiritual Blessings*, *Heb. viii. 5.*—Υποδείγμα, *the Pattern*: somewhat like the Strokes, penciled out upon a piece of fine Linen; which present You with the Figure of Sprigs, of Leaves, and of Flowers; but have not yet received their splendid Colours, their curious Shades, and beautiful Inrichments, from the Labours of the Needle.—Σκια, *A shadowy Representation*: which gives You some dim and imperfect Idea of the Body; but not the fine Features, not the distinguishing Air, none of those living Graces, which adorn the real Person.—Yet, both the Pattern and the Shadow lead our Minds to something nobler than themselves. The Pattern, to that which *completes* it; the Shadow, to that which *occasions* it.

particularly He displays the *transcendent Superiority* of *CHRIST* and his Gifts, even to those Persons and Privileges, which they held in the *highest Esteem*. These, like the Morning Star, were introductory to, yet totally eclipsed by, the rising Sun.

They had exalted Apprehensions of the *Angelic Excellencies*. The Apostle therefore celebrates the REDEEMER, as the LORD whom Angels obey, as the GOD whom Angels adore.—They always reckoned *Moses* to be the *first Favourite* of Heaven, and chief among the Children of Men. He lets them know, that *Moses*, with all his extraordinary Endowments, was but a *Servant* in the House of *JESUS*. It was his greatest Honour, to be the Harbinger of this Prince of Peace.—As the Priesthood and Sacrifices were some of their distinguishing Privileges; He shews the Pre-eminence of *CHRIST*'s Office to all the *Aaronic Orders*. He demonstrates the extensive and everlasting Efficacy of *his one Atonement*, in preference to the *whole Series* of the *Levitical Oblations*.

Ther. Thus interpreted, I must acknowledge, the Book of *Levitical Ceremonies* is *significant* and *edifying*. Whereas, abstracted from this evangelical Improvement, nothing can be more *empty* and *jejune*. I once thought, that, to peruse those obsolete Canons, was like sitting

ting down to an Entertainment of dry Bones. But, if such be their Import, they may yield Marrow and Fatness to the attentive Mind.

Due Care, however, should be taken, not to suppose a Type, where there is no *apparent* Foundation of Analogy in the Thing itself; or no *Hint* of this Nature given Us by the unerring SPIRIT. Lest, instead of being guided by Truth, We are bewildered by Fancy.—And, when either or both these Handles present themselves, I think, We should beware of straining the Subject, beyond the Bounds of a *just* and *reasonable* Comparison. Lest, instead of following the Clue, We stretch it till it breaks.—If the first Caution is not observed, the Sense of Scripture will lie so deep, or be removed to such a Distance; that none but Persons of the most *acute* Discernment, can find it, or none but Persons of the most *excursive* Imagination can reach it. If the second is not regarded, the Meaning of those divine Volumes will become so *vague* and *volatile*, that there will hardly remain any Possibility of ascertaining or fixing it.

Assp. As to the Expedience and Necessity of these cautionary Limitations, I have the Pleasure of agreeing intirely with my Friend.—Let our Fancy submit to the Reins of Judgment, otherwise her Excursions will be *wild* and *lawless*. Let our Zeal borrow the Eyes of
Dis-

Discretion, otherwise her Efforts will be *blind* and *extravagant*. And let all, thus tempered, thus regulated, be under the Influence of enlightening Grace. *Then*, to spiritualize the antient Scriptures, will be to convert the Stones of the Sanctuary into the Jewels of a Crown; and to fetch, not Water only, but Milk and Honey, from the flinty Rock.

Then, how *pleasing* must it be, as well as *instructive*, to discover the blessed *JESUS*, in all the Institutions of the *Mosaic Law*!—To see his *Incarnation* prefigured by the Feast of *Tabernacles* *. When the *Israelites* were to relinquish their Houses, and lodge in Booths. Even as the Son of *GOD* left the Bosom of his Father, and the Seats of Bliss, to inhabit a Cottage of Clay, and sojourn in a Vale of Tears.—To see our spotless and divine Victim, typically slain at the joyful Solemnity of the *Passover*, and the anniversary Fast of *Expiation*.—To see his *Death*, that inestimable Ransom for our Souls, presented to our Faith, in every Morning and Evening *Sacrifice* †: his *Intercession*, that prevailing Recommendation of our Prayers, most sweetly expressed by the rich *Incense*, which attended the sacred Rite.—To see the various Methods of *Purification*; some pointing at the *Fountain* ‡, open-
ed

* *Levit.* xxiii. 34, 40, 42.

† *Exod.* xxix. 38, 39.

‡ *Exod.* xxix. 4. *Psal.* li. 7.

ed for Sin and for Uncleanness in our REDEEMER's bleeding Heart ; others referring to those sanctifying Operations of the SPIRIT, which act *as a Refiner's Fire**, or *as Fuller's Soap*.—To see, in the *City of Refuge* †, that perfect Security, which CHRIST's meritorious Sufferings in our Stead, afford to every penitent and believing Sinner.

If it was so very affecting and so very encouraging to *Æneas*, when He beheld the Story of the *Trojan* Heroes, pictured upon the Walls of the *Carthaginian* Temple ‡ ; what Satisfaction and Joy must arise in the Christian's Breast, when He perceives the amiable Lineaments of his everlasting Friend, *portrayed* in all the Peculiarities of the *Jewish* Worship, and in the most distinguishing Events of the *Jewish* History !—This must inexpressibly endear the Bible to his Affections. This spreads *Life* and *Glory* through every Page of that blessed Book.

Ther. How soon is this Walk finished ! How imperceptibly has the Time stole away !—These *Garden-Gates* I always used to approach with a particular Complacency. They seemed to afford me a *welcome Retreat* from the Impertinence and Vanity of the World. Now,
me-

* *Numb.* xxxi. 23. *Isai.* iv. 4. † *Numb.* xxxv. 11, 12.

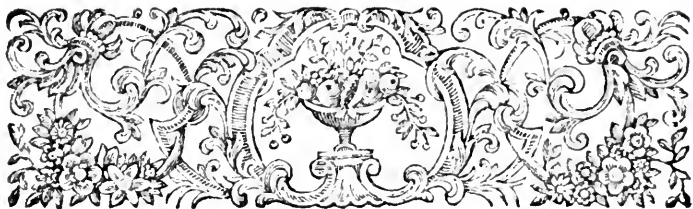
‡ *Virg.* *Æn.* I.

methinks, I enter them with Reluctance. Because, they are likely to put a Period to this agreeable Conversation.—However, as my *Aspasio* enters with me, I am reconciled, I am satisfied. It will be in his Power to restore the Pleasure, that must now be interrupted. And this is what I shall ere long request; because I have not spoke my whole Mind upon the present Subject.

Asp. Whenever You think proper, *Theron*. This is, to me, a *favourite* Subject: and not to me only, but to incomparably better Judges.—The Man, who had been caught up into the third Heavens, and seen the Visions of GOD, determined to know *nothing* but *JESUS CHRIST* and Him *crucified**.—At the grandest Assembly, that ever was convened on Earth, this furnished the *principal*, if not the *only* Topic of Conversation.—And in that World, where the Voice of Joy and Thanksgiving is perpetually heard, this constitutes the *Burden* of the Song; *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed Us to GOD by thy Blood* †.

* 1 Cor. ii. 2.

† Rev. v. 9.



DIALOGUE IV.

THERON.



MUST now desire my *Aspasio* to inform me, *What* that grand Assembly was, (which He mentioned in the Close of our last Discourse) and *where* convened?

Asp. Can't you guess, *Theron*?—Was it in the Plains of *Theffaly*; when *Xerxes* drew together the Forces of more than half the known World, and appeared at the Head of all the Potentates of the East?—Was it in the *Roman* Forum; when the Senators were assembled in their Robes, and the Barbarians took them for a Synod of Gods?—No; it was on the Mount of *Transfiguration*. Where the Son of the true GOD, the LORD of eternal Glory, shone forth in some of his *celestial* and *native* Splendor; with Garments white as the Snow*, and a Countenance bright as the Sun.

Where

* *Mark* ix. 3. The Evangelist's Description is, like the Scene, remarkably bright; and the Gradation of his Images, is

Where he conversed with two of his most distinguished Saints, just come down from the Regions of Bliss and Immortality: with *Moses* the great Deliverer of the Law, and with *Elijah* the resolute Restorer of its Honours. Where he was attended by three of his *principal* Ambassadors; who were to be the Reformers of Mankind, and the Lights of the World.

This, I think, is the most venerable and august Assembly, that the Annals of History have recorded.—And what was the *Topic* of *Conversation*, amongst these illustrious Personages?—Not the Affairs of State, nor the Revolutions of Empire; not the curious Refinements of Literature, nor the wonderful Discoveries of Philosophy; but the *ignominious* and *bloody* Exit*, which the divine *JESUS* was soon to make at *Jerusalem*.—This Circumstance, methinks, should recommend the Subject to our frequent Discourse; even though it

is *almost* as worthy of Observation, as the memorable Fact. — The Garments were *white—exceeding white—white as the Snow—whiter than any Fuller on Earth could make them—surpassing all the Works of Art, equalling the first and finest Productions of Nature* — Nay, so great was the Lustre, that it *glistered* (*εγσειετο σιλεουτα*) like the Lightning, and even dazzled the Sight.

* Does not this very delicately, yet very strongly intimate, That the Sufferings and Death of *CHRIST*, were the principal End of the *Mosaic* Institutions, and the principal Subject of the *Prophetic* Teachings? For, is it not natural to suppose, that *Moses* and *Elijah* intended, when ministering on Earth, that very Thing, which their Conversation dwelt upon, when they descended from Heaven?

it was less eminent, for intrinsic Dignity, and comfortable Import.

Talking in this manner, they arrive at the *Park*. Which, the Moment You enter, fills the View with its bold, enlarged, and magnificent Sweep.—It was diversified with level and rising Ground. Here, scooped into mimic Amphitheatres; with the *Deer* pendent on the little Summit, or shooting down the easy Precipice. There, raised into gentle Hills; some of which were *canopied* with a large, spreading, solitary Oak; others were *tufted* with a Cluster of tapering and verdant Elms. Two or three *Cascades*, gleaming from afar, as they poured along the grassy Slope, gave a pleasing Variation to the Prospect: While they startled the timorous unexperienced Fawns, with their foaming Current, and watery Roar.—*Grandeur* and *Simplicity* seemed to be the Genius of the Place. Every thing breathed an Air of noble Negligence, and artless Majesty.

In the Center of all, rose a curious *romantic Mount*.—Its Form was *exactly round*; somewhat like a Sugar-loaf, lopt off a little below the Point.—Not co-eval with Nature, but the Work of human Industry. Thrown up, 'tis supposed, in those perilous Times, when *Britain* was alarmed by foreign Invasions, or bled with intestine Wounds.—It was covered, all around,

around, with Eldar-shrubs: Whose Ranks, gradually rising, and spreading Shade above Shade, composed a kind of *woody Theatre*: Through which were struck two or three *spiral Walks*; leading, by a gentle Ascent, and under embowering Verdure, to the Summit.— At proper Intervals, and on every Side of the Hill, were formed little *Arborets*; with Apertures, cut through the Boughs, to admit a Prospect of the Country.—In one or other of these leafy Boxes, You command, at every Hour of the Day, either the Sun or the Shade. —All along the winding Avenues, and all around the beauteous Rests, sprung Daffodils, Primroses, and Violets: which, mingling with Hyacinths and Cowslips, composed many a charming Piece of *natural Mosaic*.

How agreeable, as they climb the circling Path, to reflect on the *happy Change*, that has now taken Place!—Where steely *Helmets* gleamed, or brazen *Shields* clashed, the *Goldfinches* twitter their Loves, and display their painted Plumes. The Dens of Rapine, or the horrid Haunts of Bloodshed, are become the Retreats of calm Contemplation, and friendly Converse.—In yonder lower Spaces, where the armed Troops were wont to patrol; from whence they made Excursions, to ravage the Villages, or terrify the Swains; the *Fallow-Deer* trip lightly, or the *full-headed Stags* stand at Bay.

From a small Eminence, but at a considerable Distance, gushed a couple of Springs. Which, rambling through a Grove, lost one another in the shady Labyrinth. Emerging, at length, from the Gloom, they approached nearer and nearer, and fell into Embraces at the Foot of this Hill. They rolled, in amicable Conjunction, along the pebbly Channel, that encircles its Basis; and added their *sober Melody* to the *sprightly Warbling* of the Birds. —Flowing off in one common Stream, they formed the fine Pieces of Water, which beautified the Park. From thence, they stole into the Meadow, and widened into a *River*. There, enamoured as it were with each other, they glide by wealthy Towns, and sweep through flowery Vales; regardless of the *blooming Toys*, that deck the one, and of the *noisy Crowds*, that throng the other.

So, said *Aspasio*, may *Theron* and his *Selina*, pleasing and pleased with each other, pass through the busy and the amusing Scenes of Life; neither *captivated* by the one, nor *anxious* for the other. With such harmonious Agreement, and indissoluble Union, may they pursue the Course, marked out by Providence; their Happiness *increasing*, and their Usefulness *inlarging*, as they draw *nearer* the Ocean of all Good. Then, parted by a gentle Stroke of Fate, like the Waters of some ample Stream

severed

severed by the Piers of an intervening Bridge, may they speedily *reunite!*—Reunite in consummate Blifs, and never be separated more!

Ther. I thank You, *Aspasio*, for your affectionate Compliment. Nor can I wish You, by way of Return, a greater Recompence, than the continual Exercise of such a *benevolent* Temper. For, to exercise Benevolence, is to enjoy the most refined and exalted Pleasure; such as makes the nearest Approaches to the Felicity of the eternal Mind; who, as the Scripture most beautifully speaks, *has Pleasure in the Prosperity of his Servants.*

But while We are seated on this Mount, our Situation reminds Us of (what You just now mentioned) the grand Conference relating to the Death of *CHRIST*:—A Business, which you have indeed accounted for; but in a Manner, that may be thought not the *most honourable* to the divine Attributes.

Asp. I have represented it, as a *Ransom* for our Souls, and a *Sacrifice* for our Sins. If You disapprove my Account, be pleased to favour me with your own.—For what Purpose, according to *your* Opinion, did that ever-blessed Person die?

Ther. To confirm the *Truth* of his Doctrine, and leave Us a *Pattern* of the most perfect Resignation.

Asp. These are truly noble Ends ; yet these, though noble, were not the *only*, were not the *principal* Designs of that great Event. For, upon such a Supposition, where is the *Difference* between the Death of *CHRIST*, and the Death of the Martyrs? *They* confirmed the Truth of the Gospel. In *their* Sufferings was Goodness and Obedience ; the same in Quality, though not in Degree.—Upon such a Supposition, what *Benefit* could the antient Patriarchs receive from the REDEEMER? Since None could be improved by the Example of his Patience, or the Pattern of his Obedience, till they were actually exhibited.—Or how could *CHRIST* be stiled, *The Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World**? The Advantages of whose Death, commenced from the very Beginning, as they will be prolonged even to the End of Time.

Not to depend on consequential Arguments, let Us hear the *express* Declaration of our divine Master Himself: *This is my Blood, which is shed*—for what? To give Credibility to my Gospel, or yield an Example of intire Resignation? Rather—*for the Remission of Sins* †. Will any One attempt to make, The Remission of Sins, and the Proposal of a Pattern, or the Ratification of a Doctrine, *synonymous* Terms?—They, who can torture and trans-

mute

* *Rev.* xiii. 8.† *Matt.* xxvi. 28.

mute the genuine Sense of Words, at this extraordinary rate, may *metamorphose* any Expression into any Meaning.

If then We would consider our LORD's Death, in its *due Amplitude*; We must consider it, both as a Pattern of Piety, and as a Ransom for Sinners. We must neither separate nor confound these very distinct, yet very consistent Effects.

Ther. Is it not inconsistent with the acknowledged Principles of Justice, That the *Innocent* should be punished, instead of the Offender?

Ans. If the innocent Person has an *absolute* Power over his own Life; *willingly* substitutes Himself in the Place of the Guilty; and, by his vicarious Sufferings, fully answers all the Purposes of a *righteous* Government;—In this Case, which was the Case with our LORD, I see not the least Repugnancy to the Rules of Justice.

The Bible, that authentic Transcript of the Counsels of Heaven, avows; and, by avowing, vindicates the Practice. *The LORD hath laid on Him the Iniquity of Us all**: when all We like

* *Isai.* liii. 6. *הפניע בו* *made to meet, or fall upon*, in an hostile, vindictive Manner; with a Design to take Vengeance, or inflict Death; as an armed Man falls upon his Enemy, or a fierce Lion on the helpless Lamb. This is by far the most usual Signification of the Phrase.

I could not observe, without Surprise and Sorrow, the late Attempt of a learned Writer, to interpret away the Force and

like Sheep had gone astray, and were exposed to the Stroke of Vengeance, as those wandring Creatures to the ravenous Beast; the good Shepherd interposed, and the just GOD made that Vengeance to fall upon Him, which must otherwise have been executed upon Us.—*He suffered,*

and Spirit of this Text. He says, “the Word We translate *hath laid*, is the same that We render *meet*, Exod. xxiii. 4. “*If Thou meet thine Enemies Ox or Ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring them back to Him again.* And the Meaning is, “By Him the LORD hath caused to meet, and stop the Iniquities of Us all, wherein we have wandered from Him.”

Not to inquire, whether the *Language* be consonant to Grammar; I shall only examine, whether the *Sense* is suitable to Scripture. According to this Gentleman’s Idea, the Prophet’s Doctrine is as follows; “Our Sins were running away, like a stray Sheep, or like a wandering Ox. But they were met by *CHRIST*; who graciously turned them back, and restored them to their rightful Owner.”—To avoid this glaring Impropriety, our Author has added a kind of Salvo; “to turn *Us* back to Himself, who is the Shepherd of Souls.” But this is to depart from the Prophet’s Subject; who is speaking not of *Us*, but of *our Iniquities*. This is to depart from the Tenour of *his own* Explication: If He adheres to the Clue, which He borrows from the Book of *Exodus*, what I have represented, is the unavoidable Consequence.

See! to what wretched Shifts, dishonourable to the Word of GOD, and even to the Art of Criticism, *They* must have recourse! Who refuse to acknowledge, the *real Substitution* of *CHRIST* in our Stead, and the *proper Atonement* made by his Death.—How much more like a true Critic, and like a real Christian, has *Vitringa* explained the Passage! *Cum Nos instar Oviū disperfarū esse in Erroribus, & Pœna Criminū nostrorū, instar Lupi aut Bestiæ voracis Nos persequeretur ad Exitium: intervenit servus JEHOVÆ justus, qui illam Pœnam in se suscepit; in quem irruit ad Necem usque; quique adeo medius inter Pœnam & Nos, eandem Pœnam tulit, & Nos ab Exitio vindicavit.*

suffered, says the Apostle, *the Just for the Unjust**; that, by expiating our Guilt, He might bring Us to G O D—now, to his gracious Favour—hereafter, to his blissful Presence.

You will permit me to add a Passage, from our common Favourite *Milton*. Because, it is no less beautiful in itself, than it is pertinent to the Occasion.—*Messiah*, pleading in behalf of fallen Man, thus addresses his Almighty FATHER;

—————*Man, dead in Sins and lost,
Atonement for Himself, or Offering meet
(Indebted and undone!) hath none to bring.
Behold Me then! Me for Him! Life for Life
I offer. On me let thine Anger fall.
Account me Man: I for his Sake will leave
Thy Bosom, and this Glory next to Thee
Freely put off; and for Him lastly die
Well-pleas'd; on me let Death wreak all his
Rage †.*

Ther. The fine Imagination of a Poet, will hardly pass for a decisive Argument. When We are searching after Truth, We must attend to the *Dictates* of Reason, not follow the *Vagaries* of Fancy. And Reason, *Aspasio*, remonstrates against your Notion of a vicarious Sacrifice. Reason! that primary Guide, and final Test, both in discovering and determining the Sense of Scripture.

* 1 *Pet.* iii. 18.

† *Milton*, B. III. 233.

Afp. Suppose You then, my dear *Theron*, that None are in Possession of Reason, but the Pupils of *Socinus*, and the Zealots for *Deism*? Or, that None make use of Reason, in their religious Inquiries, but Men of this Mould?

*Wrong not the Christian, think not Reason yours ;
'Tis Reason our great Master holds so dear ;
'Tis Reason's injur'd Rights his Wrath resents ;
'Tis Reason's Voice obey'd his Glories crown.
Through Reason's Wounds alone thy Faith can
die*.*

Poets, You see, are far from disclaiming Reason. Equally far is Christianity from discarding the *sober*, the *sanctified* Use of this noble Faculty. When Reason is under the Influence and Direction of the *divine* SPIRIT, We have the same high Opinion of her Excellence, as You. And, when thus regulated, We have, I am persuaded, the Sanction of her Authority, for all our Sentiments.

Reason, as She operated in the Sages of the Heathen World, instead of rejecting, approved and adopted this very Scheme. Approved it, even under the Disadvantage of a *mutilated*, *disfigured*, and extremely *impaired* Form. The current Language of the Classic Authors, and almost every Historian of *Greece* and *Rome*, are Vouchers for the Truth of this Observation †.

—As

* *Night-Thoughts*, N^o IV.

† See the Note, in Dialogue III. page 90:

—As the *Gentiles* were unanimous in the Custom of offering Sacrifices, and equally unanimous in supposing their vicarious Nature, so also are the *Jewish* Writers.

Ther. What Man of Sense, pays any Regard to the *Jewish* Writers? *Legendary* they are, and *extravagant* to the last Degree. Doctards I might call them, rather than Writers.

Asp. They are, I believe, extravagant enough in their Comments upon Scripture. But they relate, with sufficient Exactness and Fidelity, the *prevailing Belief* of their Nation. In this Case, their Testimony is as unexceptionable; as in the other, their Notions are chimerical. —Now, had it been a mistaken Belief, surely our blessed LORD, that *infallible* Judge, and *impartial* Reprover, would have testified his Disapprobation of it. Surely his Disciples, who were actuated by the *unerring* and *undaunted* Spirit of their Master, would have entered their Protest against it. Surely St. *Paul*, in his Epistle to that very People, and in his Treatise on that very Subject, would have set Himself to *rectify* such an Error; and have weeded out the Tares, before He sowed the good Seed. But there is not the least Hint of this Kind, in all the Discourses of our SAVI-OUR, or in all the Writings of his Apostles.

They speak to a People, who were accustomed to look upon their Sacrifices, as piacular

lar Oblations *, and a typical Expiation of Guilt. They speak of our REDEEMER'S Crucifixion, and the Benefits of his Death, in the sacrificial Terms, that were of *current Use*, and *established Signification*. If therefore the popular Opinion was improper, their Manner of Expression and Address, must be calculated rather to authenticate Error, than to propagate Truth.—So that, I think, even the *Silence* of the inspired Penmen on this Occasion, is but little inferior to a *loud Attestation*. Did they only say nothing *against* the Doctrine of Satisfaction by Sacrifice; it would, in effect, and Circumstances considered, be saying Abundance *for* it.—But they are very copious and explicit upon the Point.

Ther. Where are they so copious? If You have such a Heap of their Allegations, it will be easy to pick out a few, and give Us a Specimen.

Asp. It is as easy, *Theron*, as it is delightful.—*Messiah shall be cut off*, says the Prophet *Daniel*, *but not for Himself* †.—For whom then, and for What? *Isaiab* informs Us concerning both: *For the Transgression of my People was He stricken* ‡.—Because, this is an Article of the last Importance, it is repeated, it is confirmed, it is explained, with the most remarkable

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* This, I think, is incontestably proved by *Outram*, in his Treatise *De Sacrificiis*.

† *Dan.* ix. 26.

‡ *Isa.* liii. 8.

Particularity: *He was wounded for our Transgressions; He was bruised for our Iniquities; the Chastisement of our Peace was upon Him, and with his Stripes We are healed* *.—Our LORD himself asserts the same Truth in the very same Style; *I am the good Shepherd, and lay down my Life for the Sheep* †.—St. Paul, in a Multitude of Passages, sets his Seal to this momentous Doctrine.—St. Peter maintains it, in very forcible Words; *Who his own Self bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree* ‡.

The sacred Writers not only assert this capital Article, but use every Diversity of Speech, in order to give it the fullest Evidence, and the strongest Establishment. *He made Reconciliation for the Sins of the People* ||. *JESUS CHRIST the Righteous is the Propitiation for our Sins* §. *He loved Us, and washed Us from our Sins in his own Blood* ¶. *He was made Sin for Us, though He knew no Sin* **.

Ther. No body makes any Objection to these Texts. But the Sense, the true Sense of such Phrases, is the Thing in Question.

Asp.

* *Isai.* liii. 5. † *John* x. 15.

‡ *1 Pet.* ii. 24. Very forcible Words indeed.—Ο;—αυτος—αμαξιλις ημων—εν τω σωματι αυτου—*He bare—Himself bare—our Sins—in his own Body.* Particularly intended, One would imagine, to make the Article of our LORD's vicarious Sufferings, clear beyond all Misapprehension, and sure beyond all Doubt.

|| *Heb.* ii. 17.

§ *1 John* ii. 2.

¶ *Rev.* i. 5:

** *2 Cor.* v. 21.

Asp. What You call *The Question*, to me appears so plain, as not to want a Decision, or admit of a Doubt.

However, since You seem to demand a *critical Scrutiny*, it will not be thought pedantic, if I make an Observation or two upon the original Languages. — *The Chastisement of our Peace*, מוסר שלמנו The Punishment necessary to obtain our Peace, *was* inflicted upon Him. The Prophet considers GOD, under the Character of a righteous Judge, insisting upon Satisfaction to his violated Law. Which being thoroughly made, his Justice acquiesces; He has no farther Demand; but is reconciled to the Offender. Thus *Peace is made by the Blood of the Cross* *.

He gave Himself ἀντιλυτρον υπερ †, *A Ransom for All*. If this does not imply the Notion of *vicarious*, I very much question, whether Language itself can express it. — Λυτρον, is a *Ransom*; which conveys a vicarious Sense, in its most common and authorized Acceptation. — Αντι, which is equivalent to *instead*, still more fully ascertains and strengthens the Idea. — Υπερ, which is translated *for*, and denotes a Substitution of One in the Place of Another ‡; this

* Col. i. 20. † 1 Tim. ii. 6.

‡ Δεομεθα υπερ Χριστου, *We beseech You in CHRIST's stead*. 2 Cor. v. 20. — Ινα υπερ σε διακονη μοι, *That in thy Stead He might have ministered unto me*. Philem. ver. 13. As I was con-

this added to all, renders the Expression as determinate and emphatical for the Purpose, as Words can possibly be.

Shall I argue from a more obvious Topic, which has no such Dependence on the precise Significancy of the Original?—*Surely*, says the Prophet; He speaks with Vehemence, as of an Affair that is *very weighty*; He speaks with Confidence, as of a Fact that is *very certain*: *He hath borne our Grievs, and carried our Sorrows* *. What can this mean, but He hath taken upon Himself *that Affliction*, and *those Miseries*, which properly belonged to Us?—Let us read on, and this Meaning will present itself, in the clearest View. *We did esteem Him stricken, smitten of GOD, and afflicted*: We took Him for a real Malefactor, and thought that

considering the Force of this Argument, a certain four-looking gloomy Person came in my way; and desired, I would introduce Him to *Theron* and *Aspasio*, as an Evidence for fixing the Signification of the Preposition *υπερ*, when spoken of the Death of *CHRIST*.—I must confess, I did not like his Appearance, at the first sight; and do not know, that any body has made use of Him, on this Occasion. But St. *John* stood by, and said; “Introduce Him. He prophesies in this “Instance.”—Perhaps, the Reader is at a loss to guess, *Whom* I mean. To keep Him no longer in Suspence, I mean *Caiaphas* the High-Priest.—He bears the following Testimony; IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR US, THAT ONE MAN DIE FOR THE PEOPLE, AND THAT THE WHOLE NATION PERISH NOT.—Now, as *to perish* signifies, not only to die, but to die miserably; if One dies for all, that all may not die miserably, I cannot but think, He must die *INSTEAD* of All. See *John* xi. 50.

* *Isai.* liii. 4.

that He was punished for *his own* Misconduct. In opposition to which injurious and false Surmise, it is added; *But He was wounded for our Transgressions, He was bruised for our Iniquities.*—May I not here borrow the Prophet's Language, and say with an Air of Certainty? *Surely*, this is the plainest Proof in the World, that our Sins were the meritorious Cause of *CHRIST's* Sufferings. And if our Sins were the meritorious Cause of his Sufferings, our Guilt must be charged upon Him, and punished in Him.

St. Paul affirms, That *CHRIST* has delivered Us from the Curse of the Law*. How? By taking our Place, and enduring what We deserved. Or, as the Apostle Himself speaks, to the same Effect, but in a much more emphatical Manner, *by being made a Curse for Us.* Does not this evidently denote both a Commutation of Persons, and a Translation of Punishment? *He* suffered, who was innocent; not *We*, who are guilty.—He also suffered that very Sentence, which the Law denounced on Us. For, it is written, *Cursed is every One that continueth not in all Things †*; to this We were obnoxious. It is written again, *Cursed is every One that hangeth on a Tree ‡*; to this *CHRIST* submitted. And if *CHRIST* endured *that very* Curse, which We deserved:
if,

* Gal. iii. 13.

† Deut. xxvii. 26.

‡ Gal. iii. 13.

if, by this means, He delivered Us from *all* Malediction: either this must be suffering in *our Stead**, or else Nothing can be called by that Name.

Shall I descend lower still, and refer our Point to the Determination of *illiterate* Men? —Ask any of your Tenants, What Ideas arise in *their* Minds, upon the Perusal of the aforementioned Texts?—I dare venture to foretel, that, artless and unimproved as their Understandings are, they will not *hesitate* for an Answer. They will neither complain of Obscurity,

* “ This, says Dr. *South*, in his smart Manner, is spoke so plain and loud by the universal Voice of the whole Book of GOD, that Scripture must be *crucified* as well as *CHRIST*, to give any other tolerable Sense of the Expressions.”—And not Scripture only, but the common Import of Language. What says *Mezentius*? When his Son, interposing in his Behalf, is slain by *Aeneas*.

———*Pro me hostili paterer succedere Dextræ*
Quem genui? Tuane hæc Genitor per Vulnera servor?
Morte tuâ vivens?

Here, the Father is *saved* by his Son's *Wounds*; *lives* by his Son's *Death*. How, and in what Manner? By a Substitution of One instead of the Other; by the Son's *suffering*, what must otherwise have *fallen* upon the Father.—Should the *Socinian* Interpreters try the same Experiment on these Lines of *Virgil*, which they make upon Passages of a parallel Signification in Scripture; is there a Critic in the whole World, that *could approve*, that *could endure*, such flagrant Violations of Grammar, Sense, and Taste?—Yet I believe, there is no sincere Christian, but would readily and gratefully say;

———*Pro me ultrici succedere Dextræ*
Dignasti. Tua CHRISTE DEUS per Vulnera servor;
Morte tuâ vivens.

rity, nor ask the Assistance of Learning. But will *immediately* discern in all these Passages, a gracious REDEEMER suffering in their Stead; and, by his bitter, but expiatory Passion, procuring the Pardon of all their Sins.—Nay farther; as they are not accustomed to the Finesses of Criticism, I apprehend, they will be at a loss to conceive, how it is *possible* to understand such Passages in *any other* Sense.

Say not, this is an improper Appeal; or these are *incompetent* Judges. The Scriptures were written for *their* Edification; not to exercise the Ingenuity of subtle Disputants, but to instruct the *meanest* of Mankind in the Way of Salvation. Therefore, on fundamental Articles, We may assuredly conclude, The Expression will be easy, and the Doctrine perspicuous: so that *He who runs may read, and the Way-faring Men, though Fools**, shall not err therein.—And, though I am far from undervaluing the Aids of Literature, yet, upon those momentous Subjects, which are inseparably connected with our eternal Felicity, I cannot but regard the *common Sense* of plain, serious, humble Christians, as the very *best* of Critics.

Ther.

* *Ifai.* xxxv. 8. The Word *Fools*, seems to denote Persons of *slow* Understanding, and *dull* Apprehension; as *Luke* xxiv. 25. Or else it signifies Those, who, for want of a cultivated Education and the Ornaments of Literature, are *accounted* Fools by the Sons of Science; as *1 Cor.* i. 27.

Ther. It has been said by a learned Critic, That vicarious Punishment or Suffering, gives us too low Ideas of the Son of GOD, as it sinks them to the Pain and Suffering of a Malefactor, the very meanest Idea We can have of them.

Asp. The Idea is plainly suggested by the Word of Prophecy, and supported by the Attestation of sacred History. In *that* it was foretold, and in *this* it is recorded, That *He was numbered with Transgressors* *. — To this Purpose speaks St. Paul, though somewhat more cautiously than your Critic. He was made, not indeed *sinful* Flesh, but in the *Likeness* of sinful Flesh; and, though perfectly innocent, was left to endure the Vengeance due to the vilest Miscreant.

Yes, my dear *Theron*; that glorious Person, whom the highest Angel adores, *suffered, as if He had been the Criminal, the Pain and Punishment, which We, or equivalent to that which We, the real Criminals, should have suffered.* — If, to consider this, gives Us a low Idea; if, to suffer this, was a deep Abasement; how exceedingly *high*, and how immensely *grand*, is the Goodness and the Grace manifested therein! The lower You draw the Arrow on the String, the loftier Flight it makes in the Sky. And the greater our LORD'S

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* *Isai.* liii. 12. *Luke* xxii. 37.

Humiliation for Us, the more wonderful and adorable his Love to Us.

Ther. As there cannot be a vicarious Guilt, or as no One can be guilty in the Stead of Another, so there cannot be a vicarious Punishment, or no One can be punished instead of Another. Because Punishment, in its very Nature, connotes Guilt in the Person who bears it.

Asp. If You mean by Guilt, the *Consciousness* of having committed a Sin, and the internal *Defilement* consequent upon it, We never suppose *such* a vicarious Guilt. It is never affirmed, that *CHRIST* was stung with the Remorse, or stained with the Pollution, of the adulterous *David*, the perfidious *Peter*, and the persecuting *Saul*. But, that He was *treated* by the righteous GOD, *as if* He had perpetrated these, and all the Crimes of all Believers, either in the past or succeeding Ages.

If by Guilt You mean, The *Charge* of a criminal Action, and The *Obligation* to suffer Penalty, your Assertion is nothing more than begging the Question. It nakedly affirms the very Thing in Debate. And bare Affirmations, unsupported by Evidence, are seldom admitted as decisive Proofs.—We, on the other Hand, affirm, That all our criminal Actions were charged upon *CHRIST*; and that He suffered the Punishment, which they deserved.

served. The former of these, is not so properly called vicarious Guilt, as *real Guilt*, contracted by One, imputed to Another. The latter We readily allow to be *vicarious Punishment*, sustained in their Stead, whose Guilt was imputed.—For both these Points, We have the Authority of Truth itself, speaking in the Scriptures. *The LORD laid on Him the Iniquities of Us all*; here is the Imputation. *CHRIST has redeemed Us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for Us*; here is the vicarious Punishment. And You know, to *what Casuists* We submit the Interpretation of these Texts—common Sense, and an honest Heart.

Ther. Is not this *shocking* to suppose? *horrid* to affirm? If Guilt was really imputed to *CHRIST*, then Punishment was his Due—Justice might insist upon it—And He could not escape it.

Asp. To suppose this, is so far from shocking my Apprehension, that it appears, even on *your own* Principles, right and necessary.—*Right*, because Punishment, as You yourself have declared, always connotes Guilt; I would add, either contracted, or at least imputed. And indeed the Sufferings of *CHRIST* could not be of a *penal* Nature, unless He endured them as under a Charge of Guilt.—It is *necessary* to suppose this, otherwise how will You vindicate the Justice of GOD? He bid his

Sword awake, and smite * the blessed *JESUS*. But shall the Judge of all the Earth *do wrong*? Shall He smite, where there is nothing but Innocence? No Guilt, either personal or imputed? That be far from Him! The Thought be far from Us!

Whereas, upon this Supposition, it becomes a *just* and *righteous* Thing, That GOD should inflict, and that *CHRIST* should sustain, the most rigorous Punishment. And I do not know, but this might be the Cause of our LORD's Silence, when He was accused at *Pilate's* Bar, and at *Herod's* Judgment-Seat. It is probable, He considered Himself as standing before a higher Tribunal; and responsible to eternal Justice, for the criminal Actions of all his People. In this Situation, and in this Capacity, clear Himself of *personal* Demerit He could; clear himself of *imputed* Guilt He could not. *Therefore* He was dumb; He opened not his Mouth. For though, as the *Son* of the most high GOD, Glory and Immortality were his undoubted Right; yet, as the *Surety* for sinful Men, Tribulation and Death were his condign Portion.

And why should this be thought shocking? It is not the least Derogation to the transcendent Excellency of *CHRIST*. It casts not the least Stain on the unspotted Sanctity, either of his Nature, or his Life.—To bear Sin, as a

CO-

* *Zech.* xiii. 7.

voluntary Surety, is infinitely different from committing it, as an *actual* Transgressor. To say, that *CHRIST* was punished for any Irregularity of *his own*, would be false, impious, and horrid. To say, that He was charged with *our* Guilt, and endured the Punishment due—in the plain and full Sense of the Word *due*—to our Sins; is so far from being injurious to his Dignity, that it pays the *proper* Honour to his *mediatorial* Undertaking. It pays Him the Honour of—the highest Obedience to his FATHER's Will—the deepest Humiliation of his own illustrious Person—and the most boundless Benevolence to Mankind.

Ther. GOD is Love, *Aspasio*, all Love. Whereas You would—

Asp. I do not often interrupt my Friend's Discourse. But I cannot forbear interposing a Query, on this Occasion.—Is there, then, no *just Displeasure* in the DEITY? What meaneth that solemn Denunciation of the supreme Lawgiver? *The Anger of the LORD shall smoke against that Man* *.—What meaneth that awful Declaration of the Apostle? *The Wrath of GOD is revealed from Heaven, upon all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men* †.—Or, in what Sense are We to explain that alarming Interrogatory of the Prophet? *Who*

can

* *Deut.* xxix. 20.

† *Rom.* i. 18.

can stand before his Indignation? And who can abide in the Fierceness of his Anger*?—Whence could those avenging Visitations proceed, which destroyed *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* with a Tempest of Fire †? Which swept away so many Thousands of the polluted *Israclites* with a raging Pestilence ‡? And consigned over so many Millions || of *rebellious Angels* to Chains of Darkness?

Surely, *Theron*, if there be any determinate Signification in Language; if any Lesson to be learnt from the most tremendous Judgments; it is, That the LORD, though free from all the *Discomposure* of Passion, is nevertheless *angry with the Wicked* §; and will make impenitent Sinners feel the Effects of his wise and holy Indignation.

Ther. Does not your Doctrine represent the all-merciful GOD, as a *rigorous* Being? Who, when

* *Nab.* i. 6. † *Gen.* xix. 24. ‡ *Num.* xxv. 9.

|| *Millions*—The *Number* of the fallen *Angels* is no where specified; and the *Veil* sits deep upon the spiritual World; so that We can see no farther, than *Revelation* has discovered. Yet, I think, there is sufficient Room to ground a *Conjecture*, upon the Reply which one of those execrable *Apostates* made to our LORD. *My Name is Legion*; (a Word signifying a great Multitude, five or six thousand) *for We are many*. If so many were employed in tempting and tormenting a *single Person*, what *Armies*, what *Myriads* of those invisible *Enemies*, must exist through *universal Nature*!—It is an *awful Thought*; and should make Us fly to our divine Protector, and Almighty Deliverer. See *Mark* v. 9, and 2 *Pet.* ii. 4.

§ *Psal.* vii. 11. *Deut.* ix. 8.

when once displeas'd, will hardly be pacified? Whereas, the LORD himself declares by his Prophet; *Fury is not in me.*—Men of satyrical Wit would be apt to insinuate, That You had mistaken JEHOVAH for *Moloch*; and was erecting a Christian Church in the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*.

Asp. We take our Representations of GOD, not from the vain Conjectures of Men, but from the Records of infallible Truth. There he is described, as a *righteous* GOD; a *jealous* *GOD; and, to Christ-less Sinners, a *consuming Fire* †. Though wonderfully condescending, yet transcendently majestic. Inasmuch, that none of the fallen Race are admitted to *approach* his Throne, but only through the Intervention of a great MEDIATOR ‡; and, without shedding of Blood, even the Blood of a Person higher than the Heavens, there is *no Remission* || of any Offences.

Yet in all this, there is not the least Tincture of *Fury*. Fury implies an immoderate Degree of Resentment, that will hearken to no Reasoning, and accede to no Terms. The Gospel Account proves, even to a Demonstration, that this has no Place in the divine Nature. So far from it, that GOD, though highly provoked, has *provided* an Atonement
—has

* *Exod.* xx. 5: † *Heb.* xii. 29. ‡ *John* xiv. 6;
|| *Heb.* ix. 22. *Heb.* vii. 26.

—has made *Overtures* of Reconciliation to his disobedient Creatures—has even *befought* * a guilty World, to accept of Forgiveness. So that the Insinuations of your satyrical Gentlemen, are as egregiously mistaken, as they are shockingly worded.

You are a Man of Sense, *Theron* ; and esteem that Character, far above the idle Reputation of a Wit. As such, let me ask You seriously ; Is it not for the Honour of the divine Majesty, to exercise *Justice*, as well as *Mercy* ? Always to pardon, and never to punish, would be *Tameness*, rather than *Benignity* ; a Renunciation of Holiness, rather than a Display of Goodness.—Or, can it be right in Us, so extravagantly to magnify the *amiable*, as to depreciate, nay even annihilate, the *awful* Attributes of the DEITY ?—This, says a Poet, is the Theology, not of Christians, but of Infidels ;

Who

* 2 *Cor.* v. 20. It was an Instance of singular Compassion in the blessed GOD, that, though offended with *Job's* Friends, He *admitted* of a Sacrifice, and *directed* them to an Intercessor ; both typical of *CHRIST JESUS*. But what *unparalleled* Condescension, and *divinely* tender Mercies, are displayed in this Verse ! *As though GOD did beseech You by Us : We pray You in CHRIST's stead, be ye reconciled to GOD.*—Did the *Judge* ever beseech a condemned Criminal, to accept of Pardon ? Does the *Creditor* beseech a ruined Debtor, to receive an Acquittance in full ? Yet our *Almighty* LORD, and our *eternal* Judge, not only vouchsafes to offer these Blessings, but invites Us—intreats Us—with the most *tender* and *repeated* Importunity solicits Us—not to reject them !

*Who set at Odds Heaven's jarring Attributes,
 And with one Excellence another wound;
 Maim Heaven's Perfection, break its equal
 Beams,
 Bid Mercy triumph over—GOD himself,
 Undeified by their opprobrious Praise:
 A GOD all Mercy is a GOD unjust*.*

Ther. But We have lately been told, that the pardoning Grace of the Lawgiver is not obstructed by any Demands of Law and Justice. For He can set them aside.

Assp. What! Set aside a Law, that is holy, righteous, and good!—Set aside a Justice, that is eternal, inflexible, and infinite!—*St. Paul* gives a very different Solution of this Difficulty. He tells Us—not that GOD *set aside* his Law and his Justice—but that *He set forth* the blessed JESUS for a Propitiation, through Faith in his Blood: with this express Design, that He might declare his Righteousness †; might demonstrate, not only his Clemency, but his Justice; even that vindictive Justice, whose essential Character and principal Office is, to punish Sin.

This seems to be the Import of the Word *Righteousness*, in the present Connection. And, I think, more than seems, if We consult the following Verse: *To declare, I say, at this Time*
his

* Night-Thoughts, N^o IV.

† Rom. iii. 25.

his Righteousness; that He might be just *, evidence Himself to be strictly and inviolably righteous, in the Administration of his Government; even while He is the all-forgiving gracious *Justifier of the Sinner that believeth in JESUS.*—According to this Plan, *Mercy and Truth meet together; Righteousness and Peace kiss each other* †: all the Attributes harmonize; every Attribute is glorified; and not one super-eded, no, nor so much as clouded.

Ther. If some are verging to one Extreme, are not you inclining to the other? Our Ears tingle, and our Blood runs chill, at the very Thoughts of so severe a Vengeance, executed on an Object so *worthy and illustrious.*—Besides, how can We suppose, that the beneficent CREATOR and PRESERVER of Men, should *take Pleasure* in the Sufferings of the most unblameable Person, that ever existed? Especially, since He himself has made this tender Declaration; *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice* ‡.

Asp. A tender Declaration indeed it is: signifying, that GOD is better pleased with the Duties of Humanity and Charity, than with the

* *Rom.* iii. 26. The Attribute of Justice *must* be preserved inviolate. And inviolate it *is* preserved, if there was a real Infliction of Punishment on our SAVIOUR. Nothing else can thoroughly *clear up* this great Evangelical Paradox—JUST, YET JUSTIFIER OF THE UNGODLY!

† *Pfal.* lxxxv. 10.

‡ *Matt.* ix. 13.

the most costly and pompous Train of Sacrifices. Nay, that He will even *dispense* with the Observance of *his own* ceremonial Institutions, when they interfere with our Exercise of Beneficence *One to another*. Thus resigning (so admirable is his Goodness!) the Services due to Himself, for the Benefit and Comfort of his Creatures.—But all this has no Sort of Relation to the Sacrifice of *CHRIST*: which was the most noble, and the most acceptable Oblation, ever made to the King of Heaven.

We are assured by a Prophet, That *it pleased the LORD to bruise* his holy Child *JESUS*. GOD not only gave up his Son to Sufferings, but gave Him up with a divine Complacency*.—In like manner, the blessed *JESUS* addressed Himself to the dreadful Task, not only without Reluctance, but with the utmost Alacrity †. *I delight to do thy Will,*
was

* *Divine Complacency*.—This is the Idea included in the original Word רָצוּן, Isai. liii. 10. It corresponds with the Phrase, used by the Voice from Heaven, εὐδοκῆσα, Matt. iii. 17. Or, it may be very exactly translated by St. Paul's beautiful Expression, εὐαρεστίαι, Heb. xiii. 16.—And therefore the great JEHOVAH is said to smell a sweet Savour, or a *Savour of Rest* רִיחַ נִיחֻיָּה in those Sacrifices, which prefigured the crucified *JESUS*, Gen. viii. 21.

† *Utmost Alacrity*.—There is no *Inconsistency* between this Assertion, and our LORD's Supplication; *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me: nevertheless, not my Will, but thine be done*. Such a deprecatory Request, put up with so much Earnestness, yet with so much Submission, only shews the *extreme Severity* of our *REDEEMER's* Anguish,
and

was the Language of his Soul.—Should You ask ; How could the SON take Pleasure in undergoing, or the FATHER in inflicting, such amazing Sorrows ? No otherwise, than upon Account of those grand and everlasting Advantages, which were to result from them.

A severe Vengeance, You say, such as makes our Ears to tingle.—This is the very Thing intended, to *awaken* and *alarm* presumptuous Offenders. That they “ may hear, and fear, “ and do no more wickedly.” It is such a Method of dispensing Grace, as secures the utmost Reverence to the divine Commands. Strikes the deepest Terror, even while it cherishes the brightest Hope—strikes the *deepest Terror*, on every persevering Sinner—cherishes the *brightest Hope*, in every penitent Transgressor.

Ther. If one of my Servants had affronted or injured me ; I should, upon his submissive Acknowledgment, forgive his Fault, and not insist upon Satisfaction for the Wrong. Will You

and the *prodigious Weight* of his Woes. And this indeed it shews, beyond the Power of Description.—His ardent Love to Mankind, and his fervent Zeal for his FATHER’S Glory, made Him *desire* these Sufferings. His invincible Resolution and unequalled Magnanimity, emboldened Him not to decline, but to *meet* them. Yet they were so great, so terrible, that his Nature, being *human*, could not but *recoil* a little, and be *startled* at their Approach ; and, had it not been *divine* also, must inevitably have *sunk* under the Load.

You make the Father of Compassions, *more inexorable* in his Nature, *more rigid* in his Demands, than a human Master?

Assp. When You have a Servant, that owes his Being to your Power; that has received innumerable Benefits from your Bounty; yet has offered You innumerable Affronts, all attended with the most aggravating Circumstances, and all in *Defiance* of the *most righteous* Threatenings—When You are possessed of infinite Majesty, and unspotted Sanctity; when Truth inviolable, and Justice inflexible, are essential to your Character—Then, *Theron*, the Parallel will hold good; and *Your* Conduct shall be a Pattern for the Procedure of JEHOVAH.

Till then, You and I must be willing to forgive, because GOD has made it our *bounden* Duty; and because We have *incomparably more* to be forgiven by the Judge of the World, than We can possibly remit to our Fellow-creatures. In the mean Time, You will allow the great GOD, who is *glorious in Holiness*, to communicate his heavenly Favours, in a Manner becoming Himself. On such *august* and *honourable* Terms, as shall maintain the Rights of his universal Government, and manifest the Glory of his adorable Attributes.

Ther. Might not GOD have cancelled our Transgressions, and received fallen Men into

his Favour, without any Propitiation?—To deny this, would be to limit the HOLY ONE of *Israel*; and impose Conditions on that uncontrollable Sovereign, *Who giveth not Account of any of his Matters.*

Asp. We need not embarrass Ourselves, by entering upon Inquiries, which may seem to lie beyond the Limits of human Understanding. Enough for Us to know, that this Propitiation was *absolutely necessary* with regard to the first Covenant. For, as GOD had solemnly declared, *In the Day Thou eatest thereof, dying Thou shalt die*; his Truth and Justice stood engaged to execute the Threatening. And no second *Adam* could restore the first, but by taking this Curse upon Himself.

*Die Man, or Justice must; unless for Him
Some Other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid Satisfaction, Death for Death*.*

Therefore the divine *JESUS*, who lay in the Bosom of the FATHER, and knew the Counsels of Heaven, says, *The Son of Man MUST be lifted up* † on the Cross. There was

a

* *Milton*, B. III. 210.

† *John* iii. 14. Δει τον, &c. The same Expression is used, *Luke* xxiv. 26.—Perfectly conformable to this leading Truth, is the current Language both of the Law and of the Gospel. Under the Law, GOD himself says; *I have sworn, that the Iniquity of the House of Eli shall not be purged with Sacrifice or Offering for ever*; that is, the Guilt shall

a Necessity for his Crucifixion. Because, this was *stipulated* in the Covenant of Peace, made between the FATHER and the SON.—Because, it was expressly *foretold* by the antient Prophets (and the Scripture cannot be broken) that the MESSIAH *should be cut off out of the Land of the Living*.—Because, a Variety of Types, and a Multitude of Sacrifices, *pre-figured* his Death: *one* of the Types, pointed out the very *Manner* of his Suffering; and *all* the Sacrifices, detached from their Dependency on this great Oblation, would have been *beggarly Elements*,—mere unavailing empty Ceremonies.

I apprehend, it is no Limitation of the great GOD, to suppose Him incapable of acting otherwise, than in *perfect* and *perpetual* Consistency with Himself.—Neither is it any Infringement on his absolute Sovereignty, that He cannot but order all Affairs, *for the Honour* of his Justice, his Fidelity, and each of his exalted Perfections.—This is the very Thing, which the sacred Writers express, in their

shall never be expiated, 1 Sam. iii. 14. Under the Gospel, the Apostle declares; *If we sin wilfully*, by a final Apostacy from CHRIST, *there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins*; they are, to such Persons, and in such Circumstances, absolutely irremissible. Heb. x. 26.—Which Phrases are evidently connected with, and founded on, this grand Doctrine; That the appointed, the *only* Way of obtaining Pardon from the righteous GOD, is, by the Intervention of an expiatory Sacrifice.

their plain but strong Language ; *GOD who cannot lie* * : *He cannot deny Himself* †.

Ther. GOD is often said to *forgive* our Sins ; particularly, in that sublime Passage, where He proclaims his Name to *Moses*. *The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth ; keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin*. Now, Pardon is a *free* Thing. Freeness is implied in the very Nature of Forgiveness. Take away the former, and You destroy the latter.—If an *Equivalent* be given, Pardon is no longer Pardon, but a *Purchase*. Forgiveness ceases to be an Act of Grace, and becomes the Payment of a Debt.

Ans. The Text You quote is truly sublime, and equally comfortable. But You forget to mention one Article of very great Moment, which closes and completes the glorious Character. Which seems added on purpose, to prevent any *wrong Apprehensions* of the DEITY, and to guard against all *Abuse* of the Doctrine. *He will in no wise clear the Guilty* †.—

GOD

* *Tit.* i. 2.

† *2 Tim.* ii. 13.

‡ *He will in no wise clear the Guilty.* *Exod.* xxxiv. 7. This Text is not without its Difficulty, especially in the Original.—*Steuchus* interprets the Words, *Et innocens non erit sine Piaculo* : He shall not be acquitted without a particular Sacrifice.—I think, they may be translated, with a little more Propriety and Exactness, thus ; *Pardoning Iniquity, Transgres-*

GOD will not, on *any Consideration* whatever, absolve the obstinate, persevering, irreclaimable Offender: neither will He acquit any of the guilty Race, *absolutely, unconditionally*, or without such a Satisfaction, as may repair the Honour of his injured Law.

We have Redemption through his Blood, says the Apostle, *even the Forgiveness of our Sins**. It is Forgiveness, You see, though bought with a Price. It is Remission, though procured by Blood.—It is free, with regard to that *sovereign* Being, who pardons. For, He was under no Obligation to *admit* of a propitiatory Sacrifice; but might, without any Diminution of his Dignity, have left all Mankind to perish in their Sins.—It is free, with regard to the *obnoxious* Creatures, who are pardoned. For, it is vouchsafed, without any Satisfaction demand-

Transgression, and Sin, ונקה לא ינקה though not with Impunity; or rather, *though He will by no means let it go unpunished*, meaning Sin: which is the immediate *Antecedent*; is expressed in the three preceding Words; and may very properly be referred to in this Clause. Then the Sense will be, as follows; “ Though GOD pardons Sin, yet it shall not go unpunished. He will certainly inflict his righteous Vengeance, and exercise his punitive Justice, though not on the Sinner, whom He spares; yet on the SURETY, whom He has provided.”—In the same manner *Cocceius* renders the Passage, *Et non exercens Impunitatem*; and expounds it much to the same Purpose.—We have this very Word in the same remarkable Construction, *Jer. xxx. 11.* ונקה לא ינקה which is translated, and *I will not leave thee altogether unpunished.*

* *Eph. i. 7.*

demanded at *their* Hands, or any Penalty inflicted on *their* Persons.—It is in this respect also free; that an Interest in the great Atonement is granted to Us, without the least Merit, or any *deserving* Qualifications of our own.

In all this, GOD is not only merciful, but most tenderly and immensely merciful. And will any One calumniate this adorable Method of exercising Mercy? Because Provision is also made for the Glory of GOD's Truth, GOD's Holiness, and supreme Authority?

Ther. Does not your Notion of a propitiatory Sacrifice, derogate from the Goodness of the *Almighty* FATHER; and transfer all our Obligations to the *incarnate* SON?

Asp. Is there not Goodness, in *allowing* a Substitute to suffer in our Stead?—Is there not still greater Goodness, in *providing* a Substitute for Us, without any Solicitation on our Part?—Is there not the very highest Exertion of Goodness, in appointing a *dear*, an *only*, an *incomparably* excellent SON for the Purpose?—This marvelous Scheme, far, very far from obscuring, most illustriously displays, the superabundant Loving-kindness of the FATHER.

GOD *so* loved *the World*, apostate and polluted as it was—*How* did He love it? To a Degree, unutterable by any Tongue; inconceivable by any Imagination; and only to be expressed by the infinitely precious Effects.

Loved

Loved it SO, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting Life*. And does this derogate from the Goodness of the Almighty FATHER, to give, not barely Pardon and Life, but give them through the Hands, nay, through the Wounds, the Agonies, the Death of his divinest, dearest SON?

Such Privileges, vouchsafed on any Terms, must challenge the devoutest Acknowledgments. But, when attended with this *additional* Demonstration of Favour, they are enough to inflame Us with Gratitude, and transport Us with Admiration. They not only manifest, but commend † the divine Love; shew it to the greatest Advantage, in the highest Perfection, with every Circumstance of Recommendation and Endearment.—By this means, blessed GOD, Thou hast unspeakably enhanced thy Benefits! Thou hast rendered them, though invaluable in *themselves*, exceed-

* John iii. 16.

† Rom. v. 8. ΣΥΜΙΣΤΗΣΙ. It seems to be an Image taken from the Practice of *Tradesmen*. Who, in shewing their Goods, point out their Excellencies; and set, in the clearest Light, whatever may bespeak their Worth, or recommend them to the Purchaser.—Perhaps, it may allude to the Custom of sending, with some favourite and worthy Person, *recommendatory Letters*. In which his good Qualities are described; and every thing is mentioned, that may embellish his Character, and render his Presence acceptable. In this Sense St. Paul uses those nearly related Words, ΣΥΜΙΣΤΑΝΕΙΝ, ΣΥΣΤΑΤΙΚΑΙ, 2 Cor. iii. 1.

exceedingly more so, by the *Manner* of conferring them!

Ther. Again in your Elevations, *Aspasio*?—The World, You know, is grown very *rational* and *inquisitive*; will admit nothing but upon clear Evidence, and full Conviction. We expect, in all religious Inquiries, not the Flights of Fancy, or Flourishes of Rhetoric, but a Sobriety of Reason and Solidity of Argument.

Asp. The World, rational as it is, seems, by the Taste of the present Age, no Enemy to *Works of Fancy*. The World, therefore, may not be displeas'd with an affecting Story. And a Story, suitable to the Occasion, just occurs to my Mind. Such as may serve to *shadow forth*, though very *faintly*, the surpassing Benignity and Grace of our crucified LORD.

An *Asiatic* Queen, departing this Life, left behind Her three accomplished Sons; all arriv'd to Years of Maturity.—The young Princes were at Strife, who should pay the *highest Respect* to their royal Mother's Memory. To give scope for their generous Contention, they agreed to meet at the Place of her Interment; and there present the most honourable Gift, they knew how to devise, or were able to procure.—The *Elddest* came, and exhibited a sumptuous Monument; consisting of the richest Materials, and ornamented with the most exquisite Workmanship.—The *Se-*
cond

cond ranfacked all the Beauties of the blooming Creation; and offered a Garland of fuch admirable Colours, and delightful Odours, as had never been feen before.---The *Youngest* appeared, without any pompous Preparation; having only a cryftal Bafon in one Hand, and a filver Bodkin in the other. As foon as He approached the Tomb, He threw open his Breaft; pierced a Vein, that lay oppofite to his Heart; received the Blood in the tranfparent Vafe; and, with an Air of affectionate Reverence, placed it on the beloved Parent's Monument.—The Spectators, ftruck with the Sight, burft into a Shout of general Applaufe; and immediately gave the Preference to this laft Oblation.

If it was reckoned fuch a fingular Exprefion of Love, to expend a *few* of thofe precious Drops, for the Honour of a *Parent*: O! how matchlefs! how ineffable was the Love of *JESUS*, in pouring out *all* his vital Blood, for the Salvation of *Enemies*!

Ther. My greateft Objection is ftill to come.—If *CHRIST* fuffered in our Stead; He muft fuffer *that very* Punifhment, which was due to our Iniquities. This your orthodox Divines affirm to be incomparably worfe than bodily Death; to be nothing lefs than the everlafting Difpleafure of *GOD*.

Asp.

Asp. The Punishment due to our Iniquities, was Shame, Death, and the divine Wrath.

As for *Shame*—Was ever Shame, like that Shame, which our despised REDEEMER bore?—Though Prince of the Kings of the Earth, yet *born* in a Stable, and laid in a Manger.—When an *Infant*, exiled from his own Country, and a Vagabond in a foreign Land.—When engaged in the Discharge of his *Ministry*, accused of the most flagitious Crimes, and branded with the blackest Names.—When brought to his *Exit*, apprehended as a Thief; condemned as a Malefactor; nay, the vilest of Malefactors, a Robber and Murderer, is preferred before him.—His Executioners poured Contempt upon all his venerable Offices. As a *King*, they ridiculed Him, by putting a Mock-Sceptre into his Hand; and crowning Him with ragged Thorns*, instead of a royal Diadem. They villified his *prophetic* Character, by hood-winking his Eyes; striking his blessed Head; and then asking, in cruel Derision, *Who it was that smote Him* †. They cast Re-
proach

* To have crowned the blessed *JESUS* with *Straw*, would have been a vile Insult, and treating Him like an ambitious Madman. But to crown Him with *keen, pungent, lacerating* Thorns, was adding Cruelty to their Insults; unheard of Barbarity to the most contemptuous Mockery. *Matt.* xxvii. 29.

† Scornfully insinuating, that his sacred prophetic Office was fit for nothing, but to serve such despicable Purposes. *Matt.* xxvi. 68.

proach upon his *priestly* Undertaking, when they sharpened their Tongues with malicious Irony, and shot out those bitter Words; *He saved Others, Himself He cannot save* *.—To render his Infamy as *public*, as it was *shocking*, they hung Him on a Tree; and exposed Him, defiled as He was with Spitting, and disfigured with Wounds, to the gazing Eyes and contumelious Scoffs of numberless Spectators.

If You doubt, whether *CHRIST* sustained the *Wrath* of *GOD*, let Us follow Him to the Garden of *Gethsemane*. A Scene, which I would always recollect, when I walk along the *fertile Vale*, or expatiate amidst the *flowery Garden* †, or enjoy the Delights of any rural Retirement.—He had no Remorse, to alarm his spotless Conscience; yet Fearfulness and Trembling came upon Him. No Violence was offered to his sacred Person; yet a horrible Dread overwhelmed Him.—'Twas Night, cold Night; and though our divine MASTER lay prostrate upon the Earth, amidst the Fall of chilling Dews, He *sweat*—*sweat Blood*—*sweat great Drops* of Blood, *running down* in reeking Streams to the Ground.—He was anointed with the Oil of Gladness above his Fellows ‡.

Yet

* *Matt.* xxvii. 42.

† Alluding to the Evangelist's Description of *Gethsemane*, who represents it as a *Garden*; and to the Etymology of the Word, which signifies a *fat* or fruitful *Valley*, גֵּתְשֶׁמֶן *John* xviii. 1. *Matt.* xxvi. 36.

‡ *Psal.* xlv. 7.

Yet so insupportable was his Affliction, that He could not forbear crying out, *My Soul is sorrowful—exceeding sorrowful—sorrowful even unto Death* *!—What Cause, what adequate Cause, can be assigned for this amazing Anguish? None but the Wrath of his Almighty FATHER. Who was now become an inexorable Judge; treated Him no longer as the Son of his Love, but as the Surety for numberless Millions of guilty Creatures.

Ther. Was it possible, that the innocent and holy *JESUS*, the *dearly beloved SON* of *GOD*, should be an Object of his FATHER's *Wrath*?

Ass. It was not only possible, but unavoidable and necessary. *Unavoidable*, with respect to the divine Holiness; *necessary*, for the Procurement of our Redemption. — Sin was charged upon *CHRIST*; all the Sins of all Believers, in all Ages and Places of the World. And could the *infinitely righteous GOD* behold such a Deluge of Iniquities, (those abominable Things, which He hateth) without expressing his Displeasure? Or could the blessed *JESUS* be punished, *truly* punished for them, without any painful Sensation of their horrid Evil, and of that tremendous Indignation which they deserved?

If this was not the Case, who can maintain the *Dignity* of his Conduct, during the Agony

iii

* *Matt.* xxvi. 38.

in the Garden? Was there no Pouring out of the divine Displeasure? Then his Behaviour in that Hour of Trial, was not equal to the Intrepidity of the three *Hebrew* Youths; who continued calm, and without the least Perturbation, while the Furnace was heated into seven-fold Rage*.—But if this was the Time, in which *it pleased the LORD to bruise Him* †; if the most high GOD *bent his Bow like an Enemy, and stood with his right Hand as an Adversary* ‡; it is easy to account for the prodigious Consternation of our REDEEMER. It is not to be wondered, that his Heart, though endued with invincible Fortitude, should become like *melting Wax*. For, who knoweth the Power of that Wrath, at which the Pillars of Heaven tremble || ?

Ah! *Theron*; the Vinegar and the Gall, which they gave Him to drink, was not half *so bitter*, as the Cup of his FATHER's Wrath. Yet, for our sake, He drank it off to the very Dregs.—The Nails, that pierced his Hands; and the Spear, that cleft his Heart; were not half *so sharp*, as the Frowns of his eternal FATHER's Countenance. Which, for our Consolation, He patiently submitted to bear.—He was rent with Wounds, and racked with Pain; his Bones were dislocated, and his Nerves

* *Dan.* iii. 17, 18, 19. † *Isai.* liii. 10.

‡ *Lam.* ii. 4. || *Job* xxvi. 11.

Nerves convulsed; a thousand thorny Daggers were planted in his Temples, and Life flowed out at ten thousand gushing Veins. Yet this, all this was *gentle*, was *lenient*, in comparison of those inexpressible Agonies, which penetrated his *very Soul*. The former, fetched not a single Complaint from his Mouth: the latter, wrung from his breaking Heart that passionate Exclamation; *My GOD! My GOD! why hast Thou forsaken me?* — Astonishing Words! Surely, a *Distress*, beyond all Imagination grievous*, uttered them. Surely, the *Vengeance*, not of Men, but of Heaven itself, extorted them. Every Syllable of which speaks, what the mourning Prophet describes; *Is it nothing to You, all Ye that pass by? Behold and see!*

* To heighten our Idea of this Distress, the Evangelists make use of the *most forcible* Words—*εξέτατο εκθαμβεισθαι*, He was seized with the *most alarming* Astonishment—*αδημονειν*, He was overwhelmed with *insupportable Dejection*—*περιλυπησθαι*, He was *besieged* on all Sides, as it were, with an Army of *invading Sorrows*—He *wrestled*, amidst strong Cries and Tears, not only with the Malice of Men, and Rage of Devils, but with the infinitely more dreaded Indignation of GOD: He wrestled even unto *an Agony* of Spirit, *ευ αγωνια*. All these Circumstances of Horror and Anguish, constitute what a celebrated Poet very justly styles,

A Weight of Woe more than ten Worlds could bear!

The *Critic*, probably, will admire the Propriety and Beauty of this Line. Which, composed of nothing but Monosyllables, and clogged with the frequent Repetition of a cumbersome Consonant, makes the Sound remarkably apposite to the Sense.—May We all be *sacred* Critics! Have, not only a *refined Taste*, to relish such Elegancies of Composition, but an *awakened Heart*, to feel the Energy of such important Truths!

see! if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me, in the Day of his fierce Anger*?

Here, now, is our whole Punishment endured; the Shame of the Cross, and the Sorrows of Death; the Suspension of the ALMIGHTY's Favour, and the terrible Sensations of his Wrath.

Ther. Be it so. Yet all this amounts to no more, than Part of Payment. For, these Sufferings were transient; temporary only, not eternal. Therefore, the main Circumstance, the most bitter Ingredient, was wanting.

Asp. In the Estimate of Divine Justice, and in point of penal Satisfaction, they were equivalent to our endless Punishment.—Had our LORD's Sufferings been the Sufferings of a mere Man, or of the most exalted Angel, I acknowledge, they could have bore no Proportion to our Demerit. But they were the Sufferings of the Prince of Life, and the LORD of Glory: before whom all Men are as Dust, and all Angels as Worms.—Let the immense Dignity of the REDEEMER's Person, be weighed against the everlasting Duration of our Punishment, and it will counter-balance, if not preponderate. His Infinitude is surely parallel to their Eternity.

It was IMMANUEL, the incarnate GOD, who purchased the Church, and redeemed Sinners, with his own Blood†. The divine Nature of

* Lam. i. 12. † Act: xx. 28.

of our SAVIOUR communicated its ennobling Influence, to every Tear He shed, to every Sigh He heaved, and every Pang He felt. This renders his Sufferings a *perfect*, as the last Circumstance We remarked, renders them a *proper* Satisfaction. And though *the Wood of Lebanon was not sufficient to burn, nor all the Beasts thereof sufficient for a Burnt-Offering* * ; this Sacrifice fully answers the Exigence of the Case.—This Sacrifice sends up an ever-acceptable Odour to the Skies, and diffuses its sweet Perfume through all Generations: such as appeases Heaven, and revives the World.

Yes, *Theron*, You must give me Leave to repeat the delightful Truth; It was *the great GOD, even our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, who gave Himself for Us* †. His Sacrifice therefore must be *inconceivably meritorious*. O! that Sinners, the *wilest* of Sinners, knew its all-sufficient Efficacy! They would no longer be holden in the Bonds of Iniquity, by that destructive Suggestion of the Devil, *There is no Hope* ‡.

Ther. What valuable End could such vicarious Sufferings accomplish? Suppose GOD absolutely inexorable, and they must be *insufficient*. Suppose Him divinely merciful, and they are *needless*.

Asp.

* *Isai.* xl. 16. † *Tit.* ii. 13, 14. ‡ *Jer.* ii. 25.

Asp. The Difficulty You propose, I think, has been obviated already. So that I have no Occasion to solve your Dilemma, but only to answer your Query. These Sufferings—as a *Punishment*, gave ample Satisfaction to the divine violated Law—as a *Sacrifice*, they perfectly reconciled Us to our offended GOD—as a *Price*, they redeemed Us from every Evil, and purchased for Us a Title to all Good.

This is a Subject of the most distinguished Importance. Let not my *Theron* imagine, I would abuse his Patience, if I dwell a Moment longer on the favourite Topic.—I might enumerate many Ends, all *magnificent* and *gracious*, accomplished by this wonderful Expedient. I content myself with specifying a few. But those, such as bring the highest *Glory* to GOD—administer the most solid *Comfort* to Man—and most effectually promote the Interests of *Piety*.

In this We have a Manifestation of the most awful Justice, and at the same Time a Display of unbounded Goodness.—*Awful Justice*; in that the great and terrible GOD, though determined to exercise Mercy, would exercise it only in such a Manner, as might vindicate the Authority of his Law; might testify the Purity of his Nature; and declare the inviolable Faithfulness of his Word.—*Unbounded Goodness*; in that He withheld not his SON, his only SON, but freely gave Him up for Us

all. Gave up “the Brightness of his Glory,” to be covered with Infamy; gave up “the beloved of his Soul,” to expire in Agonies; on purpose to obtain Honour and Immortality for apostate Men.—The *Torments* inflicted on all the *Damned* in Hell, are not so fearful a Monument of GOD’s Justice, as those dying Agonies of the LORD *JESUS CHRIST*. Nor could a *thousand Worlds*, conferred on Mankind, have been such an Act of superabundant Munificence, as that Gift of his ever blessed SON.

Look We for *Power* and *Wisdom*?—To sustain the Humanity of CHRIST, under all the barbarous Indignities of Men, under the more envenomed Rage of Devils, and the far more insupportable Curse of the divine Law: to conquer Sin and Death and Hell, by a Person *crucified in Weakness*, and bleeding out his Life on the torturing Rack, and ignominious Gibbet: to expiate, by *one Act* and *one Offering*, the innumerable Millions of Crimes, committed by all his People, from the Beginning to the End of Time: was not this *Power*? matchless *Power*? astonishing *Power*?—And as for *Wisdom*, how admirable was the Contrivance, which could harmonize the *seemingly opposite* Claims of Mercy and of Justice! and not only *satisfy* each, but *magnify* both!—Had Punishment been executed, in *all* its *Rigour*, on the Sinner’s Person, Mercy had lost her

her amiable Honours. Had the Sinner been restored to Favour, without *any Penalties* sustained either by Himself or his Surety, Justice had been set aside as an insignificant Attribute. Whereas, by our LORD's vicarious and expiatory Sufferings, both are manifested, and both are exalted. Therefore the Scripture affirms, that GOD hath not only exercised, but *abounded in Wisdom and Prudence*—nay, hath abounded in *all* Wisdom and Prudence*, by this Instance of marvelous and triumphant Grace. Which is, at once, so honourable to Himself, and so advantageous to his People.

Ther. Advantageous to his People—I am glad, You are come to this Point. This is what I want to have cleared up. I am for those Doctrines, which glorify GOD, by doing Good to Man. Give *me* the Religion, whose Aspect is benign, and whose Agency is beneficial. Not like a *Meteor*, to dazzle Us with a vain Glitter. Not like a *Comet*, to terrify Us with a formidable Glare. But like yonder *Sun*, whose Beams shed Light, and Life, and Joy all around.

Asp. If this be what You seek, and what You prize; the *Christian* Religion, this Doctrine in particular, will answer your warmest Expectations, and challenge your highest Esteem. For it is rich with Benefits of the most needful, the most desirable, and most exalted Kind.

The

* *Eph.* i. 8.

The first and grand Blessing is *Pardon* of *Sins*.—Pardon, not of small Sins only, but of the most *aggravated*, the most *horrid*, the most *enormous*. Be they flaming as Scarlet, be they foul as the Dunghil, be they black as Hell itself; yet they shall be as the spotless Wool, or as the Virgin Snows*; they shall “be, as “though they had never been.”—Pardon, not of a few, but of *all* Sins. Be they numerous as the Stars of Heaven, numerous as the Hairs of our Head, numerous as the Sands upon the Sea-shore, *the Blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from them ALL †*.

Hereby We have *Victory* over *Death*, and *Admittance* into eternal *Life*.—For thus saith the holy Apostle, concerning the poor Sojourners in Clay; *Seeing therefore the Children were Partakers of Flesh and Blood, He also partook of the same; that by undergoing Death, He might destroy Him who had the Power of Death, that is the Devil; and deliver those, who, through Fear of Death, were all their Life-time subject to Bondage ‡*.—And thus saith the venerable Elder, concerning the glorified Saints in Light; *These are they, who came out of great Tribulation; and they have washed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb: therefore are they before the Throne ||*.

If

* *Isai.* i. 18.

† *1 John* i. 7.

‡ *Heb.* ii. 14, 15.

|| *Rev.* vii. 14.

If the *Philistines* rejoiced, when *Samson*, the Destroyer of their Country, was delivered into their Hands; how much *greater Reason* have We to rejoice, since the blessed *JESUS* has vanquished our last Enemy! Has made Death the Minister of endless Life, and the Grave a Gate to eternal Glory!—If *Joseph* had Cause to be glad, when his Prison-Garments were taken from Him; when He was brought into the Palace of *Pharaoh*; and made to sit at the Right-hand of the King. Is it not an incomparably *richer Blessing*, to have our Robes washed in redeeming Blood, and our Souls cleansed from all Guilt? Is it not an incomparably *higher Advancement*, to be admitted into the blissful Presence, and to possess the everlasting Kingdom of GOD?

To comprehend all in a Word—Hereby are procured, even for the most unworthy Creatures, all the *Benefits* of the *New Covenant*. Therefore, the Blood of *CHRIST* is styled by a Prophet, *The Blood of thy Covenant* *; by an Apostle, *The Blood of the everlasting Covenant* †; and our LORD himself says, *This is the new Covenant in my Blood* ‡.—Is it a Privilege, to know God, the infinitely amiable Source of all Perfection? Is it a most valuable Endow-
ment,

* *Zech. ix. 11:*† *Heb. xiii. 20.*‡ *Luke xxii. 20.* The original Word *διαθηκη* signifies either a *Testament*, or a *Covenant*.

ment, to have his Laws put into our Minds, and written on our Hearts? Is it a Branch of real Felicity, to have our numberless Sins forgiven, and not one of our Iniquities remembered any more? Is it the Compendium of all Happiness, to have GOD for our Portion, and our exceeding great Reward? To be his peculiar Treasure, his loving and beloved People*.—Of all these We may say, They are *the Purchase* of IMMANUEL's Blood: and whoever is truly interested in the *One*, is unquestionably intitled to the *Other*.

Who then would refuse so *comfortable*—

Ther. Too comfortable, We might imagine, to be either *true* in itself, or *safe* in its Consequences. Must it not tend to *embolden* the Sinner in the Prosecution of his Vices? Who need scruple to transgress, or be very solicitous to repent; if an all-atoning Sacrifice has been offered, for every Kind, and every Degree of Wickedness?

Assp. Would You have Sinners *intimidated*? Nothing speaks such Terror to the Children of Disobedience, as the bitter Passion, and accursed Death of *CHRIST*.—All the rhetorical Aggravations of Sin, with regard to its loathsome Nature, and execrable Vileness—all the Severity of Vengeance, executed upon rebellious Angels, or wicked Men—all, all are
weak

* *Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12.

weak and inexpressive, compared with the *dreadful Emphasis* of this great Transaction. For, if the LORD Almighty spared not *his own SON*, when Guilt was not found in Him, but only imputed to Him; how much less shall He spare *incorrigible* Offenders, who both habitually commit, and obstinately persist in, their daring Impieties?

If, by Repentance, You mean an *ingenuous Sorrow* for our Transgressions; nothing is so likely to break the stony, or melt the icy Heart, as these doleful Effects of Sin.—Whose Indignation does not rise against the infamous Wretch, that betrayed his LORD? Who is not ready to detest those envenomed Tongues, that accused Him; and those barbarous Hands, that crucified Him? How then can We choose but lament, and grieve, and mourn, when Conscience bears witness; That *our Sins* were the principal Actors in this deepest of Tragedies? That *We, even We*, by our manifold Crimes, were the *Betrayers and Murderers* of the Prince of Life!—If, by Repentance, You mean a *thorough Renunciation* of all Iniquity; no Motive is so effectual, to divorce the Affections from every abominable Idol, and divert the Feet from every evil Way, as an attentive Consideration of our REDEEMER's Death. With this agrees the Reasoning of the Apostle; *He himself bare our Sins in his own Body on the*

Tree; not *that* We should be emboldened to repeat them, but induced and enabled to forsake them; that, charmed with such unutterably tender Mercy, We might relinquish our darling Lusts; and, *being dead unto Sin, might live unto Righteousness* *.

If You would have *Benevolence*, your favourite Principle, take place and operate; it is impossible to urge so endearing a Persuasive to universal Good-will, as this *Kindness and Love of GOD our SAVIOUR* †. How can We indulge the Sallies of Resentment, or harbour the Seeds of Animosity; when the meek, the merciful, the infinitely gracious REDEEMER, laid down his Life for his *bitterest Enemies*? How can We treat with Contempt or Indifference, even the *meanest* of Mankind; since our divine Master gave his all-glorious Person, for vile Wretches and miserable Sinners?—Never was there so *winning* a Call to disinterested Charity, as the amiable Example of *CHRIST*. Never so *binding* a Cement of brotherly Love, as the Blood of the crucified *JESUS*.

In short; would You have People possessed of every heavenly Virtue, and animated to the Practice of every good Work? Nothing administers so powerful an Incitement to them all, as a *lively* and *appropriating* Sense of this wonderful Grace. Set home by the *HOLY GHOST*,

* 1 *Pet.* ii. 24.† *Tit.* iii. 4.

*GHOST**, it produces such a warm Gratitude in the Heart, as is far more operative, than the most *awful* Threatenings, or the most *cogent* Reasonings.—So that, quite contrary to your Suspicions, the native Tendency of this excellent Doctrine, is, to suppress Ungodliness, and promote Piety.

Observe, how the present calm Evening, yonder mild declining Sun, and these soft balmy Breezes; have unlocked the flowery Prisons, and detached a *Profusion* of *Oudours* through the Air: have inspirited the little Songsters of the Grove, and fetched *lavish Harmony* from their Throats. So sweetly will a true Belief in *JESUS CHRIST* and Him crucified, draw forth all the Powers of the Soul, in Acts of ready and chearful Obedience.—He is therefore said, not only to justify, but also to *sanctify the People with his Blood*†.

Let Us consider the Death of *CHRIST*, in this its full Grandeur and extensive Efficacy; and

* The Reader will give me Leave, on this Occasion, to subjoin the noble Doxology of our Church. Which, when thus applied, may be an excellent Means, both of expressing our Gratitude, and of quickening our Devotion.—*Glory be to the FATHER*; for providing this all-sufficient Atonement, and giving his SON to save a ruined World.—*Glory be to the SON*; for humbling Himself to the Death of the Cross, and obtaining eternal Redemption for Sinners.—*Glory be to the HOLY GHOST*; for testifying of *CHRIST* in our Hearts, and appropriating this great Salvation to our Souls.

† *Heb.* xiii. 12.

and We shall discern the admirable Propriety of the Apostle's Remark : *It became Him, for whom are all Things, and by whom are all Things, in bringing many Sons unto Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through Sufferings**. IT BECAME ; as an *Act* of Sovereignty in GOD, it comported with the Dignity, and emblazoned (if I may so speak) the incomprehensible Majesty of his Perfections.—As an Execution of *impartial Vengeance* on our Surety, it asserted the Rights of divine Government, and secured the utmost Veneration to the divine Law.—As an Emanation of *rich Indulgence* to Us, it redressed all our Misery, and retrieves our whole Happiness.—In *each* Respect, it spreads the brightest Lustre over all the Administrations of the blessed GOD ; and renders his very Justice, amiable and glorious even to Astonishment.—In *all* Respects, it is worthy of the most grateful and adoring Acceptance from sinful Man ; and such as will be had in everlasting Honour by the Choirs of Saints, and the Hosts of Angels.

Ther. I thank You, *Aspasio*. Your Arguments have not indeed converted me, but they have strengthened my Faith. I never was so unhappily mistaken, as to disbelieve the Satisfaction made by our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* ;

* *Heb.* ii. 10.

CHRIST; made to divine Justice; made for the Sins of the World. But, I now see more clearly its *Reasonableness* and *Importance*; its cheering Aspect on the *guilty* Conscience, and its benign Influence on the *moral* Conduct.

Asp. I congratulate You, dear *Theron*, from my inmost Soul, on your thorough Conviction of this important Truth. May You have still more *extensive* and *generous* Views of the glorious Article! And may every renewed View be more and more influential on your Heart!

Reviving, ravishing Thought! To have HIM for our bleeding *Victim*! HIM for our great *Propitiation*! at whose Feet the Armies of Heaven bow, and the Saints in Light adore! —Reviving, ravishing Thought! To have *all* our Punishment sustained, and the *whole* Curse of the Law exhausted; so that Justice itself can demand no more! —Nay; to have such a perfect Ransom paid for our Redemption, as renders it, not *barely* an Act of favourable Indulgence, but of the *highest* Righteousness* also, to pardon, accept, and glorify the Believer!

Excuse

* Therefore the Apostle says, *GOD is faithful and just to forgive Us our Sins*, 1 John i. 9. *Faithful*; because He had promised this Blessing, by the unanimous Voice of all his Prophets.—*Just*! Surely then He will *punish*! No; for *this*

Excuse me, *Theron*. My Affections are again upon the Soar. But I clip their Wings.— Only let me ask, Is not this Doctrine the *grand Peculiarity* of the Gospel; by which it stands distinguished from every other Religion, professed in the World?—Is it not the *central Point*, in which all the Lines of Duty unite, and from which all the Rays of Consolation proceed?—Strike this Article from the Creed, and You reduce the “Mystery of Godliness” to a System of Ethics: You degrade the Christian Church into a School of Philosophy. —To deny the Expiation made by our REDEEMER’S Sacrifice, is to obscure the *brightest Manifestation* of divine Benignity, and to undermine the *principal Pillar* of practical Religion; is to make a desperate Shipwreck of our everlasting Interests, and to *dash* (such, I fear, it will be found, in the final Issue of Things) Ourselves to *Death*, on the very *Rock of Salvation*.

Ther. Now, I believe, it is Time to repair *Homewards*. And I hope, it will be no disagreeable Exchange, if We resign our Seat on the Mount, for a Place in the Dining-room.

Alp.

this very Reason He will pardon.—This may seem strange: but, upon the evangelical Principles of Atonement and Redemption, it is undoubtedly true. Because, when the Debt is paid, or the Purchase made, it is the Part of *Equity* to cancel the Bond, and consign over the purchased Possession.

Asp. Pray, let me inquire, as We walk along (for I was unwilling to interrupt our Discourse, merely to gratify my Curiosity) What may be the *Design* of yonder *Edifice*; which rises on a small Eminence, near the public Road? It is neither a Tower, nor a Dwelling-House; but looks like a stately Column, erected on purpose to beautify the Prospect.

Ther. It is a sort of monumental Pile. Erected, as the Story goes, on a very memorable Occasion.—Queen *Eleanor* accompanied King *Edward the First* to (what was called) the Holy War. In which He gained signal Advantages over the Infidels, and acquired a large Share of Renown to Himself. After many gallant Exploits performed in the Field, a treacherous and desperate *Saracen*, demanding Admittance into his Chamber, under Pretence of private Business, wounded Him with an impoisoned Dagger. The Consequence of which, his Physicians declared, must be inevitable and speedy Death, unless the Poison was sucked out by some human Mouth. This might possibly preserve the royal Patient, but would be extremely dangerous to the Operator.

Dangerous as it was, his Queen claimed the Office; insisted upon it, as the Consort's Right; and executed it so *faithfully*, that She saved the King's Life, so *happily*, that She lost not her

her own.—After this, She returned to *England*, lived many Years, and bore several Children. But, sooner or later, Royalty itself must pay the Debt to Nature. Dying, on a Journey to *Scotland*, She was brought back to the last and long Home of our *English* Monarchs*.—Where-ever her Corpse rested, in the Way to its Interment, a Structure † (such as You now behold) was raised: In order to perpetuate the Memory of her conjugal Affection.

Asp. And should not our Hearts be a Monument of Gratitude to the blessed JESUS? Who drew the deadly Venom, not from our Veins, but from the immortal Part of our Nature: and not at the Hazard, but at the Loss, the certain and unavoidable Loss of his precious Life.—He opened his Breast, opened his very Soul, to the keenest Arrows of vindictive Justice; that, transfixing Him, they might drop short of Us. “The Poison whereof drank up
“ his Spirits ‡,” that the Balm of Peace might refresh ours.

O my *Tberon*! Let our Memories be the Tablet, to record this unexampled Instance of
Com-

* *Westminster Abbey.*

† One of these Structures stands on the high Road, near *Northampton*. It is surrounded with a large Flight of Steps, at the Bottom; and ornamented, towards the Top, with four female Statues, in full Proportion. A *Latin* Inscription informs the Traveler, concerning its Occasion and Design;

*In perpetuam Reginae Eleanoræ
Conjugalis Amoris Memoriam.*

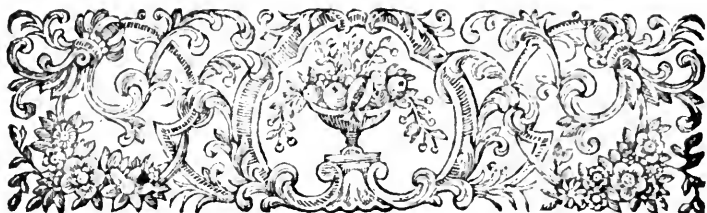
‡ *Job* vi. 4.

Compassion and Goodness. Let our Affections dwell upon the tragical, the delightful History; till they melt into Contrition, and are inflamed with Love.—If We want an *Inscription*, let Us make Use of those noble Lines, which, in the finest Climax imaginable, describe the Magnificence and Grace of this astonishing Transaction :


—————*Survey the wondrous Cure,
And at each Step let higher Wonder rise.
Pardon for infinite Offence!—And Pardon
Through Means that speak its Value infinite!
A Pardon bought with Blood!—With Blood
divine!—*

*With Blood divine of HIM, I made my Foe!—
Persisted to provoke!—Though woo'd and aw'd,
Blest and chastis'd, a flagrant Rebel still!—
Nor I alone! A rebel Universe!
My Species up in Arms!—Not one exempt!
Yet for the foulest of the Foul, He dies*!*

* Night-Thoughts, N^o IV.



DIALOGUE V.

 *SPASIO* having some Letters of Importance to answer, as soon as the Cloth was taken away, retired from Table.—His epistolary Engagements being dispatched, he inquired for *Theron*. The Servants informed Him, that their Master walked into the Garden.—A very little Search found Him, seated on an airy Mount, and sheltered by an *elegant Arbour*.

Strong and substantial Plants of *Liburnum* formed the Shell; while the slender and flexile Shoots of *Syringa* filled up the Interstices.—Was it to compliment, as well as to accommodate their worthy Guests, that they interwove the luxuriant Foliage? Was it to represent those tender but close Attachments, which had *united* their Affections, and *blended* their Interests?—I will not too positively ascribe such a Design to the Disposition of the Branches. They composed, however, by their twining Embraces,

Embraces, no inexpressive Emblem, both of the *Endearments* and the *Advantages* of Friendship. They composed a Canopy, of the freshest Verdure, and of the thickest Texture. So thick, that it intirely excluded the sultry Ray; and shed both a cool Refreshment, and an amusive Gloom: while every unsheltered Tract, glared with Light, or fainted with Heat.

You enter by an easy Ascent of Steps, lined with Turf, and fenced with a Balustrade of sloping Bay-Trees.—The Roof was a fine *Concave*, peculiarly elevated and stately. Not embossed with Sculpture; not mantled over with Fret-work; not encrusted with splendid Fresco; but far more delicately adorned with the *Syringa's silver Tufts*, and the *Liburnum's flowering Gold*. Whose large and lovely Clusters, gracefully pendent from the leafy Dome; disclosing their Sweets to the delighted Bee; and gently waving to the balmy Breath of Spring; gave the utmost Enrichment to the charming Bower.

Facing the Entrance, lay a spacious grassy Walk; terminated by an octangular Basin, with a curious *Jet d'Eau* playing in the Center. The Waters, spinning from the lower Orifices, were attenuated into innumerable little Threads; which dispersed themselves in an horizontal Direction, and returned to the

Reservoir in a drizzling Shower. Those, which issued from the higher Tubes, and larger Apertures, either sprung perpendicularly, or spouted obliquely; and formed, as they fell, several lofty Arches of liquid Crystal; all *glittering* on the Eye, and *cooling* to the Air.

Parallel to the Walk ran a *Parterre*; planted with an *Assemblée* of Flowers, that advanced, one above another, in regular Gradations of Height, of Dignity, and of Beauty.—First, a Row of *Daisies*; gay as the Smile of Youth, and fair as the Virgin-Snows.—Next, a Range of *Crocuses*; like a long Stripe of yellow Sattin, quilted with Threads, or diversified with Sprigs of Green.—A superior Order of *Ranunculuses*, each resembling the Cap of an Earl's Coronet, replenished the third Story with full-blown Tufts of glossy Scarlet.—Beyond this, a more elevated Line of *Tulips**, raised their flourished Heads, and opened their

* Here is, it must be confessed, some little Deviation from the general Laws of the Season; some *Anachronism* in the Annals of the Parterre. The Flowers united in this Representation, do not, according to the *usual* Process of Nature, make their Appearance *together*. However, as by the Oeconomy of a skilful Gardener, they *may* be thus associated; I hope, the Possibility of the Thing, will screen my flowery Productions from the Blasts of Censure!—Or, may I not shelter my blooming Assembly, under the Remark of a masterly Critic? Which is as *pertinent* to the Case, as if it had been written on purpose for our Vindication; and so perfectly *elephant*, that it must adorn every Work, which quotes it; and delight every Person, who reads it.

their enameled Cups; not bedecked with a single Tint only, but glowing with an intermingled Variety of almost every radiant Hue.—Above all arose, that noble Ornament of a royal Escutcheon, the *Flower-de-Luce*; bright with ethereal Blue, and grand with imperial Purple. Which formed, by its graceful Projections, a Cornish or a Capital of more than *Corinthian* Richness; and imparted the most
con-

“ A Painter of Nature is not obliged to attend Her in
 “ her slow Advances, which she makes from one Season to
 “ another; or to observe her Conduct in the successive Pro-
 “ duction of Plants and Flowers. He may draw into his
 “ Description all the Beauties of the Spring and Autumn;
 “ and make the whole Year contribute something to render
 “ it more agreeable. His Rose Trees, Woodbines, and
 “ Jessamines may flourish together; and his Beds be cover-
 “ ed at the same Time with Lilies, Violets, and Ama-
 “ ranthuses. His Soil is not restrained to any particular
 “ Set of Plants, but is proper either for Oaks or Myrtles,
 “ and adapts itself to the Product of every Climate.—
 “ Oranges may grow wild in it; Myrrh may be met with
 “ in every Hedge; and if He thinks it proper to have a
 “ Grove of Spices, He can quickly command Sun enough
 “ to raise it. His Concerts of Birds may be as full and
 “ harmonious, and his Woods as thick and gloomy, as
 “ He pleases. He is at no more Expence in a long Vista,
 “ than a short one; and can as easily throw his Cascades
 “ from a Precipice of half a Mile high, as from one of
 “ twenty Yards. He has his Choice of the Winds, and
 “ can turn the Course of his Rivers, in all the Variety of
 “ *Mæanders*, that are most delightful to the Reader’s Ima-
 “ gination. In a Word; He has the Modelling of Nature
 “ in his own Hands, and may give Her what Charms He
 “ pleases, provided He does not reform her too much, and
 “ run into Absurdities by endeavouring to excel.”

Spec. Vol. VI. N^o 418.

consummate Beauty to the blooming Colonnade.

The Whole, viewed from the Arbour, looked like a *Rainbow*, painted upon the Ground. And wanted nothing to rival that resplendent Arch, only the Boldness of its Sweep, and the Advantage of its ornamental Curve.

To this agreeable Recess *Theron* had withdrawn Himself. Here He sat musing and thoughtful; with his Eye fixed upon a Cut, representing some *magnificent Ruins*.—Wholly intent upon his Speculation, He never perceived the Approach of *Aspasio*; till He had reached the Summit of the Mount, and was ready to take a Seat by his Side.

Asp. Lost, *Theron!* quite lost in Thought! And unaffected with all these amiable Objects; insensible amidst this Profusion of Beauties; which, from every Quarter, make their Court to your Senses!—Methinks, the snarling *Stoic* in his Tub, could hardly put on a greater Severity of Aspect, than my polite Philosopher in his blooming *Eden*.

Ther. Ah! my dear Friend, these flowery Toys which embellish the Garden, are *familiar* to my Eye, and therefore *cheap* in my Esteem. I behold them frequently; and, for that Reason, feel but Little of the pleasing Surprise, which they may possibly awaken in a Stranger.

---Some-

—Something like this We all experience, with regard to Events infinitely *more worthy* our admiring Notice. Else, why are We not struck with a Mixture of Amazement, Veneration, and Gratitude, at the grand Machinery and magnificent Productions of Nature?

That the Hand of the ALMIGHTY should wheel round the vast terrestrial Globe, with such prodigious *Rapidity*, and exact *Punctuality*; on purpose to produce the regular Vicissitudes of Day and Night; on purpose to bring on the orderly Succession of Seed-Time and Harvest!—We wonder, when we read of the *Israelites*, sojourning forty Years in the Desert, marching backwards and forwards over its burning Sands; and find neither their Clothes *waxing old** by so long a Use, nor their Feet *swelling* † with such painful Journeys. Yet we feel no grateful Surprise, when We enjoy the Benefits of the Air, which clothes the Earth as it were with a Garment; and has neither contracted any *noxious* Taint, through the extensive Revolution of almost six thousand Years; nor suffered any *Diminution* of its natural Force, though exercised in a Series of unremitted Activity, ever since the elementary Operations began.

This Draught in my Hand, shews Us the Instability of the grandest, *most laboured* Monuments

* *Deut.* viii. 4. † *Neb.* ix. 21.

numents of human Art. They are soon swept away, among the other feeble Attempts of Mortality: Or remain only, as You see Here, in shattered Ruins; Memorials of the vain and powerless Ambition of the Builders.—How strange then, that a Structure, incomparably more tender and delicate, should be preserved to *old Age*, and *heavy Hairs*! That the bodily Machine, which is so exquisite in its Frame, so complicated in its Parts, and performs so many Thousands* of Motions every Moment, should continue *unimpaired*, yet act without Intermiſſion, so many Days, and Weeks, and Months, and Years.—How strange all this! Yet, because common, how seldom does it excite our Praise, or so much as engage our Notice!

Assp. Your Remarks are as just, as the Neglect of them is customary.—Unaccountable
Su-

* *Thousands*—Not to mention the *spontaneous*, if We consider only the *mechanical* Motions, which are continually performed in the animal System—the digestive Action of the Stomach—the vermicular Agitation of the Bowels—the Progress of the Chyle through the lacteal Vessels—the many, many Operations of the secreting Glands—the Compression of the Lungs and all their little cellular Lodgments, by every Act of Respiration—above all, that grand Impetus, the Systole of the Heart; which, by every Constriction, darts the crimson Current through an innumerable Multitude of Arteries; and drives, at the same Instant of Time, the reflux Blood through an innumerable Multitude of corresponding Veins—Such a View will oblige Us to acknowledge, that this Account is far from being extravagant: that it rather *diminishes*, than *exaggerates* the real Fact.

Supineness! Though GOD *doeth great Things*, worthy of all Observation; *yea, and Wonders without Number*: We yawn with Indolence, instead of being animated with Devotion, or transported with Delight. *Lo! He goeth before Us* in evident Manifestations of Wisdom and Power; *yet, We see Him not*: *He passeth on also*, and scatters unnumbered Blessings from his providential Hand; *but We perceive Him not* *.

This, though greatly culpable, is to be reckoned among the *smallest* Instances of our ungrateful Insensibility.—Are We not inattentive even to the Work of Redemption? That Work, which, according to the emphatical Declaration of Scripture, *exceeds in Glory* †: is by far the noblest, the most marvelous of all sublunary, perhaps of all divine, Transactions.—Are We not shamefully unaffected, even with the Appearance of GOD in human Flesh? Though the King of Kings vouchsafes to exchange his Throne, for the Humiliation of a Servant, and the Death of a Malefactor: though He is pleased, by the Imputation of his active as well as passive Obedience, to become *The LORD our Righteousness*, yet—

Ther. You are taking an effectual Way, *Assasio*, to rouse me from my Reverie, and make me indeed like the snarling Philosopher. “ Im-
“ puted

* *Jeb ix. 10, 11.*

† *2 Cor. iii. 9.*

“puted Righteousness is a Scheme grossly fri-
 “volous and absurd; utterly insufficient to
 “answer the End proposed; and, One would
 “think, could never be depended on, where
 “there is the least Degree of Understanding,
 “and Capacity for Reasoning*.”

Asp.

* The Reader will probably be disgusted, at this *Heat* of Temper, this *Asperity* of Diction, and both so *abruptly* introduced.—I have no Apology to make for my *Theron*. The Reader has Reason to be disgusted; has Reason to be chagrined. Only let me desire Him to remember, That this is the very Spirit, nay these are the *very Words*, of a celebrated Opposer of our Doctrine; not added, when He has fully proved the Absurdity of the Scheme; but assumed, even upon the Entrance to his Discourse.

I have often wondered, that Disputants, especially on religious Subjects, should choose to deal in such *acrimonious* and *reproachful* Language. *Does the Wrath of Man work the Righteousness of GOD?* Or, is a passionate Invective the proper Means, either to conciliate our Affections, or convince our Judgment?—Why should We not *write* in the same genteel and obliging Strain, in which We *converse*? Were We to meet our Antagonist in a Friend's Parlour, and have a personal Conference on the Subject, our Speech would be kind, and our Remonstrances calm;—“I am
 “sorry, Sir, that You have espoused such Notions. They
 “seem to me, extremely wrong, and equally dangerous.
 “I am apt to think, You have not duly considered, either
 “the little Ground, they have to support them; or the
 “pernicious Consequences, that may attend them.”

Why should not our Controversies from the Press be carried on, with such a *candid* and *amicable* Strife? This would certainly render them, more pleasing to the Reader; more profitable to the Public; and much more likely to have their desired Effect upon our Opponent.—For my part, I admire the Humanity and Tenderness of the Poet's Resolution; even more than the Boldness of his Figures, or the Beauty of his Expression:

Tu Lapides loqueris, ego bestina Verba r. posuam.

Asp. Who is warm now, *Theron*? May I not remind my Friend, that the *Resentful* is no more fitted to work Conviction, than the *Rapturous*?—Perhaps, You have not duly considered this Subject; nor seen it in the proper Point of View. I have sometimes beheld a Ship of War, several Leagues off at Sea. It seemed to be a *dim cloudy* Something, hovering on the Skirts of the Horizon; contemptibly mean, and not worthy of a Moment's Regard.—But, as the floating Citadel approached, the Masts arose; the Sails swelled out; its stately Form, and curious Proportions struck the Sight. It was no longer a shapeless Mass, or a Blot in the Prospect, but the *Master-Piece* of human Contrivance, and the *noblest* Spectacle in the World of Art. The Eye is never weary of viewing its Structure, nor the Mind in contemplating its Uses.

Who knows, *Theron*, but this sacred Scheme likewise, which You now look upon as a *confused Heap* of Errors, may very much improve, when more closely examined. May, at length, become a wise and benign Plan; admirably fitted to the Condition of our fallen Nature, and perfectly worthy of all Acceptation.

Ther. I know not what may happen, *Aspasio*. But there seems to be very little Probability of such a Change. For, though my last Opposition was a *mock Fight*: in my present
Ob-

Objections I am *very sincere*, and to this Doctrine I am a real Enemy.—The Notion of a substituted and vicarious Righteousness is absurd even to common Sense, and to the most natural and easy Reflections of Men.

Asp. It may not, my dear Friend, agree with our natural Apprehensions; nor fall in with the Plan, which *We* might have devised, for the Salvation of Mankind. But this is the Voice of Scripture, and a Maxim never to be forgotten; *GOD'S Thoughts are not as our Thoughts, nor his Ways as our Ways**.—*His Righteousness is like the strong Mountains, and his Judgments are like the great Deep* †: the former immovable, the latter unsearchable.

Ther. The Mention of Mountains, puts me in Mind of what I was reading Yesterday—the keen Irony, with which *Abimelech's* principal Officer chastised the blustering *Gaal*: *Thou seest the Shadow of the Mountains, as if they were Men* ‡. He, it is sarcastically intimated, was afraid, and my *Aspasio* seems to be fond, of Shadows.

Asp. Happy for your *Aspasio*, that Irony is no Argument. If a Jury was impanelled, to try me and my Doctrine, I should certainly except against Irony. Generally speaking, He is neither a *good Man*, nor a *true*. And, if I remember right, You Yourself consented to set
Him

* *Ijai.* lv. 8. † *Psal.* xxxvi. 6. ‡ *Judg.* ix. 36.

Him aside in this Debate. I shall therefore adapt my Reply, rather to what is solid, than what is smart.

“ This Notion, You say, is absurd even to “ common Sense”—A Saying, upon which I must beg Leave to put a Query. It was, I own, absolutely beyond the Power of common Sense, unassisted by divine Revelation, to *discover* this Truth.—I will grant farther, That this Blessing infinitely *transcends*, whatever common Sense has observed, in all her Converse with finite Things.—But, if I have any the least Acquaintance with common Sense, I am very sure, She *will not*, She *cannot* pronounce it an Absurdity. To this Judge I refer the Cause.

And to *open* the Cause a little, let me just observe, That GOD imputed our Sins to his SON. How else could the immaculate *JESUS* be punished, as the most inexcusable Transgressor? *Awake, O Sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the LORD of Hosts* *.—Is not this the Voice of a Judge, pronouncing the Sentence, and authorizing the Execution? Or rather, does it not describe the Action of Justice, turning the Sword from Us, and sheathing it in *CHRIST*?—Who, if He was our Substitute with regard to *penal Suffering*, why may He not stand in the same Relation, with regard to *justifying*
Obc-

* *Zech. xiii. 7.*

Obedience? There is the same Reason for the one, as for the other. Every Argument in favour of the former, is equally conclusive in behalf of the latter.

Ther. I very freely grant, that *CHRIST JESUS* was punished in our Stead; that *his* Death is the Expiation of *our* Sin, and the Cause of our Security from penal Suffering. But this—

Assp. Will undeniably prove, that Sin was imputed to Him; otherwise He could not *truly* suffer in our Stead, nor be *justly* punished at all. “And Imputation is as reasonable and justifiable in *one* Case, as in the *other*; for they both stand upon one and the same Foot; and for that Reason, He who throws down one, throws down both.”—I should not have interrupted my *Theron*, only to introduce this Answer from an eminent Divine. Who adds, what should be very seriously considered; “And therefore, whoever rejects the Doctrine of the Imputation of our SAVIOUR’s *Righteousness* to Man, does, by so doing, reject the Imputation of Man’s *Sin* to our SAVIOUR, and all the Consequences of it. Or, in other Words, He who rejects the Doctrine of the *Imputation*, does, by so doing, reject the Doctrine of the *Expiation* likewise*.”

Ther.

* STAYNOE upon Salvation by *JESUS CHRIST* above.
Vol. I. 334.

Ther. I know nothing of this Divine; and, eminent as He is, can hardly take his *Ipsè dixit* for a Decision.

Asp. I was in hopes, You would pay the greater Regard to *his* Opinion, because He is not in the Number of the whimsical Fanatics.

Give me Leave to observe farther, That the Imputation of *CHRIST's* Righteousness, bears an evident Analogy to another great Truth of *Christianity*. We did not personally commit *Adam's* Sin, yet are We chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Condemnation, on that—

Ther. How! *We* chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Condemnation, on Account of *Adam's* Transgression! This Position I must deny; I had almost said, I must abhor. None other could, in the Eye of Justice and Equity, be blameable for any Offence of our first Parents, but *they only*.

Asp. So says *Theron*, but what says *St. Paul*? This may be the Voice of natural Reason, but what is the Language of divine Revelation? *In whom*, that is in *Adam*, *all have sinned*.

Ther. The Words, if I remember right, are—*For that all have sinned*.

Asp. In the Margin, they are translated, as I have repeated them. For this Interpretation I might contend, as not in the least incompatible

ible with the original Phrase*, and as the *most precisely* suitable to the sacred Argument. But I waive this Advantage. Let the Words run into your Mould, and the Translation take your Form. They are equally decisive of the Point in Debate.—They assign the *Reason*, why Death came upon all Men; *Infants* themselves not excepted: *For that*, or *inasmuch as*, all have sinned. How? Not in their own Person; this was utterly impossible. But in that first grand Transgression of their federal Head. Which, as it could not be actually committed by them, must, according to the Tenour of the Apostle's Arguing, be imputed to them.

Ther. Pray, what do You mean by that crude, and to me unintelligible Phrase, *federal Head*.

Asp. I mean what the Apostle teaches, when He calls *CHRIST* the *second Man* †, and the *last Adam* ‡.—The second! The last! How? Not in a numerical Sense. Not in Order of Time. But in this Respect—That, as *Adam* was a public Person, and acted in the Stead of all Mankind; so *CHRIST* was a public Person, and acted in Behalf of all his People—That, as *Adam* was the *first* general Representative of this

* ΕΦ' ω παντες ημαςθον. Rom. v. 12. Not to mention the famous Distinction of *Epietetus*, τα εφ' ημων, nor the well-known Adagy of *Hesiod*, μετρον ο' επι πωσω αρισην. See Chap. iv. 18. v. 2. of this very Epistle. Where the Preposition επι is used in *Aspasio's* Sense.

† 1 Cor. xv. 47.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 45.

this Kind, *CHRIST* was the *second* and the *last*: there never was, and there never will be, any other—That, what they severally did, in this Capacity, was not intended to *terminate* in themselves, but to *affect* as many as they respectively represented. — This is *St. Paul's* Meaning, and this is the Foundation of the Doctrine of Imputation.

Ther. If You build it on no other Foundation, than *your own* particular Sense of the Apostle's Words, perhaps, your Ground may prove sandy, and treacherous to its Trust.

Asp. I build it upon mine, and I deduce it from yours, *Theron*.—But I am far from resting the whole Weight of the Cause, upon a *single* Text. It is established, again and again, in this same Chapter.—Neither do I wonder at the Prejudices, which You and Others may entertain against the Doctrine. It lies quite out of the Road of Reason's Researches: it is among *the wonderful Things of GOD's Law*. This the inspired Penman foresaw, and modelled his Discourse accordingly. Like some skilful Engineer, who, though He makes the whole Compass of his Fortification strong, yet bestows *peculiar* and *additional* Strength on those Parts, which He apprehends will be exposed to the fiercest Attack. So the wise, the divinely wise Apostle, has inculcated, and re-inculcated, this momentous Point: has enforced it

it with all the Assiduity of Zeal, and confirmed it by all the Energy of Expression.—*If through the Offence of One, many be dead—The Judgment was by One to Condemnation—By one Man's Offence Death reigned by One—By the Offence of One, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation* *.—That there may remain no Possibility, of mistaking his Meaning, or of eluding his Argument, He adds, *By ONE Man's Disobedience MANY were made Sinners* †.

Ther. Sin, I am told by a celebrated Expositor, sometimes signifies *Punishment*. He farther informs me, that We may be said to sin in *Adam*, not by the Imputation of his Disobedience to Us, but by becoming obnoxious to those Sufferings which were due to his Sin.

Asp. Then the Apostle's Reasoning will stand in this Form; *Death came upon all Men, for that all have sinned*; that is, Suffering came upon all Men, because all have suffered. A goodly Strain of Argumentation for an unerring Writer to use!—But surely *Gamaliel's* Pupil would disclaim, much more would *CHRIST's* Ambassador scorn, such weak and unmeaning Chicanery. He mentions Sin and its Punishment; but never hints, that they are intended to signify *one* and the *same* Thing. He all along maintains a Distinction between them; represents the former, as the Cause of the latter.

Judg-

* *Rom.* v. 15, 16, 17, 18.

† *Rom.* v. 19.

Judgment, Condemnation, Death are owing to *Sin, Offence, Disobedience*. It is by the Imputation of these, that We become obnoxious to those.—This Account clears up the Equity of that providential Government, which executes the Sentence of Death, even on those Descendants of *Adam*, who have not *sinned* in their own Persons. It also illustrates the Procedure of that sovereign Grace, which treats as righteous, and entitles to Life, even those Believers in *JESUS*, who have not *obeyed* in their own Persons.—What says our Church? You have a great Veneration for the *Church of England, Theron*.

Ther. I have. But, I fear, my *Aspasio* has neither so honourable an Opinion of her Worship, nor so steady an Adherence to her Constitution. Otherwise, He would not so highly extol those ambitious and canting Hypocrites the *Puritans*. Who were the most inveterate Enemies of our excellent Establishment, and would have rejoiced in its utter Subversion.

Asp. As to the Puritans, You will do me the Justice to acknowledge, that I speak only of their *evangelical* Tenets, abstracted from all *political* Principles.—As to myself, your Fears are friendly, but I trust they are *groundless*. I would only ask; Who are to be deemed the most affectionate and faithful Sons of their sacred Mother?—Those, I presume, who most

cordially embrace her Doctrines, and most *du- tifully* submit to her Precepts. By this Touchstone let my Fidelity be tried. And for an immediate Tryal, be pleased to repeat her Ninth Article.

Ther. I cannot say, that I remember the particular Words of any, though I have often read, and very much approve them all.

Afp. I wish, You would commit to your Memory, four or five of the most distinguished *. They are a valuable Treasure, and contain the Quintessence of the Gospel.

These are the Words of the Ninth Article. “Original Sin is the Fault and Corruption of every Man, that naturally is engendered of the Offspring of *Adam*.” It is the *Fault*, says the pious Bishop *Beveridge*, and therefore We are guilty of it. It is the *Corruption* also, and therefore We are defiled with it.—Our Homilies have recourse to no such Palliatives, and qualifying Interpretations, as my *Theron*’s Expositor uses. One of them affirms point-blank, that “in *Adam* all Men sinned universally.” This seems to be a Paraphrase on the Text, whose Translation You lately controverted.—In what Sense our great poetical Divine understood the sacred Writer, is apparent from the following Words; which are supposed to have been spoken by JEHOVAH himself;
—Adam’s

* Especially, Article IX, X, XI, XII, XIII.

—————*Adam's Crime*
Makes guilty all his Sons *.

And from another Passage, where our rebellious Progenitor, bewailing his aggravated Mifery, and the extenfive Malignity of his Sin, declares,

—————*In me all*
Posterity stands curs'd †.

For my own Part I muſt confeſs, That, if the Tranſmiſſion of original Depravity be granted, I know not how the Imputation of *Adam's* destructive Apoſtacy can be denied. If We had no Concern in the one, how could We be juſtly puniſhed with the other?—I ſay *puniſhed*. For, to loſe the primitive Integrity of our Nature, and inherit a depraved Diſpoſition, is at once a moſt deplorable Calamity, and a moſt terrible Punishment.—Corruption tranſmitted, and Guilt imputed, ſeem to be Doctrines *indiffolubly* connected. To allow the former, and reject the latter, is, in my Apprehenſion, to acknowledge the *Effect* without admitting the *Cauſe*.

Ther. To make Us Parties in a Covenant, which We did not agree to, can this be *equitable*? To ruin Us for a Crime, which We never committed, can this be *merciful*? Surely, this is a flagrant Injuſtice, never to be aſcribed
to

* *Milton*, B. III. 290.

† B. X. 817.

to the all-gracious GOD. A diabolical Barbarity, add Some, never to be mentioned without the utmost Detestation.

Afp. I see no Cause for such a tragical Outcry of Barbarity, nor indeed for any Complaint of Injustice. Not to insist upon the Sovereignty of an all-creating GOD, and his unquestionable Right to *do what He will with his own* *, I would only ask—Did He not condescend to transact with Man, not on the Foot of absolute uncontrollable Authority, but in the honourable and delightful Way of a *Covenant*?—Were not the Terms of this Covenant, perfectly easy, and wonderfully gracious? *Wonderfully gracious*: For, they proposed a State of inconceivable and everlasting Felicity † to Creatures, who were intitled to *no* Happiness; had not the least Claim to *any* Good; no, not so much as to the Privilege of Existence. *Perfectly easy*: For, what was the Condition on Man's Part? Not any rigorous Act of Duty, nor severe Course of Self-denial, but the free Enjoyment of *Millions* of Blessings and Pleasures, with only the Prohibition of *one* pernicious Indulgence.—Here then is made, on one hand, a Promise of the most *glorious* Reward, that GOD himself could give: and nothing required, on the other, but the *smallest* Expression of Allegiance, that Man himself could

* *Matt.* xx. 15.

† *Luke* x. 28.

could wish.—And is this Injustice? Is this Barbarity?

Ther. All this was equitable enough with regard to *Adam*: but why should We be condemned for *his* Violation of the Covenant?—Or how was such a Constitution of Things gracious, with respect to *Us*?

Assp. “Why condemned?”—Because, We should have been Partakers of the Benefit and the Glory, if He had persevered in his Duty. To this, I presume, None would object. And if they *would not* to the one, they *ought not* to the other.

You ask farther; “How was such a Constitution of Things gracious, with respect to *Us*?”—I answer; Because it was the *most likely* Means, to secure the Happiness of *Us* and all Mankind. Was not *Adam*, of all other Persons, by far the best qualified to act as a general Head? He had a Perfection of Knowledge, to discern his true Interest: a Perfection of Holiness, to capacitate Him for Obedience: and a Perfection of Happiness, disposing Him to Perseverance. As None could have more eminent Qualifications, None could have *so many* Obligations. His own eternal Welfare was at stake: the Salvation of his Family, of his Country, of the World, was depending: the Lives, the Souls, the *everlasting All* of the whole human Race, were embarked on the

single Bottom of his Fidelity. Therefore, the Felicity of every Individual, that should spring from his Loins, was a fresh Motive to Vigilance, an additional Engagement to Duty*. —As *his* Love to his Offspring was more refined, more exalted, more godlike than ours, all these Considerations and Inducements must operate upon Him, in their fullest Scope, and with the strongest Energy.—What an Entrenchment was here, to keep out Disobedience, and ward off Ruin! An Entrenchment, *deep* as Hell; *high* as Heaven; *wide* as the whole Extent of the human Species.

Here then I may venture to throw the Gauntlet, and challenge the whole World. Let the most penetrating Mind devise a Scheme, so wisely and graciously calculated to *ascertain* the Success of a *probationary* State. If this be impracticable, then must every Mouth be stopped: No Tongue can have the least Reason to complain: I, for my Part, shall think myself obliged to admire the Benignity of my CREATOR'S

* Should any Person imagine Himself more capable of standing than *Adam*, who was endowed with all the Perfections of an innocent, holy, godlike Nature; I think, by this very Imagination, He begins to *fall*; fall into Pride.—Should any Person suppose, That, from a View to his own particular Salvation, He would have been faithful; when *Adam* was not engaged to Fidelity, from a Regard to his own and the Salvation of all his Posterity; He seems to be just as wise as the Mariner, who persuades Himself, That, though a *thousand* Anchors could not secure the Ship in a Storm, yet *one* might have done it effectually.

ATOR's Conduct: and GOD may justly demand of all intelligent Creatures, *What could have been done more for the Salvation of Mankind, that I have not done* *.

Especially, when to all this We add, That the same ALMIGHTY Being, who appointed *Adam* to be our Representative in the first Covenant, without asking our *actual Consent*; appointed also *CHRIST* to be our Representative in the second Covenant, without staying for our *actual Solicitation*. When We take *this* into the Account, there remains not the least Shadow of Injustice; but Goodness, transcendent Goodness, shines forth with the brightest Lustre.

Ther. Goodness, *Aspasio*! This is surprising indeed. Why, if *Adam's* Transgression be laid to our Charge, We are *dammable* Creatures, the very Moment We exist; and are liable to the Torments of Hell, even on account of his Disobedience. To term this Goodness, is the greatest of Paradoxes! To affirm it of the DEITY, is little less than Blasphemy!

Asp. Let Us be calm, my dear Friend, and consider the Case impartially. If it is not a real Truth, I shall be as willing to relinquish it, as Yourself.

Is not Death, eternal Death, the Wages of every Sin? And if of every Sin, then doubtless of *original* Sin. Which is the *Fountain*,
from

* *Ijai.* v. 4.

from whence all the Streams of actual Iniquity flow; or rather the *Abyss*, from whence all the Torrents pour.—That, which could not be pardoned, but by the Humiliation and Agonies of GOD's adorable SON, may reasonably be supposed to deserve the most dreadful Vengeance. And it is affirmed, by an Authority which You will not dispute, that “For original as well as actual Sin, the Offering of *CHRIST* is a Propitiation and Satisfaction *.”

Does not St. *Paul* deliver it, as a Maxim in Divinity? That, *by the Offence of One*, Adam He undoubtedly means, *Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation †*. The Import of the Words, together with the Connection of the Passage, lead Us to understand this of a Condemnation to *eternal Misery*.—*The Import of the Words*: for, they are doubled ‡, to make them peculiarly strong in their Signification: and each Word, within the Compass of this very Epistle, is used in that awful Latitude of Meaning ||. *The Connection of the Passage*: because, it stands opposed to that Justification which is unto Life. This, We are sure, includes the Idea of an everlasting Duration. And why should its tremendous Counterpart be less extensive?

This

* Article XXXI.

† *Rom.* v. 18.

‡ *Καὶ αὐτὸς εἰς τὸ κατακρίνει.*

|| *Rom.* ii. 3. iii 8. viii. 1.

This Sense is evidently *patronized*, and this Doctrine most peremptorily *asserted*, by our established Church. What says the Book of *Homilies*, when treating of the Miseries consequent upon the Fall? “ This so great and miserable a Plague, if it had only rested on *Adam*, who first offended, it had been much easier, and might the better have been borne. But it fell not only on Him, but also on his Posterity and Children for ever; so that the whole Brood of *Adam’s* Race should sustain the self-same Fall and Punishment, which their Fore-father by his Offence most justly had deserved *.”—Lest any should misapprehend the Design of our Reformers, and suppose the Punishment to consist only of some bodily Suffering, or the Loss of Immortality, it is added in the same alarming Discourse; “ Neither *Adam*, nor any of his, had any Right or Interest at all in the Kingdom of Heaven; but were become plain Reprobates and Castaways, being perpetually damned to the everlasting Pains of Hell.”

Lest You should imagine, this might be written under a Sally of hasty Zeal, or that it is to be reckoned among the dotting Opinions of a credulous Antiquity; let me remind my Friend, That it is ingrafted into the *Articles*. Those Articles, which were agreed upon by the Arch-

* Homily on the Nativity of *CHRIST*.

Archbishops and Bishops of both Provinces; were consented to by the whole Clergy; and are, to this Day, the *national Standard* of our Belief. The Ninth Article, beginning with a Description of our depraved Nature, subjoins an Account of its proper Desert; “ In every
 “ Person born into the World, it deserveth
 “ G O D’s Wrath and Damnation *.”

Ther. How *miserable* then is Man!

Asp. In *Himself* He is miserable beyond Expression. But a Conviction of this Misery is the Beginning of all Happiness. *The Valley of Achor is a Door of Hope †.*

Ther. Explain Yourself, *Aspasio*. You seem to deal very much in the Incomprehensibles.

Asp. Such a Conviction would demonstrate the *absolute Insufficiency* of all human Attainments, and all human Endeavours, to procure
 Life

* I am surpris’d to see a learned Author, attempting to *sheath* the *Sting* of this awful Denunciation: attempting to prove, that the Words “ do not signify G O D’s eternal “ Wrath, and the Damnation of Hell.”—I shall take no Pains to confute, what He is pleas’d to advance. I leave the Question in the Reader’s own Breast. Let Him discover, if He can, a different Meaning in the Sentence. Unless He has a pretty shrewd Knack at *Sophistry*, I am persuas’d, He will find it a difficult Matter to give *any other* tolerable Turn to the Passage.—Surely, it must be a great Reproach to our venerable Mother, if She delivers her Doctrine in Language so *fallacious*, as must necessarily mislead the Generality of her Sons: or in Terms so *abstruse*, as even a good Understanding cannot develop, without some Proficiency in critical Ledgerdemain.

† *Hof.* ii. 15. *Achor* signifies *Trouble*.

Life and Salvation.—For, in case We could perform every Jot and Tittle of the divine Law; offend in no Instance; fall short in no Degree; persevere to the very End; yet this would be no more than our present bounden Duty. Not the least Pittance of Merit could arise from all this. Much less could this be sufficient to expiate original Guilt, or remove the dreadful Entail of the primitive all-destroying Sin.

This, therefore, would most effectually preclude every false Confidence; and *sweep away*, at one Stroke, *every Refuge of Lies* *. It would lay Us under an immediate, a most indispensable, and a happy Necessity, of betaking Ourselves to *CHRIST*.—I say *happy* Necessity; because then We should know, by Experience, what each Part of our LORD's awful yet tender Declaration meaneth; *O Israel! Thou hast destroyed thyself; but in ME is thy Help* †.—We should then find, that as Sin and Misery have abounded through the first *Adam*, Mercy and Grace have *much more abounded* through the second. For, if We were ruined by a Crime which We committed not, We are recovered by a Righteousness which We performed not. A Righteousness, infinitely surpassing whatever We could have acquired; even though our Nature had been transmitted to Us, free from

* *Ijai.* xxviii. 17.† *Hof.* xiii. 9;

from any Depravity, and exempt from all Guilt.

Ther. In your Opinion then, and according to your Scheme, *Salve* and a *Regimen* are better than a good Constitution.

Asp. No, *Theron*. My Opinion is, that none can think Himself aggrieved, or have any Reason to complain, at that grand and beneficent Regulation, which suffers the *sickly* Taper to be obscured or extinguished, but sheds abroad the *boundless* and *majestic* Beams of Day. And if any Comparison be made between the most perfect human Obedience, and the everlasting divine Righteousness of *CHRIST*, it should be taken from the glimmering Taper and the meridian Sun.

Ther. I cannot persuade myself to admire such mysterious and unaccountable Notions. They must puzzle Some: will offend Others: but cannot edify Any.

Asp. This Point, That *We all died in Adam*; were undone by his Apostacy; cannot puzzle the simplest, if unprejudiced Mind.—Nor will it offend Any, but the proud Philosopher, or the self-righteous Moralist.—And I assure You, I should not mention it, much less insist upon it, did it not subserve, and in a very singular Manner, the Purposes of *Edification*. The Doctrine of a REDEEMER, obeying and dying in our Stead, is the very Hinge and Center
of

of all evangelical Revelations: is the very Life and Soul of all evangelical Blessings. This Doctrīne is not a little illustrated, and comes greatly recommended, by the Imputation of *Adam's Sin*.

Contraries, You know, cast Light upon, and set off each other. Winter and its severe Cold, makes Spring and its chearing Warmth, more sensibly perceived, and more highly pleasing. Such an Influence has the present Subject, with respect to the vicarious Obedience of our MEDIATOR. The more clearly We see the *Reality* of the former, the more thoroughly We shall discern the *Expediency*, the *Excellency*, the *Glory* of the latter. The more We are humbled under the One, the more We shall rejoice, exult, and triumph in the Other. — The Apostle draws a long Parallel, or rather forms a strong Contrast between them, in the fifth Chapter to the *Romans*. He speaks copiously of *Adam's* Guilt, imputed to all Mankind for Condemnation and Death: that He may speak the more acceptably, the more charmingly of *CHRIST's* Righteousness, imputed to all Believers for Justification and Life. In that *dark Ground*, He well knew, this fairest loveliest Flower of Christianity, appears with *peculiar Beauty*; indeed with all the Beauty of consummate Wisdom, and adorable Benignity.

Ther.

Ther. It really seems to me a Thing *impossible*, that one Man's Righteousness should be made Another's. Can one Man live by the Soul of Another? Or be learned by the Learning of Another?—Good *Aspasio*, never attempt to maintain such palpable Absurdities. They will expose Christianity to the Scorn of Infidels.

Asp. If Infidels scoff at this comfortable Truth, their Scoffing will be, like all their other Cavils, not the *Voice* of Reason, but the *Clamour* of Prejudice.

My Friend's Objection insinuates, what We never assert; That the *Essence* of this Righteousness is transferred. Which would doubtless be in Fact impossible, as it is in Theory absurd.—But this We disavow, as strenuously as You can oppose. Our REDEEMER's Righteousness is made ours, not by *Infusion*, but by *Imputation*. The very Terms We use, may acquit Us from such a ridiculous Charge; as Imputation signifies “A placing to the Account of One, what is done by Another.” Accordingly We believe, That the Essence of this Righteousness is *CHRIST*'s, the Merit of it Ours: that *CHRIST*, and *CHRIST* alone, wrought it out; but that working it out, in our Stead, *GOD* imputes it to Us; *GOD* accepts Us for it; accepts Us *as much, as if* We had, in our own Persons, performed it.

Ther.

Ther. Not all your Refinements can reconcile me to this uncouth Notion.—The Practice is *unexampled*, and absolutely inconsistent with the Rules of *distributive Justice*.

Asp. Ah! my *Theron*, if We seek an Example of GOD's unbounded Goodness, amongst the puny Proceedings of Men; We shall be led into the most egregious Misapprehensions. To measure one of the Sparks on your Ring, and fancy We have taken the Dimension of the *Alps* or the *Andes*, would be, in comparison of this Error, a small Mistake. Since, between a brilliant Speck, and a Range of Mountains, there is *some* Proportion: but between human Beneficence, and this heavenly Bounty, there cannot possibly be *any*.—However, the all-condescending CREATOR has been pleased, so to dispense his infinitely rich Grace; that We may find, though nothing parallel, nothing correspondent, yet some *faint* Shadow of its *Manner*, among the Affairs of Mankind. Something, that may perhaps give Us such an Idea of the stupendous Subject, as a *Glow-worm* would give of the Sun's Splendor, in case a Person had never beheld that magnificent Luminary.—This Remark I must intreat You to recollect, whenever I attempt to *elucidate* the Mysteries of the Gospel, by the Occurrences of common Life.

When

When your worthy Minister was disabled, by a Rheumatic Disorder, from attending on the Business of his Function, several of the neighbouring Clergy gave Him their Assistance. Was He not, by this *vicarious* Performance of his Office, *intitled* to all the Profits of his Living?—It seems therefore not so unexampled a Thing, for one Person to act in another's Stead. And when a Service is thus discharged by the *Proxy*, the Benefit may, according to the received Maxims of Mankind, accrue to the *Principal*.—Did not *Jehu's* Descendants, even to the fourth Generation *, reap the Advantage of their great Grandfather's Zeal? Does not the Duke of — enjoy the Honours and Rewards, won by the Sword of a victorious Ancestor?—And may not the whole World of Believers, with equal, with *far greater* Justice, receive Life and Salvation, on Account of their all-deserving SAVIOUR? Especially, since He and They are one mystical Body; represented as such in Scripture, and considered as such by GOD.

No, say You: this is contrary to the Rules of distributive Justice.—What is your Idea of a *Surety*? How was the Affair stated, and how were Matters negotiated, with relation to your generous Acquaintance *Philander*? He, You
know,

* 2 Kings x. 20.

know, was bound for an unfortunate Brother, who lately stepped aside.

Ther. The Debt, by his Brother's absconding, devolved upon *Philander*. He was responsible for all, and obliged to pay the whole Sum.

Asp. Was not his Payment *as satisfactory* to the Creditor, as if it had been paid in the Debtor's own Person, by the Debtor's own Hand?

Ther. Certainly.

Asp. Was not the Debtor, by this vicarious Payment, released from all Fear of Prosecution, and *acquitted* from any future Demand on this Score?

Ther. He was.

Asp. Apply this Instance to the Redemption of Sinners by *JESUS CHRIST*: who is, in the sacred Writings, expressly styled *A Surety* *.— If *Philander's* Act was deemed, in the Estimation of Law, the Act of his Brother; if the Deed of the former was imputed, in point of Advantage, intirely to the latter; why should not the same Effects take place, with regard to the divine Bondsmen, and poor insolvent Sinners? Why should *that* be exploded in our Systems of Divinity, which is universally admitted in our Courts of Justice?

Ther.

* *Heb.* viii. 22.

Ther. Obedience and Righteousness are, in the Nature of the Things themselves, *personal* Qualities, and *only* so. Every Man is that only (and can be nothing else) which He is in Himself.

Assp. Righteousness, as *dwelling in Us*, is undoubtedly a personal Quality; and Obedience, as *performed by Us*, comes under the same Denomination. But does this supersede the Necessity, or destroy the Existence of imputed Righteousness?—Your first Proposition is ambiguous. Let it speak distinctly; add *inherent* to your Righteousness; and the Sense becomes determinate, but the Argument falls to the Ground.

“Every Man is that only, (and can be nothing else) which He is in Himself.”—If I had never seen the Bible, I should have yielded my ready Assent to this Proposition. But, when I open the Old Testament, and find it written by the Prophet; *In the LORD shall all the House of Israel be justified* *. When I turn to the New Testament, and hear the Apostle saying; *Ye are complete in HIM, who is the Head of all Principalities and Powers* †, I cannot concur with *Theron*, without contradicting Revelation.—*Israel*, or the true Believer, is said to be justified; and the Foundation of this Blessing is declared to be, not in Himself, but

* *Ijai*, lxxv. 25.

† *Coloss.* ii. 10.

but in the LORD. The *Colossians* are said to be complete; which, we are very certain, they were not in themselves; and are expressly assured, they were so in *CHRIST*.—Hence it appears, quite contrary to my Friend's Assertion, that Sinners both *have* and *are* that in *CHRIST*, which they neither have nor are in themselves. They have, by Imputation, a *Righteousness* in *CHRIST*; they are, by this imputed Righteousness, *complete* before GOD.

I believe, your Mistake proceeds from neglecting to distinguish between *INHERENT* and *IMPUTED*.—We never suppose, That a profane Person is devout, or an intemperate Person sober. This is *inherent* Righteousness.—But We maintain, That the Profane and Intemperate, being convinced of their Iniquity, and betaking themselves to the all-sufficient SAVIOUR for Redemption, are interested in the Merit both of his Life and of his Death. This is *imputed* Righteousness.—We farther affirm, That, though really abominable in Themselves, they are fully accepted by GOD, for his beloved SON'S Sake. This is *Justification* through imputed Righteousness.

Neither is this any private, precarious, or unsupported Opinion: it is the clear and positive Declaration of Scripture. *He justifieth*, He absolves from Guilt, He regards as righteous, and treats as such—*Whom?* Upright, obedi-

ent, finless Creatures? This were nothing extraordinary—No; but *He justifieth the Ungodly* *, *that believe in the LORD JESUS*. Imputing, as the Ground of this Justification, *their* Trespaffes to Him, and *his* Righteousness to them.

Ther. I see no Occasion for such *nice* Distinctions, and *metaphysical* Subtilties, in plain popular Divinity. Hard Terms and abstruse Notions, may perplex the Head, but seldom improve the Heart.

Afp. Why then do You oblige Us to make use of them? If some People twist and entangle the Reins, it behoves Others to *clear* them of the Embarrasment, and *replace* them in their due Order.—Many Writers, either from an artful Design, or through a strange Inadvertence, have jumbled and confounded these two very different Ideas. Hence, they have started Objections to our Doctrine, which, the Moment You introduce this obvious Distinction, vanish into Air. They fall into a Mistake of their own, and then throw the Absurdity upon Others.

I am no more fond of hard Terms, and abstruse Notions, than my *Theron*. Neither can I think the Instance before Us so abstruse a Notion. I am very certain, You are capable of comprehending much higher and nicer Refinements.

* *Rom.* iv. 5.

finements. Therefore, I must once again intreat You to remember the very material Difference, between *inherent* and *imputed* Righteousness. The former expresses Sanctification; the latter denotes Justification. By *this*, We are restored to the Favour of GOD; by *that*, We are made meet for his heavenly Kingdom.—Let this Distinction, which is easy, which is scriptural, which is important, take place; and We may for the future dismiss, what you call, our metaphysical Subtilties. Our Disagreement will cease, and our Opinions tally.

Ther. I question that, *Aspasio*. There are other Difficulties to be got over, before I can digest so crude an Opinion.—If we are justified by the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, then the Righteousness which justifies Mankind is *already* wrought out.

Asp. And this You take to be a most enormous Falshood. Whereas, I look upon it as a most delightful Truth.—The Righteousness, which justifies sinful Man, was *set on foot*; when GOD sent forth his SON from the Habitation of his Holiness and Glory, to be born of a Woman, and made subject to the Law.—It was *carried on*, through the whole Course of our SAVIOUR's Life; in which He always did such Things, as were pleasing to his heavenly FATHER.—It was *completed* at that ever memorable, that grand Period of Time, when the

bleſſed *IMMANUEL* bowed his dying Head; and cried, with a ſtrong triumphant Voice, IT IS FINISHED.

If the juſtifying Righteouſneſs was to be wrought by *Ourselves*, We could never be truly and fully juſtified till Death; till our Warfare was accompliſhed, and our *laſt* Act of Obedience exerted.—But how uncomfortable is this Opinion! How miſerable would it render our Lives! And how directly does it run counter to the Determination of the Apoſtle; *Ye ARE juſtified**!

Ther. Soothed then with this pleaſing Surmiſe, may not the *Libertine* ſay to his Soul?—
 “ Soul, take thine Eaſe in the moſt indolent
 “ Security. All my carnal Appetites, indulge
 “ Yourſelves without Reſtraint. Conſcience,
 “ be under no Solicitude to live ſoberly, righ-
 “ teouſly, and godlily. For the Work *is done*;
 “ *all done* to my Hands. I am like ſome for-
 “ tunate Heir, whoſe Parents have been ſuc-
 “ ceſſfully induſtrious; and have left nothing
 “ to exerciſe the Diligence of their ſurviving
 “ Son, but only to poſſeſs the Inheritance, and
 “ live on Labours not his own.”

Aſp. The Libertine, who only ſpeculates or diſputes, may indeed abuſe the *Doctrin*e of Grace. But the Believer, who feels the Power of Grace, will improve it to better Purpoſes.

Where

* 1 Cor. vi. 11;

Where the former only *fluctuates* in the Understanding, such detestable Consequences may ensue. Where the latter *operates* on the Heart, it will always produce very different Effects. Such a Person, from such a Faith, will be no more inclined to Inactivity or Licentiousness; than our busy humming Companions are inclined, by this bright Sun-shine and all those expanded Blossoms, to *sleep away* their Hours in the Hive. And You may as soon expect to see these Colonies of the Spring, swarming in *December*, clinging to an Icicle, or dispersing themselves to gather Honey on the Snow; as to see a truly gracious Man, who *is dead to Sin, living any longer therein* *.—Whoever, therefore, so shamefully *perverts* so sweet and glorious a Doctrine, is a Witness against Himself, that He has neither Lot nor Portion in the inestimable Privilege. If an Animal suck Poison from the most wholesome Herbs, We are sure, from that infallible Indication, it is the vile Spider, or some envenomed Insect, not the valuable and industrious Bee.

Ther. Truly, *Aspasio*, I know not how to call that Doctrine sweet, much less can I recommend it as wholesome; which renders Repentance, personal Reformation, and inherent Rectitude *needless*. And if your Tenet is once received, all these Duties may fairly be dismissed.

* *Rom.* vi. 2.

fed. So that if the Thing was possible, yet it would be *pernicious*.

Asp. The Prophet was of another Mind: *They shall look on Him, whom they have pierced, and mourn* *. Sinners shall look, by Faith, to their crucified LORD: shall see him fastened with Nails to the cursed Tree; see Him stabbed to the Heart by the bloody Spear. And *remembering*, that this was the Punishment due to their Provocations; *believing*, that by this Punishment, they are freed from all penal Sufferings, and intitled to all spiritual Blessings: they shall, not be tempted to transgress, but incited to mourn; not play the Profligate, but act the Penitent.—The Apostle exactly agrees with the Prophet; and both are diametrically opposite to my Friend; *The Goodness, the transcendent and amazing Goodness of GOD our SAVIOUR*, instead of diverting from, *leadeth to Repentance* †.

Far from obstructing, it powerfully promotes, *personal Reformation*. For thus faith that all-wise Being, who intimately knows our Frame, and discerns what is most effectual to work upon our Minds; *The Grace of GOD, which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared; teaching Us, that denying all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, We should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil World* ‡. Grace, You observe,

* *Zech.* xi. 10. † *Rom.* ii. 4. ‡ *Tit.* ii. 11, 12.

observe, even that gloriously free Grace, which bringeth Salvation to unworthy Creatures, is a Dissuasive of all Vice, and an Encouragement to every Virtue.

As to *inherent Rectitude*, how can that be rendered needless by imputed Righteousness? Is Health rendered insignificant, by the Abundance of our Riches? Does Ease become superfluous, through the Beauty of our Apparel?—Holiness is the *Health* of our Souls, and the *Ease* of our Minds. Whereas, ungovernable Passions create keener Anguish, than a Brood of Vipers gnawing our Bosoms. Inordinate Desires are a more intolerable Nuisance, than Swarms of Locusts infesting our Abodes. To regulate *those*, and to restrain *these*, can never be needless, till Comfort and Sorrow change their Properties; till the diabolical Nature becomes equally desirable with the Divine.

Ther. The Believer, indeed, out of mere Generosity, *may*, if He please, add Works of Righteousness of his own. But his main Interest is secure without them.

Asp. Rather, *Theron*, He *must* out of Duty, He *will* out of Gratitude, and from the new Disposition of his Nature He *cannot but*, add to his Faith Works of Righteousness.

How runs the heavenly *Edict*, in this Case made and provided? *I will, That they who have believed*

believed in GOD, be careful to maintain good Works *.—How beats the *Pulse* of a believing Soul? You may feel it, in that truly generous Demand, made by the *Pſalmiſt*: *What ſhall I render unto the LORD for all the Benefits, that He hath done unto me* †? A grateful Heart wants not the Goad, but is a Spur to itſelf.—How leans the *Biaſs* of his Nature? He is new born; created in *CHRIST JESUS* unto good Works ‡; his Delight is in the Law of the LORD ||. And whatever is our ſupreme Delight, We are ſure to proſecute; and proſecute with Ardour. *We cannot but ſpeak the Things which We have ſeen and heard* §, was the Profeſſion of the Apoſtles; and, if applied to practical Godlineſs, is the Experience of the *Chriſtian*.

Nor

* *Tit.* iii. 8. The original Word $\pi\rho\omicron\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\theta\epsilon\iota$ has a Beauty and an Energy, which, I believe, it is impoſſible for our Language to preſerve, by any literal Tranſlation. It implies, That a Believer ſhould not only be exerciſed in, but eminent for, all good Works: ſhould *ſhew* Others the Way, and *outrſtrip* them in the honourable Race: be both a *Pattern*, and a *Patron* of univerſal Godlineſs.

† *Pſal.* cxvi. 12. ‡ *Eph.* ii. 10. || *Pſal.* i. 2.

§ *Cannot but*—This is an Expreſſion, uſed by the Apoſtles, *Acts* iv. 20. It deſcribes the genuine and habitual Propenſity of their *new* Nature. As the compassionate Bowels cannot but yearn at Spectacles of Miſery: as the benevolent Heart cannot but dilate with Pleaſure, at the Sight of a Brother's Happineſs: ſo the new Creature in *CHRIST*, cannot but *deſire* to glorify, and *delight* to obey—cannot but be *ambitious* ($\pi\iota\lambda\omicron\tau\iota\mu\epsilon\chi\epsilon\theta\epsilon\iota$) to reſemble, and *covet* to enjoy—the ever bleſſed GOD.

Nor can his main Interest be secure without a holy Obedience. Because, the Judge of the World, at the Day of eternal Retribution, will declare to the Workers of Iniquity; *I never knew You; depart from me* *. Because Holiness, though not the Cause of our Admittance to the beatific Vision; is so necessary a Qualification, that *without it no Man shall see the LORD* †. Without it, there is no Access to Heaven, neither could there be any Enjoyment in Heaven.

Ther. Pray, recollect Yourself, *Aspasio*. According to the Tenour of your own Illustration, the Necessity of *personal* Obedience is evidently vacated. For, how can the Law demand a Debt of the Principal, which has been fully discharged by the Surety?

Asp. We are no longer under a Necessity of obeying the Law, *in order to establish our Justification, or lay the Foundation for our final Acceptance.* We are nevertheless engaged, by several other *indispensible* Obligations, to regulate our Conversation according to those sacred Precepts. Because—this is the most authentic Proof of our Love to the gracious REDEEMER; *If ye Love me, keep my Commandments* ‡.—This is an infallible Evidence of our Union with that exalted Head; *He that abideth*

* *Matt.* vii. 23. † *Heb.* xii. 14. ‡ *John* xiv. 15.

abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much Fruit *.—This is the invariable and the most effectual Method, of adorning † our Profession, and magnifying its divine Author; *Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father, which is in Heaven* ‡.

Do We then make void the Law, through Faith in the imputed Righteousness of our LORD?—The Apostle shall reply. And He replies with a kind of zealous Abhorrence; *GOD forbid!*—Not content to deny this false Infinituation, He maintains the very Reverse; *Yea, We establish the Law* ||. Considered as the original *Covenant* of Life; We provide for its Honour, by the perfect Obedience of *CHRIST*. Considered as an invariable *Standard* of Duty; We enforce its Observance, by the most rational, manly §, and endearing Motives.

Ther. Should We admit this Doctrine, Mankind could no longer be considered as in themselves, and solely in themselves *accountable* Creatures. Nor would the future Judgment be an *equitable* Distribution of Rewards and Punishments; but only GOD's awful and uncontrollable Execution of his own arbitrary and irreversible Decrees.

Afp.

* *John* xv. 5.

† Good Works are therefore stiled, *καλα εργα*, *graceful, ornamental, beauteous* Works, *Tit.* iii. 8.

‡ *Matt.* v. 16.

|| *Rom.* iii. 31.

§ *Hof.* xi. 4.

Asp. I have never been accustomed to consider Mankind, under the Gospel Dispensation, as accountable *solely* in themselves. Because, in this comfortable and benign Scheme, a MEDIATOR intervenes; undertakes to answer for his People; and bears the *Chastisement of their Peace*.—Were We accountable solely in Ourselves, *CHRIST* as our great High-Priest, would be set aside; and his Sacrifice, as a Propitiation for Sin, be of none Effect.

Why may not the future Judgment, be an equitable Distribution of Rewards and Punishments? If those, who reject the Atonement of the dying *JESUS*, and refuse to depend on his consummate Righteousness, are left to stand or fall, according to the Issue of their own Obedience. If Believers, on the other hand, are accepted through their most meritorious REDEEMER; but rewarded with higher or inferior Degrees of Felicity, in proportion to the Sanctity of their Nature, and Usefulness of their Lives.—I see nothing arbitrary in this Procedure; but an admirable Mixture of just Severity, and free Goodness—On those, who reject the Atonement, *just Severity*—To those, who rely on their SAVIOUR, *free Goodness*.

Ther.

Ther. The Obedience of *CHRIST* was wholly due for Himself; and therefore could not merit for Another.

Asp. A bold Assertion this! Whoever can make it good, will undoubtedly overthrow my Opinion; and, at the same Time, destroy all my Hopes. But surely, *Theron*, it is not your real Sentiment.

Could it then be Matter of Duty in the eternal SON, to be born of a Woman; and in the LORD of Lords, to become the Servant of all? Could it be Matter of Duty in the KING of Glory, to embrace the Infamy of the Cross; and in the PRINCE of Life, to pour out his Soul unto Death?—If all this was Matter of Duty, the ever blessed *JESUS* (How shall I speak it? Who can believe it?) was no better than an *unprofitable* Servant. For, such is the acknowledged Character of every One, who does no more than is his Duty to do*.

Ther. Not so fast, my Friend. Remember what the Scripture affirms. *CHRIST* is said to receive a *Commandment*, and be *subject* to the Law: Both which Expressions evidently imply Duty.

Asp. In order to accomplish our Redemption, the Son of GOD submitted Himself to the Authority of the Law, and became obedient

* *Luke* xvii. 10.

dient to its Precepts. But, this was his own *spontaneous* Act; the Matter of his *free* Choice; to which He lay under no Manner of Obligation, till He engaged to be our Surety.

Being in the Form of GOD, He was Lord of the Law; and no more subject to its Commands, than obnoxious to its Curse. Nevertheless, *He took upon Him the Form of a Servant*; and *was made under the Law*. Wherefore? *That He might obtain everlasting Life and Glory for Himself?* No; but that He might *redeem those who were under the Law**. From which it appears, that both his Engagement and his Obedience were, not for Himself, but for his People. Therefore the Prophet cries out, with holy Exultation; *To Us a Child is born; To Us a Son is given*†! His incarnate State and human Nature, together with all that He did and suffered in both, were for Us: *those* assumed on our Account, *these* referred to our Advantage.

Let Us consider this, and be amazed, and be charmed.—The great universal LORD vouchsafes to pay universal Obedience! What *Condescension* was Here!—He vouchsafes to pay it, for Us Men, and for our Redemption! What *Goodness* was this!

Ther.

* Gal. iv. 5.

† *Isai. ix. 6. Est præterea Emphasis singularis in Vocabis. Significat id, quod omnes sentiunt, nostro Bono & Commode natum esse hunc Puerum Imperatorem.*

Vitringa in loc.

Ther. Before We indulge the devotional Strain, We should take Care that our Devotion is founded on *rational* Principles. Otherwise it may prove, like the Flash of a Sky-rocket, tranſient and momentary.

Aſp. For this, I think, there is a ſolid Foundation in Reaſon, as well as Scripture. As ſoon as the Man *CHRIST JESUS* was united to the Second Perſon of the *TRINITY*, He muſt have, by virtue of that Union, an unqueſtionable Right to everlaſting Life and Glory. Therefore, He could be under no Neceſſity of obeying, in order to procure either Honour or Happineſs for *Himſelf*. But all that He performed, in conformity to the preceptive Part of the Law, He performed under the Character of a *public Perſon*: in the Place, and for the Benefit of his ſpiritual Seed. That they might be intereſted in it, and juſtified by it.

Ther. Be it ſo: the Believer is intereſted in *CHRIST's* Righteouſneſs.—Pray, is He intereſted in all, or only in Part?—If in *all*, then every Believer is equally righteous, and equally to be rewarded. Which is contrary to an allowed Maxim, That there will be different Allotments of Happineſs in the heavenly World.—If in *Part* only, how will You aſcertain the Degree? What Proportion belongs to this Perſon, and what to the other?—Either
Way,

Way, your Scheme is inextricably embarrassed.

Asp. The Reply to my *Thearon's* Inquiry, is easy; and the Embarrassment He mentions, is but imaginary.—Every true Believer is interested in *all CHRIST's* Righteousness; in the *whole* Merit of his spotless Nature, of his perfect Obedience, and expiatory Death. Less than the Whole, would be unavailable. Whereas, the Whole renders Us completely justified.

You are a great Admirer of Anatomy, *Thearon*, and must undoubtedly remember the very peculiar Structure of the *Ear*. Other Parts of the Body are progressive in their Growth. Their Bulk is proportioned to the infantile, or manly Age. But the Organs of Hearing, I have been informed, are *precisely* of the *same* Size, in the feeble Infant, and the confirmed Adult.—Justification likewise, being absolutely necessary to a State of Acceptance with GOD, is, in every Stage of the Christian Course, and even in the first Dawn of sincere Faith, complete. With regard to the *Existence* of the Privilege, there is no Difference * in the

* To the same Purpose speaks one of our most celebrated Divines; as great an Adept in sacred Literature, as Ages have produced.—“ All are justified *alike*: the *Truth* of
“ Faith justifying, not the *Measure*. Justification there-
“ fore is the same in All that believe: though their Belief

the Babes, the young Men, the Fathers in *CHRIST*. The *Perception*, the *Assurance*, the comfortable *Enjoyment* of the Mercy, may increase. But the Mercy itself is incapable of Augmentation.

The various Advances in Sanctification account for the *various Degrees* of future Glory. And not account for them only, but render them intirely reasonable; and, according to our Apprehension of Things, unavoidable. —As to settling the *Proportion*, We may safely leave that to the SUPREME ARBITRATOR. He, who *meteth out the Heavens with a Span*, and *setteth a Compass upon the Face of the Deep*, cannot be at a loss to adjust this Particular.

Ther. The Organs of Hearing, though not precisely, are *very nearly*, of the same Bulk, in the Babe and the Man. They acquire, from advancing Years, scarce any Thing more than an Increase of Solidity. So that I make no Objection to your Illustration, but only to your Doctrine.

If *CHRIST* has done all, and we are intitled to his whole Merits only by believing; to be saved must be the *easiest* Thing in the World. Whereas, the Bible represents Christianity, as

a

“ be in different Degrees. So, once in the Wilderness, all
 “ gathered not Manna in the same Measure; yet, when
 “ all came to measure, they had all alike; none above an
 “ Omer, none under.” *Lightfoot*, Vol. II. p. 1052.

a sharp *Warfare*, a State of *Wrestling*, & Course of *Striving*.—In good Truth, *Aipase*, You prophecy pleasing Things. Divinity is not your Profession; or else, I should number You among “the smooth, emollient, downy Dec-tors.” For, according to the Articles of your Creed, there is no more Difficulty in securing Heaven, than in rising from our Seat.

Asp. A *speculative* Assent to all the Principles of Religion, is, I acknowledge, a very easy Matter. It *may*, it *must* exist, whenever there is a tolerable Capacity for Reasoning, and a due Attention to Evidence.—This notional-Faith forced its Way into the Breast of *Simon* the Sorcerer *; and extorted a Confession from the dying Lips of *Julian* † the Apostate. Irresistible as the Stroke of Lightning, terrible also as its fiery Glare, it flashes
Con-

* *Acts* viii. 13.

† It is related in Ecclesiastical History, That, when the Emperor *Julian* was setting out upon his *Parthian* Expedition, He threatened to persecute the *Christians* with the utmost Severity, as soon as He returned victorious. Upon this Occasion, *Libanius* the Rhetorician, with an insidious Air, asked one of them; *What the Carpenter's Son was doing, while such a Storm hung over his Followers?*—The *Carpenter's Son*, replied the Christian, *is making a Coffin for your Emperor.*—The Event proved the Answer to be *prophetic*. For, in an Engagement with the Enemy, the wretched Apostate was mortally wounded; and cried, with his expiring Breath, *Vicisti, O Galilæe! I am vanquished, O Galilean! Thy Right-hand hath the Pre-eminence!*

Conviction into the very Devils. Even those execrable Spirits *believe and tremble* *.

But the Faith, which, far from resting in Speculation, exalts the Desires; regulates the Passions; and refines the whole Conversation—the Faith which, according to the expressive Language of Scripture, *purifies the Heart; overcomes the World; and sets the Affections on Things above*—this truly noble and triumphant Faith, is no such easy Acquisition. This is the Gift of an infinite Benefactor: the Work of a divine Agent. Called, therefore, by way of super-eminent Distinction, *Faith of the Operation of GOD* †. Because, GOD himself, by the effectual Working of his mighty Power, produces it in the human Soul.

The Exercise of this Faith, I would not compare to an active Gentleman, rising from his Seat; but rather to a *ship-wrecked* Mariner, labouring to gain some Place of Safety.—He espies a large *Rock*, that rears its Head above the boisterous Flood. To this He bears away, and to this He approaches: but, whirling Winds, and dashing Waves, drive Him back to an unhappy Distance.—Exerting all his Strength, He advances nearer still; and attempts to climb the desirable Eminence. When, a sweeping Surge interposes, and drenches Him again in the rolling Deep.—

By

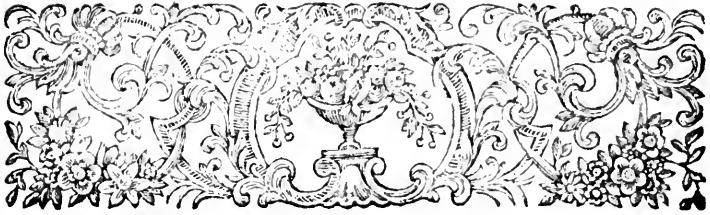
* *Jam. ii. 19.*

† *Col. ii. 12.*


By determined Efforts, He recovers the Space He had loft. Now, He fastens on the Cliff, and has almost escaped the Danger. But, there is fuch a Numbness in his Limbs, that He cannot maintain his Hold; and fuch an impetuous Swell in the Ocean, that He is once more diflodged, and plunged afresh into the raging Billows.—What can he do? His Life, his precious Life, is at ftake. He muft renew, ftill renew his Endeavours. And let Him not abandon Himfelf to Defpair. The MASTER fees Him, amidft all his fruitless Toil. Let Him cry earnestly, *LORD, fave me! I perifh!* and HE, who commandeth the Winds and the Waves, will be fure to put forth his Hand, and refcue Him from the devouring Waters.

Such, my Friend, fo *painful*, fo *affiduous* are the Struggles of Faith; before it can reft, in peaceful Security, on the *Rock of Ages*, *CHRIST JESUS*. Of this You may, fome Time or other, be affured, not only from my Lips, but from your own Experience.

Ther. What may happen in fome future Period of Time, is beyond my Power to forefee. At prefent, I am apt to think, We muft put a ftop to the theological Lecture. Don't You remember our Engagement with *Altinous*? And You will own, that Punctuality in performing our Promifes, is at leaft a *moral* Virtue, if it be not a *christian* Grace.



DIALOGUE VI.

 *SPASIO*'s Affairs called Him to *London*. He staid in Town a few Days: but as soon as Business was finished, he quitted the City, and hastened to his Friend's *Country-Seat*.—Upon his Arrival, He found some agreeable Company, that came on purpose to spend the Evening with the Family. This Incident prevented the immediate Prosecution of their Subject.—As the next Morning proved misty, and unfit for walking abroad, *Theron* invited *Asspasio* to pass an Hour in his *Study*.

It was situate at the Extremity of a large Gallery: which, while it conducted the Feet to a Repository of Learning, interposed between the Ear, and all the Disturbance of domestic Affairs. So that You are accommodated with every Thing, that may *regale* a studious Mind; and incommoded with nothing, that may

may *interrupt* a sedate Attention.—*Aspasio* readily consented to the Proposal; but desired, first, to take a Turn in this beautiful *Oblong*, and divert Himself with the Decorations of the Place.

Assp. A very short Survey, *Theron*, is sufficient to discover the Correctness of your Judgment, and the true Delicacy of your Taste.—Here, are no *impertinent* and *frivolous* Exhibitions of romantic Tales, or poetic Stories. Here, are no *indecent* Pieces of Imagery, that tend to corrupt a chaste, or inflame a wanton Fancy.—On the contrary, I am presented with a Collection of Maps, accurately drawn by the most able Hands; and with several remarkable Transactions of Antiquity, most eloquently told in the Language of the Pencil.—You have happily hit that grand Point, which the Gentleman of Refinement, as well as the Author of Genius, should ever keep in View—The Union of the *Beneficial* with the *Delightful* *.

Ther. Indeed, my *Aspasio*, I have often been disappointed, sometimes even shocked, in the Gardens, the Porticos, and the Walks of some modern *Virtuosi*. Their Pourtraits and Statues are little else, but an Assèmblage of elaborate Trifles. *Ixion* stretched upon the Wheel,

OR

* *Omne tulit Punctum, qui miscuit Utile Dulci.* HOR.

or *Phaeton* precipitated from the Chariot. *Apollo* stringing his Lyre, or *Jupiter* (I beg his supreme Highness's Pardon, for not giving Him the Precedence in my Catalogue) besriding his Eagle, and balancing his Bolts.—Pray, where is the Advantage of being introduced to this *fabulous* Tribe of Gentry? What noble Idea can they awaken, or what valuable Impression leave upon the Mind? The best We can say of such Performances, is, That they are Limning and Sculpture expensively thrown away.

This celebrated Trumpery, One can bear with, however. But, when the Painting and Sculpture, instead of cultivating Virtue, and improving our Morals, are calculated to be the very *Bane* of both——will You call *this* an elegant Entertainment? No: 'tis a Nuisance. 'Tis a Pest.—In the *Statues*, I grant, every Dimple sinks, and every Muscle swells, with the exactest Propriety. The Countenance is animated with Life, and the Limbs are ready to start into Motion.—The *Picture*, I am sensible, is as highly finished as the Effigy. The Distributions of Light and Shade most artfully adjusted. The Diminutions of the Perspective true to a Nicety. Nor can any Thing exceed the easy Flow of the Robe, unless it be the graceful Attitude, and almost speaking Aspect, of the principal Figure.—But, is this *masterly* Execution an Equivalent for the
 most

most *malignant* Effects? For sullyng the Purity of my Fancy, and poisoning the Powers of my Imagination?

Is it an Indication of the Owner's *judicious* Taste, to prefer Regularity of Features in the hammered Block, before orderly and harmonious Affections in his own Breast? Does it bespeak a *refined* Disposition, or a *benevolent* Temper, to be so extravagantly enamoured with the Touches of a lascivious Pencil; as to expose them in the most frequented Passages, and obtrude them on every unwary Guest?—Surely, this can create no very advantageous Opinion of a Gentleman's *intellectual* Discernment. Much less can it raise an amiable Idea of his *moral* Character*. On such Occasions, I am strongly tempted to suspect, That real Honour is a Stranger, where common Decency † is wanting.

As for the Artist, One can hardly forbear execrating his hateful Folly, who could *prostitute* such fine Talents to such infamous Purposes.—Detested be the Chizzel! that teaches,

* 'Tis Pity, but the Advice of *Cicero*, that great Master of elegant Taste, and polite Manners, was received as a *Standard* of Regulation, by all our Connoisseurs in the fine Arts. *In primis provideat, ne Ornamenta Ædium atque Hor-torum Vitium aliquod indicent inesse Moribus. De Offic.*

† A Gentleman, observing some gross Indelicacies of this Kind, at the Seat of a Person of Distinction, very acutely (and, I believe, too justly) said;

His Paintings are the Gibbet of his Name.

teaches, though with inimitable Dexterity, the cold obdurate Marble to inkindle dissolute Affections.—Abhorred be the Pencil! that makes no other Use of the most lovely Colours, than to pollute the Canvass, and insnare the Spectator.

It is argued, I know, that many of those Pieces are the completest Models extant.—An *everlasting Reproach* this to the Art: but no Apology for the Performances. Since, the more nicely they are executed, the more mischievous * is their Influence. It strikes the
 furer,

* I hope, it will not be thought improper; I wish, it was intirely needless; to animadvert upon a Practice, which is, not only a Reproach to our *Christian Profession*, but an Insult upon *national Decorum*. The Practice of exposing to public View, and offering to public Sale, such shameful *Prints*; as are fitted only to awaken licentious Desires, and cherish the most profligate Dispositions.

Such Spectacles are a Species of the *rankest* Poison. And can the Poison be less pernicious, because it is received at the Eye, instead of passing through the Lips? Because it tends *more immediately* to debauch the Morals, and *but remotely* to destroy the Constitution?—No Wonder, so many of our Youths are corrupted, and so many Robberies committed; while such Scenes of pictured Lewdness, are suffered to inflame them with Lust, and habituate them to Impudence.

Another very indecent Custom has unaccountably stole its Way, into several Performances of Genius and Elegance. The Custom, I mean, of representing the *Muses*, the *Graces*, and other romantic Personages, in the Form of beautiful Ladies, partly, if not intirely, naked.—'Tis true, here are no loose Adventures; no immodest Gestures; nay more, the Artist expresses *his own*, and consults *your Modesty*, by presenting You with a Position in Profile, by the Intervention of a Foliage, or the Lappet of a Robe.—But let me
 ask

fuler, and finks the deeper. It dresses Destruction gay, and paves with Beauty the Way to Ruin.

It is my chief Ambition, *Aspasio*, to have all my Decorations so circumstanced, that the Beholder may learn some *valuable Lesson* in Morality, or be reminded of some *important Event* in History: may find, even in the Scenes of his Amusement, something to establish his Virtue, or enlarge his Knowledge.

I frequently entertain my eldest Son, who is reading the *Greek* and *Latin* Historians, with an Explanation of my principal Drawings. That he may behold in Colouring, what He has perused in Narrative.—At this Instant, the Youth happened to make his Appearance; paying his Respects to *Aspasio*, and dutifully saluting his Father.—It just recurs to my Memory, said *Theron*, that some necessary Affairs of the Family, require my Attendance for a few Minutes. Will You excuse my Absence, good *Aspasio*; and permit my Son to supply my Place?

You

ask the ingenious Operator, If He would choose to introduce his Wife or his Daughter, in *such* a Manner, to public Company?—Is He startled at the Question? Is He shocked at the Thought? Then, let Him reflect, and let Others consider, Whether *that* can be graceful or allowable in a Picture, which would be brutal and unfeeling in common Life?

Socrates (who, before his Application to Philosophy, practised as a Statuary) could not but blush at this Abuse of his Art. And, being to form a Representation of the *Graces*, He represented them properly *habited*.

You will very much oblige me, by leaving me such a Companion.—And come, my dear Sir, addressing Himself to *Eugenio*, as I know You are a Lover of Learning, what think You of diverting Ourselves with these agreeable Books? Which give Us their instructive Lessons, not in puzzling Languages, but in pleasing Colours.—*Eugenio* spoke his Consent, and expressed his Modesty, by a becoming Blush. While *Aspasio* proceeded—

Asp. This is a striking Picture indeed! Hills piled on Hills form a most astonishing Prospect. What *horrible Magnificence* reigns amidst those wild and shaggy Rocks! Nature seems to have designed them for the Boundaries of the World. Yet those daring Troops are attempting to pass the prodigious Barrier. Who are they, *Eugenio*, and whom shall We call their Leader?

Eug. This, Sir, is the famous *Hannibal*, heading and encouraging his Army in the Passage of the *Alps*. The Sons of *Africa* seem to shiver with Cold, as they traverse those frozen Regions, and march among the Clouds.

Asp. 'Tis the very same. Some, You observe, climb, with excessive Toil, the steep and craggy Cliffs. Others, with far greater Difficulty, descend through dreadful Declivities of Ice; exposed all the while, to the Arrows of
the

the Mountaineers.—Some, endeavouring to avoid the Showers of Steel, slip with their Feet, and tumble headlong down the vast projecting Promontories. See from what a Height they are falling! Carriages and their Drivers, the Horse and his Rider! And at what a Distance still, from the stony Abyss below!—Some lie, with closed Eye-lids, and ghastly Features, dashed to Death at the very Bottom. Others, writhing with the Torture of mangled Limbs, and broken Bones, lift up an agonizing Look to their Comrades.—Their Comrades, insensible of a Brother's Misery, and wholly intent upon their own Preservation, hang frightfully suspended on the Edges of the Precipice. The Precipice seems to totter as they cling; and the alarmed Spectator expects, every Moment, a hideous Downfall.—Are You not startled at the View, *Eugenio*, and in pain for the hardy Adventurers?

Eug. I am, Sir. And I wonder, how they will extricate themselves from these perilous Circumstances. I have read in *Livy*, that they cut their Way through the Rocks, after they had softened them with *Vinegar*. But is this probable? How could they procure a sufficient Quantity, amidst those desolate Mountains?

Asp. I believe, their *Resolution* and their *Perseverance*, were the *Vinegar*. These open a
Road

Road through Rocks. These, under the Conduct of Prudence, and the Favour of Heaven*, surmount all Obstacles. Influenced by these, the Survivors press boldly on; and are determined to vanquish the Horrors of Nature, as a Prelude to their Victory over the Forces of *Rome*. These, I hope, will be the constant Companions of my *Eugenio's* youthful Studies; and will enable Him also to conquer the Difficulties, that lie in his Way to Learning.

What is our next Draught? At each End We have a Group of living Figures. All the intermediate Space is an extensive Tract of
Land,

* Under the *Favour of Heaven*—I cannot but wish, that the Relator of *Lord Anson's Voyage round the World*, had anticipated *Assafio's* Remark. Had made some grateful Acknowledgments to an interposing PROVIDENCE, in that masculine, nervous, noble Narrative.—A Narrative of such signal Deliverances, so critically timed, and so surprisngly circumstanced; as, in the Course of *one Expedition*, are scarcely to be paralleled.

I am persuaded, it would have been no Disparagement of the great Commander, and his gallant Officers; to have it thankfully recognized, on some very unexpected, yet most advantageous Turn of Affairs, THIS HATH GOD DONE! —Neither could it have detracted from the Merit of the brave Sailors, to have confessed, on many hazardous Emergencies; That all their Resolution, all their Address, and the Exertion of their utmost Abilities, had been only *lost Labour*, without the remarkable Co-operation of divine Goodness.—And I am apprehensive, that it must considerably diminish the Delight of many Readers, to observe the blessed Author of *all these Mercies*, passed by unnoticed, unacknowledged, and without *any* Share of the Praise.

The Sarcastm on Pope *Adrian* and his Exploits, I fear, would be too proper on this Occasion, *Hic DEUS nihil fecit.*

Land, diversified only by rapid Rivers, horrid Defarts, and mountainous Ridges; with here and there a few savage Natives, in uncouth Dressès, and formidable Arms.—It is more like a *Map*, than a *Picture*. And the most remarkable Beauty is, the *aerial Perspective*. Which puts a very agreeable Cheat upon our Eyes; causing Us to behold, on an Ell of Canvass, the Space of many Hundreds of Miles.

Eug. This represents *The Retreat of the ten Thousand Greeks*. First We behold them in the Plains of *Media*; at an immense Distance from their native Country; without Guides; without Provision; and, what is the most desperate Calamity of all, deprived of their ablest Officers by Treachery and Murder.—Well may they look dejected. How have I pitied them, as I read their Story! Abhorred the Perfidy of their Enemies, and wished them all Success in their hazardous Enterprize!

Asp. Don't you perceive, their drooping Spirits begin to revive, and some Gleam of Hope diffuses itself through their Countenances, while they listen to the eloquent *Xenophon*? Who stands conspicuous in the Midst, haranguing his Soldiers, and rousing their Courage. But, Ah! what a vast Extent of unknown Climes must they traverse, with a numerous and victorious Army, harassing them in Flank, or hanging upon their Rear!

What

What Fatigues must they sustain, what Hardships endure, before they arrive at their wished for Home!—*Home!* Fired by the enchanting Name, and animated by their brave philosophic Leader, they resolve to push their Way through all the Extremes of Peril and of Pain. To scatter, with their little Band, the incircling Millions of *Barbarians*, is the smallest of their Atchievements. They cross Rivers, they scale Rocks, whose slippery Banks, and craggy Summits, are lined with opposing Nations. They wade through Desarts of Snow; and pass over inhospitable Mountains, the far more dreaded Abodes of *Desolation*, *Drought*, and *Famine*. They encounter the Keeness of the northern Storm, and all the Rigour of the most malignant Seasons.—As some of these Articles are incapable of being expressed by the Pencil, the Artist remits Us to the Historian; and has contented Himself, with marking out the most distinguished Stages of this memorable Expedition. Only We view the courageous Itinerants, once again, on a pretty lofty Eminence. There they appear, not with their former Dejection, but in all the Transports of Joy.

Eug. This, Sir, is the Mountain *Tecqua*. From whence they had the first View of the Sea, and the first Dawn of Safety. There they embrace one another, and extol their Commanders,

manders, especially the noble *Xenophon*: Whose History gives me great Delight, and his manly yet benign Aspect, strangely attracts my Esteem. Methinks, under such a General, I could have been willing to take my Share, in all the Toil, and all the Hazards of the Expedition.

Alp. Would my *Eugenio*? Then I will list Him under a Captain, unspeakably more accomplished and beneficent. Young as You are, You shall, from this Hour, commence a Soldier and a Traveler. A *Soldier*, to fight against Sin, and every Temptation. A *Traveler*, to pass through the Wilderness of this World, unto the Land of everlasting Rest.—Though your Enemies may be numerous, and your Journey tedious, yet faint not, neither be discouraged. The LORD of Heaven is your Guide, and Heaven itself shall be your exceeding great Reward. When You arrive at those happy Abodes, your Delight will infinitely surpass, all that the *Grecians* felt on *Tecqua*; when their ravished Eyes beheld, and their Tongues with Extasy shouted, *The Sea! The Sea!*

The Scene of yonder Picture, I would venture to affirm, lies among the antient *Jews*.

Eng. How can You tell this, Sir, at such a Distance?

Asp. By the Fringes annexed to their Garments.—GOD Almighty commanded all the *Jews*, to observe this Peculiarity in their Habit *. That, their very Clothes, being different from the Apparel of their *Heathen* Neighbours, might admonish them not to be conformed to their idolatrous Worship, and licentious Manners.—This, as well as every other divine Command, our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* most exactly obeyed. Therefore, We are told by the evangelical Historian, That the diseas'd Woman, *who touched but the Hem of his Garment, was restored to Health.* Hem it is, in our *English* Bibles. But, if You consult, as I hope you often will, that most excellent of all Books, the *Greek* Testament; You will find, that the original Word might more properly be

* One would wonder, how the *Jews* can so *tenaciously* adhere to their Law, and yet so *apparently* neglect its Precepts. Where are the Sons of *Abraham*, that observe this express and positive Command of *JEHOVAH*? Though *this* indeed *might* be obeyed, yet many of the *Mosaic* Injunctions are rendered, and by *Providence* itself, absolutely impracticable. Is not this therefore a most incorrestible Proof—a Proof, not invented by the Arts of Sophistry, but written by the Finger of the *ALMIGHTY* himself—that the *legal* Ordinances are abolished, in order to make way for a *better* Dispensation? When the Avenues are become inaccessible, the House untenantable, and the principal Apartments *irreparably* decayed; is not this the most cogent Admonition to the Inhabitants, that they betake themselves to some new and more commodious Residence?—See *Numb.* xv. 38.

be rendered *Fringe**.—However, let Us pass from the Drapery to the Design.

Eug. Here, we see *David* in one of the most threatening Exigencies of his whole Life. *Saul*, more like a Blood-Hound than a King, pursues the best of Sons, and the most valuable of Subjects. He has extended the Wings of his very superior Army, in order to surround † the injured Hero, and his Handful of Associates.

Asp.

* *Matt. ix. 20.* Κρασπεδον.

† To this, or some such Incident, may be applied a Passage of the *Psalms*, which, in our Translation, is very obscure; has scarce any Sense, or, if any, a very unjustifiable one. *Wherefore should I fear in the Days of Evil, when the Wickedness of my Heels compasseth me round about?* Psalm xlix. 5. — *Wherefore?* The Reason is very apparent. When Wickedness cleaves to our Heels, or attends our Goings, it raises an Army of Terrors. It unsheaths the Sword of divine Vengeance, and levels at our guilty Heads every Threatening in the Book of GOD.

Surely then another Translation should be given to the Words, and a different Turn to the Sense! And another Translation the Words will bear; a different Sense the Connection demands. *Wherefore should I fear, when Wickedness compasseth me about at my Heels?* This is a fine spirited Interrogation. This implies a great and noble Truth. From this also the Verse appears, not only with Propriety, but with Beauty.—*When Wickedness, or the malicious Attempts of wicked Men—compass me about, surround me, threaten me on every Side—nay, when they are at my very Heels, just upon the Point to seize, overwhelm, and crush me; so that the Danger seems both inevitable and imminent.* Yet even then, having GOD's almighty Power and inviolable Faithfulness for my Protection, *wherefore should I be alarmed?* Alarmed! No; confiding in such a Safeguard, I will bid Defiance to my Enemies, and bid Adieu to my Fears.

Afp. This is the most *animated*, and, I think, the most *masterly* Performance, that has hitherto come under our Notice.—Consternation and Doubt agitate their Looks. Shall they surrender themselves, as so many tame Victims, to a Tyrant's Fury? Or, shall they cut their Way to Safety, through the Hearts of Countrymen, Friends, and Brothers? Dreadful Dilemma!—While they are debating, the Pursuers are closing upon them. A few, a few Minutes more, must decide their Fate.—But who is the Person that intervenes, just at this *critical* Juncture?

Eug. It is a Messenger from the principal Inhabitants of *Judæa*. He comes breathless and trembling. Amazement in his Face, and Dust upon his Head. “An Invasion!” He cries — “An Invasion!—The *Philistines* have “poured themselves upon our Frontiers!—“The *Philistines* are over-running the Land*!”

Afp. Upon the Receipt of this News, See! what Vexation reddens in the disappointed Monarch's Aspect! What Anger lightens in his Eye! At the same Time, what pale Reflections on his Country's Danger, mingle themselves with the fiery Passions, and almost quench the Flame inkindling
in

* This Event is related, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 25, &c. And it is one of the most extraordinary Instances of a divine Interposul, at the very Crisis of Need, that any History has recorded.

in his Cheeks. Shall the Vulture relinquish his Prey, even when it lies fluttering under his Talons? Galling Thought! But his Kingdom is at stake. If He does not immediately advance to repel the Enemy, his All, his All is lost. Burning therefore with Indignation, yet chilled with Fear, He turns, hasty though reluctant, away *.—Are You not charmed, *Eugenio*, with this Description of *tumultuous* and *contrary* Passions? Which afford the finest Subject for historic Painting, and are so happily expressed in this Piece.

Eug. Indeed, Sir, I am *shocked*, rather than charmed. The very Looks of that revengeful Monarch fill me with Horror. What must He suffer in his Mind, who discovers such Rage and Anguish in his Features! I would not have his furious Temper, for all his royal Power.

Asp. Then, my dear *Eugenio*, You must endeavour to suppress every Emotion of Envy and Malevolence. You must cherish a cordial Good-will to all Men; and learn to rejoice in *their* Excellencies and Happiness, as well as in *your own*. Envy is the Worm that gnaws, Envy is the Fury that embroils, his wretched Heart. And an Author, with whom You will ere long be acquainted, has assured Us;

Invidia

* ————— Εχω ακουστιγε θυμω.

Thus *Homer* expresses the Contrariety of Passions, that frequently operate, at the same Time, in the same Breast.

*Invidiâ Siculi non invenire Tyranni
Tormentum majus.* Hor.

The next is a Kind of *Night-piece*. Stars are in the Sky, and the new Moon rides on the Skirts of the Hemisphere. Which affords just Light enough to distinguish Objects.— This is a perfect Contrast to the foregoing. We see no Conflict of jarring Passions. But the principal Person appears *sedate* and *composed*, as the Night that surrounds Him. He stands on the Bank of a River, thoughtful and attentive; as though he was pondering, or executing, some important Project.

Eug. This is *Cyrus the Great*. He stands upon the Banks of the *Euphrates*; not far from *Babylon*. He points with his Sceptre, and is giving Directions to his Army. Their Orders are, to pass through the Channel of the River, (which is drained of its Water) in order to surprize the City.

Asp. This is a Prince of very superior Dignity. The honoured Instrument of executing JEHOVAH's Counsels. He was foretold by the Prophet *Isaiab*, and even mentioned by Name *, more than two hundred Years before his Birth. Let Us wish Him Prosperity. For He goes to humble the Pride of *Babylon*, and release the Captivity of *Israel*.—See! with what

* *Isai.* xlv. 28. xlv. 1.

what regular Movements, and what calm Alacrity, his Troops advance. Silence seems to escort them; while, under Covert of the Shades, and with Providence at their Head, they march along a Road, never before trodden by the Foot of Man.—The Soldiers of the Garrison, have abandoned their Station on the Wall, to join in the dissolute Indulgence of this fatal Night. The Inhabitants, like many a heedless Sinner, are lulled in Security, even on the very Brink of Ruin.

Eug. Why are those *brazen Gates*, which lead to the River, placed in such a distinguished Point of View? They strike my Eye more, I think, than all the Monuments of Art and Grandeur, which adorn that superb City.—And let me farther ask, Whether the Painter has not offended against Probability, in suffering them to stand wide open? On the Approach of so formidable an Adversary, I should expect to have found them shut with all possible Security.

Asp. In this Particular, the Painter has shewed his Judgment, and not forgotten his Piety. GOD had devoted that haughty and oppressive Metropolis to Destruction. And You will perceive, from this Circumstance, how wonderfully He *over-rules* all Events, for the Accomplishment of his sacred Purposes. Had

those ponderous Gates been shut *, the City had continued impregnable, and the whole Enterprize been defeated. But, through some accidental Forgetfulness, occasioned by the Disorders of this riotous Solemnity, or rather by a very *signal Interposition* of divine Vengeance, they are left open, and afford an easy Entrance to Slaughter and Death. Which rush upon the unhappy Creatures, all sunk in Sleep, or overcharged

* See this very momentous, though seemingly inconsiderable Circumstance, finely illustrated by Mr. *Rollin*, and compared with a remarkable Prophecy in *Isaiab. Antient Hist.* Vol. II. p. 144, 153.—A Work, in which the most *entertaining* and *instructive* Events of Antiquity, are regularly digested; elegantly related; and stripped of those minuter Incidents, which make the Story move slow, and are apt to fatigue the Attention.—Concise, but judicious Observations are interspersed. Which may teach young Minds, to form a right Judgment of Things: and not be misled, by the *Plausibility* of popular Notions, or the *Partiality* of prejudiced Historians.—Many very distinguished Predictions of Scripture, are explained and confirmed by correspondent Facts, from the most authentic Memoirs of classical Literature. Indeed, a perpetual Regard to the Elucidation and Honour of the *sacred Oracles*, runs through and ennobles the whole Performance.—Which Method, if not strictly conformable to the Rules of Historical Composition, is a Transgression of them greatly to their Advantage. It may be said to resemble the *golden Branch*, celebrated by *Virgil*, and plucked by his Hero. Whose Growth, though a Departure from the usual Laws of Vegetation, was far from depreciating the Value of the Tree.

Though I admire the Whole, I am charmed with the *Conclusion*. It is, I think, peculiarly pertinent, and inimitably grand. Has a Dignity, an Elevation, a Majesty, which, somewhat like the Kingdom it describes, is quite unequalled, and little less than stupendous;

Παντοθεν ἀργυροῦσθε, χρυσου δ' ἐπέθηκε κορωνην.

charged with Wine, as a concealed Snare, in some dreadful unexpected Moment springs up, and inextricably entangles the unwary Bird.—Was I to inscribe this Picture with a Motto, I would choose the Apostle's Admonition, BE SOBER: BE VIGILANT.

Who is this, with his Length of Hair* flowing upon his Shoulders; with such Amplitude of Personage, such Magnificence of Mein, and noble Plainness of Habit.

Eug. This, Sir, is my favourite Piece.—My Father sometimes shews me the Heads of the Philosophers: but there is something so uninviting and severe in *Socrates* and *Diogenes*, that I could never much admire them.—But this, Sir, is *Scipio*; the Thunderbolt of War, as *Virgil* calls Him. Here is something so lovely and graceful, as well as grand and majestic, that I am never weary of looking on Him.

Assp. He appears with a Lady of distinguished Beauty in his Hand.

Eug.

* I believe, it was not customary with the *Romans*, especially their Warriors, to have long flowing Hair. This therefore might seem an Offence against what the *Italians* call *il Costume*, if the Painter was not supported by the Authority of *Livy*. Who, in his descriptive Picture of *Scipio*, gives Us the following Touches; *Species Corporis ampla ac magnifica. Præterquam quod suapte Natura multa Majestas ijerat, adornabat promissa Crætarics, Habitusque Corporis, non cultus Munditiis, sed virilis verè ac militaris.*

Eug. This is the captive Princess ; who had been taken in War ; who was set apart for the General's Prize ; but whom He is now restoring to her espoused Husband.

Asp. You are right, *Eugenio*.—He has just led in his lovely Captive, attended by her Husband and Parents, amidst a full Assembly of *Romans* and *Celtiberians* ; the Victors and the Vanquished. His modest Eyes, You observe, are rather turned from, than gazing upon, the blooming Virgin.—Cannot You suppose, how the Spectators must be affected, upon the Opening of this extraordinary Scene ? Every One beholds, the Hero with Admiration, the Lady with Delight. Every Bosom is big with Expectation, or in Pain for the Event. After a short Pause, He addresses Himself to the Lover, in Words to this Effect—“ I am no
 “ Stranger to your Interest in this fine Wo-
 “ man. The Fortune of War has put her
 “ intirely into my Power. The Circumstances
 “ of my Youth cannot render me insensible
 “ to so engaging a Person. But with Us *Ro-*
 “ *mans*, Honour and Generosity have a more
 “ prevailing Influence, than transitory Plea-
 “ sures. Take your Bride ; be happy in each
 “ Other ; and when You look upon this
 “ Gift, admire the *Romans*, be a Friend to
 “ *Rome*.”—Upon this He delivers Her (as You behold the Action here represented) to the enamoured Prince.

See !

See! how the Clouds, that cluster and hang around, are struck with the beneficent Deed! —In the *Celtiberians*, We behold a Mixture of Veneration and Surprise. Their Looks are full of Meaning. Methinks, they are going to cry out; *Excellent Man!*—In the *Romans*, We discern a conscious Superiority, and Exultation of Mind. Triumph is in their Features. As though they would say, *This wondrous Man is ours!*—In the *Lady*, We admire the accomplished and modest Fair; uniting all the Dignity of her Birth, with all the Delicacy of her Sex. What soft Confusion, and what tender Joy, appear in her Countenance! She is lost in Wonder, and at a loss for Words. She speaks the Acknowledgments of her Heart, by the silent Eloquence of a Tear; which steals down her glowing Cheek, to bedew the kind Hand, that has protected her Innocence, and is delivering Her to her Lord.—*Her Lord* is under an apparent, and a graceful Struggle, of Love and Gratitude. He dotes upon his charming Princess, and He almost adores his generous Benefactor. We can hardly tell, whether He is going to clasp the former in his Arms, or throw Himself at the Feet of the latter.—The *aged Parents* express their Transport in a different Manner. Their Knees are bent to the Earth; their Eyes are lifted up to Heaven; they implore, for their

their noble Guardian, every Blessing that the Gods can bestow.—*Scipio* Himself displays all the Magnanimity of the Conqueror, tempered with the Sedateness of the Philosopher, and softened with the Gentleness of the Friend. He gives Happiness, but He enjoys a greater. His Eyes sparkle with a sublime Delight; and He seems to anticipate the Applause, which this *truly* heroic Act will gain, in all Countries and in all Ages.

Eug. Is not this a greater Victory, than any that He had won, in the Field of Battle? And a nobler Triumph, than any that could be voted Him, by the applauding Senate? Amiable *Scipio!* Might I be a *Roman*, I would be no other than *Scipio*.

Asp. I wish You, my dear Sir, the Temperance and Generosity of *Scipio*. But from a better Motive than his. *He*, I fear, was too much swayed by a Spirit of Ambition, which *You* must endeavour to suppress, rather than cherish.—A *Spirit of Ambition*, which pants after Distinction, and thirsts for Applause, is diametrically opposite to the Genius of the Gospel*.—It is a Lesson, which must infallibly be unlearned, if ever We become Possessors of Faith, or Partakers of *CHRIST* †.—It is a Root of Bitterness, which naturally produces Envy ‡; that most odious, and (as
You

* *Gal.* v. 26.† *John* v. 44.‡ *Gal.* v. 26.

You have just now seen) most self-tormenting of all Tempers.—It is a Habit of Mind, which generally renders Men Incendiaries in the Church, and Disturbers of its Tranquillity*. —It is therefore, more like an *enchanted Potion* that inebriates, than a *genuine Cordial* that animates.

Eug. From what Motive then would You encourage me, to be diligent in the Pursuit of Learning, and in the Cultivation of every Virtue?

Assp. Not, that You may acquire the poor, contemptible, perishing Honour, which cometh from Men—but, that You may *please* GOD, your Almighty CREATOR—that You may *glorify* CHRIST, your infinitely condescending REDEEMER—that You may Yourself attain, what is the true *Dignity* and only *Felicity* of your Nature; and may be serviceable to the *best Interests* of your Fellow-creatures—even their present Holiness, and their eternal Happiness.

These are the *grand* and *endearing* Encouragements, which our Holy Religion proposes. These will operate, I am bold to aver, with a much sweeter, and a far more sovereign Efficacy, than all the glittering Enticements which Ambition can devise. And, what is above all other Considerations weighty, these will be
more

* 3 *John* 9, 10.

more likely, or rather these will be very certain, to receive the *divine Blessing*.

You told me, You was never weary of contemplating *Scipio*. For which Reason, I promise Myself, You will not be fatigued or displeas'd, though I have so long confin'd your Attention to this Pourtrait.—But have We no Hero of *Britain*, fit to join this illustrious Triumvirate from *Rome*, *Persia*, and *Judæa*?

Eug. The very next We meet, is one of our *English* Kings. But I cannot say, that I remember either his Name, or his Story.

Asp. How, my young Gentleman! Do You read the Annals of *other* Nations, and not acquaint Yourself with the Affairs of *your own* Country?—If I was in your Place, I would apply myself to the classical Writers by way of Study, and to some valuable *English* Historian by way of Amusement. Such an Amusement is infinitely preferable to *Novels* or *Romances*; and will not only relax your Attention, but enrich your Mind.

Eug. I thank You, good Sir, for your Admonition. And, if You please, I will now begin the Study, You recommend. Your Explanation of these Drawings, shall be the Rudiments of my Knowledge. And I shall think it a Happiness, to receive my first Instructions, from so able a Master.

Asp.

Afp. It is Honour enough for *me, Eugenio*, to have given You the Hint. I only point out your Game, or spring the Covey; You fhall be taught by a more expert Proficient, to make it your own. Yet, though Others may direct You with greater Skill, None will rejoice in your fuccessful Purfuit, more fincerely than myfelf.

This is our renowned *Henry the Fifth*; as He appeared after the Victory of *Agincourt*. You fee the gallant Conqueror clad in Steel, and recent from the Slaughter of the infulting Foe. He feems to breathe an heroic Ardour, which is fweetened and exalted by a lively Devotion.—He that, a little while ago, drove the Battle, like a Whirlwind, on the Legions of *France*; now, bends a fuppliant Knee, and offers the euchariftic Hymn, to the LORD GOD of Hofts. No turbulent or diforderly Joy riots among the Soldiery. They exprefs not the Triumph of their Hearts, in frantic Exultations, or drunken Revels; but in Acts of Thankfgiving to JEHOVAH. In an Attitude, that fpeaks the Pfalmift's devout Acknowledgment; *Not unto Us, O LORD, not unto Us, but unto thy Name be the Glory.*

This laft Instance informs my *Eugenio*, That *Prayer* is an honourable Employ—has been practifed by Perfons of the moft admired Endowments—is the fureft Method of *obtaining*
Succels,

Success, in whatever Business We undertake ; and of *enjoying Prosperity*, in whatever Circumstances We are placed.

The next Piece is different from all the preceding. In *those*, Armies with their Banners displayed, Ships of War riding at Anchor, battering Engines and Instruments of Death, form the Perspective. In *this*, We have, all around, a lovely rural Landshape ; expressive of Peace, and enriched with Plenty. Corn and Cattle in the Valleys ; fruitful Vineyards on the Hills ; and beautiful Gardens surrounding the Houses.—But who is that *graceful* and *august* Personage, seated on a stately Throne of Ivory and Gold ?

Eug. This is *Solomon*, giving his first Audience to the Queen of *Sheba*. A large Train of her Attendants throng the Avenues of the Palace. Some leading foreign Animals : Some, bearing Vases and Caskets : All, arrayed in strange Apparel. The *Israelites* gaze upon their outlandish Visitants, their costly Presents, and peculiar Manners. Their Visitants are as much surpris'd at the Walls, the Towers, and especially the Temple of *Jerusalem*. But, You, Sir, I apprehend, are most pleas'd with the venerable Person, that fills the Throne.

Alp.

Asp. Indeed I am ; and so is his royal Guest. — You see, in her Habit, her Retinue, her Deportment, a rude unpolished Kind of Grandeur. But all in *Solomon* is so splendid, and at the same Time so elegant ; displays such a Delicacy of Taste, and such a Magnificence of Spirit ; that the *Sabaean Queen* is overwhelmed with Amazement, and transported with Delight. Her Looks speak that high but just Compliment, recorded by the sacred Historian ; *It was a true Report, that I heard in my own Land, of thy Acts, and of thy Wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the Words, until I came, and mine Eyes had seen : and behold ! the half was not told me : thy Wisdom and Prosperity exceed the Fame which I heard* *.

The Dome is of Cedar, the Pillars of Marble, on which are supported Curtains of Embroidery.—The Pillars shine with the most glossy Polish, and swell upon the Eye with the boldest Projections. The Curtains, pendent in large and easy Folds, seem not adhesive to the Canvass, but waving in the Air. The Throne is so exquisitely contrived, so richly ornamented, and so highly finished, as shews the Painter had in his Eye that remarkable Observation of Scripture ; *There was not the like made in any Kingdom.*

* 1 Kings x. 6, 7.

If the Monarch was absent, We should desire no greater Entertainment, than to view the Beauties of the Apartment: but can hardly allow any Attention to the Edifice, when so graceful and so grand a Presence bespeaks our Regard. For I must own, there appears to me something peculiarly excellent in this Figure: a *Serenity* and *Dignity*, without any of that martial Air, which gives a Tincture of Ferocity to the Warrior: a *Sagacity* and *Penetration*, not to be equalled by the Wrinkles of Age, yet transparent through all the Bloom of Youth. Piety and Wisdom, the Love of GOD and the Grace of his SPIRIT, give an Elevation to the Mind; a secret Charm to the Countenance; and something more than mortal to the whole Man.—I am apt to suspect, *Eugenio*, that You yourself are ready to adopt a new Favourite. That You now prefer *Solomon* even to *Scipio*; and had rather be like the “Beloved of the LORD,” than the Darling of *Rome*.

Eug. Every Thing in *Solomon* is so venerable and heavenly, that I am filled with Awe, rather than fired with Emulation. It is not for a Boy, to think of imitating such high Perfection!

Asp. Why not, my dear Sir? It was GOD who gave *Solomon* his superior Wisdom, and
exalted

exalted Accomplishments. And GOD is *the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever*: as willing to hear, and as able to help You, as He was to hear and bless his Servant *Solomon*.—Neither let your Youth be a Discouragement. *Out of the Mouth of very Babes and Sucklings, HE ordaineth Strength, and perfects Praise* *. *Samuel* ministered in the Temple, when He was but a Child †. *Josiah*, while He was yet young, began to seek after the GOD of his Fathers ‡. *Timothy* was acquainted with the Holy Scriptures from his earliest Years ||. And *Solomon* himself was none of the oldest, when He was favoured with that extraordinary Vision, and made that admirable Choice at *Gibeon* §. A Passage of Scripture, which I dare say, You have read; which I would recommend to your attentive Consideration; and which, I hope, You will take for the Model of your Conduct.—And if You, like that illustrious young Prince, desire a wise and understanding Heart, more than the Affluence of Wealth, or the Distinctions of Honour: if You seek *Wisdom as Silver, and search for Her as for hid Treasure: then shall You also understand the Fear of the LORD, and find the Knowledge of GOD* ¶.

The

* *Psal.* viii. 2. † *1 Sam.* ii. 18. ‡ *2 Chron.* xxxiv. 3. || *2 Tim.* iii. 15. § *1 Kings* iii. 5, 6, &c.
¶ *Prov.* ii. 4, 5.

The next that occurs, presents Us with a View of the *Sea*; and a most tremendous View it is.

Eug. This is the Voyage related by the Evangelist; when our LORD sailed with his Disciples, and bid the Storm be still, and made the Ocean calm.

Asp. Then We may truly say, *A Greater than Solomon is Here!*—Give me Leave to hint, upon this Occasion, that every Picture of *CHRIST* must necessarily *depreciate* his glorious Person. Therefore You will never think, that a few Rays beaming round his sacred Head, can properly distinguish the SON of GOD, or express the Grace of his Offices, and the Divinity of his Nature. It is not to display the Perfections of the LORD *JESUS Himself*, but only to give Us an Idea of one of his *Works*, that the Pencil has been employed on this grand Subject.

You will also remember, that it was not the main Ocean, but the Lake of *Tiberias*, on which they sailed. However, the Painter is at Liberty, to make his Sea as large as He pleases, and his *Storm* as terrible as He can. Accordingly, He has collected all the Horrors of a Tempest.—Lightnings fire the Arch above; and Thunders, could Thunders have been painted, would have rocked the Ground below. Those flaming Bolts have smitten a
huge

huge Promontory, and tore its rugged Brow. See! how the rocky Fragment is tumbling, with impetuous Bound, from Cliff to Cliff.—The Waters, lashed by furious Winds, heave and tofs their tumultuous Billows. Here, they rise in rolling Ridges; there, they rage in devouring Whirls.—Amidst these horrible Commotions, You behold a *Vessel* in all the Extremity of *Distress*. Straining under the Blast, battered and half overwhelmed by the Surge, she can no longer maintain the unequal Conflict; she yields to the resistless Flood; and begins, evidently begins to sink.—Perplexed, amazed, and at their Wit's End, the Disciples run to and fro. They shift the Tackling; lighten the Stowage; try every Expedient; and find, to their inexpressible Astonishment, every Expedient ineffectual.

We cast our Eye forward, and their divine MASTER appears, sedately rising from a gentle Slumber. He sees the Perplexity and Horror of his Companions, without the least Emotion of Alarm. He sees Destruction approaching, Heaven and Earth mingling, and, instead of being dismayed, *enjoys* the elemental War.—What Composure in his Mien! What Dignity in his Attitude! What Majesty, sweetened with Compassion, in his Aspect! Such as could arise from no other Cause, but a conscious and undoubted Certainty, that not

a Soul of the Crew should be lost; not a Hair of their Head perish; and that all this mighty Uproar of Nature, should end in a Demonstration of his *mightier* Power, and a Confirmation of his Disciples *Faith*.—He looks abroad into the mutinous Sky, and the turbulent Deep. He waves, with an authoritative Air, his sacred Hand; and adds the great commanding Word, PEACE: BE STILL.—Do You inquire after the Effect? Let *Milton* declare it;

*Confusion heard his Voice, and wild Uproar
Stood rul'd.*

This is expressed in another Draught. Where all is hushed: the tremendous Agitations cease, and the most profound Tranquility takes Place. The Water is smooth as Glass; We have the Picture of a perfect *Calm*; and view those very Persons, who, a little while ago, were in the wildest Distraction, and in the very Jaws of Ruin, surrounding their LORD as Men alive from the Dead*.

Their

* The Circumstances of this Miracle, as related by the Evangelists, are truly wonderful, and to the last Degree picturesque.

Master! Master! We perish! How concise, how abrupt, and how ardent is this Exclamation! Therefore how strongly significant of imminent Danger, and of the utmost Distress! They have not Time to be explicit. A Moment's Delay may be fatal. What they utter is Conciseness itself, and all Rapidity.

Their Confternation is turned into Wonder, and their Pangs of Fear into Extafies of Joy. They acknowledge the Omnipotence, and adore the Goodnefs of *JESUS*.

Eug. Well may they acknowledge his *Omnipotence*; fince *Winds and Waves obey Him*. Great Reason have they to adore his *Goodnefs*, fince He refcued them from the very Jaws of Death; that worft of Deaths, perifhing in the ftormy Deep.

Afp. If *JESUS CHRIST* had vouchsafed fuch a Deliverance to my *Eugenio*; What would

pidity. *Luke* viii. 24.—This is Nature: this is the *genuine* Language of the Heart: this is true historic Painting. Every impartial Reader muft admire this exquisitely juft and fine Stroke, far beyond the diffufe and (I had almoft faid, *impertinently*) florid Speech, which *Virgil* puts into the Mouth of his Hero on a like Occafion. *Æn.* I. 98.

Σιωπα, πεφριμωσο. What a Majesty in this Command! 'Tis admirable: 'tis inimitable: 'tis worthy of GOD.—I think, We may obferve a peculiarly proper Word, addreffed and adapted to each Element: the firft injoining a *Ceffation* of the *Winds*, the fecond a *Quiefcence* of the *Waves*: Silence in all that roared, Compofure in all that raged. As though (to give a fhort Paraphrafe on the grand Injunction) it had been faid; *Winds, be hush'd*; *Waves, be calm*. *Mark* iv. 39.

The *Effect* on the Difciples is defcribed, with all the Force of Imagination, and all the Energy of Diction. To represent in Colours, what the evangelical Historian has left upon Record, would be a Subject fit for the immortal *Raphael*; and perhaps not to be equalled even by his mafterly Pencil. *Λιαν εκ περιςσιν εν αυτοις εξιςαντο και εθαυμαζον—εθαυμαζον, they were amazed—εξιςαντο, they were transported with Amazement—λιαν, to the very greateft Degree—εκ περιςσιν, exceeding all that Language can exprefs.* *Mark* vi. 51.

would He have thought, or how would He have been affected?

Eug. I should have thought myself *inexpressibly* obliged; and that I could never shew *sufficient* Gratitude to so great a Benefactor.

Asp. Assure yourself then, my dear Sir, that He has done infinitely more for You.—He has delivered You, not indeed from being swallowed up by the raging Billows, but from sinking into the Pit of everlasting Perdition.—He has not only rescued You from endless Destruction, but obtained eternal Life and heavenly Happiness for You.—This He has done, not by speaking a Word, or issuing a Command; but by bearing your Guilt, suffering your Punishment, and dying the Death, the most ignominious and tormenting Death, in your Stead.—Should You not then *unfeignedly* love HIM? *Study* to please HIM? and make it the *reigning* Endeavour of your Life to glorify HIM?

Here, *Theron* returned, and the young Student withdrew; after receiving some affectionate and encouraging Compliments from *Alphaso*. Who was going to enlarge upon the excellent Taste of his Friend; the instructive Stile of his Pictures; the good Sense and great Proficiency of his Son. But *Theron*, far from coveting the Praise, and fully satisfied with the

the

the Consciousness, of acting the becoming Part, prevented his Discourse, by stepping to a Pair of Glafs Folding-Doors: which, thrown open, admitted them into the *Study*.

A Chimney-Piece of grey Marble, with plain, but bold and protuberant Mouldings, formed a very handsome Appearance.—In various little Niches, were fixed elegant *Busts*; and on the several Interstices, hung beautiful *Prints*; representing many of the most eminently learned Men, who were the Ornaments and Blessings, both of antient and modern Times. The Shelves, all around, were accommodated, not encumbered with Books. *Aspasio*, running over the letter'd Backs, observed a Collection of the most valuable Authors, in History and Natural Philosophy, in Poetry and Divinity.

You will easily perceive, said *Theron*, that I am somewhat singular in furnishing my Study, as well as in ornamenting the Avenue. My Books are not for Shew, but Use; and claim a Regard, rather on Account of their Worth, than their Number.—An immense Multitude of Volumes, I have always thought, is more likely to embarrass the Attention, than to improve the Understanding. A *huge* Library seems to resemble a perplexing *Labyrinth*; and often bewilders the Mind, instead of leading it expeditiously to the Acquisition of Truth.

When

When People are eager to peruse a Multiplicity of Writings, it frequently happens, that in reading all, they digest none *. They taste some empty and transient Amusement, but collect no solid or lasting Advantage. Their Minds are somewhat like those capacious Looking-Glasses, which We have seen exposed in the most frequented and populous Streets of *London*. They receive all Manner of shadowy Images, but no substantial Impression. A thousand Figures *pass through* them, not one *abides* in them.

Our Books, replied *Aspasio*, as well as our Friends, should rather be *select*, than *numerous*. For my Part, I would desire no more than two or three of the most correct and masterly Writers in any Science. These, a Person of moderate Capacity may be able to comprehend; and not comprehend only, but enrich his Memory with the choicest Sentiments, and make the Substance of their Works his own.—He will, by Repetition and familiar Converse, enter into their *Spirit*, and acquire their *Manner*. While a Rambler in reading, does little more than gratify

* The Author of *Night-Thoughts* has touched this Subject, with great Judgment, and equal Sprightlines.

*Voracious Learning, often overfed,
 Digests not into Sense the motley Meal.
 This Forager on Other's Wisdom, leaves
 Her native Farm, her Reason quite untill'd.
 With mixt Manure She surfeits the rank Soil,
 Dung'd but not dress'd; and rich to Beggary.*

tify his Fancy, without refining his Taste, or amending his Heart.

Upon this *Aspasio* turned Himself; and espied, in one Corner of the Apartment, the celestial and terrestrial *Globes*; in another, a large reflecting *Telescope*; and on the Top of a Buroe, one or two of the best *Microscopes*.

These Instruments, resumed *Theron*, have opened an inexhaustible Fund of the finest Entertainments *. They have furnished Us with *new Eyes*; and brought up, I may venture to say, a *new World* into our View. They give Us a Sight of Wonders, that may seem incredible to the incurious Vulgar, and were utterly unknown to the most inquisitive Sages
of

* Gentlemen of Taste and Seriousness cannot, I think, have a nobler Piece of Furniture for their Studies, than the *Microscope* and the *Telescope*, the *Orrery* and the *Air-Pump*. This Apparatus would afford them a most delightful and improving Amusement in a solitary Hour.—It would also give them an Opportunity of entertaining their Company, in a truly elegant and very instructive Manner. It would open a fine and ample Field, for displaying the Glories of GOD the CREATOR, and of GOD the REDEEMER.—As the Discoveries made by these Instruments, are so *surprising* in themselves, and *new* to the Generality of Mankind, every edifying Hint deduced from *such* Observations, would come with a peculiar Recommendation.—This, I am sure, would be a Method of reducing to Practice, what the polite Historian has recorded of the politer *Scipio*; *Elegantissimo Intervalla Negotiorum Otio dispunxit*. Vell. Paterc.—And, I believe, it might be a happy Means of tuning the Soul, to bear a Part in that immortal Hymn; *Worthy art Thou, O LORD, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for Thou hast created all Things; and for thy Pleasure they now exist, and were at first created.*

REV. iv. 11.

of Antiquity. They charm the Eye with a Display of inimitable Beauties, where nothing worthy of Notice was expected. They throw the Mind into a pleasing Transport of Admiration; and from the meanest lowest Objects, raise the most *amiable* and *exalted* Ideas of the all-glorious CREATOR.

I have often regretted, that such rational and manly Gratifications should be almost universally supplanted, by the *fantastical* and *childish* Amusements in Vogue. Why should not the Contemplation of Nature's surprising Novelties, be as acceptable an Entertainment, as the stale Diversion of *Quadrille*; be as refined an Employ for a leisure Hour, as to count the Spots on a Pack of Cards?—The Ladies, I am very sure, might find brighter Colours, and more delicate Ornaments, in the Robes and Head-Dress of a common *Fly*; than ever they found amidst the Trinkets of a *Toy-Shop*. And was the fair Circle of Females once acquainted with the radiant Varnish and rich Studs, that enamel the Cover of a *Beetle's* Wing; I am apt to think, they would view with less Rapture, with more Indifference, perhaps, with a becoming Disdain, all the pretty Fancies of a *Beau's* Wardrobe.

A few Days ago, when the accomplished *Manilia* favoured Us with a Visit, I shewed Her, through a magnifying Glass, the Sting
of

of a Bee, the Scale of a Soal, the Wing of a Gnat, and some other *beautiful Minims* of Nature; together with the Powder, which adheres to our Finger, when We touch the Body of a Moth.—“ Surprising! cried the young Lady. What elegant Figures! What enchanting Finery!

————— *Smallest Lineaments exact,*
In all the Liveries deck't of Summer's Pride,
With Spots of Gold and Purple, Azure and Green.

“ How perfect the Polish, and how high the Finishing, of that *little Weapon!*—This Piece of *defensive Armour*, how skilfully contrived, and how curiously wrought! Here, rising into little Ridges, like the Bosses of a Buckler; fitted to repel Injuries. There, scooped into little Cavities, designed, I suppose, to diminish its Weight; that the Coat of Mail may not incumber, even while it defends, the puny Wearer.—What I took to be a whitish despicable Rag; is the *neatest Fan*, I ever beheld. Mounted on Sticks * inimitably tapering and slender. Tinged with all the soft and lovely Colours of the most glossy Mother of Pearl.—But, what astonishes me more than all, is the View of that *coloured Dust*; which your Instrument has turned
 “ into

* These *Sticks*, are the little *Ribs*, which support, at proper Intervals, the fine transparent Membrane of the Wing.

“ into a *Cluster of Feathers*. Every one wrought
 “ off with a Regularity and a Delicacy, that
 “ are beyond the Power of Description. The
 “ finest Stroke drawn by the *Italian Pen*,
 “ compared with the extreme Minuteness of
 “ the Shaft, is broad and bulky as an Admi-
 “ ral’s Mast. A Speck of Leaf-Gold, could it
 “ be weighed against the exquisite Attenua-
 “ tions of the Vane*, would be more sub-
 “ stantial and ponderous than yonder marble
 “ Slab.

“ How nice, even to a Prodigy, must be
 “ the Mechanism of the *animalcule* Race! I see
 “ Globules, I see Tides of Blood, rolling
 “ through Mæanders inexpressibly finer, than
 “ the finest Hair. — Stranger still! I see
 “ whole Sholes of active Creatures, expatiat-
 “ ing in a single Drop of Water †: taking
 “ their

* *Vane* is the feathery Part of a Quill.

† In a single Drop of Water, Dr. *Hook* is said to have discovered, with his *Microscope*, eight Millions two hundred and eighty thousand *Animalcules*.—This is mentioned, because it is the prevailing Philosophy of the Age. Though I must confess, that Mr. *Gautier* seems to have gone a considerable Way, towards giving it another Turn. As He has proved, before a learned Assembly at *Paris*, That the *Vermiculars* of *Leuwenhoek*, and the living *Moleculæ* of Mr. *de Buffon*, were only Balls of Air agitated by the fermenting of the Seed. If so, it is not impossible, but Dr. *Hook*’s *Animalcula* may be nothing more than *Balls of Air*, agitated by the fermenting of the Pepper.

Be this as it will, the young Lady’s Remarks on the Wonders of *Mechanism* in the *animalcule* Creation, I believe will never be controverted.

“ their Pastime amidst such a scanty Canal, as
 “ unstraitened and as much at large, as *Levi-*
 “ *athan* in the Abysses of the Ocean.—A whole
 “ *Kingdom* of these Creatures, though collected
 “ into a Body, are quite undiscernable by the
 “ naked Eye. What then must be the Size of
 “ every *Individual*? Yet in every Individual
 “ there is a complete *System* of Limbs; each en-
 “ dowed with spontaneous Motion; all as-
 “ sembled, though not crowded, in a living
 “ *Atom*.—To reflect upon the Texture of Ves-
 “ sels, and the Operation of Organs, so com-
 “ plex, so numerous, yet so inconceivably mi-
 “ nute; how it awakens Admiration! Fills
 “ me with Reverence of the ALMIGHTY
 “ MAKER! and yields a Pleasure, infinitely
 “ superior to all the modish Amusements of
 “ our Sex!—Your Discoveries of *Life in Mi-*
 “ *niature*, have given me a Disgust of, what is
 “ called *Higb Life*, and its solemn Fopperies.
 “ You have spoiled me, *Tberon*, for a fashion-
 “ able Trifler. I shall no longer relish the dull
 “ Oeconomy of the Fan, or the poor Parade
 “ of the Snuff-Box.”

Asp. Have You nothing to say of the *Tele-*
scope?—I believe, it must be my Province to
 celebrate this admirable Invention; and I wish
 I could do it, with *Manilia*'s brilliant Imagina-
 tion.—If the *Microscope* leads Us downward,

to the curious Secrets of the animalcule Creation; the *Telescope* bears Us upward, to the grand Peculiarities of the starry Regions. The Eye, conducted by this wonderful Guide, visits a Variety of majestic Orbs, which would otherwise be lost in unmeasurable Tracts of Æther. — This, far more surprizing than the Discoveries of *Columbus*, has found out new Colonies of Worlds, in every Quarter of the nocturnal Skies. This has placed a glittering Crescent, on the Brow of one * of the Planets; and has given others a most stately Train of Attendants †.

Tell me, *Theron*; could You discern the full Choir of the Constellations, or distinguish the variegated Face of the Moon, without the Aid of your *telescopic* Tube? Could You, with your unassisted Eye, get a Sight of *Jupiter's* Satellites, or procure a Glimpse of *Saturn's* Ring? — Without that supplementary Aid to our Sight, they are quite imperceptible; though the Satellites of the former, are incomparably more magnificent, than the *Retinue* of all the Monarchs in the World; and compared with the Ring of the latter, all the *Bridges* on ten thousand Rivers, are less than the Ferule of your Cane.

As the *Telescope* to the Eye, so is *Revelation* to the Understanding. It discovers Truths,
which,

* The Planet *Venus*.

† The Satellites of *Jupiter* and *Saturn*.

which, exclusive of such a Discovery, had been for ever hid from the most sagacious Minds. —'Tis strange to the unlearned Observer, that this ponderous Globe of Earth and Seas, should wheel its rapid Circuit round the Sun. But the *Telescope* has rendered this Fact clear to a Demonstration. —'Tis strange likewise to our natural Apprehensions, that We should die in *Adam*, and be undone by our first Parent's Disobedience. Nor less so, that We should be made alive in *CHRIST*, and derive our Recovery from his *imputed* Righteousness. But Revelation makes this Doctrine as certain, as it is comfortable.

Ther. Does Revelation make it certain? — This is a Point not yet established, but taken for granted. I rather apprehend, that Revelation, in no Place maintains it, in many Places disavows it. — Since your Absence, *Afpasio*, I have spent some Time in searching the Scriptures, with a particular View to this Tenet. And I can find no such Expression in the whole Bible, as the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness. If it was so *leading* an Article, as You represent; surely, it could not have been intirely forgotten by the inspired Writers, nor utterly excluded from *their* Body of Divinity.

Afp. The very identical Expression may not occur, and yet the Doctrine be abundantly
VOL. I. U taught.

taught. I believe, You never met with the Word *Resurrection*, in any Part of the Pentateuch; nor ever read the Phrase *Satisfaction*, in all the New Testament. Yet our LORD fully proved the Truth of the former, from the Writings of *Moses*; and You Yourself have acknowledged the latter, to be the unanimous Sense of the Apostles and Evangelists.

In the Epistle to the *Romans*, We have express and repeated Mention of a Righteousness imputed. *What* or *whose* Righteousness, can be the Subject of this Assertion?—Not the Righteousness of *Angels*. They are a superior Class of Beings, and have no such intimate Connection with our Nature.—Not the Righteousness of eminent *Saints*. This is the exploded Error of Popery; and furnishes the *Romish* Zealots with that Chimera of Arrogance and Folly, Works of Supererogation.—Not any Righteousness of our own: for, it is positively declared, to be *without Works**; in which no Works of our own have any Concurrence, or the least Share.—What other Righteousness then can be meant, but the Righteousness of our great SUBSTITUTE, SURETY, and SAVIOUR? Who took our Nature; discharged our Debt; and is therefore stiled, *Jehovah* our Righteousness †.

Ther.

* *Rom.* iv. 6.

† *Jer.* xxiii. 6:

Ther. This seems contrary to the whole Tenour of the sacred Instructions. What says the Prophet? *When the wicked Man turneth away, from his Wickedness that He hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, He shall save his Soul alive* *.—Here, that greatest of Blessings, the Salvation of the Soul, is ascribed to a *Departure from Evil*, and a *Perseverance in Good*: to a real Alteration in a Man's own Temper and Conduct, not to any fanciful Application of some transmissible Righteousness from Another.

Asp. Let me ask my *Theron*; Is there no Wickedness, but Riot and Debauchery, Profaneness and Injustice?—*Unbelief*, though it may pass without Censure or Notice in a System of Morality, is, in the Volume of Revelation, declared a *capital Crime*. Our LORD, speaking of the HOLY SPIRIT, mentions it as a signal Part of his Office, That *He shall convince the World of Sin*.—Of what Sin? Scandalous Violations of moral Rectitude? This were a needless Employ. The Light of Reason is sufficient to evince such a Charge; and the Court of Conscience is erected, to pass the deserved Sentence.—Of Sin, adds the HEAVENLY TEACHER, *because they believe not on me* †: on my Death, as the Cause of their Forgiveness; on my Righteousness, as the Ground

* *Ezek.* xviii. 27.

† *John* xvi. 9.

Ground of their Acceptance ; on my SPIRIT, as the powerful Principle of their Holiness.

Unbelief treats GOD as a Liar * ; because, it rejects the Testimony, which He has bore concerning his beloved SON.—Unbelief tramples on the Blood of *CHRIST*, and is a most contemptuous Affront to all his saving Offices.—Unbelief would counteract the Operations of the HOLY GHOST ; whose peculiar Work it is, to testify of *CHRIST*, and make manifest his Righteousness.—Unbelief instigates (could We have thought it possible ?) a Child of Dust, a Slave of Sin, to idolize Himself and his own Performances.—To say all in a Word ; Unbelief is that *great*, that *comprehensive* Iniquity, which scornfully rejects, or impiously renounces, the most glorious Method of Salvation, which Omniscience itself could devise.

The wicked Man, therefore, never turns from his Wickedness ; till He turns, by a true Faith, to *JESUS CHRIST*. Till then, He is a Rebel against the *Gospel*, however He may pay some specious and partial Regard to the Law. So flagrant a Rebel, that he stands particularly excepted, in the Act of Evangelical Indemnity. For, as *He that believeth on the SON, hath everlasting Life ; so, He that believeth*

* I *John* v. 10.

believeth not, is condemned already, and the Wrath of GOD abideth on him *.

Ther. What are the *Psalmist's* Sentiments on this Subject? Does not He represent the Matter in a very different Light? *Thou, LORD, art merciful; for Thou rewardest every Man according to his, not Another's Works* †.

Asp. Noble Saying! May it be written upon our very Hearts!—GOD is merciful, and therefore rewardeth. From whence it appears, that what We call a Reward, is really an Act of Mercy, rather than of Justice. The *Wages* of Sin is Death; but the *Gift* (says the Apostle, altering his Style, and making a most important Distinction) the Gift of GOD is eternal Life ‡.—The inspired Penman subjoins, not *for*, but *according to*, every Man's Works. His Works are the Measure, not the meritorious Cause. To merit, is the sole Privilege of the SAVIOUR. To Him it is owing, that our imperfect Services are honoured

* *John* iii. 18, 36. The Words are exceedingly emphatical, and no less awful.—Not barely He *shall* come into Condemnation, but He (that believeth not) *is* condemned already. Though ever so civilized or refined in his outward Conversation, He lies under a Sentence of Death, and is the Object of divine Wrath.—Which not only will *visit* Him, but *abideth* on Him. So that, where-ever He may be, what-ever He may do, the Displeasure of the tremendous JEHOVAH hangs over Him, like a dreadful destructive Sword; and, if He dies in such a Condition, will inevitably fall upon him, and cut him in Pieces eternally.

† *Psal.* lxxii. 12.

‡ *Rem.* vi. 23.

noured with any Acceptance; much more that they are recompensed with any Reward.

Ther. Does not this Exposition of yours, clash with that truly generous Acknowledgment of *St. Peter*? *In every Nation, He that feareth GOD, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with Him**. Here, it is undeniably evident, that Acceptance with our CREATOR, is founded on a Man's *own* Piety, and *personal* Integrity.

Asp. Rightly to understand this Text, We should inquire into the Circumstances of the History.—The Apostle had been strongly and most unreasonably prejudiced in Favour of the *Jews*; imagining, that the Salvation of *CHRIST*, like the Dispensation of *Moses*, must be confined to his Countrymen.—But now, having considered the Purport of his late heavenly Vision; having compared it with the angelic Message, delivered to *Cornelius*; and being made acquainted with the Character of that valuable Man; He breaks out into this truly catholic Declaration.—“ My Prejudices
 “ are vanished. My Sentiments are enlarged.
 “ From the Instance before me, it is *demonstrably*
 “ certain; that GOD does not appropriate the
 “ Blessings of his Covenant, to any particular
 “ Person, Family, or People. *But, in every Na-*
 “ *tion, He that feareth Him, and from a Prin-*
 “ ciple

* *Acts* x. 35.

“ ciple of Religion in the Heart, *worketh Righteousness* in the Life, *is accepted*; so accepted, as to be an Object of the divine Favour, and an Inheritor of eternal Happiness.”

This, I think, is the exact Meaning of the Place. And let it be recollected, that no One truly fears, or can possibly please GOD, without Faith*. For which Reason, it seems necessary to suppose, that *Cornelius*, though a Heathen by Birth, had believed through Grace. —Nay; it is evident from the Context, that he had heard of *JESUS CHRIST*; had some Acquaintance with the Design of his Coming, and the Execution of his Office †; enough to be the Ground of a *real*, though perhaps an *infantile* Faith. The Business of the Apostle was, to lead this Convert into the *clear* Light, and *full* Privileges of the Gospel; to ratify and confirm his Title to them, by the sacred *Seal* of Baptism; and introduce Him, as the *First-Fruits* of the Gentiles, into the Christian Church.

So that nothing can be concluded from this Passage, but that the glad Tidings of *Christianity*

* *Heb. xi. 6.*

† See *ver. 36, 37.* Indeed it could hardly be otherwise; since *Cornelius* was settled at *Cæsarea*, the Residence of the Lord-Lieutenant; and Seat of the Civil, as *Jerusalem* was of the Ecclesiastical Government. In a Place of such general Resort, so very remarkable an Event could not be unknown. Especially, as *Philip* the Evangelist had fixed his Abode in that City. See *Acts viii. 40.*

ity are for *Jews*, for *Gentiles*, for all People—that Faith, even when weak, is productive of good Works—and, when sincerely improved, will certainly be increased; will “go from Strength to Strength.”

Ther. Does not our SAVIOUR, in describing the Process, and foretelling the Issue of the last decisive Tryal, assign a Kingdom to the Righteous? Assign it, in this precise View, as a proper Remuneration of *their own* good Works; Saying, in the most express Terms; *Come, ye blessed of my FATHER, inherit the Kingdom prepared for You, from the Foundation of the World: FOR I was an hungred, and Ye gave me Meat; FOR &c. FOR &c.**

Assp. Be pleased to take Notice of the Expression. They are bidden to *inherit*: and what is freer than an Inheritance?—Observe also the *Reason* alledged, and compare it with the Rule of Judicature. *He that believeth, shall be saved.* This is the avowed, the invariable Standard, by which He proceeds, in administering everlasting Judgment. Accordingly, He confers eternal Life on the Righteous, as Persons intitled to this great Felicity, on the Foot of his own gracious Appointment.

FOR

† *Matt.* xxv. 30.

FOR denotes, not the *Foundation*, but the *Evidence*, of their Right. “ I acquit such a Person, says the Arbitrator in a judicial Claim; *for* the Witnesses depose, that the Debt is paid.” The Deposition, which answers to these righteous Acts, is the *Proof*; Payment of the Debt, which corresponds with *CHRIST*’s perfect Obedience, is the *Cause** of the Discharge.—*For Ye have given*; Ye have abounded in all Instances of Duty to me, and Love to your Brethren; and thereby have manifested Yourself true Believers.

It may be farther observed, That our LORD says not, Ye have done it to your Fellow-creatures, but *to these my Brethren* †. He commends not every *random* Act of Good-nature or Generosity, but such Kinds of Beneficence only, as carry the *Christian* Stamp; were exercised to a Disciple, “ in the Name of a Disciple.” And *these* most evidently proceed from Faith; *these* undeniably attest its Sincerity.

Ther. Are not these Distinctions more *subtle*, than *solid*?

Asp. To me they appear in no such Light. If You think otherwise, let Us appeal to those
 excel-

* The Spring is come, says the Countryman; *for* the Orchard blooms, and the Black-Bird sings. The Blooming of the Trees, and the Melody of the Birds, were never supposed to *create*, only to *characterize*, the delightful Season. They are, not its Cause, but the Proof of its taking Place.

† *Matt.* xxv. 40.

excellent Persons themselves. The Turn, the very remarkable Turn of their Sentiments, will fully decide our Question.—Do they lay *any Strefs* upon their own religious Duties, and beneficent Deeds? Far from relying on them, farther still from pleading them, they bestow not a *single Thought* upon them. Having fixed their Hopes on the Rock of Ages, they forget these transient Bubbles*. Nay, they *wonder*, That their exalted MASTER should condescend, to make any honourable Mention of such imperfect Services.—O! that We may be enabled, through the whole Course of our Lives, to follow the Example of their Piety; and, when We stand before the tremendous Tribunal, to imitate their Humility and Wisdom! *Their Humility*; in renouncing themselves, and disclaiming all Desert of their own. *Their Wisdom*; in reposing their whole Confidence on the Merits and Righteousness of their REDEEMER.

Ther. Our LORD makes no Mention of this Doctrine, in his Sermon on the Mount. Whereas, if it had been so *very material*, He would

* *Bubbles* they are, compared with the all-glorious Obedience of *CHRIST*; or considered in reference to the grand Affair of Justification before GOD.—But as Bubbles, or watery Vesicles inflated with Air, are the Means of exhibiting the beautiful Colours of the *Rainbow*; so these Services, though poor and defective, *bear Testimony* to the Existence of that precious Grace—*Faith*.

would at least have touched upon it, in that comprehensive Summary of true Religion.

Ass. Our LORD says not a Word, concerning the Sacrifice of his Death. Neither is there a Syllable, relating to his Intercession for Transgressors. But are these Articles of our *Faith* to be deemed fictitious or superfluous? Because, they are not expressly inculcated, in that admirable Treatise of *practical* Divinity.

However, upon a more attentive Examination, perhaps, We shall find the Point most strongly *implied*, though not distinctly *specified*; its Necessity demonstrated, though its Nature be not explained.—The illustrious TEACHER opened his Mouth, and with a peculiar Solemnity said; *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit**.—But *Who* are they? Not the Persons, who sooth themselves with the flattering Conceit of the *Laodicean* Church; *I am rich* in Obedience, and *increased in spiritual Goods* †. Those rather, who see their Indigence; bewail their Guilt; and hunger and thirst after the justifying Merit of a REDEEMER. Who, from the very Bottom of an humbled Heart, confess; “ LORD, I am no more able to conform all my Conduct, to thy most holy Law, than I am capable of atoning for my innumerable Sins. CHRIST must be my Right-

* *Matt.* v. 3.

† *Rev.* iii. 17.

“ Righteousness, as well as my Propitiation,
 “ or else I am irrecoverably undone.”

The inimitable PREACHER farther assures his Hearers; That, *unless their Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, they shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven**.—How must *Christians* exceed the *Pharisees*? Not only in being *sincere*; in having Respect unto *all* GOD’s Commandments; but also in possessing a *complete* Righteousness. Such as the divine Holiness can, with Complacency, accept; and in which the divine Justice may, with Honour, acquiesce. Nor can this be any Thing less, than the perfect Obedience of the great MEDIATOR.—St. *Paul’s* memorable Testimony, concerning his Attainments in the *Pharisaical*, and his Hopes in the *Christian* State †, afford the very best Comment upon this important Declaration of our LORD.

Ther. The ORACLE of Heaven, You know, was once consulted upon that most momentous of all Questions; How a Person may ascertain his Title to Life and Immortality? And what is the Tenour of the sacred Rescript? —We are referred to the Ten Commandments; and, in the most explicit Terms, with the most peremptory Air, told; *This DO, and thou shalt live* ‡.

Asp.

* *Matt.* v. 20. † *Phil.* iii. 7, 8, 9. ‡ *Matt.* xix. 17. *Luke* x. 28.

Asp. That particular Person, if You please, was referred to the ten Commandments; not *We*, and Mankind in general.—Our LORD, in the preceding Verses, had been informing his Disciples; That they must *receive the Kingdom of GOD*, or the Grace of the Gospel, and the Blessings it proposes, *as a little Child*. And this can hardly signify, in Consequence of their own Doings.

Ther. “ That particular Person referred! “ Not We and Mankind in general!”—I don’t understand your Meaning, *Aspasio*.

Asp. You will observe then, that our LORD’S Reply was not an universal Direction, but an Answer *Ad Hominem*; peculiarly adapted * to the young Gentleman’s Application, which, however it may have been admired, was none of the wisest.—Instead of asking; “ How “ shall a *poor guilty* Mortal, who is every Day “ offending, obtain Forgiveness from the righteous GOD?” Instead of saying; “ How “ shall I, who am not able to think a *good* “ *Thought*,

* It is delightful to observe the Wisdom of our LORD: how exactly this divine Casuist suits his Counsel to the various States of Mankind.—The Secure and Presumptuous He sends to the *Law*, that they may be *humbled*. To the Contrite and Penitent He preaches the *Gospel*, that they may be *comforted*.—When the *Pharisee*, full of Self-conceit, stands up and says, *What shall I do?* The Answer is, *Do all that is commanded*. When the *broken-hearted* Woman falls at his Feet, and speaks in Tears the Guilt of her Life, and the Anguish of her Soul; *thy Sins are forgiven*, is the gracious Reply.

“ *Thought*, make sure my Title to an eternal “ Weight of Glory ?” Our Querist demands ; *What good Thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal Life ?* The Reply proceeds upon the Inquirer’s own Principles. *If* You expect Salvation upon such *legal* Terms, know, that your Obedience must be nothing less, than a *perfect* Conformity to the divine Law. Perform all its Precepts, in their utmost Extent, in their exactest Purity, and with an unre-mitted Perseverance, then — But alas ! such Perfection is too high for fallen Creatures ; they cannot attain unto it. Necessarily, therefore, must they drop all such Pretensions, and have Recourse to some other Method of Justification.

Ther. Why did that “ WONDERFUL “ COUNSELLOR,” if such was the Purport of his Answer, express Himself so obscurely ? Why did He not divert his promising Scholar from this fruitless Attempt ; and put Him in the right, the practicable Way of obtaining Salvation ?

Ans. This He did, with the finest Address, and in the most skilful Manner.—Had our LORD plainly affirmed, “ You are worldly ; “ You are covetous ; your Riches are your “ GOD :” such a Charge would, in all Probability, have been as confidently denied, as it was plainly urged. Therefore He brings this
specious

specious Hypocrite to a *Test**, which could not be evaded, and which was sure to discover the Truth. A Test, which laid open the palpable and enormous Defects of his so much boasted Obedience. Which made it appear, that, instead of keeping *all* the Commandments, this vain Self-justiciary had not obeyed the very *first*. But, amidst all his towering Imaginations of Himself, had been, and at that very Instant was, a fordid groveling Idolater: who preferred his transitory Possessions on Earth, to an everlasting Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven.—Could any Expedient be more suitable to the Case? Or better calculated to reduce Him, intoxicated as He was with Pride, to a sober humble Mind? To beat Him off from his false Foundation, *the Righteousness which is of the Law*; and lead Him to a Reliance on the promised, the expected, the present MESSIAH?

It puts me in mind of my Friend *Sagacio's* Conduct. Which seems to have some Conformity with our LORD's Procedure; and may, possibly, tend to illustrate its Propriety.—Visiting one of his unlearned Neighbours, He found Him in Company with a certain talkative Stranger; who was haranguing, at an *extravagant* Rate, on the Wonders of Astronomy.—*Sagacio* soon perceived, that the chief
Furni-

* *Matt.* xix. 21.

Furniture of this extraordinary Adept, lay in a little Acquaintance with the technical Terms, and somewhat more than a little Share of Assurance. How should He bring the self-plumed Sciolist to a little *Modesty* of Sentiment, and *Decorum* of Conversation? He took Leave to ask, “What the Word *Astronomy* might signify?” The Orator was struck dumb in a Moment. He had never informed Himself, it seems, that Astronomy related to the Order and Regulation of the Stars. This single Question taught our minute Philosopher, more effectually than twenty Lectures on the Subject. It taught Him his *own Ignorance*; and that He had the very Rudiments of his so much admired Science still to learn.

Ther. What will You say to those famous Passages in the Epistle of St. *James*? *By Works a Man is justified. Was not Abraham our Father justified by Works* *? Can any Words be plainer in their Meaning? Or, can any Meaning be more directly opposite to the whole Scope of your Argumentation?

Assp. This I would say, *Theron*.—The Passages You quote, when detached from the Context, may *seem* inconsistent with the Declarations of another Apostle. As a Limb, when *wrenched* from its natural Situation, ap-
 appears

* *Jam.* ii. 21, 24.

pears with an Air of Disproportion. Whereas, reduce the dislocated Part, and it will recover the Symmetry of its Shape; it will harmonize exactly with the animal System.—Replace likewise these Assertions; consider them in *Connection* with the whole Paragraph; and they will be found, if not Unisons, yet perfect Concords, with the Strain of *St. Paul's Teaching*.

What is the Point, which *St. James* undertakes to illustrate?—To distinguish a genuine from an insincere Faith. *If a Man say, He hath Faith*; this is the Boast of some hypocritical Professor. So that the Apostle is evidently dealing with a *Pretender* to the precious Gift: and therefore replies, *Shew me thy Faith*: Prove the Reality of thy Claim: Prove it to *me* and to the Church, to thy Fellow-creatures and *Fellow-christians*. If unproductive of righteous Works, We must pronounce it spurious, worthless, dead.

Having detected the *Counterfeit*, He proceeds to describe the *Sterling*. The grand Characteristic of which is, A Frame of Mind and a Course of Action, corresponding with the Doctrine believed. By this Touchstone the Faith of our renowned Progenitor was tried; and, being tried, was “found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory.” *Was not Abraham our Father justified by Works?*—Justified! How? As to Acceptance with the SUPREME
VOL. I. X JUDGE?

JUDGE? No: this was effected, long before the Patriarch offered up *Isaac*. But when He exercised that Heroic Act of Self-Denial, Resignation, and Obedience; then his Justification was evidenced, to all his Cotemporaries, and to all Generations. *His Faith was made perfect* *; answered its proper End; and appeared to be of the true, the triumphant, the scriptural Kind; since it overcame the World, overcame Self, and regarded GOD as All in All.

Upon the whole; *St. Paul* speaks concerning the Justification of our *Persons*; *St. James* concerning the Justification of our *Faith* †. —*St. Paul* describes the *Manner* of being justified, before the all-seeing GOD; *St. James* points out the *Proof* ‡ of a justified State,

* Ετελειωθη: In this Sense, I suppose, We are to understand *St. John's* Aphorism. *He that doeth Righteousness, is righteous*; manifests the Truth of his Conversion, and justifies his Profession from all Suspicion of Insincerity. 1 *John* iii. 7.

† That the Expression used by *St. James*, signifies this declarative Justification, is plain from 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. Where the Apostle, speaking of our LORD *JESUS CHRIST*, says; εδικαιωθη, *He was justified in or by the SPIRIT: declared to be the true SON of GOD; manifested on Earth, and recognized from Heaven, as the undoubted SAVIOUR of the World.*

‡ A very little Reflection, I should imagine, must convince every unprejudiced Reader; That *St. James* cannot possibly be stating the Method of Justification, before the infinitely righteous GOD. Because, He never so much as mentions the Death of *CHRIST*—*Who made his Soul an Offering*

State, as it is visible to Men.—The former proceeds from the immaculate Righteousness of *CHRIST*, placed to our Account; the latter consists in the Fruits of Righteousness, adorning our Life.—Rightly understood, therefore, these Passages are not in the least contradictory to the Epistles of *St. Paul*, or to the Scope of my Argumentation. But are a seasonable Caveat and a proper Preservative, against misunderstanding *those*, or perverting *this*.

Ther. I wish, you would read that concise, but judicious Abridgment of true Religion, comprised in the fifteenth *Psalms*. The sacred Penman sets out with this Inquiry; *LORD, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle, or who shall rest upon thy holy Hill?* To this most interesting Query, the following Verses are a full and satisfactory Answer. The whole of which turns upon the Discharge of moral Duties; *walking uprightly, and working Righteousness*. Without a Syllable, or a single Hint, concerning the very superior Excellence of Faith, or the extreme Necessity of a vicarious Obedience.

Asp. I have often read, and I well remember, that beautiful, that instructive *Psalms*. And

I

seeing for Sin—to whom give all the Prophets Witness, that whosoever believeth in Him, shall receive Remission of Sins—and besides whom, there is no other Name given under Heaven, whereby We can be saved—Could an Apostle so absolutely forget his LORD; and in a Case, where every other inspired Writer acknowledges Him; nay, acknowledges Him to be
ALL IN ALL?

I beg leave to observe, once for all, with relation to such Passages of the Old Testament; That they suppose the Persons, whom they describe, to be convinced of their *natural Corruption*; to be humbled under a Sense of their *actual Guilt*; and to live in a conscientious Observance of the *expiatory Sacrifices*. All which had an invariable Reference to *CHRIST*, and derived their whole Virtue from his Mediation.

Would any of the *Jewish* Saints, think you, have dared to advance a Plea for eternal Blessedness, upon the Foot of their own Conformity to such *moral* Directions? Neglecting, at the same Time, the annual Ordinance of the Passover, the Sacrifices of the three great Festivals, or a believing Improvement of the daily Oblation.—By no means. They were, and they would acknowledge themselves, deplorably defective. They would plead the Promise of free Grace, and fly to the Blood, which GOD himself had appointed *to make an Atonement for their Souls*.—By such Sentiments and such a Conduct, they reduced to Practice the very Essence of our Doctrine: disavowing their own Deeds, however virtuous or religious; and trusting in the Strength of *Israel, the LORD our Righteousness*. Who alone fulfilled all the Precepts, contained in this excellent Formulary of Duty. Who was also the *Sub-*
stance

stance of every purifying and every propitiatory Rite.

Ther. Has not the sacred Writer expressly said, at the Close of the *Psalms*? *Whoso DOETH these Things, shall never fall.*

Asp. He has: And this, I apprehend, is his Meaning.—“Persons of such a Temper, and such a Practice, bear the Marks of GOD’s Children, and are meet for his Glory. Accordingly, they shall never fall, either into total Apostacy HERE, or final Condemnation HEREAFTER. They are now Heirs, and in due Time shall be Possessors, of his eternal Kingdom.”

But you will take Notice, that all these Duties and Qualifications, only *characterize*, not *constitute*, the Inheritor of Heaven.—You will likewise advert to another very remarkable Circumstance in his Character; *He setteth not by Himself, but is lowly in his own Eyes* *. Or, as the

* *Psalms* xv. 4. נְתוּזָה בְּעֵינָיו נִמְאָה. I cannot say, that I admire the Bible Translation of this Clause: *In whose Eyes the vile Person is contemptible.* Methinks, it does not favour of the tender and benign Spirit of our Religion, which teaches Us to *honour all Men*; to despise no one’s *Person*, but only to detest the *Wickedness* of the Wicked.

Should the Sense I have opposed, have its Weight; the Sense I have preferred, is incomparably *weightier*. If, to despise the Vile, is a religious Act; to think meanly of Ourselves, is a much more advanced, and a far more difficult Instance of true Religion. This is to copy the highest Pattern of human Excellence; who, notwithstanding his very superior Attainments, accounted *Himself less than the least of all Saints*; nay, *the very chiefest of Sinners*.

the more expressive Original speaks, *He is base and vile* in his own Sight. So far from aspiring to *Self-justification*, that He even condemns and abhors Himself; and falls down, as a most unworthy Wretch, at the Foot of infinitely free Grace.

Ther. I cannot but think, it is the *current Doctrine* of Scripture, and I am sure, it is one of the *first Principles* which the Light of Nature teaches—That the most high GOD must necessarily love Righteousness, and take Pleasure in the Righteous.

Asp. If the Light of Nature was to publish a Gospel, I believe, it would be formed upon your Plan. It would bestow Favour only on the *Innocent*, the *Virtuous*, and the *Holy*.—But the Gospel of *CHRIST* runs in a very different Strain. This brings Pardon for the Condemned, and Blessings for the Accursed. This is Health to the Sick, and Recovery to the Ruined. *The LORD hath anointed me*, saith its divine Author, *to preach good Tidings to the Meek*, who are humbled under a Sense of their Sinfulness.—*He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted*, who are wounded with a Conviction of their undone State—to *proclaim Liberty to the Captives*, the wretched Captives of *Satan*; and the *Opening of the Prison to them that are bound*,

bound, bound in the Chains of Ignorance, Impotence, and Misery*.

As I am myself a most unworthy Sinner, You must not be displeas'd, if I espouse the Cause of those unhappy Creatures. Yet, though a Friend of Sinners, I am no Enemy to the Righteous. I intirely agree with my *Theron* in allowing, that the most High GOD necessarily loves Righteousness. Only I want to be inform'd, *Where* this admirable and lovely Quality is to be found?—Not among the *Gentiles*. They have swerved from the Dictates of natural Conscience.—Not among the *Jews*. They have broke the holy Commandment deliver'd on Mount *Sinai*.—Not among *Christians*. For, if GOD should enter into Judgment with Us, We could not answer Him one of a Thousand.—In the Kingdom of *Æthiopia*, or in the Country of the *Moors*, where will You find the *native Whites*?

The SON of GOD found None among the Race of *Adam*, that were intitled to the Character of Righteous. He who gave Himself a Ransom for All, makes no Application to such Persons †.—Why? Because he fullenly *disesteemed* personal Goodness? Or was unable to *distinguish* the Excellency of inherent Virtue?—No; but because he knew, that, amiable as these

* *Isaiab lxi. 1.*

† *Matt. ix. 13. I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

these Qualifications are, they have no Existence in the human Heart; till the Sinner, reconciled by his Death, be sanctified also by his SPIRIT.

You remember, perhaps, that remarkable Answer, which the *Spartans* once returned to a threatening Embassy, from some of the neighbouring States. Nothing could be more concise; and, I think, nothing was ever more spirited and significant.

Ther. Those Neighbours gave them to understand by their Ambassadors; “ That, if
“ they entered their Territories, they would
“ burn their Towns; make the Inhabitants
“ Prisoners; and spread Destruction, where-
“ ever they advanced.”—To which insolent Menace, the brave *Lacedæmonians* made no other Reply, than—IF.

Is this the Story, to which You refer?

Ass. The very same.—And when you are speaking of human Righteousness, as the Cause of our Acceptance with the eternal GOD, I would borrow the Language of a *Spartan*. IF, shall be my Reply.—*If*, exclusive of the Obedience, and independent on the SPIRIT of CHRIST, You can furnish Yourself with this Endowment: Or, *if* You can carry your Righteousness to that Perfection, which may equal the Purity of the Law, and comport with the Majesty of the Lawgiver: *then* trust
in

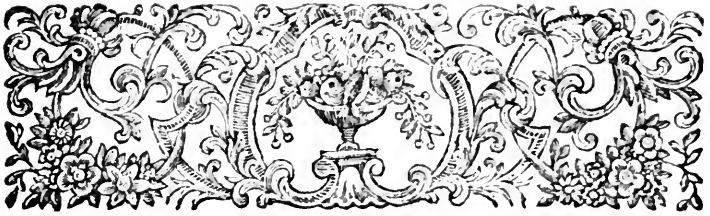
in it; let it be the Ground of your Confidence; and seek no better Foundation.

But whoever shall, in this Manner, seek for his Recommendation to the Favour of GOD; will act like the mistaken Countryman in *Horace*: Who, being unable to ford the River, took up a Resolution to wait on the Banks, till the Stream was all run by:

At ille
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis Ævum *.

Ther. Here, I fancy, We must take Leave of your Countryman. If He adheres to his Resolution, We shall find Him in the very same Situation, when Breakfast is over; and may resume our Subject, just where it is discontinued.

* *Vain Man, desist: Such flatt'ring Hopes forego:
It flows, and flows, and will for ever flow.*



DIALOGUE VII.

T H E R O N .

BUT O me, who have spent the greatest Part of the Winter in *Town*, these Scenes of the *Country* are inexpressibly pleasing. Take, who will, the gilded Saloon, and the silken Settee; so long as I can shelter myself under the Canopy of such a spreading Beech, and use one of its coarse, mis-shapen Roots for my Seat.

'Tis true, We see no longer those splendid Brocades, and elegant Toupees, which distinguish the *Park* and the *Mall*.—But we have, full in our View, a Multitude of honest Rustics; pursuing their chearful Labours in yonder *Meadow*. Some, mowing the luxuriant Herbage. Some, raising it into regular Cocks. Others, loading their Waggons with the Hay, or clearing the Ground with their Rakes. The
Ground,

Ground, cleared of its soft Incumbrance, appears fresh and green, like another Spring. While the Exhalations of the tedded Grass, floating in the Air, give a rural Perfume to the Gale.—And which, my *Assasio*, which are the most valuable Objects? The *little Labourers* of the Hive, that enrich themselves, and regale their Masters? Or the *gay Flutterers* of the Garden, whose whole Life is nothing but Sport; and their highest Character is, to be insignificantly pretty?

Assp. In this Retirement, We hear none of the wanton and corrupting Airs of the *Opera*; no, nor the majestic and ennobling Melody of the *Oratorio**.—But We have a Band of Music, stationed in the Grove; and a Concert of native Harmony, warbling from the Boughs. We are entertained with the Music, which charmed the human Ear, long before † *Jubal* found out his Instruments; and thousands of Years before *Handel* composed his Notes.—The Bull-finch, and a Multitude of little tuneful Throats, strike the Key. The Thrush

* *Majestic and ennobling.*—This, I think, is the true Character, and expresses the real Tendency, of the *Oratorio*. Nevertheless, it may not be improper to observe; that if We carry a trifling or irreligious Spirit to the Entertainment; if We attend to the musical Airs, but disregard those sacred Truths, which enter into the Composition; such a Behaviour will be little better than a *Profanation* of holy Things. I fear, it will be a Species of *taking* GOD's adorable and glorious Name *in vain*.

† *Gen.* iv. 21.

Thrush below, and the Sky-Lark responsive from above, *diversify* and *exalt* the Strain. The Black-Bird, somewhat like the solemn Organ, with Notes perfectly mellow, and gracefully sonorous, crowns the Choir. While the Turtle's melancholy Voice, and the murmuring Water's plaintive Tone, *deepen* and *complete* the universal Symphony.

This is the Music, which constituted the first Song of Thanksgiving, and formed the first vocal Praise, that the all-gracious CREATOR received, from his new-made World. This is neither the Parent of Effeminacy, nor a Pander for Vice; but refines the Affections, even while it amuses the Imagination.

Ther. All the Entertainments of Nature, are calculated to secure our Innocence, as well as to gratify our Fancy. And what is another very agreeable Circumstance, these Gratifications which afford the sublimest Pleasure, are exhibited *gratis*. While those, which enervate the Mind, and debauch the Affections, must be *dearly purchased*.—Every one cannot gain Admittance into the Boxes or the Pit, when some celebrated *Tragedy* is brought upon the Stage. But every one may behold the beautiful Exhibitions of *Spring*, and the noble Productions of *Autumn*. All may contemplate the Machinery of Nature, and the Wonders of Creation. Thereby enjoying a far
more

more exquisite Amusement, without any of the Guilt, or any of the Danger.

The Inhabitants of yonder Villages, have never beheld the splendid Procession, which solemnizes the Coronation of a Monarch; nor the *gaudy Illuminations*, which distinguish the Anniversary of his Birth. But they see, almost every Morning, a much nobler Spectacle displayed in the East. They see the great *Ruler* of the *Day*, or rather the Envoy from Day's eternal SOVEREIGN, making his Entry amidst the Spaces of the Sky.—The Heavens are strewed with Colours, that outvie the Pinks and Carnations. The Grass is decked with Dew-Drops, and every Plant is strung, as it were, with Pearls. All around the Darkness flies, and sweet refreshing Gales arise.—At length the magnificent Luminary appears. And what is all the ostentatious Pomp of Kings? What is all the Glitter of the most brilliant Court? Compared with his transcendent Lustre?—This Spectacle we may behold, without Loss of Time, or Prejudice to Health. Nay, We cannot behold it, without *improving* one, and *redeeming* the other. So beneficial are even the Pleasures, which Nature yields! So serviceable the very Diversions, to which she invites!

Asp. Thus gracious is the Almighty MAKER, in the Constitution of material Things.

The

The *Substantial* and the *Valuable*, are open to every One; are accessible by all. Only the *Tinsel* and the *Trappings*, are the Property of a Few; the poor Prerogative of Wealth.

No less gracious is GOD, in the Disposal of *spiritual* Favours. These are infinitely more excellent; and yet are equally free. We are invited to *buy them, without Money, and without Price**.—What do you give for the Benefits of the rising Sun, or the Delights of this rural Melody? The Case is much the same, with regard to the Righteousness, by which We are justified, and all the Blessings of Salvation.

Ther. This brings to our Remembrance the Countryman, whom we left on the Banks of the River. And, for aught I can see, *Theron* and the Rustic are pretty much upon a footing. The first, as far from acceding to your Notions; as the last, is from gaining his Point.

Asp. Have you any Objection, *Theron*, to these Gifts of Nature; because, they are neither purchased by your Money, nor produced by your own Toil?

Ther. But who can ever expect to obtain Pardon, and Acceptance, and eternal Salvation, at so cheap a Rate? It seems to be all Delusion, *Aspasio*.

Asp.

* *Isai.* lv. 1.

Assp. So cheap! Then You would pay something, I presume, by way of Price.—But give me Leave to ask; What Price did you pay to GOD your MAKER, for fashioning You in your Mother's Womb? What Price have you paid to GOD your PRESERVER, for upholding You ever since You was born? Or what Price do You think of paying to GOD the supreme PROPRIETOR, for the Ground, on which You tread; for the Air, in which You breathe; for the Sun, by which You see? Just the same Price must You advance to GOD your SAVIOUR, for all his justifying Merits.

Both *these* and *those* proceed from the same BENEFACTOR. They are all absolutely necessary, either for the Welfare of the Body, or the Happiness of the Soul. And they are all vouchsafed on the same free Terms. For thus saith the Prophet; *His Going-forth, in the Dispensation of the Gospel, is prepared as the Morning. CHRIST, with all his precious Privileges, shall come unto Us as the Rain; as the latter and former Rain unto the Earth* *. —However, if You are acquainted with a different, or a better Way, be so good as to communicate your Knowledge.

Ther. Some, You may observe, depend upon their *inoffensive* Behaviour. They live
peace-

* *Hof.* vi. 3,

peaceably. They do no Harm to their Neighbours. They are guilty of no gross Offence against GOD. And why should they not hope to obtain his Favour?—They apprehend, the Prophet *Samuel* establishes their Hope, when He makes this solemn Appeal; *Whose Ass have I taken? Whose Ox have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded*?*—Nay, they imagine, that our LORD himself has authorized their Expectation, by giving this Character of *Nathaniel*; *An Israelite indeed, in whom is no Guile* †.—A Freedom from outward Injustice and inward Hypocrisy, is all the Qualification, applauded in the one Case, avowed in the other.

Ass. This negative Goodness (if it deserves to be called Goodness) was a Plea for the empty *Pharisee*. But None, I presume, would choose to be associated with *such* a Companion, either in Character Here, or in Condition Hereafter.

Samuel, in the Place You mention, is vindicating Himself, only to his *Fellow-creatures*, and only in the Capacity of a *Magistrate*. He speaks not of his Justification before the Judge of Quick and Dead. This, He well knew, must be derived from another Source, and must rest upon a firmer Bottom.

The

* 1 Sam. xii. 3.

† John i. 47.

The Israelite without Guile, was a Person, who not only abstained from every Sin, but performed every Duty; and without any wilful Neglect of the One, or any allowed Indulgence of the Other. This Instance, therefore, will by no means prove the Sufficiency of your negative Righteousness. Which seems to have just the same Degree of Excellency, as a Fountain that never issues in Water, or as a Cloud that never descends in Rain*.

Ther. In this Particular, *Aspasso*, your Sentiments are mine.—But I would add *Morality* to Civility; the *virtuous* to the inoffensive Conversation. And if We not only cease to do Evil, but learn to do well: if we use Temperance, exercise Charity, and keep all the Commandments to the *best of our Power*, is not this a sufficient Foundation for our Hope?

Asp. Yes, *Theron*; if, as you add *Morality* to your Civility, you add *Perfection* to both. Otherwise you must be ranked, not among the *Claimants*, but among the *Delinquents*. You have no Title to a Reward, but stand in Need of Pardon.

It is a Principle of Justice, founded on the unalterable Constitution of Things, That the Debtor be acquitted, when He has paid the
Debt.

* *Vel Lyra quæ reticet, vel qui non tenditur Arcus.*

Claudian.

Debt. But supposing Him, instead of Gold to bring Iron; instead of Talents to return Pence; instead of defraying, to increase the Score daily; can He then reasonably expect, or legally claim a Discharge?

With respect to such an Obedience, We may pass our Verdict in the figurative, but very expressive Language of *Isaiab*: *The Bed is shorter, than that a Man can stretch Himself on it; and the Covering narrower, than that He can wrap Himself in it* *. It can neither give Rest to the alarmed Conscience, nor afford Protection to the guilty Soul. If We have nothing better to plead, We shall not be able to lift up our Heads, in the last decisive Judgment; but *must enter into the Rock, and hide Ourselves in the Dust, for Fear of the LORD, and for the Glory of his Majesty* †.

Ther. We will go a Step farther, and take in the Exercise of Devotion. We will read GOD's Word; pray to his DIVINE MAJESTY; and regularly attend on his public Worship.—Here now, are *social* Accomplishments and *moral* Virtues, completed by the Performance of *religious* Duties.

Asp. Completed!—I fear, that Expression will scarcely abide the Test of a single Query. Have You then performed all your Duties, with that ardent Love of GOD, and undivided

* *Ifai.* xxviii. 2c.

† *Ifai.* ii. 1c.

vided View to his Glory? With that adoring Gratitude to the blessed *JESUS*, and that child-like Dependence on his *SPIRIT*? Which the Reason of Things requires, and the Scriptures of Truth enjoin?—If not; your Duties, be they moral, or religious, or both, are far from being complete. Nay; they are utterly defective; and, for that Reason, absolutely insufficient for your Justification. They are *clipped* or *sophisticated* Coin. And will that be *current* in the World of Glory?

Ther. Allowing them to be defective, they are at least *sincere*. And though not free from all Alloy, yet if they bear the *Image* and *Superscription* of Integrity, why should they be rejected, as “reprobate Silver *?” Why should they not obtain the Currency, You mention?

Asp. Alas!—says a judicious and admired Writer,—“The Imperfections of our best Services daily *forfeit* the Blessings of *Time*. How impossible then is it, that the Sincerity of them, amidst so many Frailties and Defects, should *purchase* the Glories of *Eternity*!”

Ther. Be your Writer ever so judicious, I can confront Him with Others, equally capable of judging, and diametrically opposite in Opinion.—What says that wise and brave Man, the Successor of *Moses*, and Generalissimo of the Armies of *Israel*? *Joshua*, I am sure,

Y 2 declares

* *Jer.* vi. 30.

declares Himself on my Side. *Fear the LORD, and serve Him in Sincerity* *, is his last solemn Charge to the People.—Even the great Apostle, on a Review of his Ministry, makes it Matter of Self-gratulation, That He *had his Conversation in godly Sincerity* †.

Afp. You have quoted the Charge, delivered by the *Servant*, be pleased to recollect the Protestation, made by the *Master*: *Not for thy Righteousness, says Moses, or for the Uprightness of thy Heart, dost Thou go to possess their Land* ‡. Even an earthly *Canaan* was not given to the *Israelites*, as the Reward of their own, either outward Obedience, or inward Sincerity. Much less can We expect the Kingdom of Immortality, on Account of any Uprightness of our Intentions, or Piety of our Actions.

However, as the Doctrine of Sincerity is the *favourite* and the *fashionable* Tenet, I will conform a little to the Taste in Vogue. You shall have no Reason to complain, That I am either a *Cynic* or a *Stoic* ||.—Let it suffice Us to be sincere. Only let Us refer Ourselves to the Apostle, for a Description of this darling Qualification. *That Ye may be sincere, being filled with the Fruits of Righteousness, which are by JESUS CHRIST, unto the Praise and Glory of GOD* §.

Here

* *Yesh.* xxiv. 4. † *2 Cor.* i. 12. ‡ *Deut.* ix. v.

|| The *Cynic* had no Complaisance, the *Stoic* was quite inflexible. § *Phil.* i. 10, 11.

Here are three Properties of acceptable Sincerity.—It must bear Fruits, *the Fruits of Righteousness*; and bear them *abundantly*, so that We may be filled with them.—The Branch and the Fruits must derive, *that* its Vigour, *these* their Flavour, and both of them their very Being, from the all-supporting, all-supplying Root *CHRIST JESUS*.—Then, instead of terminating in Self-justification, they must redound to the Honour of GOD. It is not said, These shall *justify* You, but these shall *glorify* your FATHER which is in Heaven.

This Kind of Sincerity, can never be too highly esteemed, nor too zealously encouraged. But this, You will observe, flows from the Grace of *CHRIST*, and issues in the Glory of GOD. Therefore does but very poorly attest, either the Sufficiency of *human Ability*, to perform good Works; or the Sufficiency of *human Works*, to win the Prize of our High Calling.

Ther. Do You then exclude *all* Works? Will You make a mere Nothing, both of *our* moral Endowments, and of *your* evangelical Obedience?

Asp. They are excluded from all Share in justifying Us. Yet not by me, but by an Authority, to which there can be no Objection, and from which there lies no Appeal. Speak-

ing of Salvation, thus faith the Wisdom of GOD; *Not of Works*—

Ther. Works of the *ceremonial* Law, I suppose. These, we all acknowledge, are, under the *Christian* Dispensation, as a Bond cancelled, or an Act repealed. But sure You will allow a better Office, and a nobler Character, to that Course of Obedience, which is regulated by the Commands of *CHRIST*.

Alp. St. Paul will allow it no such Office, as that for which *Theron* is pleading. *Ye are saved*, says the Apostle. Ye are delivered from Wrath, reconciled to GOD, and made Heirs of his Kingdom.—How? *By Grace, through Faith* *. *Grace*, like a magnificent Sovereign, from the Riches of his own Bounty, and without any Respect to human Worthiness, confers the glorious Gift. *Faith*, like an indigent Petitioner, with an empty Hand, and without any Pretence to personal Desert, receives the heavenly Blessing.

Both Grace and Faith stand in direct Opposition to Works; *all* Works whatever. Whether they be Works of the Law, or Works of the Gospel; Exercises of the Heart, or Actions of the Life; done while We remain unregenerate, or when We become regenerate; they are, all and every of them, *equally* set aside in this great Affair.

That

* *Eph.* ii. 8.

That the Bill of Exclusion is thus *extensive*, or rather quite *unlimited*, appears from the Reason assigned. *Lest any Man should boast* * : that all Pretence of Glorifying may be cut off from fallen Creatures: that the whole Honour of obtaining Salvation, may be appropriated to HIM, who *hid not his Face from Shame and Spitting*.—And is He not worthy, unspeakably and infinitely worthy, to receive this unrivalled Honour, as a Recompence for his unparalleled Humiliation.

Ther. All our good Works, We allow, are recommended by *CHRIST*. They prevail for our Justification, only through his Merits. So that We still depend upon the REDEEMER. And, by this means, pay Him the highest Honour.

Asp. Depend upon the REDEEMER! No, my dear Friend. You rely upon your own pious Acts, and moral Qualifications. They, *they* are your grand Recommendation. The Office consigned over to the divine *JESUS*, is nothing more than to be (as it were) *Master of the Ceremonies*. He may have the Credit of *introducing* your fine Accomplishments, with a kind of graceful Air.—But is *this* an Office suited to his incomparable Dignity? Was it for *this*, that He bowed the Heavens, and partook of our Nature? Was it for *this*, that He became subject to the Law, and obedient unto

Y 4

Death?

* *Eph.* ii. 9.

Death? *Only* for *this*, that He might usher in our own Endowments, with a Plume and a Scarf?—Surely, *Theron*, You can never entertain such low Thoughts of the incarnate GOD, and of *CHRIST*'s mediatorial Undertaking.

Ther. Neither can I entertain such *low* and *vilifying* Thoughts, of our own virtuous Attainments. They distinguish Persons of Eminence and Worth, from the sordid Wretch and execrable Villain; just as the noble Faculty of Reason, distinguishes the Man from the Brute.

Asp. To deny good Works the Merit of justifying Us, is very different from vilifying them.—You are going to build a new House, *Theron*. Pray, do You intend to hew your Timber, from the flimsy Tendrils of the Vine?

Ther. No, certainly*.

Asp. Because You don't think its feeble Shoots proper, to form the Beams, and support the Roof, of your intended Edifice; do You, therefore, affront them, depreciate them, or disallow their Usefulness?—By no means.—They may *beautify* your Walls, with their ornamental Spread; and *enrich* the Desert, with their delicious Fruit. This is an Office, suitable to the Nature of the Plant: and from
this

* *No, certainly.*—Perhaps, it may be worth our while to observe; That this is the Meaning of a very *obsolete* Expression, which occurs in our Translation of (*sc. vid. sc.*) *Luke* xviii, 9. *I throw not.*

this it receives sufficient Estimation, without pretending to the Honours of the Oak.

Virtuous Attainments, I own, are a considerable Distinction, in the present State of Things. And, what is a higher Encomium (I shall now outshoot You, in your own Bow) they will distinguish the true Believer from the Hypocritical Professor, even at the great Tribunal.—But let them be content with their Province, and not intrude upon the SAVIOUR'S Prerogative. To *effect* Justification, be *his*: to *discriminate* the Justified, *theirs*.—Neither let them elate their Possessors, with a vain Conceit of themselves. Who, though they were meek as *Moses*, holy as *Samuel*, and wise as *Daniel*, must confide in nothing, but the boundless Mercies of the LORD; must plead nothing, but the infinite Merits of his *CHRIST*.

This, I am sure, is the Theology, both of the *Psalmist*, and of *St. Paul*. They derive the Blessedness promised in Scripture, not from the shallow Stream of human Accomplishments, but from the inexhaustible Ocean of divine Grace. *Blessed is He, whose Unrighteousnesses are forgiven, and whose Sins are covered**.

Ther. Will *Aspasio* then, like many of our modern Disputants, *mutilate* the holy Word? Industriously display, what seems to favour
his

* *Psal.* xxxii. 1. *Rom.* iv. 7.

his Cause ; but artfully secrete, what tends to overthrow his Scheme ? How could You forget, or why should You suppress, the following Clause ? *And in whose Spirit there is no Guile.* — Was You afraid, it would demolish your Opinion ; and point out an *upright, honest* Mind, as the Cause of this Blessedness ?

Asp. Far was I, my dear *Theron*, from any such groundless Apprehensions ; and equally far from all such delusory Designs. *Shall I talk deceitfully for GOD * ?* His sacred Cause does not need it, and his exalted Majesty would disdain it. No : I would condemn my Tongue to eternal Silence, rather than speak a Syllable, either to conceal, or disguise the Truth.

Most readily We will admit the Sentence You mention : *In whose Spirit there is no Guile.* It is evident from the Context, That these Words are not descriptive of a Person, in whose Heart and Conversation there *is* no Iniquity ; but whose Mouth freely *confesses* the Iniquity of them both. Confesses, without any Reserve, or the least Attempt to palliate. — Which, instead of invalidating, corroborates my Argument. Since, according to your own Allegation, the highest Merit consists, in a *free Acknowledgment* of Sin, or a *total Remuneration* of all Worthiness.

Ther.

* *Job* xiii. 7.

Ther. When We join *Repentance* to all our other Works; lament our Deficiencies, and implore Forgiveness: surely, this must be available with a merciful GOD, and cannot but intitle Us to the Happiness of Heaven.

Asp. How strange does it sound, at least in my Ears, for poor, miserable, guilty Creatures, to talk of intitling themselves to the Happiness of Heaven, by any Deeds of their own! When it is owing wholly to GOD's rich *forbearing Mercy*, that they are not transmitted to Hell: owing wholly to GOD's free *preventing Grace*, that they are enabled to think a good Thought.

But not to insist upon this Consideration.— I will suppose You, to have lamented your Deficiencies, and implored Forgiveness. Yet still I must say to my Friend, as our LORD replied to the young Gentleman in the Gospel, *One Thing Thou lackest*: a Righteousness, that may magnify the Law, and make it honourable.—Should GOD, without insisting upon this, pardon and reward, He would not act according to his glorious Character; nor be, at once, *a just GOD, and a SAVIOUR**.— And if You can find this Righteousness, *either in the Depth, or in the Height above*; in any Person or any Object, save only in the imputed Obedience of our LORD *JESUS CHRIST,*

* *Isai.* xlv. 21.

CHRIST, I retract whatever I have advanced.

Ther. A Preacher and an Author has lately assured Us, That We are to be “ accepted of “ GOD, and saved by our own Obedience.” If so, I need not scruple to repeat my Assertion, that our own Duties, especially when accompanied with Repentance, are a *real* and *proper* Foundation for Life eternal.

Asp. Then the Apostle was under a great Mistake, when, treating of *CHRIST* and his Merits, He ventured to assert; *Other Foundation can no Man lay, save that which is laid, even JESUS CHRIST**.

Ther. If You will not credit a modern Preacher, I can produce a Decision, made by one of the most antient and authoritative *Synods*, that ever was convened: *Then hath GOD also to the Gentiles granted Repentance unto Life* †.—*Repentance unto Life*, is *their* unanimous Voice, and my unexceptionable Voucher.

Asp. I can easily guess the Assembly, to which You refer. But I can hardly grant it the venerable Name of a *Synod*. It consisted of some *Judaizing* Converts. Who adhered, with a tenacious and bigotted Zeal, to the *Mosaic* Rites.—However, though I might scruple my *Theron's* Appellation, I readily acquiesce in *their* Determination.

It

* 1 Cor. iii. 11.

† Acts xi. 18.

It is not said, Those *Gentiles* were penitent, and *therefore* GOD granted them Life. This should have been the Language of the Assembly, in order to establish my Friend's Way of Thinking.—On the contrary, they were *dead* in Sin. GOD, of his free Goodness, granted them Repentance. Which is both the Beginning and a substantial Part of *true* Life: even of that Life, which is founded on Justification, is carried on by Sanctification, and completed in Glory.

I would farther observe; That Repentance is a *Turning of the Heart*. And, when it is Repentance unto Life, it is a Turning of the Heart from every other Object, to the great and sole Fountain of Good, *CHRIST JESUS*.—Were Men Slaves to Sensuality? When they repent, they are turned to *CHRIST*, for refined and heavenly Affections. Were they wont to confide in themselves, and their own Works? As soon as they truly repent, they turn to *CHRIST* for a better Righteousness; and, thereby, for everlasting Acceptance with GOD.—In short; they turn from every false Stay, and fly only to *CHRIST*; depend only on *CHRIST*. Looking, not to their own Tears or Humiliation, not to their own Duties or Graces; but *looking for the Mercy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST unto eternal Life**.

Ther.

* *Jude* 21.

Ther. Suppose, it should be wrong, to expect such a vast Reward, as the inconceivable Glories of Heaven, on Account of our own Duties: Yet, to set them *wholly* aside; to allow them *no* Influence at all; not so much as the *least* Co-operation, in turning the Scale; this is an Excess on the other hand. If the former is *Presumption*, the latter is *Fanaticism*.

Asp. I must confess, I do not thoroughly understand, What You mean by Fanaticism. Neither is it of much Significancy, to enter upon the Disquisition of an obnoxious Term. I would only maintain, That, on Us unworthy Sinners, whatever is bestowed by the righteous GOD, is bestowed, not as a Debt* to our Works, but as the Donation of pure *Grace*.

Ther. I think, it is sufficiently of Grace; if We acknowledge good Works, to be wrought by the Assistance of the DIVINE SPIRIT; and then admitted, together with our SAVIOUR's Merits, as a Recommendation to the divine Favour.

Asp. The *Pharisee* could make his Acknowledgments, for the Assistance of Grace. *GOD, I thank Thee*, was his Language. Yet, this did

* *Bestowed as a Debt*, is, I must confess, somewhat like Jargon. But, perhaps, *Jargon* and *Inconsistency*, may not be without their *Propriety* in this Place. As they tend to shew the Genius of *that* Doctrine, which would connect such contradictory Ideas.

did not exempt Him from the Charge of *Pride*, nor secure Him from the Sin of *Boasting*.— Besides; if good Works are wrought by the Operation of the divine SPIRIT, they draw a Bill upon our Gratitude, not upon the Bank of Heaven. They render Us the *obliged*, not the *deserving* Party. To think or teach otherwise, is errant *Popery* *, however it may lurk under a Veil of *Protestantism*.

What You say, brings to my Mind a memorable Story.—Two Persons were traveling through the Desarts of *Arabia*. The one carried a Musket; the Other was armed with a Sword. A *Lion* espies them, and advances fiercely towards them. The foremost discharges his Piece, and wounds the savage Creature. The Wound, neither killing, nor disabling, only enrages the Monster. He seizes the unfortunate Marksman, and is upon the Point to tear Him Limb from Limb. His Companion flies to his Succour; snatches up the Carbine, that dropt from the other's Hand; and fells the ravenous Beast to the Ground. Then, drawing his Sword, stabs him to the Heart, and rescues his Friend.—

How,

* *Good Works*, says a Champion for the Church of *Rome*, are *Mercatura Regni cœlestis, the Price We pay, or the Commodity We barter, for the Kingdom of Heaven*.—Another Zealot of that Communion declares; *Cœlum gratis non accipiam, It shall never be said, that I receive Heaven merely as a Matter of Alms*.—So speaks He! But, blessed be GOD, We have not so learned *CHRIST*.

How, do You think, this Friend *repays* his Deliverer, when they both return to their native Country?—Truly, He demands Satisfaction for the Loss of his Weapon, which happened to be broke in the Encounter. He commences a Law-suit against that generous Associate, who had put his Life in his Hand, and saved the Prosecutor from the very Jaws of Destruction.

Do You commend the *Equity* of such a Procedure?—It is only a Shadow, the *most faint* Shadow of our excessive Unreasonableness, if We presume to write ourselves Creditors, and the DIVINE BEING Debtor; because, He has delivered us from the Bondage of Corruption, and enabled Us to perform the Duties of Godliness.

Theron paused; as somewhat struck by the Representation. After a short Interval, *Afpasio* resumed the Discourse.

Believe me, my dear Friend, Salvation, both in the Root and all its Branches, is *intirely* of Grace. Or else believe me, for the many cogent Testimonies of Scripture; which most circumstantially ascertain this great Truth. *Election* is of Grace: *Having predestinated Us unto the Adoption of Children*, not on Account of human Worthiness, but *according to the good Pleasure of his Will* *.—Equally gratuitous
is

* *Eph.* i. 5.

is our effectual *Vocation*: GOD hath called Us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his Purpose and Grace*.—Faith is owing to the same Cause: By Grace Ye are saved through Faith †.—From hence springs *Justification*: Being justified freely by his Grace ‡.—This is the Origin of *Regeneration*: Of his own Will begat He Us by the Word of Truth ||.—The *Consummation* of Blifs flows from the same all-supplying Source: *The Gift of GOD is eternal Life* §: It is, in every Respect, a Gift; not only without, but contrary to, all Desert of ours.—So that the Foundation is laid in the Riches of Grace: the Superstructure is reared by the Hand of Grace: and when the Top-stone is brought forth, when our Felicity is completed in the Kingdom of Heaven, the everlasting Acclamation will be, *Grace, Grace unto ** it!*

This

* 2 Tim. i. 9.

† Eph. ii. 8.

‡ Rom. iii. 24. Δωρεον τη αυτη χαριτι. One of these Expressions, might have served, to convey the Apostle's Meaning. But, He doubles his Assertion; in order to give Us the fullest Conviction of the Truth, and to impress Us with a Sense of its PECULIAR IMPORTANCE: FREELY, BY HIS GRACE.—Is it possible to find out a Form of Words, that should more absolutely exclude all Consideration of our own Works and Obedience? Or that should more emphatically ascribe the Whole of our Justification to free, uninfluenced, sovereign Goodness?

|| Jam. i. 18.

§ Rom. vi. 23. Χρησµα. Which is a more expressive Word than δωρηµα, and conveys the Idea of *free* Favour.

** Zech. iv. 7.

This is that glorious Gospel, which human Learning could never have discovered; which carnal Reason cannot understand; which the Wisdom of this World accounteth Foolishness; which the Envy of the Devil, and the Pride of Man, will always oppose.

Ther. What say You to the Opinion, which *Ouranius* so strenuously maintains? That We are justified, not by the Merits of *CHRIST* imputed to Us, but by *CHRIST* himself formed in our Hearts. And *Ouranius* is none of your proud or carnal People. His Writings are remarkable for their strict Piety, and his Life is as exemplary as his Principles.

Asp. You know, *Theron*, I have nothing to do with the Persons of Men, but with the Truths of the Gospel. *Ouranius*, though eminently devout, may be mistaken. And, if this is his Way of Thinking, He quite misapprehends the Doctrine of Grace.

What is written in the Oracles of Scripture? *The LORD justifieth the Ungodly* *. What is included in the Tenet of *Ouranius*? He justifieth the *Holy*, the *Heavenly*, the *Christ-like*.—*A Man is justified without Works* †, says the Secretary of Heaven. He is justified by Works, says the Pen of *Ouranius*: only let them be Works of a superior Order; such as are internal, spiritual, and wrought by the Operation

* *Rom.* iv. 5.

† *Rom.* iii. 29.

tion of *CHRIST* on the Soul.—According to this Notion, *every One* is justified by his own Love, his own Purity, his own Zeal. Whereas, an unerring Writer has most solemnly declared, That *by ONE Man's Obedience Many*, many Myriads of Sinners, even all the redeemed World, *shall be made righteous* *.

This Notion, I think, is *Legalism* in its greatest Subtilty, or highest Refinement. It disannuls the *Merit* of *CHRIST*; it vacates all *Imputation*; and makes our Salvation to consist *wholly* in the Work of Sanctification. Against which, if You remember, I entered my Protest, in one of our first † Conferences. And now let me add a Confession of my Faith—
 “ I am justified; my Soul is accepted; not be-
 “ cause *CHRIST* has put his Laws in my
 “ Mind, but shed his Blood for my Sins: not
 “ because I *myself* am enabled to walk in all
 “ godly Conversation, but because the *LORD*
 “ *JESUS* has fulfilled all Righteousness as my
 “ *Surety*.”

Ther. I am for neither of the Extremes. The middle Way is most eligibile. This is what sound Sense approves, and the sacred System authorizes. *Whofo believeth on me*, says our *LORD*, *shall not perish, but shall have everlasting Life* ‡. *Blessed*, adds the beloved Disciple,

* *Rom.* v. 19.

‡ *John* iii. 15. -

† See Dialogue II. pag. 68.

ciple, *are they, who do his Commandments; that they may have a Right to the Tree of Life; and may enter in, through the Gates, into the City**.

Conformably to these Texts of Scripture, I would neither reject our REDEEMER'S Merits, nor repudiate good Works. As this shady Tree, and these cooling Breezes, unite their Properties, to render our Situation agreeable; so those two Causes, acting in Conjunction, exalt Us to the Favour of GOD, and constitute Us Heirs of Heaven.—GOD himself has joined them. And I must urge my Remonstrance in our LORD'S own Words, *What GOD hath joined together, let not Man put asunder.*

Asp. Would You then make Impotence itself a *Coadjutor* with Omnipotence?—Does this humble the Sinner? Does this exalt the SAVIOUR?—No: it is a most injurious Infringement of his mediatorial Dignity. Instead of excluding, it evidently introduces Boasting. In Consequence of such a Scheme, it would be said by the Inhabitants of the heavenly World; “Thanks to our blessed REDEEMER for this Happiness! Yet, not to Him *only*, but to our own Righteousness also.”

Can You imagine, that the Obedience of *CHRIST*, is *insufficient* to accomplish our Justification? Must its Efficacy be reinforced by the Accession of our Works?—And what are these

* *Rev.* xxii. 14.

these Works of ours? That *they* should enhance the Value, the immense Value, of our REDEEMER'S!—*Maimed, tarnished, worm-eaten* Things. Eaten by the Worms of Self-seeking, Self-admiring, Self-love: Tarnished by a thousand Vanities: Maimed by ten thousand Negligencies.—To join *these* in Communion, with our divine MASTER'S Righteousness; would be infinitely more *disgraceful*, than to tack the Beggar's Rag on the Monarch's Robe. Would be altogether as *needleless*, as to dream of augmenting the Sea, by the Drops of our Bucket.

Ther. Worm-eaten! What Reason have You to represent our Acts of Obedience under this disgraceful Image?

Ans. I thought, You could hardly brook this disparaging Expression. It is somewhat like *petty Treason* against the Dignity of Man. My Reasons I would postpone to some other Opportunity; when, if You please, We will give the Cause a full Hearing.

At present, to make amends for this vile Slander, I will suppose your Works to have *no* Defect; nay, to have *all* the Perfection, which You yourself could wish.—Will You *glory*, on this Account?—You are too modest, I am sure, to avow or patronize such a Practice. Yet, if we say or think, concerning any Attainments of our own, “This is the Ground,

“ on which I expect to escape Condemnation, “ and inherit Life;” We do, in the most *offensive*, though not in the most *explicit* Manner, glory.

Or, will You reckon, that these Services, because faultless, are meritorious; and authorize You to make a Demand upon the ALMIGHTY? Let us hear our LORD’s Decision in the Case. *When ye have done not some only, but all those Things which are commanded You; say, We are no better than unprofitable Servants; We have done nothing more, than what was our indispensable Duty to do**. And have, on this Footing, just the same Claim to Honours and Rewards, as the *Negro Slave*, after the Dispatch of his daily Business, has upon the Estate or the Wealth of an *American Planter*.

Ther. But what say You to those Passages of Scripture, which I have quoted. You have given them a Hearing, but no Answer. They, I do insist upon it, expressly *assert*, therefore incontestably *prove*, an Union of *CHRIST’s* Merit, and our own Works, in the Business of Salvation.

Asp. It is written in the Book of *Revelations*, *Blessed are they that do his Commandments*. And wherefore? Because, the Obedience of Faith, is attended with a real Blessedness on Earth; and

* *Luke xvii. 10.*

and demonstrates our Title, to eternal Blessedness in Heaven. It is, to speak according to St. *John's* Idea, though not the *Purchase*, yet the *Evidence* of our Right to the Tree of Life.

All this I acknowledge. But where, I beseech You, does the Scripture join the Obedience of *CHRIST* and the Obedience of Man, as mutually concurring to justify the Sinner? —The Scripture utterly *disfavours* such a Co-partnership; and asserts what our Homily expresses: “Surely, there can be no Work of any
“ mortal Man (be He never so holy) that shall
“ be coupled in Merit with *CHRIST's* most
“ holy Act *.”—It steadily declares, that, in this greatest of Transactions, *CHRIST* is not an Accessary, but the Principal; nay, that He is ALL. *Be it known unto You, Men and Brethren, that through this illustrious and exalted Person †, is preached unto You the Forgiveness of Sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all Things.—Through this Person; without any Partner or Coadjutor. Which was typified by the High-Priest, when, on the solemn Day of Expiation, He went into the Tabernacle alone, and made the typical Atonement without any Associate ‡.—From all Things; by HIM they are*

* Homily on *Good-Friday*.

† *Acts* xiii. 38. Δις τερς, the Word *Man* is not in the Original. So that I think, *this illustrious and exalted Person*, is the fullest and most exact Translation.

‡ *Levit.* xvi. 17.

are *wholly*, as well as *solely* justified. Freed from every Charge, whether of Omission or Commission; and rendered, not in part only, but completely acceptable.

I hope, therefore, You will no longer consider the glorious *IMMANUEL*, as a *partial* Cause of our Justification.—What would be the Consequence, if a Person should fix one Foot on the Bank of yonder River, and rest another on the fluid Stream?

Ther. He must unavoidably fall.

Assp. And what says our divine Instructor, to those double-minded *Galatians*; who could not believe themselves safe and complete, in the Merits of *CHRIST* alone: but must be seeking some other Foundation, on which to repose a *Share* at least of their Confidence? He says; and they are awful Words; they call for my *Theron's* most serious Regard; *Ye are fallen from Grace* *.

Let me intreat my Friend, to beware of this Error. I think, it is the prevailing Error of our Times; and so much the more *dangerous*, because it is somewhat specious.—To pour Contempt upon the blessed *JESUS*, with the *Libertines* and *Deists*, would be flocking to a Mind, that retains the least Reverence for sacred Things. Intirely to set aside the meritorious Efficacy of his Undertaking, with the
Arians

* *Gal.* v. 4.

Arians and *Socinians*, would be afflictive to a Conscience, that is impressed with the least Sense of Sin. Whereas, to erect our Merits on the Foundation of *CHRIST's*; to be found in *his*, yet not renounce *our own* Righteousness; this is both plausible to our Reason, and pleasing to our Vanity. This seems to honour the DIVINE SAVIOUR, even while it gratifies human *Pride*.—But this is an egregious Falshood, and cannot stand. This is an abominable Idol, and must be laid in the Dust. *CHRIST*, like the *real* Mother of the Child, will have the whole, or none*; the *whole*—*unshared*—*undiminished* Glory of our Salvation.

Let me once again intreat my dear *Theron*, to beware of this Error. It is the main Pillar in the *Roman* Heresy, and the Master-policy of the *Popish* Machiavilians. “*CHRIST* hath merited, that We may merit,” is their grand Maxim, and their grand Delusion. Hence come their Penances and their Pilgrimages: hence the hypocritical Mortifications of Some, and the extravagant Austerities of Others: this enriches their Shrines, and fills their Cloysters. And to those Seminaries of Superstition, let it be banished, let it be confined.—*There* let them raise their Scaffolding, and try to enlarge the Dimensions of the Sky. *There* let them kindle their

* 1 Kings iii. 26.

their Flambeaus, and attempt to increase the Lustre of the Sun. And when they have effected this *easier* Task, then will We *Protestants* follow their Example, and adopt their System. Then will We also think of adding our own Righteousness, by way of Supplement to our LORD's.

Ther. If We are justified wholly by our LORD's Righteousness: if nothing *need* be added, if nothing *can* be added to its all comprehending Fulness, what becomes of the generally received Opinion, that *CHRIST* obtained for Us only a *Possibility* of being saved; or put Us into a *Capacity* of acquiring Salvation?

Asp. It will be discountenanced and overthrown; as extremely dishonourable to the REDEEMER, and no less uncomfortable to the Redeemed. When *CHRIST* procured our Pardon, and recovered our Title to Life; it was all his own Doing. *Of the People there was none with Him* *. In both Cases his Work was perfect.—Hear his own Testimony: *I have finished the Work, which Thou gavest me to do* †. Should You want an Explication of these Words, I refer You to the Comment of an Apostle. *He, that is, JESUS CHRIST, has obtained eternal Redemption for Us* ‡. This was his Work, and it is fully executed. *He has, HE HAS, obtained eternal Redemption; and left*

* *Isai.* lxiii. 6.† *John* xvii. 4.‡ *Heb.* ix. 12.

left nothing for his People, but to accept the glorious Purchase, and live as becomes the Redeemed of the LORD.

This Truth is written, as with a Sun-beam, in every Page of the Gospel; and sounds, as with a Voice of Thunder, in the Songs of Heaven. *Salvation to our GOD*, they cry, *that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the LAMB**. Those Saints in Glory, ascribe the Whole—the Whole of their Salvation they ascribe, to the Grace of GOD, and to the Blood of the LAMB.

Ther. Have not many of our ablest Divines represented Faith, Obedience, and Repentance, as the *Terms of Acceptance*? *CHRIST*, according to this Account, procured not the Blessing itself, but only the Grant of *easier* Conditions, on which it may be enjoyed.

Asp. What says that sublime Being, who gives the ablest Divines all their Wisdom? *My righteous Servant shall justify Many †*. Not pave the Way, or adjust the Preliminaries, but dispatch *the very* Business;—*shall justify*.—The Terms of Acceptance, for fallen and rebellious Man, were, A full Satisfaction to the divine Justice, and a complete Conformity to the divine Law. These, impracticable by Us, were consigned over to *CHRIST*. By Him they were thoroughly accomplished; and by this
Ac-

* *Rev.* vii. 10.

† *Isai.* liii. 11.

Accomplishment of them, He purchased for us all Blessings. Among others, He purchased the *Gift* of Faith, the *Grace* of Repentance, and *Ability* to yield thankful, dutiful, evangelical Obedience. These therefore are very improperly called the *Terms*, which are really constituent *Parts* of our Salvation.

To sum up all in a Word—The whole Tenour of Revelation shews, that there are but two Methods, whereby any of the Children of *Adam* can be justified.—Either by a perfect Obedience to the Law, in *their own* Persons; and then the Reward is of Debt*. —Or else, because the *Surety* of a better Covenant has satisfied all Demands in their Stead; and then it is a Gift of Grace.—There is no trimming or reconciling Expedient.—You may choose either of the two; but no third is proposed or allowed.

Ther. Was there not a different Method, for the *antient* People of GOD?

Asp. None, *Theron.* In the State of primitive Innocency, a *perfect* and *persevering* Observance of the divine Command, was the Condition of Life and Immortality. When, by the first grand Apostacy, this became impossible; a *free* Pardon, and *gracious* Acceptance, through the blessed *JESUS*, were substituted

* *Rom.* iv. 4. *Passional* Debt; founded on the Promise of the Covenant, not springing from any Worth in the Obedience.

stituted in its Stead. Which Oeconomy, like a Fountain of Life, was opened; when GOD promised *the Seed of the Woman, to bruise the Serpent's Head**.—It ran, like a salutary Rivulet, through the *Antediluvian World*—Continued its Progress along the *Patriarchal Age*—Flowed, in broader Streams, under the *Mosaic Dispensation*—Is derived down to Us, abundantly enlarged by the Coming of *CHRIST*, and the Ministry of his *Apostles*—Will be transmitted, with an increasing Spread, to the latest Posterity. Nor ever cease to amplify and extend its Influence, till, as the Fountain is become a River, the River is augmented into an Ocean; and *the Knowledge of the LORD* our Righteousness *fill the Earth, as the Waters cover the Abysses of the Sea* †.

There was, I confess, a Diversity in the Administration, but no Difference in the Nature, of the Blessing. *JESUS CHRIST*, however variously manifested, was the *same Yesterday*, is the *same to Day*, will be the *same for ever* ‡. As it is the very same Sun, which *gleams* at early Dawn; which *shines* in the advancing Day; and *glows* at Height of Noon.

My Simile reminds Us of the Time, and leaves a most important Doctrine upon our Memories. Suppose We take the Admonition, and begin to move homeward.

Ther.

* *Gen.* iii. 15.

† *Isai.* xi. 9.

‡ *Heb.* xiii. 8.

Ther. We need be in no Hurry, *Aspasio*. My Watch tells me, that We have half an Hour good. Besides, I have something farther to alledge, and from a very great Authority, which seems directly contrary to your Notion.

Asp. Just as You please, *Theron*. If You choose to stay, I am all Compliance with your Inclination. And, would Truth permit, I should be all Conformity to your Opinion.

Ther. You know, Who it is that asks; *What doth the LORD require of Thee?* And neither of Us need be informed, What it is, that the Prophet replies; *Do Justice, love Mercy, and walk humbly with thy GOD* *. But I want to know, what *You think* of this Passage?

Asp. I think, it is absolutely inconsistent with *your* Scheme. This Passage inculcates *Humility*. But your Scheme is the very Reverse of that amiable Virtue. *A Self-justiciary* walking humbly with GOD, is little better than a Contradiction in Terms.

The LORD, has said; “Ye shall be saved
“ by Grace †.” Your System replies; “No,
“ but

* *Mic.* vi. 8.

† *Eph.* ii. 5. This Text lays the Ax to the *very Root* of spiritual Pride, and all Self-glorying whatever. Therefore the inspired Writer, foreseeing the Backwardness of Mankind

“but by our own Works.”—It is declared in Scripture; “That the Gift of GOD is eternal Life.” It is implied in my Friend’s Doctrine; That this Happiness is the Wages of our own Deeds.—“My SON shall have all the Glory of a Sinner’s Salvation,” is the unalterable Decree of the MOST HIGH. “We will have a Share in the Honour,” is the Language of your Opinion.—Look, how wide therefore the East is from the West! So remote is such a Strain of Teaching, from the Practice of *walking humbly* with our GOD.

Ther. But consider, good *Aspasio*; have I not the Prophet’s Authority for my Opinion? Are not his Words expressly on my Side? Does He not mention these Duties of Morality and Piety, as the *appointed Method* of obtaining the divine Favour?

Asp. He mentions, I apprehend, a solicitous *Inquiry*. To which He gives a satisfactory *Answer*. Then subjoins a practical *Improvement* of the Whole.—The Inquiry is expressed in these Words; *Wherewithal shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the High GOD? Shall I come before Him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of a Year old? Will the*

kind to receive it, yet knowing the absolute Necessity of its Reception, again asserts (*ver. 8.*) the *very same* Truth, in the *very same* Words.

the LORD be pleased with Thousands of Rams ; with ten Thousands of Rivers of Oil ? Shall I give my First-born for my Transgression, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul ?*—To which it is replied ; *He hath shewed Thee, O Man, what is good for this important Purpose ; namely the MESSIAH ; pointed out by all thy Sacrifices, and described in the preceding Chapter. Atonement for Sin, and Peace with GOD, are to be made by a better Hand, and in a better Way, than thou proposest. HE, whose Outgoings have been from of old, from everlasting † ; HE, who is the Son of the HIGHEST, and yet the Seed of Her that travaileth ‡ ; HE has undertaken, and will fully execute, this great Office.*

And what doth the LORD thy GOD require of Thee ? What Temper, what Conduct, what Expressions of Gratitude, from his People ? Who are reconciled through the Blood of CHRIST, and admitted to the Blessings of the New Covenant ||. — They are to testify their Thankfulness, by the Alacrity, Uniformity, and Constancy

* *Mic. vi. 7, 8.* † *Mic. v. 2.* ‡ *Mic. v. 3.*

|| *Thy GOD, is the Phrase. Which denotes an Interest ; implies an Appropriation ; and is the peculiar Language of the Covenant. — Thy GOD ; not made so by thy humble Walking, but by an Act of his own Grace, previous to any Obedience of thine. — According to Theron's Principles, the Prophet should rather have said, walk humbly (not with thy GOD, but) that He may be thy GOD.*

stancy of their Obedience ; or by the conscientious Discharge of every *moral, social, and religious* Duty.

If this be a true Interpretation of the Text, instead of establishing, it overturns your Cause. —But I have another Objection to your Method, perhaps, more weighty than the foregoing.

Ther. Pray, let me hear it.—I am not so enamoured with my Notions, but I can bear to have them censured ; nor so attached to my Scheme, but I can relinquish it for a better.

Asp. I would illustrate my Meaning, by a common Experiment in Optics. When Objects are viewed in a *concave Speculum*, or in the Hollow of a polished Spoon, how do they appear !

Ther. Inverted.

Asp. Such is my Friend's System of Religion. He inverts the Order of the Gospel. He turns the beautiful Building upside down ; and lays that for the *Foundation*, which should only be Part of the *Superstructure*.—Not so the Apostle *Paul*. He, like a wise Master-BUILDER, places *CHRIST* as the Foundation-Stone ; and rears his Edifice of practical Godliness, on that all-supporting Basis.—Examine his Epistle to the *Romans*. Which is unquestionably the completest Model of Doc-

trine, and the noblest Body of Divinity, ex-
tant in the World.

He first discovers the *Depravity* of our Na-
ture, and the Misery of our Condition.—
He, then, displays the Method of our *Reco-*
very by *CHRIST*, and the Blessings freely
vouchsafed in his Gospel.—After which, He
delineates the Offices of *Morality*, and inforces
them by the most engaging Motives. Motives,
drawn from the free unbounded Loving-kind-
ness of *GOD* our *SAVIOUR*, and from the
rich invaluable Benefits of his Grace*.—Pri-
vilege He plants as the *Root*. From which,
Duty blooms, as the *Flower*; Godliness grows,
as the *Fruit*.

The same Order is observed by *St. Peter*, in
his very concise, but very accurate Map, of
the Way to Heaven. *Elect*, according to the
Foreknowledge of GOD the FATHER, through
Sancti-

* This, I think, is the best Platform for an *evangelical*
Catechism. The *Ruin* of Man, occasioned by Sin—His
Recovery, effected by *CHRIST*—His *Gratitude*, to be ex-
pressed by way of Obedience.—This Plan is carried into
Execution by the *Palatinate* Divines. Who have formed
upon it, a Summary of catechetical Instruction: than which I
have met with nothing of the Kind, more clear and satis-
factory; more edifying and animating; more exactly con-
sonant to the benign Spirit of the Gospel, or better calcu-
lated to make Mankind both holy and happy.—This Piece
the Reader may see, together with a judicious, and very
valuable Exposition of it, in the *Latin Works of Henricus*
Altingius. 1 Vol. Quarto. Which, I believe, may be
bought for a Trifle, yet are more precious than Gold.

Sanctification of the SPIRIT, unto Obedience, and Sprinkling of the Blood of CHRIST.*—First, the everlasting and electing Love of the FATHER.—Then, the inlightening and renewing Agency of the SPIRIT. Who testifies of CHRIST, and applies his Death to the Soul; purifying the Heart by Faith.—From whence, as from a Fountain of living Waters, flow *true Sanctification*, and every Species of real Holiness.—All which, being partly defective, and partly polluted, must be sprinkled with the Blood of JESUS, and made acceptable by his dying Oblation.

Ther. Is this the *constant* Method, in which the sacred Writers represent the Gospel Salvation? Do they always observe this particular Order, in arranging its Doctrines and its Duties? Or, is it not an insignificant Circumstance, which goes *first*, provided We take in *both*?

Asp. To observe this Order, I am persuaded, is no insignificant Circumstance. It is of *great Consequence*, both to our Establishment and to our Growth in Grace. Is it a Matter of Indifference to the Archer, whether He send the Point, or the Feather of his Arrow foremost? Can He, in either Case, hit the Mark with equal Ease, and equal Certainty?

A a 2

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* 1 Pet. i. 2.

I believe, You will find, that the sacred Writers, in all their *evangelical* Discourses, invariably adhere to this Order. Nay; it took place even under the *legal* Dispensation.—When the LORD GOD published his Law from Mount *Sinai*; when He wrote it, with his own Finger, on Tables of Stone; how did He introduce the Precepts? How enforce their Observance?—Let Us attend to the Preamble; which is the Language of Love, and the very Spirit of the Gospel: *I am the LORD thy GOD; who brought Thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage**. “ I have
 “ already delivered Thee, with a mighty
 “ Hand, from the most fordid and insupport-
 “ able Slavery. I have promised Thee, for
 “ thy Possession, the delightful Country of
 “ *Canaan; a goodly Heritage of the Hosts of Na-*
 “ *tions* †. Nay, I *myself* am thy Portion; a
 “ GOD in Covenant with Thee; engaged,
 “ by an inviolable Contract, and with the Ex-
 “ ertion of all my Attributes, to do Thee
 “ Good. *Therefore*, keep the Statutes, the
 “ Judgments, and Ordinances, which I am
 “ now going to establish.”—Could there be a more winning Inducement, or a more endearing Obligation, to Obedience?

I might point out the same Strain, running through the Exhortations of *Moses*, and the
 Songs

* *Ex.* xx. 2.

† *Jer.* iii. 19.

Songs of *David*; the Sermons of the Prophets, and the Writings of the Apostles. But this I wave, not through an Apprehension of its Difficulty, only from a Fear of Prolixity.— However, You will not think me tedious, if I produce one more Instance, from the great Master of our Schools. *For We Ourselves were some time foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and Envy, hateful and hating one another* *. Here, He sets before Us a dismal, but exact Picture, of our depraved and undone Condition.— Then He presents Us with a delightful View of our Redemption, both in its gracious Cause, and precious Effects. *But, after that the Kindness and Love of GOD our SAVIOUR toward Man appeared; not by Works of Righteousness, which We have done, but according to his Mercy, He saved Us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and Renewing of the HOLY GHOST; which He hath shed on Us abundantly, through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR; that being justified by his Grace, We should be made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life.*—Having thus provided for our Happiness; He then promotes our Holiness. *This is a faithful Saying, and these Things I will that Thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in GOD, might be careful to maintain good Works: these Things are good and profitable unto Men.*

* *Tit.* iii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

I make no Comment * upon the Passage: because I hope, You will commit it, as a noble Depositum, to your Memory. Your own diligent Meditation, accompanied with humble Prayer, will furnish out the best Exposition.— Only I would just remark, that the Apostle, always consistent, always uniform, marshals his Thoughts with his usual Exactness. Good Works are not *disbanded*; nor yet suffered to lead the *Van*; but made to bring up the *Rear* †. —When he mentions these Fruits of the SPIRIT, He mentions them, not slightly, as Mat-
ters

* Perhaps, the Reader will give me Leave, though *Aspasia* has declined the Office, to add a short *expository Stricture*, upon the most distinguished Parts of this very important Paragraph.—I. We have the *Cause* of our Redemption; *not Works of Righteousness, which We have done, but the Kindness, the Love, the Mercy of GOD our SAVIOUR.*—II. The *Effects*; which are—1. *Justification; being justified, having our Sins forgiven, and CHRIST's Righteousness imputed: and this, without any the least deserving Quality in Us; solely by his Grace, and most unmerited Goodness.*—2. *Sanctification; expressed by The Washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST.* Whose Influences purify the Soul, as the Washing of Water cleanses the Body; and introduce an Improvement, into all the Faculties of the Mind, as eminent and glorious, as the Return of Spring diffuses, over the whole Face of reviving Nature.—III. The *End and Consummation* of all: that We should be made *Heirs* of the heavenly Kingdom; and live, now in the assured Hope, hereafter in the full Enjoyment, of *eternal Life*.

† The same Order is observed by St. *John*, Rev. xiv. 13, *Blessed are the Dead, which die in the LORD; for they rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.* Not go before, to open the everlasting Doors, and give them Admittance into the Mansions of Joy. But they *follow* them, when ad-

ad-

ters of small Moment; but earnestly, as Affairs of great Importance. It is his Desire and his Charge, that all Believers should *be careful**; have their Hearts upon the Business; should use their best Contrivance, and exert their utmost Endeavours—not barely to practice, but to *maintain*†; to be exemplary, distinguished, and pre-eminent in the Exercise of every Virtue.—Because, this Virtue, and those Works, though not the Ground of a Reconciliation with GOD, are *amiable* in the Eyes of all, and *honourable* ‡ to the christian Profession. They are also a necessary Ingredient in *personal* Happiness, and the apparent Means of *social* Usefulness §,

Ther.

admitted. As the Robe, which, on a King's Coronation-Day, flows from his Shoulders, cannot but accompany Him, wheresoever He goes.—It may be pertinent, on the Mention of this Illustration, just to hint; That, as it is not the *Robe* of State, which *makes* the King; so neither is it the *Practice* of Holiness, which *makes* the Christian. An Union with *CHRIST*, an Interest in his Merits, and the in-dwelling Presence of his *SPIRIT*; *these*, and nothing short of these, constitute the true Christian. Yet, as the royal Robe is an Attendant on Majesty, and distinguishes the Monarch; so, practical Godliness is inseparable from Faith, and adorns the Believer.

* Φροντισῶσι. This is somewhat like that emphatical Expression, which so often occurs in the Old Testament, תשמרו לעשות *Ye shall observe to do*: Ye shall be very *diligent* to fulfil; Ye shall be very *exact* in performing.

† Περιεχασθαι. The Reader may see this Word more *critically* explained, pag. 234. in the Note.

‡ Καλα.

§ Ωφελιμω.

Ther. This View of the evangelical Plan is, I confess, new to me; and particularly your Ordinance of the Epistle to the *Romans*.

Asp. If this be *new*, perhaps, what I am going to advance, may be *strange*.—We have been talking about Acceptance with GOD; and debating, whether our own good Works, are the Cause of this ineffimable Blessing. What will You say, if We can perform *no* good Work, *till* We are interested in *CHRIST*, and accepted by GOD?

Ther. Say!—That this is razing Foundations.

Asp. It is razing the wrong, the Foundation falsely so called. Which will certainly deceive as Many, as make it their Trust. — And is it not *prudent*, when We are building for Eternity, carefully to examine the Ground? Is it not *friendly*, to divert a Man from the treacherous Sand, and lead Him to the unshaken Rock? — For this Cause I said it once, and for this Cause I say it again, That We can perform *no* good Work, *till* We are interested in *CHRIST*, and accepted of GOD.

Ther. Produce your Reasons, *Aspasio*. And strong Reasons they must be, which are forcible enough to support such an Opinion.

Asp. The Case seems to speak for itself. How *can* a Man that is evil, do Works that are good?

good? Would You expect to gather *Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles?*—But let Us hear, what our unerring TEACHER says: *As the Branch cannot bear Fruit of itself, except it abide in the Vine; no more can Ye, except Ye abide in me* *. Nothing can be more express and full to our Purpose. But that which follows, is far more awful and alarming to our Consciences. *If a Man abide not in Me, He is cast forth as a Branch, and is withered; and Men gather them, and cast them into the Fire, and they are burned* †.—From which it appears, that the human Heart is never actuated by *good Tempers*; that the human Life can never be productive of *good Works*; until a Man is ingrafted into *CHRIST*. No more than a Branch can bear valuable Fruit, while it continues in a State of Separation from the Tree ‡.—It appears also, that Persons alienated from *CHRIST*, are, and all their Performances too, like *broken, withered, rotten Boughs*: fit for nothing, but to be committed to the Flames, and consumed from the Earth.

Both

* *John xv. 4.*† *John xv. 6.*

‡ This discovers an Error, which is often committed, in our Attempts to instruct little Children. What is more common, than to tell them? “If they will be good, GOD Almighty will love and bless them.”—Whereas, they should rather be informed, “That they are Sinners: but, that GOD Almighty has given his SON to die for Sinners: and, if they pray to Him, He will forgive their Sins; will make them holy; make them happy; and bless them with all spiritual Blessings in *CHRIST*.”

Both they and their Services, far from being meritorious, are, in the Estimate of Heaven, worthless and despicably mean.

Ther. What! Are all the noble Deeds, performed by the Advocates for Morality, and Lovers of Virtue, worthless in themselves, and despicable before the SUPREME BEING? Worthless and despicable (grating Words!) *only* because they are not attended with the Peculiarities of your Faith? Can the Want of this *little* Circumstance, change their Nature, and turn their Gold into Dross?

Asp. My dear *Theron*, call not the Circumstance little. It is sufficient, were your Works more precious than Gold, to debase them into Tin, into Lead, into Dross.—When the poor Shepherd brought You, yesterday Morning, a Present of some Wood-Strawberries; bringing them, as an humble Expression of his *Gratitude*, they were kindly received. But, if He had offered them, as a *Price* for your House, or as the *Purchase* of your Estate; how should You have regarded them, in such a Connection? No Words can express the Disdain, You would have conceived. — When *Barnabas* presented a Sum of Money to the Apostles, for the Supply of their own Necessities, and the Relief of indigent Believers*; it was welcome to them, and pleasing to their GOD. But,
when

* *Acts* iv. 37.

when *Simon* the Sorcerer, offered his Gold to *Peter* and *John*; offering it, not from a Principle of Faith, but as an Equivalent for the HOLY SPIRIT; not in order to testify his Thankfulness, but rather to play the Huckster with Heaven; it was rejected with the utmost Indignation*.

I leave my Friend to apply the preceding Instances. Only let me beg of Him to believe; that, if my Words are *grating*, they are *extorted* by the Force of Truth. If I am obliged, in any measure, to blame your Works; it is, as a great Critic blames Eloquence, “with the “Tenderness of a Lover.”—But my Censure falls only on their faulty *Origin*, and unbecoming *Aim*. Let them spring from the Grace of *CHRIST*, as their Source; let them propose the Glory of *CHRIST*, as their End; then, instead of putting a Slight upon them, or giving them a Bill of Divorce, I would court, caress, and wed them.—Whereas, if neither *this* End be kept in the View, nor *that* Principle operate in the Heart; I must persist, in putting a Query upon their Character; nay, in denying the very Possibility of their Existence. There may be a *Mimickry* of holy Actions. But it is *Mimickry* only; as empty, as the Combs † made by those Wasps; and no better, than a Flame that is painted.

I

* *Acts* viii. 20.- † *Faciunt & Vespa Favos.*

I have an Authority for this Doctrine, which I think, You will not offer to controvert.

Ther. What Authority?

Asp. That of our Church. Who declares, in her XIIIth Article; “ Works done before
“ the Grace of *CHRIST*, and Inspiration of
“ his *SPIRIT*, are not pleasing to *GOD*; for-
“ asmuch as they spring not out of Faith in
“ *CHRIST*.”—Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*, pu-
rifies the Heart. Till this be done, We have
neither Disposition nor Capacity for holy Obe-
dience. Nay, without Faith in *CHRIST*, our
Persons are abominable*; our State is damna-
ble; and how can any of our Works be ac-
ceptable?

Such a One, You say, is honest in his Deal-
ings, temperate in his Enjoyments, charitable
to the Poor. I allow it all. But, unless these
seeming Virtues are referred to the *Glory* of the
Supreme *JEHOVAH*; unless they flow from
Faith in the crucified *JESUS*; they may be
Acts of worldly Policy, of selfish Prudence, or
Pharisaical Pride. They are by no means a
pleasing Oblation to the *LORD* Almighty †.
—Nay;

* *To the Defiled and Unbelieving is nothing clean.* Tit. i. 15.
The Apostle joins *Defiled* and *Unbelieving*: to intimate, that
without a true Belief nothing is clean. The Understanding
and the Conscience are polluted. Both the Man and his Do-
ings are impure.

† Might not this Observation be made, with great Pro-
priety, in our *infirmary* and other *charitable* Sermons? Should
not

—Nay; instead of being Acts of Duty, and Objects of Approbation, they stand condemned in the Scripture, and are Breaches of the Commandment. They stand condemned in that Scripture, which declares; *Without Faith it is impossible to please GOD* *. They are Breaches of that Commandment, which requires; *Whether Ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever Ye do, do all to the Glory of GOD* †.

Upon the whole; if We will submit to the Determination of our established Church, or acquiesce in the Decision of our Divine MASTER; We must acknowledge, that there is no such Thing as a good Work, till We are reconciled to GOD, and our Persons accepted in his Sight.—Therefore, to represent our own Works, as the Means of Reconciliation and
Ac-

not the Audience be exhorted to abound in Acts of Benevolence, from a *grateful Regard* to the infinitely merciful and condescending *JESUS*? *2 Cor.* viii. 9.—Should they not, before all Things, be directed to *make sure* their Interest in the REDEEMER's Merits? That their Persons may find Favour, and their Alms Acceptance. *Eph.* i. 6.—Should they not be admonished, that without this *believing Application* to *CHRIST*, whatever they do, whatever they give, is worthless in the Eye of their MAKER, and will be fruitless to their own Souls? *Heb.* xi. 6.—In this Respect our SAVI-OUR was eminently typified by the *Jewish Altar*. On which *every* Sacrifice, by whomsoever brought, was to be offered. And separate from which *no* Sacrifice, however costly, could be accepted. *Exod.* xx. 24.

* *Heb.* xi. 6.

† *1 Cor.* x. 31.

Acceptance, is both chimerical and absurd. *Chimerical*, because it builds upon a Phantom, and takes for a Reality, what has no Existence. *Abſurd*, because it inverts the natural Order of Things, and would make the Effect antecedent to the Cauſe.

Ther. Before we quit this agreeable Retreat, let me aſk my *Aſſaſio*; What He propoſes, by running down all thoſe Works, which are the Produce of inward Religion, and eſſential to true Holineſs. Whoſe Excellency is diſplayed in the *cleareſt*, and whoſe Neceſſity is urged in the *ſtrongeſt* Terms, throughout the whole Bible.

Aſp. I am far from running down thoſe Works, which are the Produce of inward Religion; and therefore may be juſtly ſtilled, *Works of Faith, and Labours of Love* *.—But I would

* *Works of Faith, and Labours of Love.* 1 Theſſ. i. 3. How finely are good Works characterized, in this Place! Though it be only *en paſſant*, tranſiently, or by the by. And how judiciously are the *true* diſtinguiſhed from the *counterfeit*! Works, that are done in Faith; Works, that proceed from Love; theſe, and theſe only, the Apoſtle ſignifies, are *really* good.—As ſome noble River, though preſſing forward to the Ocean, nourishes many a fair Plant; and ſuckles many a ſweet Flower, by the Way; ſo the ſacred Writers, though principally intent (as here) upon ſome different Point; yet drop *incidentally* ſuch valuable Truths, as cheer the Believer's Heart, and make glad the City of our GOD.

would caution Us both to take Care, lest they be destitute of those Circumstances, which alone can render them *truly* good.

I would also persuade my *Theron*, and I would habituate myself, not to repose our *Confidence* in any Works whatsoever. Lest they prove a bruised Reed, that breaks under our Weight; or a pointed Spear, that pierces Us to the Heart.—We shall never be like the Church, *Who comes up out of the Wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved* *; so long as We bolster up Ourselves, with a Conceit of personal Righteousness. This was the Error, the fatal Error of the *Pharisees*. This the Film, that blinded the Eyes of their Mind; and sealed them up, under the Darknes of final Unbelief.

Besides, my dear *Theron*: If You expect to be saved by your own Duties, You will be loth to see the worst of your Condition. To see the worst of your Condition, will be a *Dagger* to your Hopes, and as *Death* to your Soul. You will therefore be inclined to *daub with untempered Mortar* †. Instead of acknowledging the deep Depravity of your Nature, and the numberless Iniquities of your Life, You will invent a thousand Excuses, to palliate your Guilt. And, by this means, erect a *Wall of Partition*, between your Soul and the Merits
of

* *Cant.* viii. 5.

† *Ezek.* xiii. 10.

of your REDEEMER. Which will be a greater Inconvenience, a more destructive Evil, than to cut off all Supply of Provision from an Army, or even to intercept the Sun-beams from visiting the Earth.

Ther. Now you talk of Armies, I must observe, that, though I have scarce been able to keep my Ground, in this argumentative Action, I cannot allow You the Honour of a Victory. As a *Retreat* is very different from a *Rout*.

Asp. I would also remark, that my Friend has changed the intended Plan of our Operations. Has almost continually acted upon the *Offensive*. While my Part has been only to sustain the Shock. At our next Encounter, You may expect to have the Order of Battle reversed. I shall direct my Forces to begin the Charge. Put Yourself therefore in Readiness for a *brisk Attack*.

Ther. You act the fair Enemy, *Aspasio*, I must confess; in thus giving the Alarm, before You make the Assault.

Asp. This Hostility may appear *fairer still*, when I assure You, that my Weapons aim not at the Destruction of your Comfort, or the Demolition of any valuable Interest. Only they would be *mighty, through GOD, to pull down the Strong-holds of Unbelief; and bring every self-exalting, every rebellious Thought,*
cap-

*captive unto CHRIST**. Captive, in a professed Submission to his Righteousness, as well as a dutiful Subjection to his Commands.—And, when *such* is the Tendency of the Campaign, it will be your greatest Advantage, to lose the Victory. It will be better than a Triumph, to acknowledge Yourself vanquished.


* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5, 6.





DIALOGUE VIII.

THERON.

UR last Conversation ended with a *Challenge*. To decline or delay the Acceptance of it, would look like Cowardice in me, and be a Piece of Injustice to You, *Aspasio*. Therefore, I am now ready to give You all the Satisfaction, which a Gentleman can demand. —Only as the Weather continues hazy, I believe, my *Study* must be the Place of Action.

Asp. A Challenge! *Theron*—

Ther. What, Sir! Do You boggle? Would You eat your Words, and play the Poltroon?

Asp. Perhaps, I may have an Inclination to follow the Example of a *Brother Hero*; who ran away from the Field of Battle, just as his Comrades were advancing to charge the Enemy. And when called to an Account for his Beha-

Behaviour, right worthily alledged; That his Retreat proceeded, not from any Timidity of Mind; no, but from a Concern for the public Good. “For,” quoth He, “if I had been “knocked on the Head to-day, how should “I have been able to fight for my Country “to-morrow?”

You smile, *Theron*, at my doughty Warrior, and his sage Maxim.—But, since You have glanced at a certain *modish* Custom, give me Leave very seriously to assure You; That, if the Affair was to be determined by Sword and Pistol, I should reckon such a Conduct, a *resolute* Refusal at least, not at all unmanly, but the *truly* wise and galliant Behaviour.—For surely, it can never be an Instance of Wisdom, to hazard my Life, at the mere Caprice of a turbulent Ruffian; who is a Stranger to all the Principles of Humanity and Generosity, but a Slave, an abandoned Slave, to his own ungovernable Passions.—Surely, it can never be an Act of real Bravery, to expose *my* Person; because some fool-hardy Practitioner in the Fencing-school, is desperate enough to risk *his*.—The Gentleman, the true Gentleman, should exert a becoming Dignity of Spirit; and scorn to set his Welfare on a Level, with that of an inconsiderate and barbarous Bully*.

Ther.

* *Aspasio* calls the Person who gives the Challenge, a *Bully*. And such, notwithstanding all the Maxims of *fantastical*

Ther. But Honour, my *Aspasio*, Honour is at stake. Better to lose our Life, than forfeit our Reputation. Better to be in a Grave, than to be the Jest of every Coffee-House; and perhaps pointed at, as We pass the Streets, for mean-spirited, sneaking, or, as the Gentlemen of the Sword so *elegantly* speak, *white-livered* Animals.

Asp. Lose our Reputation, *Theron*! Amongst whom, I beseech You?—A few rash and precipitate Creatures: The Pupils of *La Mancha's* Knight: The Sons of *Chimera** and Cruelty. Whose Applause is Infamy; and their Detraction the highest Praise they can bestow.—From every judicious and worthy Person, your Conduct will be sure to gain Approbation, and your Character Esteem. When *Cæsar* received a Challenge from *Anthony*, to engage Him in single Combat, He very calmly answered the Bearer of the Message; *If Anthony*
is

astical and *false* Honour, He will certainly be found, when tried at the Bar of Reason or Justice. For, if the most impetuous, irrational, and brutal Barbarity is allowed to constitute a Bully, *He* has an indisputable Title to the Character; who, on Account of a mere Punctilio, or some slight Affront, would destroy a Life, that might be of Service to *Society*—might be a Blessing to various *Relatives*—and is intimately connected with a blissful or miserable *Immortality*.

* This Kind of Gentry are stiled—in a BOOK, with which they have little or no Acquaintance; but whose Maxims will be had in Reverence, when their Names are lost in Oblivion—בני שאן *The Sons of Biffer*, or *The Children of Neife*. Jerem. xlviii. 45.

's weary of Life, tell Him, there are other Ways to Death, besides the Point of my Sword.—Who ever deemed this, an Instance of Cowardice! All Ages have admired it, as the Act of a *discreet* and *gallant* Man; who was sensible of his own Importance, and knew how to treat the petulant and revengeful Humour of a discontented Adversary with its deserved Contempt.

Barely to lose our Life, is the smallest of those Evils, which attend this mischievous Practice.—It is pregnant with a long, an almost *endless* Train of disastrous Consequences to Parents, Wives, Children, Friends, Associates, and the Community.—It is an *infalible* Expedient, to be deprived of the Favour of the infinite GOD, and to be excluded from the Joys of his eternal Kingdom.—It is the *sure* Way, to become an Object of Abhorrence to the Angels of Light; and be made the Laughing-stock of Devils, in their Dungeons of Darknes*. *Shame, everlasting Shame,*

* “ Let me tell You with Confidence,” (says an excellent Person, addressing Himself to one of these unhappy *Desperado's*) “ that all Duels, or single Combats, are murderous; blanch them over (how You list) with Names of Honour, and honest Pretences, their Use is sinful, and their Nature devilish.” See the select Works of Bishop *Hall*, in one Volume Fol. p. 526. Where the Reader will find a happy Mixture of true *Oratory*, and sound *Divinity*; a rich Vein of *Fancy*, and a sweet Spirit of *Piety*; Contemplations upon the Histories of Scripture (which, I think, are our Prelate's Master-Piece) almost as *entertaining* and

Shame, *shall be* the Reward of such Gallantry, *the Promotion of* such Fools*.

Ther. With regard to this Point, I am intirely of your Opinion, *Assafso*; however I may differ in other Particulars.

Assp. Say You so, *Theron!* Would *You* then tamely submit to Affronts, Insults, and Injuries?

Ther. As to the trifling Affronts of a peevish incontinent Tongue, I would treat *them* with a superior Scorn. And when thus treated, they are sure to recoil, with the keenest Edge, and severest Weight, upon the *impotent* Malice that offers them. The Wretch should see, that I could pity his Misery, and smile at his Folly.—But as to *Injuries*, the Case is otherwise. Should any one offer Violence to my Person, 'tis at his Peril. He would find, and perhaps to his Smart,

*Et Nos Tēla Manu, Ferrumque laud debile
Dextrā*

*Spargimus, et nostrō sepātur de Vulnere San-
guis †.*

Here, the fundamental and everlasting Law of *Self-preservation* calls upon Us to play the Man.

and *instruative*, as the Subjects illustrated are important and wonderful.—Notwithstanding a few stiff or antique Phrases, I cannot but esteem the Works of this Author, among the most valuable Compositions extant in our Language.

* *Prov.* iii. 35.

† *Virgil.*

Man. And I am sure, *Christianity* does not require Us, to yield our Throats to the Knife, or open our Breasts to the Dagger.

But to retire—to deliberate—to sit down—and indite a *formal* Challenge—seems to me altogether as savage and iniquitous, as to assault on the Highway.—He that demands my Money on the Road, or extorts it by an incendiary Letter, or decoys me into the Snare by a forged and counterfeit Note; is stigmatized for a Villain; is abhorred by every Person of Integrity; and, when detected, is rewarded with a Halter. Why should We reckon the headstrong Bravo *less injurious*? Who makes his Attempt upon my very Life; and thirsts, with insatiable Fury, for my Blood?

Asp. He allows You a fair *Chance*; it is said.

Ther. A Chance! Of what?—Either of falling a Sacrifice to his Rage, or of imbruing my Hands in his Blood. Which is neither more nor less, than reducing me to a *Necessity*, of launching into Damnation myself, or of transmitting a Fellow-creature to eternal Vengeance.—And is *this* an Extenuation? *This* a mitigating Circumstance? It really proves the Practice so inexcusably wicked, that nothing can be pleaded in its Defence. The very Argument, used to justify the horrid Deed, inflames and aggravates its Malignity.

'Tis Pity, but the *legislative* Authority would interpose, for the Suppression of such a flagrant Wrong to Society, and such a notorious Violation of our benign Religion. Why should not the Laws declare it *Felony*, to make the first Overture for a Duel? Since it is always more heinous, and frequently more pernicious. Is always Murder in the *Intention*, and frequently issues in *double* Destruction: the One, inflicted by the Stab of Violence; the Other, executed by the Sword of Justice.

Might it not, at least, be branded with some Mark of public Infamy, or subjected to a severe *pecuniary Mulct*? So that a Gentleman of Spirit and Temper might have it in his Power, to return the Compliment of a challenging Letter with some such Answer;

S I R,

“ However meanly You may think of your
 “ Life, I set too high a Value upon mine, to
 “ expose it as a Mark for *undisciplined* and
 “ *outrageous* Passions.—Neither have I so to-
 “ tally renounced all that is humane, bene-
 “ volent, or amiable, as to draw my Sword
 “ for your Destruction, because you have first
 “ been overcome by *precipitate* and *unreason-*
 “ *able* Repentment.—You have given me an
 “ Opportunity of acting the *Gentleman* and
 “ the *Christian*. And this Challenge I accept,
 “ as

“ as a Note under your Hand for five hundred Pounds* ; which will very soon be demanded, according to Law, by,

S I R,

Your, &c.

Asp. But to resume the proper Subject—the Nature of *our* Engagement. Which I now recollect, and which was explained, when I ventured to give, what You call *The Challenge*.—As it is not my *Theron*, but the Obstacles of his Faith, and the Enemies of his Felicity, that I am to encounter, perhaps I shall have Courage to stand my Ground. And, instead of *violating* all the Obligations of Equity, Honour, and Conscience, I shall certainly evidence my Love to my Friend ; may possibly promote his truest Good.

Ther.

* Might not the Refuser of a Challenge be dignified with some honorary Distinction, resembling the *Civic Crown* amongst the antient *Romans*? Since, by his *cool* and *temperate* Bravery, He saves one Life from the Sword, another from the Halter.—Was some honorary Distinction, on the one hand, united to a pecuniary Forfeiture on the other, I cannot but think, they would prove an effectual Method to *check* the *Progress* of this destructive Evil. It would break the Teeth of Malice with her own Weapons, and turn the Artillery of Revenge upon Herself. Those detestable Passions would be loth to indulge themselves in this horrid Manner, if it was made the sure Way to *ennoble* and *enrich* the Object of their Rage.—*N. B.* The *Civic Crown* was an Ornament assigned to those Soldiers, who had in Battle rescued a Fellow-citizen from impending Death.

Ther. I don't see, how this can be effected, by your late Attempt. You undertook to *run down* all Works of Righteousness, as absolutely unable to find Acceptance with GOD, and equally insufficient to recommend Us to his Favour.—It is for the Credit of these, which *Aspasio* has depreciated, that I enter the Lists.

Asp. Pray, what is the Standard, to which these Works of Righteousness must be conformed; and by which their Sufficiency may be determined?

Ther. The *moral Law*, doubtless: I know no other Standard of Righteousness, nor any other Way of becoming righteous.

Asp. Agreed, *Theron*. We will join Issue on *this Footing*; and try the Merits of our Cause, before *this Tribunal*. Yourself shall be the Judge. I will only ask your Opinion, and refer myself to your Decision.—You see, I am soon weary of the military Style. I had obtruded myself on a Part, which I was not qualified to act; and now resume a more becoming Character.

Ther. If You place me on the Bench, I shall allow of no such Digressions; but shall keep You close to the Subject.

Asp. Has your Lordship then considered the Nature of the divine Law, and the Extent of its Obligations?

Ther.

Ther. It obliges *all* Persons, and comprizes the *Whole* Duty of Man. It forbids all Immorality, and enjoins every Virtue.—Are not these your Sentiments?

Asp. They are, when somewhat enlarged.—The Empire of the Law, as *prohibitory* of *Evil*, extends both to the outward and inward Man. It takes Cognizance of the Actions. It judges every Word. All the Operations, and all the Dispositions of the Soul, come under its sacred Jurisdiction.—It is indeed a Discerner, not only of the working Thoughts, but also of the dawning Intentions; and arraigns them both at its awful Bar. *It pierces even to the dividing asunder of the Soul and Spirit**. Not the inmost Recesses of the Breast, are too deep for its Penetration; nor all the Artifices of the deceitful Heart, too subtle for its Detection.—*Other* Laws forbid the unclean Act; *this* condemns the wanton Eye, and irregular Desire. *Other* Laws punish the injurious Deed; *this* passes Sentence on the unguarded Sallies of Passion, and the most secret Emotions of Resentment. So eminently true is that Remark of the *Psalmist*, *Thy Commandments are exceeding broad †*!—Tell me now, *Theron*, has your Obedience been commensurate to this extensive Platform of Duty?

Ther. If the Law be so *very extensive*—

Asp.

* *Heb.* iv. 20.

† *Psal.* cxix. 96.

Asp. Nay, my Friend, You cannot suspect, that I have stretched, to an undue Extent, the Obligations of the divine Law. Since this Interpretation is established by an Authority, *too great* to be controverted; *too clear* to be misunderstood; even by the Authority of **CHRIST** Himself. Whose Sermon upon the Mount is a professed Exposition of the Commandments, and maintains, in the most explicit Manner, all that I have advanced.— So that, if our LORD's Exposition is just, I think, it will be neither rash, nor uncharitable to say, There is not a Man upon Earth, but has *broke* them *all*.

Ther. Are We all Idolaters then? All Adulterers? All Murderers? Shocking to imagine!

Asp. It is shocking, I confess.—But how much more so, if *such* Delinquents expect Justification by their own Deeds?

Ther. This is no Proof of your Assertion, my good Friend.

Asp. To be fond of Gold; to be enamoured with the World; to love any Creature more than the ever-blessed CREATOR; are Instances of Idolatry*, not quite so gross, but altogether as real, as to set up Idols in our Temples, or pay Acts of Adoration to senseless Images. Have You always been free from this *Apostacy* of the *Affections*?

Our

* *Col.* iii. 5. *Phil.* iii. 19.

Our infallible TEACHER has informed Us, That unreasonable Anger, contemptuous Language, and malevolent Wishes *, are each a Species of Murder; and not many Removes from the Assassins's deadly Stab. Have You been always meek, always benevolent, and never chargeable with this *mental Homicide*?

We are farther assured, That the Indulgence of inordinate Desire is, in the impartial Estimate of Heaven, as the Commission of the impure Deed †. And evil Concupiscence of every Kind violates that sacred Precept, *Thou shalt not covet* ‡. Has your Will been invariably

* *Matt. v. 22.*

† *Matt. v. 28.*

‡ *Rom. vii. 7.* *Aspasio's* Observation brings to my Remembrance a remarkable Incident; which, as it is quite pertinent to our Purpose, the Reader will allow me to relate. It passed between a Friend of mine, and a certain ingenious Stranger, into whose Company He happened to fall.—The Gentleman was extolling, at an extravagant Rate, the Virtue of *Honesty*: what a Dignity it imparted to our Nature! How it recommended Us to the SUPREME BEING! He confirmed all by a celebrated Line from Mr. *Pope*,

An honest Man's the noblest Work of GOD.

Sir, replied my Friend, however excellent the Virtue of Honesty may be, I fear, there are very few Men in the World, that really possess it.—You surprize me! said the Stranger.—Ignorant as I am of your Character, Sir, I fancy, it would be no difficult Matter, to prove even *You* a dishonest Man.—I defy You.—Will You give me Leave then, to ask You a Question or two; and promise not to be offended? —Ask your Questions, and welcome.—Have you never met with an Opportunity of getting Gain by some *unfair* Means? —The Gentleman paused.—I don't ask, Whether You made *use of*, but whether You have *met* with, such Opportunity?

bly upright, and warped with no irregular Inclination? Are You wholly unpolluted with this *Adultery* of the *Heart*?

I wait not for a Reply. I have often heard You *plead Guilty* to all—yes, to all and every of these Charges respectively.

Ther. Where, and when, *Aspasio*?

Asp. In the most sacred Place, and on the most solemn Occasion. And not You only, but a whole Multitude of self-condemned Criminals.—Our Church, You know, has ingrafted the Decalogue into her public Service; and taught all her Members to answer, after the Repetition of each Commandment; *LORD, have Mercy upon Us, and incline our Hearts to keep this Law.* Is not this an Acknowledgment of Disobedience in every Particular? Is not such the Meaning of our Response?—
“ We are verily guilty concerning this Thing.
“ And

tunity? I, for my Part, have; and, I believe, every Body else has.—Very probably I may.—How did You feel Your Mind affected, on such an Occasion? Had You *no* secret Desire, not the *least* Inclination, to seize the Advantage that offered? Tell me, without any Evasion, and consistently with the Character You admire?—I must acknowledge, I have not always been absolutely free from every irregular *Inclination*, but—Hold, Sir; none of your Salvo’s. You have confessed enough. If You had the Desire, though You never proceeded to the Action, this shews You was dishonest in *Heart*. This is what the Scripture calls *Concupiscence*. It defiles the Soul. It is a Breach of that Law, which requireth *Truth in the inner Parts*. And, unless You are pardoned through the Blood of *CHRIST*, will be a just Ground of your Condemnation, *when GOD shall judge the Secrets of Men*.

“ And we humbly implore, both pardoning
 “ Mercy for the past, and strengthening Grace
 “ for the future.”

Give me Leave to urge my Question a little farther.—Is there a *single Day*, in which You have not transgressed, some way or other, this sacred Rule?

Ther. If the Law of GOD will dispense with no Deviation, not even in the first Starts of Thought, or the least Wanderings of Desire.—But surely to affirm this, is to extend the Law beyond all reasonable Bounds. The Motions of evil Desire, *if indulged*, are undoubtedly criminal. But are they also, *when restrained*, Breaches of Duty? I should rather imagine, that such Temptations are thrown in our Way, for the Trial of our Obedience: which, had they no Power over our Affections, would not be Tryals; and, when they are resolutely withstood, cannot be Faults.

Asp. What was the Judgment of our Reformers? And what is the Voice of our Church? We may find both in the Ninth Article. “ Al-
 “ though there is no Condemnation for them
 “ that believe and are baptised, yet the Apostle
 “ doth confess, That Concupiscence and
 “ Lust hath of itself the Nature of Sin.” It is not said, Concupiscence hath *then only* the Nature of Sin, when it is ripened into Action; but *of itself*, and before it breaks out into the Commission of Iniquity.

Ther.

Ther. This I can truly plead in my own Behalf; That it has not been customary with me to offend; at least, not *presumptuously*, or of deliberate Wickedness.

Asp. My dear *Theron*, do not offer to *palliate* your Guilt. Such an Opiate may stupify, but will not cure: or rather, like Opiates ill prepared, it will intoxicate the Mind, and counteract the Operation of every healing Medicine.—Besides, it is not only pernicious, but false and unreasonable. You know the Use of that *Jolar Microscope*, and are able to inform me of its Effects.

Ther. I ought to be pretty well acquainted with these Experiments; since it has long been my favourite Diversion, to employ a few spare Hours in such agreeable Speculations.

Asp. You have seen the Body of an Insect, accommodated to the surprising Instrument. When, in this Situation, the Animal was pricked by a very fine Needle; your Eye, your naked Eye, just perceived the *Puncture*; and discovered, perhaps, a *Speck* of Moisture oozing from the Orifice. But, in what Manner were they represented by the magnifying Instrument?

Ther. The *Puncture* was widened into a frightful *Gash*. The *Speck* of Moisture swelled into a copious Stream; and flowed, like a *Torrent*, from the gaping Wound. An Ox, under
the

the sacrificing Knife, scarce looks more bulky, or bleeds more largely.

Asp. Don't You apprehend my Design?— If *We*, short-sighted Mortals, and almost blinded with Self-love; if *We* cannot but be sensible of our Faults; how flagrant must they appear, in what *enormous* Magnitudes, and with what *aggravating* Circumstances to an Eye perfectly pure, and infinitely penetrating?

Instead of attempting to extenuate our Offences, let Us make some such improving Reflections.—“ If this holy Law, which prohibits the minutest Failure, form the *Inditement*; if this all-discerning GOD, who sifts our Conduct even to the smallest Defect, be the *Judge*; if our personal Goodness, which abounds with Imperfections, be our *Plea*; what can We expect, at that decisive Hour, when the LORD shall *lay Judgment to the Line, and Righteousness to the Plummets** ?— Surely, this Consideration should incline Us, to adopt the wise and ardent Wish of the Apostle; *That We may now, in this our Day, win CHRIST; and, at the last tremendous Audit, be found in Him; not having our own Righteousness, which is of the Law, for the Foundation of our Hopes, but the Righteousness which is of GOD, by Faith in JESUS CHRIST* †.”

Con-

* *Isai.* xxviii. 17.

† *Phil.* iii. 8, 9, 11.

Consider the Law in its nobler Capacity, as *injoining* whatever is excellent.—Can You hope, *Theron*, to be justified by it, if You fall short of its Demands, not barely in a few Instances, but in *every* Action of your Life, and *every* Temper of your Heart?

Ther. Such a Hope, cherished amidst such Circumstances, would be fallacious and absurd.—But I trust, I am not so very faulty, or rather so intirely abandoned, as your Interrogatory supposes.

Asp. Have You duly weighed the *Perfection* and *Spirituality* of the divine Law?—It is a Transcript of the unspotted Purity, and absolute Rectitude of the divine Nature. It requires an unreserved Obedience to all GOD'S Commands, and a most unfeigned Submission to all his Dispensations; without regretting the former, as a grievous Yoke; or repining at the latter, as rigorous Treatment.—It calls, not only for external Duty, but also for the most upright Imaginations, and devout Affections.—Nay, it insists upon the Exercise of *every* Virtue, and that in the *highest* Degree. Love, without the least Lukewarmness; and Faith, without any Diffidence: a Sanctity of Desire, that knows no Stain; and an Humility of Mind, that is free from all Elatement.—In a Word; it requires Us to be perfect, *even as our FATHER which is in Heaven is perfect* *.

* *Matt.* v. 48.

Do any of your Actions come up to this exalted Standard? Are any of your Graces thus refined?

Ther. Am I then absolutely an *Insolvent* before the great LORD of the Universe? Have I no Lamb in my Foid without a Blemish? Nothing in my Life, nothing in my Heart, but what is defective and defiled?

Asp. Indeed, my Friend, this is not *your* Condition alone, but the Condition of the most irreproachable Person on Earth. There is *None* perfect, in any Character, or in any Work, no not One. None that obeys the divine Law, uniformly, invariably, and completely.

Cast your Eye upon the Names, which are subjoined to those beautiful *Prints*. How elegant is the Engraving! How accurate are the Letters! The Strokes most delicately fine! their Shape most exactly true!—Let me ask You to transcribe them with Your Pen; and make the Copy equal to the Original. Preserve all the noble Boldness of the *Roman* Stamp, and all the graceful Softness of the *Italian* Touch.—What? Could You not execute this Talk, even in your present unimpaired Health, and with the Exertion of all your Skill? How shamefully then must You fall short, if your Eyes were *dim* with Age; if your Hands shook with a *paralytic* Disorder;

and your Understanding was oppreffed with a *lethargic* Dulnefs?—Such is really the Cafe with regard to all the Children of Men. Our Nature is depraved; our moral Abilities are enervated; and our intellectual Faculties clouded. And can We, in fuch a *State of Impotence*, tranfcribe that facred System, which is the very Image of GOD—tranfcribe it into our Tempers, and render it legible in our Lives, without diminishing one Jot or Tittle of its perfect Purity?

Ther. Though I fall fhort, there are Chriftians of a much higher Clafs. Chriftians, I don't doubt, who have thefe Laws written on their Hearts; all whole Tempers are caft into this heavenly Mould. Nor am I myfelf without Hopes of making *more confiderable* Advances in Holinefs.

Asp. May your Hopes be quickened into vigorous Endeavours! And your Endeavours be crowned with abundant Succefs!—What You fuppose, concerning very eminent Chriftians, I cannot wholly admit, neither do I wholly deny. They may have all their Tempers caft into the heavenly Mould: but then, they are conformed to the facred Pattern, only *in Part*. There is a Refemblance; yet not fuch as that clear and fteady Mirror (pointing to a fine Glafs over the Chimney-piece) exhibits; but fuch as fome *turbulent* and *muddy* Stream

Stream reflects.—If the Breasts of these eminent Christians were formed on the Model of *Drusus's* * House; I verily think, You would have a lower Opinion of their Acquisitions in Virtue.

David, whom GOD himself dignifies with the most exalted of all Characters, and styles *a Man after his own Heart* †; who, to a most inflamed Love, added a most accurate Knowledge, of the divine Testimonies; was deeply sensible of the Truth, I would inculcate. After an attentive Contemplation of the Sublimity, the Extent, the Sanctity of those heavenly Institutes, He breaks out into this humbling Exclamation; “*Who can tell, how oft He offendeth* ‡? Was the most vigilant Conduct, or the most purified Soul, examined by this consummate Rule; innumerable would be found the Slips of the former, and glaring would the Failures of the latter appear.”

Ther. I cannot see the Reason, for *degrading* human Nature, to such an extravagant De-

* When *Drusus*, a noble *Roman*, was deliberating upon a Model for his new House; the Architect offered to build it in such a Taste, that no Eye should overlook any of his Rooms.—“You quite mistake my Inclination, said *Drusus*. “I am for the very Reverse of your Plan. I would have my House so contrived, that every Passenger may see, what ever is transacted within.”

† For the Propriety of this Character, and its Correspondence with the Person, I would refer the Reader to a *Note*, in *Dialogue I.* p. 31.

‡ *Psal.* xix. 12.

Degree; and ranking human Works amongst the *Refuse* of Things.

Asp. Do You ask the Reason of this Remonstrance?—It is to preserve Us from the mischievous Error of the *Pharisee*. Who, measuring Himself, not by the *true, sublime, and extensive* Sense of the Law, but by a false, debased, and mutilated Interpretation, became haughty in his own Conceit, and abominable in the Sight of GOD.—Hear Him trumpeting his own Praise; *I am no Extortioner, no Adulterer* *. This, the poor vain Creature fancied, was a sufficient Obedience, paid to the *second Table*. See Him still strutting in his own imaginary Plumes †; *I fast twice in the Week; I give Tythes*

* *Luke* xviii. 11.

† This seems to give the genuine Signification of το υψηλον εν ανθρωποις, *Luke* xvi. 15. Not that which is highly esteemed, εντιμον, ειδοξον. The Proposition, taken in this Sense, is neither necessarily nor universally true. The Meekness of *Moses*, the Fortitude of *Joshua*, the Wisdom of *Solomon*, were highly esteemed among those very Men, to whom our LORD addressed his Discourse. Yet none can suppose, that the Endowments of those illustrious Personages, were an Abomination in the Sight of GOD.

Whereas, whatever is *high and lifted up*, haughty and conceited; every Sentiment of Self-admiration, and all the Fruits which spring from that bitter Root; these are *certainly and invariably* Objects of the divine Abhorrence.—This Interpretation, I think, is most suitable, not only to *Fact* in general, but to the *Import* of this Word in particular: See *Rom.* xi. 20. Where it occurs in a similar Acceptation, μη υψηλοφρονει. *Be not high-minded.*—It seems also best to quadrate with the *Tenour* of our SAVIOUR's Reproof; *Ye are they that justify Yourselves before Men*, but all such arrogant Attempts, and every such elated Air, the most holy GOD beholds with Detestation.

Tytbes of all that I possess *. This, He foolishly dreamt, was a due Compliance with the Demands of the *first* Table.—The young Ruler, seems to have been under the same Delusion, when He had the Assurance to declare; *All these Things*, which are prescribed by the divine Law, *have I kept from my Youth up* †.

A more pestilent Opinion, it is scarce possible for the Mind of Man to entertain. And nothing can appear more egregiously mistaken, if We consider the *vast comprehensive* Scope of the sacred Precepts; and are convinced, that they require a *most exact* Conformity, in every Particular, and every Punctilio.

Ther. Is there nothing valuable then, in Regularity of Conduct, and Integrity of Heart? Is there no Excellency, in our Acts of Charity, and Habits of Virtue?

Asp. From our *Fellow-creatures* they stand intitled to Respect, Imitation, and Gratitude. But before *infinite* Perfection, they must drop their Claim, and lie prostrate in the Dust; imploring Forgiveness, not challenging a Reward. We all discern a Beauty and a twinkling Lustre in the Stars, when viewed under the Shades of Night. But, when the magnificent Source of Day arises, their Beauty vanishes, their Lustre is Darkness. *Such* are human Accomplishments, when compared with the perfect Law,

* *Luke* xviii. 12.† *Matt.* xix. 20.

Law, or beheld by the piercing Eye, of the supremely glorious GOD.

Ther. Methinks, this Notion confounds the Difference of Good and Evil; and, by rendering all our Actions *blameable*, would render them all *alike*. This is levelling with a Witnesses!

Asp. It only shews, that there are Blemishes in all. Whereas, Some are Flaw and Blemish all over. Is there no Difference between the *Leopard's Spots*, and the *Æthiopian's Soot*? If I maintain, that neither of them are perfectly white, does this imply, that both are equally black?

I am only alledging, That all We perform, however *specious* it may seem, is very *far short* of our sacred Rule; and therefore cannot procure the divine Favour, or intitle Us to the Kingdom of Heaven.—Nay, that if GOD should enter into Judgment with Us, on the Foot of our own Performances; He would discover such Defects, even in the choicest Instances of our Obedience, as would render them Matter of *Condemnation* *, not meritorious of *Applause*.

Be

* To this Assertion St. Cyril, in Concert with several other Fathers, bears a very exprefs Testimony: Αυτο ημων και το ορθως εργασθαι δοξου, μομφης και αιτιας αμοιρησειεν αν η τι αυ περιεργαζομενα τε και εαυαυζοντ^ο Θεο. *Even those of our Actions, which seem to be performed in a right Manner, could not escape Conscience and Blame, if GOD should examine, and bring them to the Test.*

Be pleas'd to observe this Penknife—What can be more exquisitely *keen*, than the Edge; or more nicely *polished*, than the Blade? But, how do they appear, when beheld through one of those *Microscopes*?

Ther. The Edge less sharp than the Woodman's Ax, or rather more *blunt* than his iron Wedge. The Polish resembles a Mass of *coarse* Metal, rudely hammered on the Anvil.

Asp. How very delicate is the *Cambric*, that forms your Ruffles; and gives such an ornamental Air to your whole Dress! Nothing can be finer, than the Threads; or more exact, than the Texture. But what is their Appearance in a *microscopic* View?

Ther. You would take the fine Threads for hempen *Cords*; and would almost be positive, that they had been *wattled* together, by the clumsy Hands of the Hurdle Maker; rather than curiously wove, in the Artist's Loom.

Asp. That lovely Piece of *Enamel*, which makes a Part of your Lady's pensile Equipage, quite charms the Spectator, with the Justness of its Figure, and the Radiancy of its Colours. But —

Ther. Under the Scrutiny of this searching Instrument, it loses all its Elegance; and instead of winning our Admiration, provokes our Contempt. It looks like a Heap of Mortar, *plastered* on by the Mason's Trowel.

Asp.

Alp. You see then, *Theron*, what gross In-
delicacies, what bungling Inequalities, this sup-
plementary Aid to our Sight discovers, even in
the *most finished* Works of human Art. So, and
abundantly more, does the immaculate Purity
of GOD, discern Imperfections in our *most*
upright Deeds, and *most guarded* Hours.

I said, *immaculate Purity*—For, GOD is not
only unerringly wise to detect, but infinitely
pure to abhor, all Contamination. Have You
considered this Attribute of the GODHEAD,
Theron?

Ther. I have; and not without Amazement
at the charming, the awful Descriptions of it,
which occur in the sacred Writings.—G O D
is not only holy, but, as the Lawgiver of the
Jews very sublimely expresses Himself, *glorious*
in Holiness *. The sacred Penmen, treating of
this illustrious Perfection, seem to labour the
important Point. They indulge the loftiest
Flights of Imagination; they employ the boldest
Figures of Speech; and add the most glowing
Colours of Eloquence; not without frequent
Acknowledgments, that all the *Force* of Lan-
guage, is abundantly too *feeble*, for the un-
utterable Subject.

One of the Prophets, addressing the KING
eternal, immortal, invisible, breaks out into
this

* *Exod.* xv. 11.

this extatic Exclamation ; O LORD, my GOD, my HOLY ONE, Thou art of purer Eyes, than (to allow, shall I say? This is an Ascription of Praise, unspeakably too mean for thy surpassing Excellency. Thou art of purer Eyes, than) to look upon Evil, and canst not behold Iniquity*.—Another, wrapt into a prophetic Vision, sees the *Seraphim* veiling their Faces, in Token of profound Humiliation ; hears those Sons of Ardour and Love, crying, in loud responsive Strains ; Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD GOD of Sabaoth †.—Nay, so transcendently holy,

* *Hab.* i. 13.

† *Isai.* vi. 3. The Poets, and Writers of a bold Imagination, are particularly fond of *Machinery* ; of introducing celestial Beings, in order to give some peculiar Dignity to their Plan, or some additional Strength to their Sentiments. With inimitable Propriety, and surprising Emphasis, is this Species of fine Writing used in Scripture. Especially in the Passage quoted above.

Let us only consider—The *Personages*. These are the *Seraphim* ; pure and active Spirits. Likened, by the Psalmist, to Flames of Fire ; styled, by the Apostle, Dominions and Principalities of Heaven. Who excel in Strength and Wisdom, in every high and bright Accomplishment.—Their *Attitude*. They wait around the KING immortal, seated on his exalted Throne. They stand ; are in a Posture of Service : with their Wings outstretched, ready to fly at the first Signal, and execute whatever is commanded. They stand, not with their Eyes reverently cast down ; but with their *Faces covered*, to denote the *deepest* Self-Abasement : as Creatures, that are conscious and ashamed of their own Meanness ; or as overcome with the insupportable Glories, which beam from uncreated Majesty.—Their *Action*. They celebrate, not in cold Conversation, but with rapturous Songs, not with single Voices, but in a grand Choir, (יהוה אלהינו, see *Psal.*

holy, says another devout Worshipper, that all created Glory is totally eclipsed in his Presence. *He looketh to the Moon, and it shineth not; yea, the Stars are not pure in his Sight*.*

And

Psal. lxxxvii. 5, 6) the amiable yet tremendous Sanctity of the LORD Almighty.—Their *Manner of Expression*. Though filled and penetrated with the prodigious Theme, they attempt not to describe it. Impracticable that, even by the Tongues of Angels! They express themselves, therefore, in the Language of profound Admiration; in repeated, in reiterated Acclamations to the wonderful Attribute; *Holy! Holy! Holy!*—The *Effects* of this august Appearance. The Posts of the Door, shake at the Voice: the ponderous and magnificent Pillars of Brass, (see *2 Chron.* iii. 17.) tremble like a Leaf. The spacious and beautiful House, is filled with Tokens of the divine Indignation; is involved in Clouds of Smoke; and joins with the trembling Columns, and adoring Seraphs, to tell the thoughtless World, *What a fearful Thing it is to fall into the Hands of the living GOD!* The Prophet himself is struck with Astonishment; is overwhelmed with Awe; and cries out, “as a Woman in her Pangs.”—Can any Thing be more invlivened, impressive, and alarming?

If I shall not trespass upon the Reader's Patience, I would beg Leave to add a Remark, concerning the Word *Sabbath*: which, though a *Hebrew* Expression, is retained in that excellent Hymn, intitled *Te Deum*; and which some People, I am inclined to believe, inadvertently confound with *Sabbath*.—The latter signifies the *Rest* of the seventh Day; and, in this Connection, yields a Sense, not very apposite, and comparatively mean. Whereas, the former denotes *Armies* or *Hosts*; and furnishes Us with an Image, truly grand and majestic; worthy to be admitted into the Songs of Seraphs.—It celebrates GOD, as the great, universal, uncontrollable SOVEREIGN: who exercises a *supreme Dominion* over all the Orders of Being, from the loftiest Archangel that shines in Heaven, to the lowest Reptile that crawls in Dust. Who says to a Legion of Cherubs, *Go*; and they go:—to a Swarm of Insects, *Come*; and they come:—to any, to every Creature, *Do this*; and they do it. See *Matt.* viii. 9.

* *Job* xxv. 5.

And his very Angels, those refined and exalted Intelligencies, *He chargeth with Folly* *.

Asp. Very majestic Descriptions!—And pray let Us observe the Impressions, which such Beamings of the divine Effulgence made upon the Saints of old.—*Moses*, drawing near the cloudy Pavilion, the Presence-chamber of the HOLY ONE of *Israel*, says, with Emotions of uncommon Dread; *I exceedingly fear and quake †*!—When *Job* is favoured with some peculiar Manifestations of the omnipotent GOD, see his Posture! Hear his Words! *I abhor myself, and repent in Dust and Ashes ‡*. How strong is the Language! How deep the Abasement!—When *Isaiab* saw the incomprehensible JEHOVAH, sitting upon his Throne; and the Princes of Heaven, adoring at his Footstool; seized with a Pang of reverential Fear, He cried out; *Woe is me! I am undone! For I am a Man of unclean Lips ||*!—When *Ezekiel* beheld an emblematical Representation of HIM, who dwelleth in Light inaccessible: When the ANTIENT of Days, veiled under a human Shape, appeared to *Daniel*: though One was a devout Priest, and each was an eminent Prophet; yet, overwhelmed with a Mixture of Veneration and Terror, they both fell down at his Feet as dead §. And this, not before

* *Job*. iv. 18. † *Heb.* xii. 21. ‡ *Job*. xlii. 6.
 || *Isai.* vi. 5. § *Ezek.* i. 28. *Dan.* x. 8, 9.

before a full Display, but only before a *Glimpſe* of the GODHEAD. Which, though partial and tranſient, was too dazzlingly bright, for an Eye of Fleſh to bear.

O my Friend! my *Theron!* what Figure muſt *our* mean Performances, *our* low Attainments make, before this immenſely glorious GOD? — Let Us examine the Behaviour and Spirit of *Job*, a little more particularly. He is one of your favourite Examples; and indeed very deſervedly. For, in Piety He had no Superior, and no Equal; *there was None like Him in the Earth*. Yet, when He has to do with the MAKER of all Things, and the JUDGE of all Men, He pours out his abaſhed Soul in theſe very remarkable Profeſſions: *If I juſtify Myſelf, my own Mouth ſhall condemn me: if I ſay, I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe* *.— He declares yet farther; *If I waſh myſelf in Snow-water, and make my Hands never ſo clean, yet ſhalt Thou, O righteous and eternal GOD, plunge me in the Ditch*; manifeſt me, notwithstanding all this Care and Circumſpection, to be a guilty and a filthy Creature; yea, ſo very guilty and filthy, that my *own Clothes*, were they ſenſible of the Pollution, *could not but abhor me*.

This He confeſſes, not becauſe He was an habitual Sinner, or chargeable with any ſcandalous

* See *Job*. ix. 20, 21—30, 31, 32.

dalous Immorality; but because his Mind was filled with the most affecting Sense, of GOD's inconceivable Holiness, and infinite Glory. *For*, adds the venerable Sufferer, *He is not a Man as I am*; but a BEING of such extensive Knowledge, that nothing can escape his Discernment; of such exalted Purity, that every Spot of Defilement is lothsome in his Sight. For which Reason, it is absolutely impossible, *that I should answer Him*, with reference to my own personal Righteousness: *or that We should come together in Judgment*, on any such Footing, without Confusion to myself, and Ruin to my Cause.

To all this He subjoins, what is still more memorable and exemplary: *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my Soul, I would despise my Life.*—He supposes Himself in a higher State, than your most advanced Christian; though I were *perfect*. Yet, even in such a State, were it attainable and attained, *I would not know my Soul*; not dwell upon, not plead, no, nor so much as cherish a Thought of, my own Accomplishments and Acquirements. In the important Business of Justification, they should stand for Cyphers; they should be thrown into Shades; they should intirely disappear.—Nay more; *I would despise my Life*; my Life, with all its most shining Actions and most distinguished Virtues, should be reckoned
in-

insignificant and despicable. Just as *insignificant* and *despicable*, with respect to this great Transaction, as a wandering Spark would be, if appointed to diffuse Day amidst the Darkness of Night, or produce Spring amidst the Depths of Winter.

Ther. These are alarming Hints, *Aspasio*, I must confess. — A Law, which requires an *exact* and *universal* Obedience, both in Heart and Life! — A GOD of such Majesty, Purity and Glory, that Men of the most *approved* Integrity, are overwhelmed with *Confusion*, in his Presence? — I shall consider them, at my Leisure, with the Attention they deserve. — At present, I believe, Opportunity is giving Us the Slip. Yonder Coach seems to be moving this Way, and the Livery looks like *Philander's*.

Aspasio, desirous to fix these Convictions — which are of the *last* Consequence to our Faith and Salvation — very desirous to fix them on his Friend's Mind, replied.

Asp. As your Visitants are at a Distance, give me Leave to observe; That the wisest of Men, attending to the *first* of these Particulars, has poured Contempt upon all human Excellency; *There is not a just Man upon Earth, that doeth Good, and sinneth not* *. The Apostle of *CHRIST* takes Shame to Himself, on the same Account;

* *Ecclef.* vii. 20.

Account; and teaches all Mankind to strike the Sail of Self-Conceit; *In many Things We offend all**.—David, considering the latter of these Points, prays with the utmost Earnestness; *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O LORD!* And assigns this humbling Reason for his Petition; *For, in thy Sight, shall no Man living be justified*†. This induced *Nebemiah*, who had been so nobly zealous for the Honour of his GOD, not to confide in his own valuable Services, but make Application to forgiving Goodness. *Spare me, O LORD, according to thy great Mercy*‡.

Had I set before You the Example of the poor *Publican*, who smote upon his Breast; durst not lift up his Eyes to Heaven; but cried from the Bottom of a polluted Heart, *GOD be merciful to me a Sinner* ||! *Self-Love*, might possibly have whispered; “Surely, I am not to be ranked with that abominable Wretch. I stand upon some better Footing, than such an infamous Offender.”—With respect to the Enjoyment of eternal Life, We stand upon no better, upon no other. And when *low* as that obnoxious despised Creature, We are upon the very same Ground with the most *exalted* Saints. They all appear before the MAJESTY of HEAVEN, in the same Attitude of unfeigned Humiliation, and

with

* *Jam.* iii. 2. † *Psal.* cxliii. 2. ‡ *Neh.* xiii. 22.
 § *Lute* xviii. 13.

with the same Acknowledgments of utter Unworthiness.—For, it is a certain Truth, and admits of *no* Exception; That to justify Sinners, is not the Privilege of human Obedience, but the *sole* Prerogative of *the LORD our Righteousness*.

Ther. Is not the Practice of *Hezekiah* an Exception to your Rule? These, if I recollect aright, are the Words of that holy King; *I beseech Thee, O LORD, remember how I have walked before Thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is good in thy Sight**. You see, He puts the Issue of his Tryal before the everlasting GOD, upon his own Integrity and his own Obedience.

Asp. These are his Words, but they are not used with *this* View. He humbly represents before the great SOVEREIGN of the World, how beneficial his former Life *had been*, and how serviceable his prolonged Life *might be*, to the best Interests of the *Jewish* Nation. He recurs to his Obedience, not that He may establish his Hope of eternal Happiness in Heaven; but that He may obtain a *Reprieve* from the Grave, and a Lengthening of his Tranquillity *on Earth*.—Neither is this Obedience gloried in, by way of Merit; but only pleaded, by way of Argument: As though He had said; “Remember, gracious
“GOD, how I have exerted my royal Au-
“thority,

* 2 Kings xx. 3.

“thority, to suppress Idolatry, to extirpat^e
 “Vice, and to promote thy true Religion.
 “*Consider*, how greatly thy People stand in
 “need of such a vigilant and zealous Gover-
 “nor; and to what a miserable Condition
 “both Church and State may be reduced, if
 “Thou takest away thy Servant by this threat-
 “ened but untimely Stroke. And, for the
 “Welfare of *Judah*, for the Honour of thy
 “Name, for the Support of thy own Wor-
 “ship, *O spare me a little!*”

Aspasio paused; expecting a Reply.—As
Theron continued silent and musing, *Aspasio*,
 with a Smile of Benevolence, proceeded.—
 Come, my *Theron*; why so deep in Thought?
 Have You any Objection to the Evidences I
 have produced?—They are some of the most
dignified Characters, and *illustrious* Personages,
 that could be selected from all Ages: Kings,
 Princes, and Patriots; Priests, Saints, and
 Martyrs. Should these be deemed insufficient,
 I can exhibit a larger and nobler Cloud of
 Witnesses—*larger*, for they are a great Mul-
 titude, which no Man can number, of all
 Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and
 Tongues—*nobler*, for they stand before the
 Throne, and before the LAMB, clothed with
 white Robes, and Palms in their Hands.—
 Ask those shining Armies, Who they are, and
 Whence they came? Their Answer is com-

prized in one of my *favourite* Portions of Scripture: one of those *delightful* Texts, from which I hope to derive Consolation even in my last Moments. For which Reason, You will allow me to repeat it, though it may perhaps be mentioned in a former Conversation. *We are they, who came out of great Tribulation; and have washed our Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the LAMB: therefore are We before the Throne**.

Some of them laid down their Lives for the Sake of *CHRIST*; many of them were eminent for Works of Righteousness; all of them were endued with real Holiness. Yet, none of these Qualifications constituted their *Passport*, into the Regions of endless Felicity. They had *washed their Robes*; had fled to the Atonement, and pleaded the Merits, of *JESUS* their SAVIOUR—Hereby they had *made them white*; this was the Cause of their Acquittance from Guilt, and their complete Justification—And *therefore*, on this Account, their Persons were accepted; they were presented without Spot before the Throne; and admitted to that Fulness of Joy, which is at *GOD's* Right-hand for evermore.

Ther. I have no Objection to your Witness. But, methinks, your Doctrine is strangely *debaasing* to human Nature.

Asp.

* *Rev.* vii. 14, 15.

Assp. A Sign, *Theron*, that it is agreeable to the Genius of the *Gospel*. Which is calculated, as the eloquent *Isaiab* foretold, to humble the Sinner, and exalt the SAVIOUR* ; *The Loftiness of Man shall be bowed down, and the Haughtiness of Men shall be made low, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that Day* † : “ Man, “ though naturally vain, shall be made sensible of his numberless Offences ; shall see the “ Defects that attend his highest Attainments ; “ shall confess the Impossibility of being justified by the Deeds of the Law ; and place all “ his Hope upon the propitiatory Death, and “ meritorious Obedience, of the LORD “ *JESUS CHRIST.*”

* This corresponds with a very valuable Maxim, which an eminent Divine once recommended to his People, as a *Touchstone* to distinguish *evangelical* Truth.—That Doctrine, he said, which tends

To humble the Sinner ;
To exalt the SAVIOUR ;
To promote Holiness ;

That Doctrine, which tends to accomplish *all* these Designs, You may embrace as *sound*. That which is defective in its Influence on *any one* of them, You should reject as *corrupt*.

† *Isai.* ii. 11.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.





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