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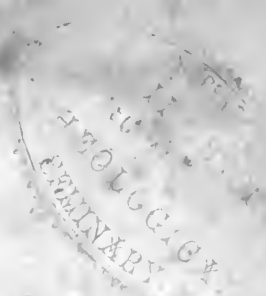
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Contents



1. Remarks on Chubb on Providence
2. Remarks on Chubb's Vindication of his true Gospel of Jesus Christ
3. Animadversions on Chubb's discourse on Miracles
4. Truth & modern-deism at variance
5. True Deism the Basis of Christianity

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Truth and modern-deism at variance ;

Which is shewn,

From a careful examination of Mr. *Thomas Chubb's* four dissertations,

V I Z.

- His I. On *Melchizedek's* paying tithes to *Abraham*.
II. On *Esau's* being a better man than *Jacob*.
III. On *Balaam's* excellent character.
IV. On the people of *Israel's* serving the Lord, intending, their *butchering* of their fellow-creatures.

These heads of argument, Mr. *Chubb* has decorated with several *curious excursions*.

To the Examination, are annexed

Select remarks upon the Rev. Dr. *Isaac Watts's* treatise, entitled, *the glory of Christ, as God-man*. In a Letter to a Friend.

By C A L E B [✓] F L E M I N G.

L O N D O N :

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TO THE PUBLIC.

I Have proposed to shew, that truth and modern-deism are at variance. By Truth, I mean, Things considered and treated by us as they are in their own nature, and as they are represented in that sacred book, the Bible. As to the term, Deism, or Theism, it properly stands opposed to Polytheism, and Dæmonism; as a noble Writer has observed. And is of so much importance, that a man cannot be a settled Christian, who is not a good Deist. Christianity does certainly depend upon the belief of one supreme Being. Hence I understand our Blessed Lord, when he says, no man can come unto me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him. And this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.——But I have used the term, modern-deism, in the vulgar, tho' improper sense of the word; even as it is understood to import a disbelief of the written-revelation. If therefore the true deism, or the belief of one God, is a proper qualification for men's embracing the Christian doctrine, or, their coming to Christ, and working the work of God, then it will follow, that modern-deism, as it imports a disbelief of the Christian revelation, must be at variance with truth.

In Mr. Chubb's dissertations there does appear a want of honest, careful attention; as well as a want of decency. He has made the most venerable characters the subject of ridicule. He has burlesqued visions, and angelical conferences with holy men. And his treatment of God's having a Son, is enormously base and offensive!

He should have shewn, that this world has no relation at all to the great universe, before he had burlesqued the ministration of Angels.——And also that God, the infinite Spirit, has no other way of communicating his will to men, but such as he pleaseth to allot him; before he had struck so boldly at the foundation of the written-revelation. He should have shewn that Wisdom, Folly, Pride, Rebellion have a constitution that implies Sex, because

men are called their Sons; before he had so insolently treated the notion of God's having a Son. And at the same time, it was incumbent on him to have proved, that all men have spoken, and written absurdly but himself. In a word, he should have demonstrated, that [what we call] the sacred Writings have no claim to truth; before he had attempted to take away their authority.

I undertake to shew, that he has greatly misrepresented these writings; and that the conclusions which he draws, are quite opposite to their most obvious sense and meaning.

What pleasure either he or any man can have, in prejudicing the world against a Book, which has been the greatest means of reforming mankind, of any other in the known world, I cannot conceive. For nothing is more certain, than that all the evils, I mean, the moral evils and mischiefs that have had a place among men, are condemned and provided against in this book!—it patronizeth no falshood, no vice, no cruelty. But, when its rules and maxims have been uniformly practised upon, it has every where made men eminently just, charitable and pious.

Whereas, even the public worship of the one God, now preferred to life, by our brethren, the protestants in France, would be lost in the world, if modern-deism prevail'd!

The LETTER annexed, contains select remarks, which chiefly have to do with the supposed UNION between the Father and the Son, as constituting one common principle of action, &c. or one God, which I call, personal union.—A subject, which has very considerable concern with the credibility of the Christian doctrine: and therefore cannot be thought foreign to the professed design of this Treat.

I hope the whole of the examination will be found plain and conclusive: as I have carefully avoided criticism; and conducted the argument upon the obvious view of the history. But with what propriety, the public must judge.



T R U T H

A N D

MODERN-DEISM

At variance.

An Examination of Dissertation I.

IN Mr. *Chubb's* first dissertation, he would make it appear, that *Abraham* did not give tithes to *Melchizedek*, but *Melchizedek* to *Abraham*. The History referred to, is in the xivth Chapter of *Genesis*.

On
Melchizedek.

He will have it, “ that *Melchizedek* having
 “ prayed to God for a blessing upon *Abraham*,
 “ and given thanks to God for giving him the
 “ victory, he then proceeded to *blefs* or pay
 “ his thank-offering to *Abraham* himself, by
 “ presenting him with a *tenth* part of the good
 “ things, he had brought from *Salem*, (for he
 “ gave him tithes of all) and then, the other
 “ *nine* parts; no doubt, he distributed among

B

“ the

On “ the rest of the people to refresh and comfort
Melchi- “ them ; or, at least, as far as that would go
zedek. “ towards it.”——p. 8, 9. This is Mr. C’s
 } account of the matter.

It will be proper to enquire what *foundation* there is for this sense, in the history. And there we are told, that “ *Abram* [for his name “ was not now *Abraham*] when he had heard “ that his brother *Lot* was taken captive, he “ armed, and led forth his trained, or disci- “ plined servants, *three hundred and eighteen,* “ and pursued the victorious *Kings* unto *Dan* ; “ where he *divided* his forces by night, or “ placed them in the most advantageous form “ for engagement : then he smote them, and “ pursued them to *Hobab*, on the left side “ *Damascus*. And he [*Abram*] brought back “ all the goods the Conquerors had taken, and “ also his brother *Lot*, and his goods, and the “ women also, and the people. And the *King* “ of *Sodom* went out to meet him, whose city “ had been plundered, [by *Cherdorlaomer King* “ of *Elam*, and his Confederates] of all the “ goods and victuals that were in it. And “ *Melchizedek, King of Salem*, brought forth “ bread and wine, and he was the PRIEST of “ the most high God. And he blessed him and “ said, blessed be *Abram* of the most high God, “ possessor of heaven and earth : and blessed be “ the most high God, which hath delivered “ thine enemies into thine hand.
 “ And he gave him tithes of all.

And

“ And the King of Sodom said unto Abram, On
 “ give me the persons, or souls, and take the Melchi-
 “ goods thy self.” zedek.

And he gave him tithes of all. Melchizedek first bleffeth Abram, in the name of the most high God, and then he bleffeth the most high God; who had delivered Abram's enemies into his hand: It immediately follows, and he gave him tithes of all. Now whether the personal pronoun, *he*, be applied to Abram or to Melchizedek, the relative, *him*, to whom the tithes were given, could properly be neither the one nor the other; but the most high God, to whom the success was owing. Melchizedek's appearing in the character of priest of the most high God, does plainly determine Melchizedek to have performed the office of Priest in this affair; and Abram must have been the *he* who gave the tithes of all, as an acknowledgment of the success being from the most high God.—The *he*, can admit of no other reference, than either to Abram's giving the tithes of all to the most high God, or to Melchizedek's doing so: the *him* being relative to the most high God most evidently.—So that the *all*, of which tithes were given, must have been of the spoil which Abram had taken; otherwise it would have had no affinity with the acknowledgment made of the success. It must be a tenth of the spoil obtained by victory.

Melchizedek, as priest of the most high God, blessing Abram in his name, and attributing the

On success to the most high God, made the *oblation Melchizedek* proper, as expressing the *external piety* of those times.—And that *Abram* had a right of such disposal of a *tenth*, is unquestionable: and must have been quite satisfactory to all those, who had so lately been under the *oppressive, destructive* hands of these plunderers; and who were likewise witnesses of the acknowledgment made of the success, as owing to God. And that *Abram* did do so, is most probable from the history. So that Mr. C's sense seems quite awkward and strained, *viz.* “ that *Melchizedek*, the priest of the most high God, should “ carry provisions out of *Salem* for the refreshment of *Abram* and his company, and appropriate *one tenth* to *Abram*.” It is no less than an absurdity to suppose this, when *Abram* himself was not perhaps the *five hundredth part* of those who wanted the refreshment! And it must have been unworthy the brave and generous captain of this *little army*, to have suffered any such decimation appropriate to himself. It could surely be no other than *Abram*, who gave *tithes of all*. And this done, in consequence of a religious, solemn acknowledgment made to the *most high God*, as having given him the victory.

The very design of offering a *tenth*, as an acknowledgment of God's goodness in the interposal, will much better suit *Abram* than it can *Melchizedek*; for *Abram* gave the tenth, and *Melchizedek*, as priest, only presented the offering to the *most high God*.—With
great

great impropriety would *Melchizedek* have offered *Abraham* the tenths, in acknowledgment of the success he had had, when he had just before attributed that success to the most high God. On *Melchizedek*.

And as the *tenths*, thus offered, was an act of homage to the Deity, we find *Abram*, in his answer to the *King of Sodom*, declaring, that he had lift up his hand, or made his acknowledgment, by the *tenths*, unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth.

We no where learn, in the *Mosaic* history, that *tithes* were ever given properly to men, but under the character of *priests of the most high God*;—and tho' the head of every family in the patriarchal world, may be allowed to have been *priests*; yet, in the present case, *Abram* does not appear in that character: nor, has he only part of his own family with him, but also other families, together with the heads of them. And besides, *Melchizedek*, the priest of the most high God, is introduced, as offering up *public prayers and thanksgivings* on the behalf of *Abram*. It was therefore quite in character for *Abram* to give, by the hands of this priest, *tithes of all*; as an open confession that he owed his victory to God, and had the most grateful sense of the obligation.

It was no unusual thing, for men in the patriarchal age to give the *tenth*, or appropriate a *tenth*, to the purpose of a religious offering. So *Jacob* says, *Gen. xxviii. 22. And of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give a TENTH unto thee.*

On thee. It seems to have been a religious custom, or stated method of acknowledging their dependence on divine providence.

What then, because *Abram* was, in a sense, a *priest* in his own family, but had now put on the character of a *warrior*, together with all the males of his family fit for arms, had succeeded in his expedition, and was met by a priest of that *most high God*, who had given him the victory; must this *priest* offer and give tithes of all to *Abram*? Of all what? why, says Mr. C. "of all the *bread and wine*, that he had brought to refresh *Abram* and his *Company*." This cannot surely be the case; for there would have been great impropriety in *Abram's* having a *tenth*; as he was but *one* in *five, six, or more* hundreds that wanted refreshment.—And, in truth, this *decimation* of Mr. C's is an absurd thing, in his own explication; because, "the other *nine* parts were distributed, no doubt, says he, among the rest of the people to nourish and refresh them." So that, what was eat and drank by *Abram's* servants, was properly given to *Abram*: and therefore, it is very absurd to suppose, that when the history says, that he gave him tithes of all, that this could mean, *Melchizedek's* giving *Abram* the TENTH of the *bread and wine*, which he brought to refresh him and his company withal; since, the *whole*, or the *greatest* part of this provision would be used by *Abram* and that part of his family, his armed servants, *three hundred and eighteen!*—

It

It must then be referred to *Abram*, and On to his offering of a *tenth* to God, by *Melchize-Melchizedek*, in thankful acknowledgment of the victory *zedek*. he had given him. Indeed it must be owned, that Mr. C. is not *singular* in the sense he has put upon the history: for Mr. POOL, in his *Synopsis Criticorum*, takes notice, "some will have it that *Melchizedek* gave the *tenths* to *Abram*. *Quidam volunt Melch. dedisse decimas Abrahamo.*" And he adds, "so some of the *Jews*. *Ita Hebræi nonnulli.*" But there appears no foundation for the opinion in the history. It could be no other than *Abram*, who gave the most high God the *tenths of all*. And we are not by any necessity obliged to confine the *all* to what had been taken by the *five Kings* from *Abram's* Friends and Allies, tho' I have supposed this; for, if we only allow, that the *five Kings* had *other substance* with them, besides such spoil they had taken from *Abram's* Allies, we may apply the *all* to that plunder: tho' I think it no way improper to take in both. Which ever of these ways we understand it, nothing seems more plain, than that the *tenths* must be of the *spoil* which the *victory* had entitled *Abram* unto, and that constituted the *eucharistical-offering*: which acknowledgment *Abram*, and not *Melchizedek*, made to the *most high God*.

Thus, from every light, it can be placed in, the sense is obvious; and so understood, Mr. C. would have had no occasion for his observation

On vation on the author to the *Hebrews*; ch. vii. *Melchi-7.* who says, [referring to this blessing of *A-zedek. bram*] *that without all contradiction, the LESS*
 is blessed of the BETTER, or greater.

No, says Mr. C. “ a beggar may blefs, that
 “ is, he may put up his petition to God for a
 “ blessing upon a *King*; but then, it does not
 “ follow, that the beggar is *better*, or *greater*
 “ in any respect, than the *King* he blessed
 “ and prayed for; and therefore the aforefaid
 “ *Author*’s reasoning must needs be inconclu-
 “ sive.” p. 8. *note.*

But why so positive? Is not Mr. C. self-
 condemned? “ Is he not disposed to *extend*
 “ his knowledge or belief *beyond* the means of
 “ information, and so has recourse in *conjec-*
 “ *ture*? and as his judgment has no proper
 “ guide, so, consequently, he determines ac-
 “ cording to the *arbitrary* and *wandering* ima-
 “ gination of his own mind.” p. 11.

This will, I am persuaded, be the case with
 his attempt on the character of the *author* of
 the epistle to the *Hebrews*; for it is wholly
without foundation: the history of *Melchize-*
dek giving him, and not *Abram*, the charac-
 ter of the *priest of the most high God, and the*
King of Salem. Mr. C. should have proved
 that there was no weight, no emphatical mean-
 ing in the character of, *the priest of the most*
high God: that such priests were *many*; and
 that *Abram* was equally qualified, and com-
 missioned

missioned by God to *blefs himself*, as *Melchizedek* was to blefs him, *in the name of the Lord.* *Melchizedek.* — That *Abram* was blefled *with effect* by *Melchizedek*, may be rationally fupposed from the character and office of *Melchizedek*; and from his being the *only person* in that idolatrous age, who was *such a King, and such a Priest.* There was none *before* him of like character and office, and none *after* him, till the *Messiah*, the *prince.* Even *Abraham* had no such distinguished character, as a *priest*, tho' greatly honoured of God for his piety and virtue, and called the *friend of God.*

Hence it was that the *writer* to the *Hebrews* affirms of him, from the history, *that the less is blefled of the better, or greater*; as *Melchizedek* sustained a superior character to *Abram*, being *King of Salem*, and also *priest of the most high God*; commissioned by him, *in his name to blefs Abram.* *Abram* was convinced of this, and therefore very justly and piously gave **TITHES** of all.

Upon this historical foundation it is, that the *Pfalmist*, prophetically speaking of *Jesus Christ*, calls him, *a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.* And in which the *Writer* to the *Hebrews* observes, that *Melchizedek's* priesthood was distinguished from the *Aaronical* priesthood; which distinction lay in the latter having *tithes* appointed for them, because *they were to have no inheritance among the children of Israel*, Numb. xviii. 20, 24. But *Melchizedek* was a *King, as well as a Priest.*

On — And besides; the *aaronical* priesthood, *Melchizedek* had a *succession* in the tribe of *Levi*: but, *Melchizedek* had no *predecessor* nor *successor*, as a priest of the most high God, in his family. Mr. C. is therefore mistaken, when he says, “ he apprehends, that it is agreed upon by all, that the order of priesthood, in *Melchizedek*, was the *head*, or *principal* person of every family or tribe, who was King, and priest in his own house.” p. 12. And if he will take his notions from the history, he will find, that *idolatry* had taken an *universal spread*, at the time of this intercourse between *Melchizedek* and *Abram*.

Mr. C. will not allow *Christ* to be a priest, *after the order of Melchizedek*.—why? —because truly, “ *Christ* did not perform *priestly acts*, nor exercise any *priestly office*, in, and among his own family or tribe.” p. 17.

Since Mr. C. seems to have mistook the *order of Melchizedek's* priesthood, which is of itself sufficient to make him *object* to *Christ's* being a priest *after his order*. But then, it does not follow, that because *Christ* was sacrificed by the wicked *Jews* and *Romans*, that therefore he did not *willingly* submit to be thus sacrificed. We, who believe his *divine* character, do discern, that he *freely gave his flesh for the life of the world*. And are assured, that had he *not consented* to undergo the death he underwent, it would not have been *so* rewardable

ble, as that in consequence of such obedience, he should have a *name given him above every name!* On *Melchizedek.*

He shewed, by his chearful obedience unto the death, that *the doing of God's will* is preferable to life; and that the utmost degree of pain should be undergone with composure, in the doing or suffering according to that will.

—An *example* of obedience, which, if followed, will entitle to the *favour* of God, and qualify for life everlasting. In which the *moral redemption* of men can only consist; and on which account he is the *Redeemer* of men, as he thus becomes the *author* and the *finisher* of their faith in God.

The very idea of his *ever living to make intercession for us*, is such a view of his *priesthood* as implies a *personal dominion* assigned him, by virtue of that obedience unto death.

And thus we regard him, as the foundation of our hope and expectation of life, even from his being appointed of God *the resurrection and the life*. So that his exercising a *priestly office* now in heaven, if it be understood to mean his being made *head over all things to his church*, in virtue of his ministrations here on earth, Mr. C. may call it “the *towering* of our imaginations above the clouds.” p. 17. if he pleaseth; I see nothing in it *unworthy* the hope and expectation of the most *rational* Christian, *viz.* that he shall find him dignified with such dominion, as is implied *in raising the dead,*

On judging the world, and determining the everlasting fates of men.
zedek.

This *Writer* seems greatly disturbed with, what he calls, “*the enthusiastic rapture St. Stephen* was in, when he saw the heavens opened, and the glory of God, or God seated on a glorious throne, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God;—and says, that nothing concerning Christ’s priesthood can be inferred from hence.” p. 18.

In the idea of *priesthood*, which Mr. C. would seem to burlesque, perhaps there may be something ridiculous; but as having the *interests* and *concerns* of men constantly in view, I am of opinion, such a notion of *priesthood* may be rationally inferred. And we know, that the *high-priest* among the Jews, had the names of the *twelve tribes*, which he wore upon his breast-plate, as intimating, that he was the *representative* of that people.

With some analogy, therefore, the Jew-Converts might be directed, by this *Christian-writer*, to contemplate *Jesus*, as an *high-priest*, tho’ he was of an *higher order* than that of *Aaron*; *ever living* to retain a concern for his people.

From hence, that is, from *Stephen’s vision*, Mr. C. takes a *tour* to *Abab*, and the *lying-prophet*, 1 K. xxii. “And by the *Lord* or *Jehovah*,

“*vab*, he says, we must not understand the
“*supreme deity*.” p. 19.

On
Melchi-
zedek.

If men seek to quarrel with the Writings of the *Old* or the *New* Testament, they may find a *bad* and *perverse* sense much more easily than a *good* one. I have looked over this history, and can find nothing to give me offence; much less, to lead me to arraign the character of *Jehovah*. The *Jews* had *Prophets* among them, or an *order of men* called so, who were trained up in the knowledge of the Scriptures; they were to speak and interpret *God's words*. And we read of the *sons of the prophets*, 2 *Kings* ii. 5. And of peoples *enquiring* of them, 2 *Kings* iv. 22. *Ezek.* xiv. 1.—And that one of their offices, was, to *pray* for the people, *Jer.* xiv. 11. xv. 1. xxvii. 18. And they are supposed to have had *schools* or *academies*. But it is no where said, that all, who had the name of *prophets*, were *good* men. We read of *false*, as well as of *true* prophets, who pretended to speak *in the name of the Lord*. And in this *xxiid* of the *1st* Book of *Kings*, of *four hundred* of them, whom *Abab* had collected, *false prophets*, ver. 6. What sort of men they must be, one may learn from *Abab's* character, given chap. *xxi.* 25, 26. who is said, *to have sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, and who did very abominably in following idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.*—And it is as plain, that *Jehosha-*
phat

On *phat* had no good opinion of them,——as well *Melchi-* as that *Abab* hated *Micaiah* the true prophet. *zedek.* *Micaiah* is mentioned as contradicting what
 { the battalion of *Court-flattering-prophets* had prophecied ; and even declaring, that he had had a *vision*; in which, it was represented to him, that the Kings who refused his message would be prevailed upon, by a *false* prophet, to take the most destructive measures :—for the 19, 20, 21, 22. are evidently the language of a *vision*. Nor is there any difficulty in the 23d ver. where *Micaiah* says, *Now, therefore behold, the Lord Jehovah hath put a lying spirit into the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.*

It appears, to me, to be a strong *irony*. It seems as if the *ridicule* had been very apparent to *Zedekiah*, the *principal* of the false prophets; for he was so much enraged, that he smote *Micaiah* in open-court, ver. 24. probably, he understood that *Micaiah* intended him, by *the spirit*, in the vision, *that stood before the Lord*, who said, *he would persuade Ahab*: for *Zedekiah* says, *which way went the spirit of the Lord from me, to speak unto thee?* *Micaiah's* answer to *Zedekiah*, and his declaration to King *Abab*, after he had ordered him into prison, are all in evidence, that what he had said about the *lying spirit*, in the mouth of the prophets, being put in *by the Lord Jehovah*, was the most *severe* and *pointed* *ridicule* imaginable! and intended to expose their message to the utmost contempt: for it is, by no means,
 capa-

capable of being understood in, the style of *On the grave*, or the *serious* address; that is, as *Melchizedek*.
 representing the *truth of facts*: but only a *satirical* representation of *hypocritical* appearances, put on by these men, who pretended to be the *true* prophets of *Jehovah*.


If Mr. C. should not be satisfied with this way of accounting for the *Lord's*, or *Jehovah's* putting a lying spirit into the mouth of the prophets, he needeth but to consider it as expressive of the *permission* of *Jehovah*: for in scripture language, *Jehovah* is often said to do that, of which he is no *efficient cause* at all; but only as he does not interpose to hinder, or obstruct the operations of wicked men.—
 In the case of *Pharaoh*, he is said to have *hardened* his heart; when it is evident, 'from the whole history, that *Jehovah* did nothing, that could naturally have such a tendency. All he did, was the *not cutting him off*, by any of his repeated judgments; and so allowed him time to *harden* his own heart. God raised him up, and made him to stand; he did not destroy him under his provocation, that he might *shew his power*, and *declare his name* thro' the earth.

And who that reads the *aphorism*, *Prov. xvi. 4. The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil*;—would understand it, as if God made men *wicked*. The writer cannot be so understood; for in the very next verse it is said, *that every one*

On one proud in heart, is an abomination to the Melchi-Lord.—Men make themselves wicked, not zedek. God; he is no way capable of tempting men to wickedness: but when they are wicked, they agree to the day of evil, or, are fitted for it. He is then said to make them for the day of evil, as he appoints a day of evil, or of punishment for them.

Again, when God in his providence overrules the wicked designs of men to purposes worthy of himself, the good he brings about, is sometimes represented as if the evil belonged to his scheme; so *Gen. xlv. 5.* Joseph passeth over the wicked conduct and intention of his brethren, by a generous compassion to them, whilst they were under the intolerable weight of a wounded conscience; and bids them not be so grieved or angry with themselves, but to consider, that tho' they sold him thither, yet God did send him before them, to preserve life. Nevertheless, the wickedness was their own, tho' the beneficial event was God's; and should be marvellous in their eyes! *Jehovah* is therefore righteous, and acquitted of all concern in the case of the lying prophets, tho' he permitted them to deceive *Abab*: for he, by his prophet *Micaiah*, forewarns *Abab* of the evil.

Yet, says Mr. C. “ the vision of the prophet
 “ *Micaiah*, and of *St. Stephen*, of the Lord's
 “ sitting upon a throne, and of Jesus standing
 “ at the right hand of God, suppose the God
 “ of *Israel* to be in part material, and thereby
 “ visible;

“ visible ; tho’ generally invisible to us : and On
 “ as this raiseth a *low, carnal, unsuitable* and *Melchi-*
 “ *false* image of the Deity, so must be deemed *zedek.*
 “ idolatrous.” This is the reasoning of part 
 of 21, 22, 23 pages.

The conceit happens to be a very *lame* one ; for in neither of these historical Facts, does the *prophet*, or *St. Stephen* appear to have understood what they saw to be the *immensity* of God, which can have no throne : but a *glory* that indicated such a presence of God there, as by no means excluded his presence any where else : yet, in both cases, it indicated a *more radiant* and *striking* display of the presence ! *Micaiah*, as a true prophet, well knew, that in the appearances made to *Moses*, the displays of the divine glory, were always accommodated to the capacity and condition of *Moses* : and the history informs us, that they were far from impressing his mind with *low* and *carnal* ideas of God, or as leading him to suppose *partly* a *material* being : see *Deut.* iv. 12, 15, and onward. And the history intimates nothing like it, from the impression it had on the mind of *Micaiah*. The conceit is therefore without any the least foundation : for the *Jewish writings*, tho’ they often mention the *throne of God*, yet they speak of the *spirituality* and *immensity* of God, with language suitable to *exalt* the Deity, and represent him as most adorable to the conceptions of all men, who can read the prophetic Scripture

D

without

On without prejudice. Let Mr. C. look thro' *Isaiab's Melchi-zedek.* God in it, and then say, whether his mentioning of a *throne*, conveys a *carnal* and *false* image of the deity.—Whatever may be the unhappy turn of Mr. C's imagination, I am confident, it had no such effect on *Isaiab*: for tho' he says, chap. vi. *beg.* that he saw the Lord *sitting on his throne*; yet he constantly speaketh of him in the most *pure, grand, majestic* language and style; even as *the high and lofty one who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy! and who meteth out the heavens with a span! before whom all nations are as nothing, and are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.* Yea, from chap. xl. to the end of that book, the ideas conveyed of God, or the expressions used about him, are very far from being *low, carnal, or unsuitable*; tho' he saw the Lord *on his throne*.—From such vision, he never did once dream of God's being in *part material*, and therefore *visible*; tho' Mr. C's disordered imagination has took this coarse painting. And in the case of *St. Stephen*, there is no more danger of any *debased* sentiment arising in the mind, from his seeing *the heavens opened, the glory of the Lord, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*.—Every one, who is well acquainted with the language of Scripture, knows, that by *right hand*, when applied to God is a figurative way of expressing his *active power and strength*, as his *name* does his *essential power*: and he must be a *weak* person

person indeed, who, because of this *figure*, On
 does conclude, that God has a *right* hand, and *Melchi-*
 a *left* hand too, like himself. With the same *zedek.*
 reason might we charge the Scripture with rai-
 sing a *debased, carnal, and false* image of God,
 because it speaks of him as *seeing* and *hearing*,—
 must we therefore conclude that he has *eyes*
 and *ears*? And yet, what representation more
 awful and affecting, or fuller of Majesty, than
 these, *viz. Prov. xv. 3. the eyes of the Lord are*
in every place, beholding the evil and the good!
Hab. i. 13. of purer eyes than to behold evil,
and canst not look on iniquity!

And when we understand, that by *right*
hand, applied to God, is a figure to express
power and *strength* in a very emphatical sense,
 there is no more danger of any *unsuitable* or
false image being produced, than by using the
 figure of *eyes* to express his *understanding*.
 The phrase, *right hand*, is used by our Lord,
Matt. xxvi. 64.

As to the *heaven opening*; an honest, care-
 ful mind will have no offence from the repre-
 sentation. It is very easy to suppose the *facul-*
ties of perception in *Stephen* made fit, or well
 disposed for the vision; and this would be the
 very same thing in its effect, as if a *medium* or
veil was removed; or it would be like to the
 drawing aside of a curtain. For, tho' God is
 said to be in heaven, he is said also to be every
 where, essentially present *in all space*: So that
 the difference of the display of his being, is, I
 humbly conceive, to be accounted for, from

On the different capacities and powers, both natural *Melchizedek* and moral, of his creation ; added to the divine condescensions. Yet, there are *high* and *low* in a relative comparison of created existences, in the several parts of space ; or *high* and *low* according to the conception of finite intelligences.

St. *Stephen* might then have the vision of a glory, *upward*, to his view ; and see *Jesus* standing at the *right hand of God* ; that is, invested with *active* power : having the *symbols* and *marks* of majesty in his whole appearance ! and all this without any, the least, tendency to introduce *idolatrous* or *base* sentiments : And if so, Mr. *C*'s remarks upon it, however *farcaical*, will have no place. Let Mr. *C*. refer us to any other writings that are so well adapted to *exalt* the ideas of *God*, as those of the old and new Testament, if he is able.— Neither will the use of *figure*, admit of any objection. All writings abound with *figure*, and men are even incapable of discourse without it. Nay, the *sublimity* and *excellency* of all writings, has been estimated from the easy, natural, striking adjustment and application of *figure*.— The *objectors* to Revelation, can no more do without the use of *figure*, than the *friends* and *advocates* of it can : so that in the present case, if we but admit the *propriety* of the *figurative* expression applied to the *visions* related, we shall find the character, of both the *Jewish* and the *Christian* historians *secure* from any injury design'd by this writer. The insinuation of *romance*, the attempt to *defame* and *scandalize*,

scandalize, will have no place or weight, but with such who are under the dominion of prejudice. On Melchizedek.

The inference our *Commentator* would draw, from this play of his own imagination, is, p. 23. “ that if the *author* of the epistle to the *Hebrews* was liable to err, and did err, as in the instances above ; then, that may have been the case of other *scripture-writers* ; I say, that may have been the case, for any thing we know, or for any grounds we have, from which we may fairly and justly conclude the contrary.”

Whatever may have been the case with the author to the *Hebrews*, or other *scripture-writers*, the inference I draw from what has been offered, is, that the *author* to the *Hebrews* has not erred in the instances referred to : but this *scripture-writer*, Mr. C. seems to have greatly erred in his comment on him ; and if he has greatly erred both in this, and in other of his writings, it will hold out to us this instructive lesson, viz. that what he says about the *revelation*, is by no means to be depended upon ; but it must be very unsafe for any man to rely on his representation.

Thus have I done with Mr. *Chubb's* first Enquiry.

An

An Examination of Dissertation II.

Mr. Chubb's second Dissertation is, upon the conduct of Esau and Jacob, the two sons of the patriarch Isaac; whereby, he says, it appears that Esau was much the better man.

On “ **W**HY the younger brother should be
Esau “ preferred in the posterity of Isaac,
 and “ or whether there was any thing in *reason* or
Jacob. “ *nature* to be the ground of that preference,
 “ Mr. C. says, is the subject of our present
 “ enquiry, p. 26. He owns, “ that there
 “ does not appear to be *any other* memoir or
 “ record but the *Pentateuch* only, *from*, and
 “ *by which* the character and conduct of
 “ the *Hebrew* patriarchs are *discovered* and
 “ *made known* to us; so it must be that record
 “ *only* which can furnish us with *materials* for
 “ the general enquiry.” p. 25.

But having cited the history of *Esau's* conduct, in selling his birthright, he says, this perhaps is *justly condemnable*: p. 27. Yet in p. 29. he tells us, “ that *Esau* acted *properly* “ in preferring a greater good to a less, when “ without it, he must have been deprived of “ both; he acted *right* in giving up his birth- “ right to save his life. So that, at the worst, “ *Esau's misconduct* was the effect of *weak-* “ *ness*, but not of *wickedness*; the produce of “ a

“ a *mistaken* judgment, but not of a *vicious* mind.” And here, he again falls heavily upon the *Author* of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, and chargeth him with giving a very *partial* account of *Esau's* case. p. 29.

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

How Mr. C. can reconcile his allowing, that perhaps the conduct of *Esau*, was in this point justly condemnable, with a direct justification of it, as *proper* and *right*, I am not logician enough to find out. Or how was the effect of *weakness*, and the produce of a *mistaken* judgment, a sufficient ground of saying, perhaps he was justly condemnable? — Mr. C. will not allow this to be a good conclusion in any other case: he won't say what he here says, viz. that a man is justly condemnable for preferring a *greater* to a *lesser* good. He knows the contrary; and would pronounce absolutely, that he was justly commendable. He is therefore guilty of abuse of language, of absurdity in diction, as well as confusion in his ideas: for, at the worst, he only allows, it might have been the effect of *weakness*, and the produce of a *mistaken* judgment; but in a better light, it was *proper* and *right* for him to do it.

The historian saith, that *Esau* despised his birthright; by which Mr. C. thinks, “ nothing more can be meant, than that he had not set so high a value upon it as he ought, or as the case required that he should.” p. 28. This again militates with the asser-
tion

On tion of his acting *properly* and *right*. For *Efau* how can this be affirmed of *him*, who had not and set so *high* a *value* upon it, as he *ought*, or as *Jacob*. the case *required* that he should?

But even Mr. C's concession here, will help to justify the *Author* to the *Hebrews*, in calling *Efau* a *PROPHANE* person: for if Mr. C. will but recollect what he says in his note p. 12. of his first dissertation, *viz.* " that the *principal* person of every family, or tribe, was " *King* and *priest* in his own house;" perhaps it may follow, that *Efau* discovered his *prophaneness* in throwing contempt on the *religious* or *priestly* character he was to sustain *; and in wantonly resigning his claim *only* to gratify his appetite, that lusted strongly after *Jacob's* mess of pottage. For it is very improbable, that *Efau*, when he return'd from hunting, should find nothing at all in his *father's dwellings* to satisfy his hunger; or that there was *no food* there, except *Jacob's pottage*; which Mr. C's reasoning would insinuate. The supposition would be wild, and quite absurd; as well as the conclusion, *viz.* that *unless he had had Jacob's pottage, he must have died for want of food*. His earnest manner of requesting that mess, which *Jacob* had prepared for himself, only intimates, his *longing*, or *lusting* for that particular food with great vehemence! and the *barter* which he makes of his *birthright*, with the *contempt* he expressed about it, after he

* N. B. I mention this upon Mr. C's hypothesis; but don't put it as the sense of the *birthright*.

had eaten, makes it probable, that there was something very *irreligious* in the thing.— Neither does it appear, by the history, that *Isaac* knew of this contract; for he wanted to have given *Esau* the *patriarchal-blessing*. Indeed, it must be owned that *Jacob* used great *artifice* and *deceit* in order to obtain it; but it was his right, assigned, made over to him by his *brother*: thus much may be said in the favour of *Jacob*.

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

It is not to be wonder'd at, when we enter fully into the character of *Esau*, that we find him complaining of his brother *Jacob*, and calling him a *supplanter*. But if the *Pentateuch* is the only memoir to guide us in judging of the affair, *Esau* plainly had sold the *birth-right*, tho' he wanted his father to have given him the *blessing* of the elder son, or of *Esau*. "It would be a false insinuation, that *Isaac* did not "bless *Esau*;" as will appear, even where *Esau* plains, *Gen. xxvii. 38. hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, me also, O my father*. Upon which *Isaac*, we are told, blesteth him, and says, *behold thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shall serve thy brother: and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the DOMINION, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.*

It is pity, it is matter of some concern, that Mr. C. has not determined the nature of the *birthright*, or shewn us *in what* it did really consist. He waves this, and says, "he shall

E

" not

On “ not enquire whether in those times parents
Esau “ had it in their *power*, and it was left to their
 and “ option to determine the state and condition
Jacob. “ of their posterity, either for prosperity or
 “ adversity, for many generations to come.”

P. 34.

Mr. C. will not expressly say there was *nothing* in it, because this would prove too much for him, *viz.* that *Esau* received *above* a valuable consideration.——

But what if the blessing of the *Birtbright* had a reference to that *promise* made to *Abraham*, that in thy SEED shall all the nations of the earth be blessed? And that altho' they had no perfectly clear idea of the intention of it; yet they might understand by it, that some great person should *descend* from them; and that the line of *descent* would be declared by the head of the family: as it had been the case with respect to *Isaac* himself, who was to be called the seed of *Abraham*. So, very probably, it was expected that the person thus distinguished should name his descendant, in the direct line of the promise. *Isaac* seems inclined to have pronounced *Esau* his successor, in this line. But nevertheless, when he had pronounced it on *Jacob*, he found that he could not revoke it. He knew that it must be his lot, and not the lot of *Esau*.

Mr. C. would insinuate, “ as if *Esau* had had “ great injury done him by *Jacob*.” p. 31, 33. One would have thought, from his account, that he

he had been disinherited of the *patrimony*. But there is nothing like it. The *Blessing* is, “a prayer to God for him: and a conferring of the title of superiority—*be Lord over thy brethren.*” And this prayer to God, Mr. C. makes *little* of. On
Esau
and
Jacob.

—Add to this, the history says no less than that *Esau* drove *Jacob* away from *all* his father's inheritance; and would not have suffer'd him to share any part of the *patrimony*. So that if this *patrimony* belong'd to the blessing, *Jacob*, in *Esau's* intention, shall not have it. And it does not appear from the history, that tho' *Jacob* did see his Father *Isaac* before his death, that he had such share of his Father's possessions, as could give the least offence to *Esau*: nay, that he had any share at all. Compare *Gen.* xxxv. 37, 38, 39. with chap. xxxvi. 6, 7. In the former place we have an account of *Jacob's* visit to his father, and his father's death. In the latter, *that Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the souls of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance which he had got in the land of Canaan, and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob, for their riches were more than that they might dwell together: and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them, because of their cattle.*

This account does not look as if *Esau* had been supplanted by *Jacob* of the *patrimonial* estate. He should seem to have greatly increased in his possessions by the death of *Isaac*. Besides, before this, when *Esau* and *Jacob*

On had their reconciling interview, chap. xxxiii. *Esau* they both say, *that they had enough*.—So that and whatever was the distribution of *Isaac's* possessions, it does not appear that *Esau* thought himself aggrieved; but he consents to separate from *Jacob*, because of his own *abundance*.

Nor could his quitting, and leaving *Jacob* on the place in the least intimate, that *Jacob*, and not he, had the patrimonial estate. For the text says, that it was *the land wherein they were strangers*.—But the reason why *Esau* removed, and not *Jacob*, should rather seem to have been the greater affluence of his moveable possessions, *viz.* *flocks*, and *herds*, and the *great increase* of his family. And as to *Lordship*, *dominion* or *sovereignty* over the person of *Esau*, if this was intended by the Birthright, *Jacob* does not appear to have enjoy'd the *title* and *dominion* conferred by the *blessing*, or to have claim'd it.

On the contrary, when they meet together, *Jacob* treats *Esau* as his elder brother, or superior, and calls him *his Lord*, *Gen.* xxxiii. 14. As this sense of the *blessing* is prophetic, so it must refer to *Jacob's* posterity, since he did never personally enjoy it.

The history no where mentions *Jacob's* exercising one single act of dominion over *Esau*. If therefore neither *riches*, nor *title*, nor *power* were the things in which *Jacob* supplanted *Esau*: but the *birthright* and *blessing* intended the conveyance of a *promise*, that respected a very distant event; [as I think it evidently

dently did] this allowed, Mr. C. I imagine, will not be so fond of laying any stress upon it. I dare say, he does, in his heart, make *Isaac* welcome to it; and thinks *Esau* a fool for crying about it. —

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

But how will Mr. C's account of *Jacob*'s villainy stand, when we take this view of the *birthright* and *blessing*? how was he so consummate a rogue, as he would make him? If *property* was conferred by the *birthright* or *blessing*, alienable property, *Esau* and not *Jacob* was the accomplished villain! as he occasioned his *brother* to be banished, by threatening his life: and would not have suffered him to share those possessions assigned him by his father, but would have seized them *all* for himself.

It is true, *Jacob* did use dissimulation, great dissimulation and hypocrisy; and his *mother* assisted him in it: but then, it should be considered, that he had been the *comfort* of her life, and *Esau* the *bitterness* of it.—Upon the whole, there seems to be nothing so difficult to be accounted for in the history, as *Isaac*'s blind affection and fondness for his *undutiful* son *Esau*.——And yet, in this, he was not *singular*. Other good and worthy men, as well as *Isaac*, have discovered an amazing affection for even their most *profligate* and *abandoned* offspring!——

Again, should it still be objected, that there was a difference between the *birthright* and the *blessing*? I can understand it in no other light,
from

On from the history, than the *prophetical* confirmation of the rights of the *primogeniture*, which *Esau* had sold to his brother *Jacob*. *Jacob*: and which *Isaac* would have conferred on *Esau*, but, by a deception, pronounced on *Jacob*, and could not reverse it. For had the *Blessing* intended a bequest of his worldly fortune, it does not appear, but that *Isaac* would have had both *power* and a *right* to have altered his *will*, as soon as he found the deception.

Upon a review, we find, that *Esau* had a *blessing*; yet not *that* blessing, which would have belonged to him, had he kept his *birth-right*, and behaved well. And moreover, that altho' there is no defending *hypocrisy*, *lies*, or *deceitful* stratagems in any; yet in respect of *Jacob* such circumstances do occur, as make his case *less criminal* by far, than Mr. C. would have it: *circumstances* which bear very hard upon *Esau's* character! for it seems to me, by the history, that *Esau* sought to have obtained the *very blessing*, that he had long before actually sold to his brother *Jacob*, and under oath too!——

To proceed: *ESAU threatens to be the death of JACOB, in the days of mourning for his father.* But says Mr. C. "tho' this part of *E-sau's* conduct may be *justly blameable*, yet it "had every alleviating circumstance attending "it." Mr. C's *Hero*, it seems, must be almost blameless, tho' he be in his heart a *murderer*, a *fratricide*, a *son of Cain*, a *child of the Devil*,

Devil, in the very intention of his soul! he will vindicate this, because it is *Esau*. For it seems, “ that tho’ *Esau* had this in his heart, “ yet because he did not *hastily* put it in practice, but only intended to do it at some distance of time; hence there is, *every alleviating circumstance* attends this part of *Esau’s* conduct.” p. 35.

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

Mr. C. who expresseth such an abhorrence of *murder* in other cases, has vouchsafed to say thus much, and in so *bad* a manner, in favour of a determined *assassin*.—He afterward proceeds to arraign *Rebecca*, “ as conscious of the “ ill *usage* that had been done to her son “ *Esau*, who, hereupon, to prevent bad consequences, prevails upon *Isaac* to send *Jacob* “ away to his uncle *Laban*.” p. 35.

The history says, one reason was, because she was afraid that *Esau* would *slay* him, therefore she took this method, that by a long absence, his anger might be pacified. Is this an *alleviating circumstance* in favour of *Esau*? but there is more than this in it; she was afraid that *Jacob* would have *intermarried* with *idolaters*, as *Esau* appears to have done: for she says to *Isaac*, *I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these [Esau’s wives] which are the daughters of the Land, what good shall my life do me?* Gen. xxvii. 46. and comp. xxvi. 34, 35. And *Esau*
was

On *was* forty years old, when he took to wife Judith *Esau* the daughter of Beerî the Hittite, and Bathemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite, which *Jacob*. were a grief, [the Hebrew, as by margin,] a bitterness of spirit unto Isaac and to Rebecca.

Mr. C. has cited this passage, p. 31. But then, with his usual complaisance to *Esau*, he says, “ whether he was any way blameable in “ the choice of these women, the historian has “ not informed us, but only, that they were “ a grief to his parents; and therefore nothing “ can be concluded from it, either to his “ praise or dispraise.”

I know not what he would expect more, from the history, to form a conclusion upon. For he speaks well of *Isaac*, however he may have formed disadvantageous ideas of *Rebecca*; he calls him *Esau's* tender, loving father, p. 33. But there is not any thing more express than that *Esau's* inter-marriage with these women, was a bitterness of soul both to *Isaac* and *Rebecca*: and as it should seem, from the history, it was a piece of conduct not much to the praise of *Esau*. Yet Mr. C. won't conclude any thing about it!—He won't,—tho' it so evidently appears, that they made the life of *Rebecca* so unhappy to her, that she assigns it as one chief reason why she would rather send *Jacob* away from her, and deprive herself of the singular pleasure and comfort she had in him!—There is great room then to suppose *Esau* had been very indutiful in this piece of conduct. That he had not

not consulted, at all, his parents comfort or pleasure in his marriages. Neither is it in the least probable, that these complaints would have been made, if he had. In the other *patriarchal* characters, the historian gives a particular relation concerning the parental approbation and choice; as in the case both of *Isaac* and of *Jacob*: who were married under the direction of their parents.—But *Esau's* marriage seems to have been an *undutiful* and *impious* piece of conduct. Besides this, whatever might have been the disposition of his *wives* to idolatry, or any other wrong measures which they took, had *Esau* retained a *just* and *filial* piety, he would not have suffered them, nor have become himself, in consequence of such inter-marriages, the occasion of *bitterness of soul* to his parents, in their old age.

Mr. C. seems to be a very *unfair*, a very *partial* reader and commentator. He says, “the historian has not informed us whether *Esau* was *blameable* in his choice of those women: but only that they were a *grief* to his parents.” Surely he is a stranger to the parental *storgè*, or he would not have treated it with so *faulty* an indifference. And besides, I am obliged to say it, he does injustice to the historian: for the crime was of so heinous a nature, that *Esau* himself is expressly said to have seen that the daughters of Canaan pleased not, were evil in the eyes of his father *Isaac*: and accordingly he went and took another wife, viz. *Mahalath* the daughter of *Ishmael*, *Abraham's*

On ham's son, Gen. xxviii. 8. *Esau* seems by *Esau* this to acknowledge his wickedness, in inter- and marrying with the idolatrous *Canaanites*. 'He *Jacob*. is much affected with the thought of *Isaac's* having blessed *Jacob*, and sent him to *Padan-aram* out of the reach of his fury; and that he might not, as he had done, take a wife of the daughters of *Canaan*; and he feels a painful consciousness from the thought of *Jacob's* obeying his father and mother, and being gone, as it reproached his own undutifulness.— These thoughts moreover, afford him the reason of his not having the blessing, as he had married idolaters; and therefore his line of descent would have been unworthy of the promise.— On these accounts he is now a penitent, filled with remorse; but too late. Tho' in order to please his father, he will not throw off all apparent regard to religion any longer, but will go and take a wife of *Ismael's* family. Notwithstanding all this said by the historian, Mr. C. can draw no conclusion!—

This may serve to abate the force of Mr. C's resentment against *Jacob*, played off till p. 44. At that page he begins his burlesque of "the hieroglyphick dream of *Jacob's*, Gen. xxviii. " and the slow progression of the angels up and " down the ladder."

I fancy, if an *heathen* had formed such a representation, in order to denote the ministrations of angels; [tho' Mr. C. is not fond of the doctrine

doctrine of a providence, either conducted immediately by God, or mediately] and the thing had not been found in revelation; had it but been under the title of a *philosophic dream*, he would have greatly admired it!

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

He is offended, because he thinks *Jacob* has just been engaged in *very wicked* practices; which by no means appear to be any thing like what he has stated them: for, this *enquirer* has been too *partial*.—he has not considered *Jacob* as fleeing for his life, from the vengeance of a brother, who would have murdered him; *viz.* because he, by *dissimulation*, had secured the birth-right, which *Esau* had long ago made over to him, and would have got from him the confirmation of it. Neither does he consider, that *Jacob*, and not *Esau*, had been the *comfort* and *joy* of his parents, the aged *Isaac* and *Rebecca*; and that he is now making his journey at the *command* of his parents, whose faces he probably must never see more.

Had Mr. C. done justice to *Jacob's* character, or treated it with half the complaisance he has done *Esau's*, he would have found *salvo's* enough for *Jacob*; he would have done this, had he made him his *favourite* character. He must have seen some striking marks of piety in *Jacob's* *vow*, which he mentions, p.45. and not have said, “ that *Jacob* took care to stipulate *good terms for himself*, whether he trafficked with God or with men.”

On To vow a *tenth* of what God should give
Esau him, as a constant perpetual acknowledgment
 and of his dependance and obligation, don't deserve
Jacob to be called a *mercenary stipulation*; but from
 the pen of a man of Mr. C's age and under-
 standing, should have been treated as a *pious*
resolution.

Worse yet, Mr. C. says, "it does not ap-
 pear that this part of the bargain was made
 good."—The history no where tells him,
that it was not. "He is again disposed, con-
 trary to the *rule* he proposes, to *extend* his
 knowledge or belief, *beyond* the means of in-
 formation, and therefore determines accord-
 ing to the *arbitrary* and *wandering* imagi-
 nation of his own mind." p. 11.

He ought to have shewn, that *Jacob* did not
 perform his *religious vow*, which is too inde-
 cently called, a *part of the bargain*. Poor
Jacob is very unfairly treated; but the com-
 fort is, the attack is very futile and weak.
Jacob's vow, says he, *seems to have been*
like that of the sailor's in the storm." p. 46.
How and *where* has it this appearance? why in
 Mr. C's imagination! but no where else.

He farther says, "whether *Jacob's multi-*
plying of *wives* and *concubines*, is consonant
 to that rule of action which the species of
 mankind is to be *governed* by, is a question
 I shall not enter into." p. 46.

Why

On

Esau

and

Jacob.

Why will he not enter into it? Is he not comparing the characters of *Jacob* and *Esau*? if he be, it was proper he should have enter'd into it. But because he found he should have no advantage from it in his argument, *Esau's* having had *many* wives, and some of them greatly to the *prejudice* of his character, shewing his want of filial piety; therefore it is, I presume, he would not enter into the enquiry.

He next follows *Jacob* in his journey to *Laban*, and considers his *contract* with him, as to the reward of his labour, or his yearly wages: which, he says, "had the appearance of a most *fair* and *equitable* proposal, and seem'd to bespeak the proposer, *Jacob*, to be a man of *strict* honour, *honesty*, and *integrity*; but, *in truth*, it was an *artful* contrivance in *Jacob* to get the best of *Laban's* cattle to himself," &c. p. 47.

This he calls *Jacob's* craft and *subtilty*; tho' he does not tell us *how* he came by it.—Whether any other but *Jacob*, or even *Jacob* himself, except in these circumstances, could have produced the same effects by the same means.

—But without any regard to *truth* or *mercy* *Jacob* is charged "with *covetousness* and *craft*, that were *inexhaustible*, p. 48. in *draining* the *blood* out of the veins of his uncle *Laban*."

He

On
Esau He calls this, *Jacob's* skill in *natural philo-*
 and *sophy*. Be it so; it then deserved *reward*. As
Jacob. all *Philosophers* have thought, in proportion to
 the beneficial use they have been able to make
 of their knowledge. But has he proved that
 it was owing to this *source*? Not at all. For
 this being once done, and the methods of
 operation obvious; *others* might have made
 the *same* experiment, and with *like* success.
 But who has done it? Did *Jacob* ever do it
 afterward?—so that if it cannot be proved to
 have been owing to this source; it is then no
 more than a *romance*, to say, it was his skill
 in *natural philosophy*.

We will examine the *authentic memoir*, the
 history upon it.

Jacob serves the first *seven* years for *Laban's*
 daughter *Rachel*. *Laban* deceives him, and
 gives him *Leah*. He then serveth *seven* years
 more for *Rachel*. A flagrant proof of *Jacob's*
 inexhaustible covetousness!—He desires of
Laban to let him go to his own country, with
 his *wives* and *children*, *Gen. xxx. 25*, and
 appeals to *Laban*, that *he knew the service he*
had done him. *Laban* intreats him to stay,
 and says, *I have learned by experience, that*
the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. Had
 this been *Jacob's* way of *sucking the blood out*
of Laban's veins? No, Mr. C. will say, “it
 “was his getting all *Laban's strong cattle*.”—
Jacob did practise upon his strong cattle, in
 consequence of the liberty he had of doing so,
 by

by virtue of the contract. And what if *Laban* complains? *Jacob* had all along before this, served him with all his power; and *Laban* had deceived him, and changed his wages ten times, ver. 6, 7. He served him fourteen years for his two daughters, six years for his cattle. He had done it with fidelity and diligence. *What beasts had torn, he bore the loss of, Laban demanded it of him.* And he was so constant to his charge, *that in the day, the drought eat, or consumed, or as the Septuagint, burnt him with heat, and the frost by night, was upon him; and his sleep departed from his eyes, ver. 39, 40.* And *Jacob* declares, *that except the Lord had been with him, surely Laban would have sent him away empty, ver. 42.* It should therefore seem that *Laban* was the ill man, and not *Jacob*, and that the success of his practising on the cattle was owing to the more immediate blessing of divine providence.

Nor does *Jacob* appear to have been overpaid for his labour. Neither did he do the least injury to *Laban*. And the cattle, thus taken away, he had an undoubted right unto. So that if *Laban* suffered in his estate, does it not appear that it was the just punishment of his oppression and unrighteousness towards *Jacob*? No other reason can be assigned from the history. —

Moreover, the cattle taken away by *Jacob*, were for the support of *Laban's* daughters and their children, as well as for *Jacob*: and for that number of persons who went along with

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

On with him, who had been part of *Laban's Esau* family: all which, the covetous, cruel *Laban* and would have sent away *starving!* Such is the *Jacob*. excellent character of *Laban*, which Mr. C. so much pities, nay, so much admires.—

Mr. C. might have spared his severity on *Jacob*, p. 51. where he says, “ that it was “ both *impious* and *false*, for him to make it “ the *act* of *God*, *viz.* the taking away *La-* “ *ban's* cattle, and giving them to him,—and “ that he *covered* his *evil* deeds with the *cloak* “ of *divine providence.*”

From the history, nothing seems more evident, than that it was an interposal of providence.—For in chap. xxx. 39. we are told, that the effect of the measure which *Jacob* took with *Laban's* plain, or simple colour'd cattle, [for *Laban* had removed, tho' Mr. C. has took no notice of it, all the *ring-straked*, *spotted*, and *speckled* of his cattle, three days journey from those cattle he allowed *Jacob* to practise upon,] the effect was, that they brought forth cattle *ring-straked*, *speckled*, and *spotted*.—But from the same history, *Jacob* chargeth *Laban*, with changing his wages ten times, chap. xxxi. 7, 8. So that when *Jacob* had practised upon the cattle, *Laban* would tell him, at one time, that none but the *speckled* should be his wages; upon which providence so ordered it, that the cattle bore none but *speckled*. When *Laban* saw this, then he would again change his wages, and allow him

no other property but in the *ring-straked*; hereupon the cattle bore nothing else, — and so on.

On
Esau
and

Mr. C. should not have cited this appeal of *Jacob's*, and then have charged him with *impiety* and *falsehood*, in fathering these productions on *providence*; unless he could have shewn, from the history, that this was the effect of *Jacob's* artifice, or cunning. — There is something in *Jacob's* accusation of *Laban*, that supposes his uncle very *arbitrary* and *unjust* in his treatment of him. And from his *changing* his wages, such was the appearance of providence in *Jacob's* favour, that his appeal lies *unanswered* in the history. — And that *Laban* changed his wages, as to the cattle, after *Jacob* had made use of his *devices* with them, is a far more probable conjecture, than that he did it *before* such practice upon them; because, if there had been any natural tendency, from the *manner* of peeling his sticks, to make some *speckled*, some *spotted*, and others *ring-straked*, there would have been no room of complaint: for the preparing of the *rods* all one way, would have been as easy a task for *Jacob*, as it had been to peel them diverse ways, at first. The reason of the complaint, must therefore lie, in the arbitrary alteration of the terms, *after* the same method had been taken by *Jacob*, as at the first; and in the *pain* which it gave *Jacob*, to find, that *Laban* would not be convinced [notwithstanding such evidence given,] that it was the *hand*

Jacob.

On of God, or the *immediate* interposition of providence, which secured him the reward of his and service.

Jacob. And indeed *Laban* seems to be at last convinced of it, when he swears by the *God of Abraham*, and the *God of Nabor*, ver. 53. And prays, that *Jehovah*, the supreme God, would watch between him and *Jacob*, when they were absent from one another. And bids *Jacob* see, *God is witness between me and thee*. May we not reasonably conclude, that this method of providence in favour of *Jacob*, had, by this time, cured *Laban* of his idolatrous dispositions; and reconciled him to the loss of his *Gods*, or *images*? ver. 12, 13. I wonder Mr. C. has not more display'd the great *iniquity* of *RACHEL*, in stealing her father's *Gods*!—he has however paid her the compliment, “of having learned the art of *lying* and “*dissimulation* as well as her husband,” p. 52. tho' he has not offer'd the least thing in proof of it: nor can he tell from the history, that her excuse was a *lie*. Neither does her husband ever appear chargeable with *falsehood*, but in that *single instance*, of personating his brother, which was done by him with reluctance, and at the strong instigation of his *Mother*; of whom he appears to have had an high veneration. — Where then does the charge of *impiety* and *falsehood* centre? Surely not on *Jacob*.—For, there is nothing in the whole history to ground it upon.

On

Esau

and

Jacob.

Mr. C. is also pleased to treat *Jacob's dream* with great freedom, and calls it "one of his *arts of dissimulation*, made use of to justify *himself*, at the expence of his *uncle's reputation*." p. 49.—But what is it that *prejudice* will not enable a man to say? The *history* stares him full in the face, and the *truth* of its whole thread, reflects guilt strongly upon him. When he comes to *Laban's dream*, he is in some sort of confusion, and says, "who, or what *this god* was that interposed in *favour* of *Jacob*, when his *character* and *conduct* are taken into the account, is hard to find." p. 52.

Perhaps it may, when given by Mr. C. — But by the *character* and *conduct* of *Jacob*, as it lies in the history, the difficulty will not be found. And one may venture to tell Mr. C. that it was the true God, the *supreme God*, the *God of Abraham*, and the *fear* of *Isaac*. Or in the language of *Laban* himself; it was *the God of Abraham*, and *the God of Nahor*. See *Gen.* xxxi. 53.

It is certainly no less than to do injury to *Jacob's character*, to leave *him* and *Laban* at variance, with such high charge of blame on the former: when the history would have furnished this writer with *Laban's* "conviction of his own *crime*, being the aggressor, the *guilty* person; and likewise his reconciliation with

On “ *Jacob*, by a solemn Covenant ;——their
Esau “ eating and tarrying all night together in the
 and “ mount ; *Laban*’s kissing his sons and his
Jacob. “ daughters, and *blessing* them upon his de-
 { “ parture.” *Gen.* xxxi. 54, 55.

And Mr. C. must own that this is a capital omission.—It looks too much like a writer who is resolved to *disparage*, and *disgrace* a character without any foundation.

I would advise Mr. C. as a next trial of his skill, to attempt a proof of *Cain*’s character being *better* than that of *Abel*’s. It will give him perhaps as desirable an opportunity of attacking the *writer* to the *Hebrews*: And if he can but make *Pharaoh*’s character, a much more excellent one than *Moses*’s, he will *effectually* and at once destroy all credit in the authority of the *Mosaic* Writings.

Mr. C. has omitted two things very much in favour of *Jacob*.—The first of these which I refer to, is, that the *whole scheme* of the deception was laid by his Mother, *Rebecca* ; and all the means were provided by her for the execution of it. She was able to come at *Esau*’s goodly raiment ; she put it upon *Jacob*. Moreover, she prepared the meat for the taste of *Isaac*.—*Jacob* strongly objected to the scheme ; he says, he should appear to his father, as a *deceiver* ; and bring a *curse* upon himself, rather than a *blessing*. *Gen.* xxvii. Yet, his mother insists upon it that he *obey her voice* ; and as-
 fures

tures him, that she will take the *curse upon herself*.—

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

Jacob appears from the history, incapable of having undertook, or of accomplishing the scheme, had it not been for his Mother. She makes it a point of *filial duty*; and removes from him the difficulties which lay before him. She engages to answer for it to *Isaac*, and reconcile him to the deception: which appears by the history to have been the case, tho' *Isaac* at first *trembled with a great trembling*; ver. 33.

The other thing, he has omitted of great moment, is, that in whatever respect *Esau* might think himself injured by him, *Jacob* must be allow'd to have made him *restitution*, by giving him *his blessing*.—*Take my blessing*, I pray thee. chap. xxiii. 11. His present, which *Esau* accepted, consisted of 200 she-goats, 20 he-goats: 200 ewes, 20 rams: 30 milch-camels with their colts: 40 kine, and 10 bulls: 20 she-afes, and 10 foals.— In all, about 580 head of cattle.

The *manner* in which he receives his brother *Esau's* *pacific* turn of mind and reconciliation to him, is very moving. He tells him, that it had given him a sort of divine pleasure, *he had seen his face, as tho' he had seen the face of God*.— And it argues the piety of *Jacob*, to express so much delight in his brother's *conversion*. He left him a *murderer*, and now meets him a *penitent*. *Esau* runs to meet *Jacob*,
embraces

On embraces him, falls on his neck, kisses him; *Esau* and they both weep; ver. 4.

and These are very important parts of the history; and will by no means quadrate with *Jacob*. Mr. C's design of blackening *Jacob's* character. But, on the contrary, they speak much in the favour of this renowned *Patriarch*. He seems to have had as great a veneration for *truth*, as Mr. C. tho' he once acted the part of a *deceiver*, in obedience to the command of his Mother. And *Esau* discovers a great esteem and veneration for him, when he comes to himself; and is far from thinking him that base scoundrel, Mr. C. would make him. Even *Esau* in the height of his power, and fulness pays him the utmost respect and deference: as a man that *God had dealt graciously with!* on which account he accepted of his *bleſſing*. See ver. 11.

Men, should therefore, as that *calm* and *judicious* writer, the reverend Mr. *Joseph Morris* observes, in his Sermon upon *Elisha's calling down fire from heaven vindicated*, “ all
 “ men should do justice to the memory of
 “ the deceased, as well as to the character
 “ of the living; and put the most favourable
 “ construction upon their actions from the
 “ same principle of humanity, which would
 “ lead them to judge charitably of their co-
 “ temporaries. It is a mean and wicked thing
 “ to misrepresent and calumniate the dead,
 “ who cannot speak for themselves; which
 “ crime will be the greater, if they deservedly
 “ bore

“ bore a good character, and are allowed to
 “ have acted well in the general course of
 “ their lives: We should not rashly suspect
 “ evil of such men, but impartially weigh all
 “ the words of an historian, and view all the
 “ circumstances of their action, before we
 “ judge of their conduct in any particular case.
 “ And if there is room for a favourable opi-
 “ nion, charity and justice oblige us to think
 “ the best of them.”

On
Esau
 and
Jacob.

Mr. C. is in haste, to shew his dislike of
Jacob's wrestling with an angel, p. 54. “ The
 “ angels were a species of beings, that very
 “ much resembled mankind, eat and drank
 “ with them: but it is not quite so clear,
 “ whether they were *male* and *female*, or
 “ do *increase* and multiply like men; tho'
 “ some passages seem in favour of the affirma-
 “ tive side of the question. Such as *Job* i. 6.
 “ the sons of God were angels, from Satan's
 “ *associating* with them.”

But what if the *sons of God*, should more
 probably intend, *religious men*; such who wor-
 shipped the *one God* in opposition to, or distinc-
 tion from idolaters? It seems much more pro-
 bable; so I understand it. And I presume
 my opinion has full as much ground as his,
 nay more.

In the language of the *new testament*, the
 phrase, *sons of God*, manifestly intends, persons
 of *great virtue*; those who bear a moral re-
 semblance

On semblance of him, whether they be *male* or *Esau female*. So *John* i. 12. *As many as received and him, i. e. his doctrine,* [women as well as men] *Jacob. to them gave he power to become the SONS OF* GOD. *Rom. viii. 14. Those who are led by the spirit of God, are the SONS OF GOD. comp. v. 18. Phil. ii. 15. I John iii. 1, 2.*

It, at the same time, is expressive of the *important privilege* those persons enjoy, who *duly venerate* the revelation which God has made of his will by his *son* : even as it indicates a moral resemblance of God, which is not at all confined to *sex*. *Men* or *women*, who become virtuous and holy, under the means God vouchsafes them, are honoured with the character of the *sons of God*.——

Mr. C. says, p. 55, 56.——“ if there is no-
 “ thing in the constitution of each individual,
 “ which denominates it either a male or fe-
 “ male ; then it is plain, that the term *son*,
 “ as well as *daughter*, is *altogether irrelative*
 “ to that species ; because there is *nothing* to
 “ ground the *distinction*, and therefore not the
 “ *appellations*, upon.——So that if God has a
 “ *son*, then there must be, at least, a capacity
 “ in nature for his having a *daughter*.”—

I chuse to cite no more of this, as it is so *much* to the disreputation of this writer. He must own, he has ever owned, that God may *properly* be called, a *father*. I know of none but an *Atheist* that has ever denied this. A
Theist

Theist cannot, however greatly he contemns *the Revelation*. But if God may be looked upon as a *father*, without applying the idea of *sex* to him, then he may have creatures, that deserve the appellation of *sons*, from their moral resemblance of him, tho' they should be of a *species* that has *no distinction* of sex; or tho' they should be creatures of *different sexes* in the same species. For as the term or appellation, *father*, applied to God, has nothing to do with a constitution that is bodily or material; so the *relation* subsisting between him and virtuous beings, is of a *spiritual* and *moral* nature, and will justly admit of the *appellation*, without any regard had to bodily constitution*. In p. 112. this same writer speaks of God as the *common father* of mankind—and as not being the God and *father* of one nation more than another.—And does Mr. C. think of him as a *material* being, or as *having a body*, when he has so much *ridiculed* the notion, in his *first* dissertation?

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

The very text he cites, p. 57. from *Gen.* xxxiv. concerning *Dinah's* going out to see the *daughters of the land*, might have led him to discern the distinction intended by the *sons of God*, in the place before cited, *Job* i. 6. comp. as intending such, who were the *worshippers of the true God*, in distinction from *idolaters*.

* Mr. C. has attended but very little to the use of words: or else he would have known, that nothing was more common in the *Hebrew* language, [as appears from the translation we have] than to apply the appellation, *son*, to a disciple of *Wisdom*; or, the *son* of pride, to express a *proud man*, &c.

H

But

On But he wants to shew his resentment to-
Esau wards *Simeon* and *Levi*, &c. “ who no doubt,
 and “ says he, were appointed for that purpose by
Jacob. “ the rest; who, like *thirsty bloodbonds*, came
 “ upon the city.” p. 58, 59.

Far be it from me to justify an action con-
 demned by *Jacob*: and that had great *cruelty*
 in it. I am as little fond of any thing that
 looks like *cruelty*, as Mr. C. can be. But I
 hate *defamation*; it is wrong in any writer. To
 stab men's *characters* is as little defensible,
 as to murder, or take away their *lives*: And
 I would yet have that opinion of Mr. C. as to
 hope, that where he sees it to be the case, he
 will own that it is so.—

I am not assured, from the history, that any
 one of the *sons of Jacob* were concerned in this
 massacre, but *Simeon* and *Levi*. See *Gen.* xxxiv.
 25, 26, 27.—*And it came to pass that two of*
the sons of Jacob, SIMEON and LEVI, Dinah's
brethren, took each man his sword, and came
upon the city boldly, and slew all the males.
And they slew Hamor and Shechem with the
edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of She-
chem's house, and went out. The sons of Ja-
cob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city.

Here is no mention made of the other sons
 of *Jacob*. And it may as properly, perhaps,
 only properly be understood, of *Simeon* and *Levi*,
 those *sons of Jacob*, who had slain the men of
 the city; then entered the house of the prince,
 slew him and his son, brought their sister a-
 way; and after this, came upon or among the
 slain;

slain, and took away the spoil. This seems to be the plain sense of the history: for,

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

At v. 30. *Jacob* is said to reprove no one of his sons but *Simeon* and *Levi*. Whereas if the *others* had been concerned, they surely would have been mentioned:—but not one word of any other in the whole history. And when we read him pronouncing his *last thoughts* about his children, called his *blessing*; we find that he reproaches no one for the crime but *Simeon* and *Levi*: And yet, tho' there is not any foundation of charge in the history, Mr. C. adds to the text, “ *who no doubt were appointed for that purpose by the rest.*”—And, “ *probably the other sons, having the signal given them.*”—

Upon the whole, it is therefore evident, that whatsoever might be the resentment of the rest of *Jacob's* sons, to the indignity offered their sister *Dinah*, it does no where appear from the history, that any one of them had either laid the scheme, or consented to the execution of it, save only *Simeon* and *Levi*. None but these are charged with the crime: whereas in the comment of Mr. C. they were *equally* guilty, as confederates. But had this been the case, *Jacob* would, no doubt, have laid no such partial charge of *crime*, by putting it wholly on *Simeon* and *Levi*; nor from a *total silence* acquit all the rest. Mr. C. makes the other brethren, not only *conspirators* against the lives of *Shechem*, and *Hamor* his father,

On but *confederates* in the slaughter: whereas had *Efau* he attended carefully, and without prejudice, and he might have seen, that it is not at all necessary to suppose them *parties* at all in the slaughter, but the contrary: for the history expressly says, that the *sons of Jacob*, who perpetrated the slaughter were *Simcon* and *Levi*; and *confines* it to them, by saying, Two of the sons of *Jacob*, v. 25. “ who slew all the males in the city, then *Hamor* and *Sheckem*, and brought out *Dinah* their sister: after this, they spoiled the city.” Now, if these *two armed men* may be supposed capable of the *greater* exploit, without any assistance from their brethren, they were surely capable of the *less*, *viz.* that of spoiling the city, when all the men were slain.

However, in their *wrath*, tho' it was *cruel*, and in their *anger*, tho' it was *curfed*, they spared the *little ones*, the *children*, and the *women*; as these were supposed not to have approved the *rape* which *Sheckem* committed upon *Dinah*, v. 29.

The history seems to have thus acquitted the other sons of *Jacob*, who must have been chargeable, if the thing had been as Mr. C. has represented it. Or if we could suppose them, even to have assisted in spoiling the city, they must have been looked upon as *accessories* to the massacre; and deserved reproof and censure from *Jacob*: and I see no reason of doubt, but they would have had it; and that we should have known it.

In p. 62. we have *Jacob's* character summed up. "Upon the whole, it seems to be this, viz. he was a *covetous, crafty, designing man*; who sacrificed *truth, honour, and honesty* to his avaricious views: and tho' he made a profession of *great piety*, and he is said to have had frequent *personal conferences* with God, with Angels, &c. yet his conduct, upon the whole, seems justly condemnable, and what even a *wise and good man* would *greatly disapprove.*"

Whereas, "*Esau* appears to have been a *plain, honest, undesigning, good-natured man.*"
p. 63.

On
Esau
and
Jacob.

I do cheerfully refer the *Dissertation* of Mr. C's upon these *two Characters*, to a comparison with what I have offered. Being persuaded that the *supreme God* may yet, with great propriety, be considered, as having been the *God, the patron, and defender of Jacob*, notwithstanding the attempt of this writer, to make it improbable, or impossible.

An

An examination of *diss.* III.

Mr. Chubb's third dissertation, is, upon the conduct of Balaam. In which he says, that prophet's character is cleared of those reproaches and imputations wherewith it has been stained.

On *Balaam* **I**N p. 72. it is said, " that as *Balaam* would " give no answer to *Balak's* messengers, " until he had received instructions from God, " and then he would answer agreeable there- " to : this *cautious conduct* in *Balaam* seems " to merit praise, in that he would not *hastily* " take upon him to *bless*, or to *curse*, until " he had consulted his *principal*, and was in- " vested with proper authority for either."

We may already form a judgment of Mr. C's opinion as to *prophets*, and *revelations*, and *visions*, from what has been observed of him in the *two* former dissertations. He seems to laugh at them, as mere *chimeras*. Nevertheless, we shall find him mighty gravely defending the character of the prophet *Balaam*, as he thinks it will give him an opportunity of demolishing the authority of a New Testament *writer* or two. Indeed he has not quite covered the grimace of this *grave* defence; for he here mentions *Jehovah*, under the appellation of *Balaam's principal*! " who, or what " that God was that appeared to *Jacob* and to " *Laban*,

“ *Laban*, we are before told, he thinks it On
 “ hard to find: whether a being of a species *Balaam*
 “ like to man, that *increased* and *multiplied*,
 “ is not so clear a point; but he thinks there
 “ are *some* passages in HOLY WRIT, which
 “ seems to favour the affirmative side.”——

p. 54. We cannot therefore suppose him in earnest in this dissertation, but as having a favourite view and purpose to serve, viz. that above-mentioned.

However, *Balaam*, he tells us, ‘ disregarded
 ‘ the importunity of *Balak*, and all his bribes,
 ‘ and would not *curse Israel*,——he held fast
 ‘ his integrity. And when he saw that it
 ‘ pleased the Lord to *blefs Israel*, he went not
 ‘ forth to *receive* instructions, as at other
 ‘ times, but the *spirit* of the Lord came upon
 ‘ him, and he prophecied of, and pronounced
 ‘ a blessing upon *Israel*, p. 74, 75. Thus it
 ‘ appears from the Historian, that he *resolved*,
 ‘ and *made good* his resolution, not to *deviate*
 ‘ from his duty, either by *excess* or *defect*,
 ‘ that he would do neither *more*, nor *less*, than
 ‘ as God should direct; that the *word* which
 ‘ God should put in his *mouth*, *that* and *that*
 ‘ *only*, he would speak. And, therefore,
 ‘ whatever *opprobrious names* he may have
 ‘ been stigmatized by, whether that of con-
 ‘ juror, enchanter, or otherwise; yet his *be-*
 ‘ *haviour* and *conduct* appear to be *amiable*,
 ‘ and which has not been *excelled* by many of
 ‘ those whose names have been enter’d upon
 ‘ record, either in *sacred* or profane history.

‘ And

On *Balaam* ' And he introduces the prophet *Micah* as relating something that will greatly heighten his character; *tho'* by what authority he knows not. p. 76. *Micah* vi. 5, 6, 7, 8. From which passage Mr. C. concludes, that " never had any man more just and proper notions of the supreme Deity, and of the true grounds of men's acceptance with him, than *Balaam* had." p. 77.

Here Mr. C. has borne his testimony to the passage in *Micah*, as giving " the most just and proper notions of the supreme Deity, and of the true grounds of Man's acceptance with him." There is something then very good in the book, which we call a *divine revelation*. Something, that no *theist* can possibly exceed.

But yet, as Mr. C. does not know by what authority *MICAH* relates this, he seems too bold in making that use of it which he does in *Balaam's* character.

And truly, it appears very plain to me, that the prophet does not mention these things, as the words of *Balaam*, but as his own. He indeed " bids them, the *Jews*, reflect on what *Balak* consulted, and what *Balaam* answered." But the things he infers from those transactions are intended to shew the *inefficacy* of all their consultations, contrivances or schemes. — That they cannot be fairly understood as the words of *Balaam*, seems evident, because that prophet once and again bid *Balak* build altars, and

and offer sacrifices. See *Numb.* xxii. 39, 40. On xxiii. 15,—29, 30. And sought after enchant-
Balaam
ments, chap. xxiv. 1.

The History informs us, that *Balaam* did not, could not curse *Israel*. But as soon as the history of *Balaam's* intercourse with *Balak* finishes, chap. xxiv. 25. the account takes place, of the people of *Israel* committing whoredom with the daughters of *MOAB*. It does not say here expressly that *Balaam* advised to this stratagem; but inasmuch as the very same historian in another Book intimates, that *Balaam* would have cursed *Israel*, but God would not hearken to him, *Deut.* xxiii. 5. and that nothing else could be the plain and manifest design of his directing *Balak* to, build altars, and offer sacrifice; compare *Josh.* xxiv. 10. we may fairly conclude, that *Balaam* would have cursed *Israel*, or intimated such desire in the several directions he gave *Balak*: and was capable of giving such advice. So that the words of *Micah*, will not bear to be understood as the words of *Balaam*.

But to this Mr. C. says, “ that *Balaam's* desire to curse *Israel*, is not supported, but is rather contradicted by the more general history of *Balaam*; so it carries with it its own answer.” p: 84.

By way of reply, I ask, why did *Balaam* make so much of the messengers, and use so many stratagems to gratify *Balak*, and seek to please him,

I

On him, by directing him again and again to *sa-Balaam crifice*, if he had not been influenced some way, by a *desire to curse Israel*? The run of his history does not contradict, what the same historian has said of *God's not hearkening to Balaam, who wanted to have cursed Israel*.—How is it that God did not hearken to *Balaam*, if *Balaam* had not had such desire? That he had, seems evident, and is a sufficient ground of *St. Peter's* remark, *viz.* that *Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness*? *2 Pet. ii. 15.* and of *Jude's*, that he ran greedily after reward.——

The *Revelation* made to *St. John*, expressly mentions him as *teaching Balak* to cast a *stumbling block* before *Israel*.—And the *history* has nothing in it that contradicts this. It is therefore infinitely more safe, to rely on the declarations of these *New Testament* writings, than on the imagination of any man.

Mr. C. indeed builds upon the words of *Micah*, as if they were *Balaam's* words; but if there is no reason to conclude they were *his* words, but *Micah's* reflections upon the *vain*, and *fruitless* attempts of *Balaam* and *Balak*, as they most probably, and I think undoubtedly are, then *Mr. C's* reasoning has lost all its force, and what he builds upon it must every bit of it fall to the ground.

In order to remove all imaginary ground of *objection*, I will endeavour to account for the intercourse between *Jehovah* and *Balaam*, tho' a *bad* man; and then put the narrative into
one

one connected view : by which the *wide throat* On
of credulity may be seen to belong to Mr. C. *Balaam*
 p. 86. }

That *Jehovah* should make such use of *Balaam*, as the History informs us he did, tho' a dealer in enchantments, or a famous conjurer, of whom *Balak* had an high opinion, may, I imagine, be thus well accounted for : *viz.* As it was a method of convincing the *Moabites* of his being the *God of Israel*, thro' a *medium* of their own chusing.—And from this condescension of *Jehovah* to a converse with *Balaam*, tho' *Balaam* found himself under an *inability* to do the thing which he was desired by *Balak* to do ; yet, he might presume, upon the conferences he had, that in consequence of some farther use of sacrifices and enchantments, that *spirit of divination* which he wanted, would come upon him. *Balaam* seems not to speak at any time about *Israel* as one who declared himself *freely*, but under impulsive constraint.—I have formed these ideas of him from a careful view of the history : See *Numb.* xxii. 13. God had told *Balaam*, that he should neither go with the elders, nor curse the people : upon which *Balaam* bids them *go back ; for the Lord had refused him leave to go with them.* I will give an abstract of the following history, as it appears to me.

“ After this, *Balak* sends more honourable
 “ princes. *Balaam* tells them, *that he cannot go*
 I 2 “ beyond

On “ beyond the word of the Lord, if Balak would
 Balaam “ give him his house full of silver; ver. 18. but
 “ he would have them tarry all night: and he
 “ would try what might be done. He has
 “ leave to go. Yet, God’s anger is said to be
 “ kindled against him, because he went.”—
 The difficulty here may be removed. “ The
 “ condition of leave, was, that he should be
 “ govern’d by God’s direction, the word which
 “ should be said to him.” And it seems high-
 ly probable, that he had been making *fine pro-*
misses to the princes, of his *curfing* Israel. “ On
 “ which account, we have the appearance of
 “ the *angel*, and the speaking of the *afs*;
 “ which were proper to convince the princes,
 “ as well as reprove the *prophet* for his pre-
 “ sumption.—That this was the case, seems
 “ probable from ver. 35. where the angel
 “ suffers him to go forward with the men,
 “ *only he was to take care, not to speak any*
 “ *word about* Israel, *but what should be spoke*
 “ *to him.*” This seems to me to be a rebuke
 for what he had said, and to give us the key.
 “ And when he comes to *Balak*, he tells him,
 “ that he had no power at all to say any thing
 “ of himself. *Lo*, says he, *I am come to thee!*
 “ *have I now any power at all to say any thing?*
 “ the word that God puts in my mouth, that
 “ *shall I speak.* That is, thou art never the
 “ better for sending for me, I am no *free-agent*
 “ in the affair: and thy princes can witness to
 “ the reproof I had by the angel, in the way,
 “ and

“ and also to the express order I had from On
 “ him.— Balaam

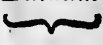
“ However, *Balaam*, on the morrow, orders
 “ *Balak* on a high hill, according to the
 “ custom of idolaters, to build him seven al-
 “ tars, and prepare him seven oxen, and se-
 “ ven rams. And *Balaam* and *Balak* offer'd
 “ a bullock and a ram upon each altar. These
 “ are some of the enchantments. This magi-
 “ cian useth this mystical number of altars,
 “ and sacrifices, seven; an equal number of
 “ beeves and of rams: and says, peradventure
 “ God would meet him there. He is met,
 “ but so far from any success from his *enchant-*
 “ *ments*, that he *blesseth Israel*, and *curseth* the
 “ enemies of *Israel*, and he does it in *Balak's*
 “ hearing, chap. xxiii. 1,—11. And tells
 “ him he could not help it, ver. 12. *Balak*
 “ carries him to the top of another high hill.
 “ They do the same things over again. *Balaam*
 “ seems now to be more confident about meet-
 “ ing the Lord.—The Lord meets him, and
 “ the *parable* he obliges *Balaam* to utter, sig-
 “ nified his *unchangeableness*; and that no *en-*
 “ *chantment* would lie against *Jacob*, or *divi-*
 “ *nation* against *Israel*.—*Balak* now bids *Ba-*
 “ *laam* neither curse at all, nor bless at all.
 “ But *Balaam* tells him, *all that the Lord*
 “ *speaketh, that I must do*. Nevertheless they
 “ will make another attempt; at which *Ba-*
 “ *laam* saw that it pleased the Lord to *bles*
 “ *Israel*, so that he sought no more after his
 “ enchantments; but is again obliged to speak
 “ of

On “ of *Israel* as wonderfully victorious and amazingly prosperous! And tho’ *Balak*’s anger *Balaam* “ is kindled against him, yet *Balaam* is forced “ to deliver a stinging prophecy about the de- “ struction of the *Canaanites*.”

In all this account I cannot see the least intimation of any *virtuous* character belonging to *Balaam*. For even what he said of *desiring to die the death of the righteous*, and of *having his latter end like his*, was no more spoken freely by him, than any other part of the parable, from a *compulsive impression* made upon him. He appears to have been an *idolater*; and to have used his *enchantments*, in order to have obtained leave, and a power of CURSING *Israel* in the name of the God of *Israel*, but could not.

Thus have I examined the *facts* from which the character of *Balaam* is to be drawn: and find nothing *good* in it. The inference which *Micah* makes from *Balak*’s consultations, and *Balaam*’s answers from *Shittim* to *Gilgal*, will teach one the *righteousness* of the Lord, but not of *Balaam*. His whole conduct which Mr. C. applauds, was *involuntary*. Nor is there one single passage in the whole History, that intimates either his piety or virtue. Mr. C’s charging the New-Testament *writers* with *calumny*, p. 87. is quite groundless.

I have not, in these *few* observations, offer’d the least violence, that I know of, to the true and
apparent

apparent state of the case. And tho' I no more On
delight in exaggerating a *wicked* character, than *Balaam*
in detracting from a *good* one; yet it appears 
plainly to me, that *Balaam's* was not a *good*
one; and that the remarks of the New-Testa-
ment writers may be justified, from that very
historian's account, who wrote the transactions
of *Balaam* and of *Balak*.

An

An examination of *diss.* IV.

Mr. C's fourth dissertation, is, upon that assertion of the Lord Bishop of Salisbury's, in a late sermon from Judges ii. 7. viz. thus far all is well. His design is to prove, that Joshua's sense of the Israelites serving the Lord, intended, their butchering of their fellow-creatures.

On *the* *Lord.* **I** Shall not undertake to defend a *Writer* of so great abilities, as are those of the *Bishop of Salisbury*. He needs not my help; for if he thinks Mr. C's *remarks* worth his notice, he will, I am persuaded, convince the world of the *inconclusiveness* of the reflections made upon his assertion. Nevertheless, I will take some particular notice of the *chief design* of this dissertation, which, according to the late method taken by Mr. C. is to *depreciate* the authority of the sacred writings.

He, p. 89, 90. will consider the *premises*, from which the *conclusion* is drawn: and he says, "that by *servicing the Lord*, sometimes
 " signifies *worshipping him*, or shewing outward marks of *respect*, suitable to the *external piety* of the times, and which in *Joshua's* time consisted in *building altars, offering sacrifices, &c.* but then, this could not be intended by the historian, because in these
 " services,


“ services, according to the history, the people of *Israel* had been almost totally deficient.”

On
serving
the
Lord.

This passage, I am of opinion, is expressed somewhat improperly, as will be seen in the following respects: As,

1. When he says, that *serving the Lord*, is to be understood, the shewing outward marks of respect to him, *suitable to the external piety* of the times: I understand the *outward marks* of respect, viz. *building altars, offering sacrifices, &c.* being in themselves what would express the *external piety* of the times, and not any thing *distinct* from it; or, as what may be called, *suitable to the external piety*. Had he said, that these things were *suitable to the internal piety* of the times, he had spoke, in my opinion, more properly; but then it would not have suited so well with his design: which is to insinuate, that they had been *almost totally deficient in serving the Lord*, from the time of their passing over *Jordan*, [at which time they were circumcised, and kept the passover] till the time of the second attack upon *Ai*.——

To suppose them influenced by a *faith* in the one *God*, and a *fear* and *reverence* of him, tho' they had not manifested that external piety, which consists in *building altars, and offering sacrifices, &c.* would not serve Mr. C's purpose, because the internal piety might be said to be, 'a *serving of the Lord*.'

On 2. I can less relish that expression, of being *servi*ng almost totally deficient; for if it was but almost, *the* there had been some one instance or more of *Lord.* such respect paid to the Lord, notwithstanding  the history should not give the *least hint* of their performing *any act* of publick worship, until the end of *Joshua's* campaign.—But if there had not been any, and Mr. C's opinion be conclusive, *viz.* that from the *silence* of the history, there could have been *none*, then, his *almost totally deficient* is very absurdly expressed. On the other hand, to suppose that there might have been *one* public act of homage performed by them, will admit, upon the same *ratio*, that there had been *more* or *many*; which will absolutely destroy the whole of his reasoning.—But, what must one think of the law of the *weekly sabbath*, or how it would operate upon them? Was it not expressive of *public homage*, as they rested upon it from their labour, by virtue of its being a divine command; tho' they did not *build altars*, or offer *sacrifices*?

Secondly, serving the Lord, he says, “sometimes implies *worshipping the Lord*, and *him only*, in distinction from, and in opposition to the worshipping of *idols*, and the *gods* of other nations; but this, the Historian has informed us, was not their case; and therefore could not be intended by him.”

P. 90.

Why

Why so? why because “ *Joshua*, a little On
 “ before his death, called the people together, *servi*ng
 “ and having reminded them of the *victories* the
 “ they had obtained, which he considered as *Lord*.
 “ the *works* of the *Lord*, and which the hi-
 “ storian called the *mighty works* of the *Lord*,
 “ that he did for *Israel*, he exhorted them as
 “ followeth, *Josh. xxiv. 14. to fear the Lord,*
 “ *and serve him in sincerity, and in truth, and*
 “ *to put away the strange gods, &c.* Hence,
 “ he says, it is plain, that the *Israelites*, in
 “ his *time*, even whilst they were making
 “ war upon the *Canaanites*, retained and ve-
 “ nerated the *gods* or *idols* their fathers had
 “ worshipped.” p. 91.—

Surely this is *unfair* reasoning: for, from the time of their having built an altar to the Lord, at the attack upon *Ai*, till the time that *Joshua* gives this exhortation, was about *twenty-four* years. At which time having been flushed with success, and beginning to enjoy a peaceful possession, the worst that can be supposed, is, that the bulk of the people might possibly become *vain* and *foolish*. But there is not the least reason to conclude, that this had been the *real* condition and character of this people, during the whole time of their being engaged in war; *but the contrary*. For they never had one single *promise of success* against their enemies, whilst in a state of idolatry; but must have been defeated and *cut off* whenever they [being idolatrous] engaged
 K 2 with

On with the enemy. For, the very reason why *servi*ng God commissioned them to dispossess the *Canaanites*, was their *idolatry and enormous Lord-wickedness!* Let any one read the xviii chapter of *Leviticus*, and then say, if he can, that any people could have been more abominably wicked! Besides, *Israel* is threatned, that if they went into the same abominations, *that the land should spue them out also*, ver. 28, 29. And their *possession* of it, depended upon their preserving themselves free from *idolatry and vice*, upon their *cleaving* to the Lord, and *servi*ng him, in this latter sense of the word, *viz. worshipping* the Lord, and *him only*: or else there is no truth, either in what *Moses*, or what *Joshua* declared. I would refer my reader to the constant declarations of both. So that if the *history* is to be our *guide* in this matter, and not the groundless opinion of Mr. C. the *Israelites* could not have had success in *one single* battle; nor have been able to have made *one single* conquest, had they been *idolaters* during the engagement. And altho', they, some of them might possibly have become *wanton*, and *ungrateful* at the time of this *exhortation* given them by *Joshua*; yet, when he declares his *own choice*, *Josh. xxiv. 15.* they appear not to have been so far rivetted in their follies, but express *repentance*; *i. e.* supposing this the state of the case.

But, I am of opinion, [tho' for argument's sake, I have supposed the worst of them,] that they, at this time, were not at all gone
into

into idolatry. The reasoning of the former, On chapter, and of this, would lead one to think *servings* them *no idolaters*.—*Joshua* is only apprehensive, that this might hereafter become the *Lord*. case with them, upon their complete establishment, when in a state of fulness, of uninterrupted peace, and tranquility. And the very answer of the people will naturally lead one to conclude, that they had not now become idolaters; for they say, *GOD FORBID that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods!*—Does this look like the answer of a people conscious, at the same time, of their being idolaters? Or, does it not rather express the utmost abhorrence; expressed by them of idolatry?—

To this Mr. C. will reply, “that *Joshua* says, “ ver. 23. *Now therefore put away the strange gods that are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel.* And that hence it is plain, that the *Israelites retained and venerated the idols their fathers had served.*” p. 92.

I think that this is not plain: it seems more plain, that many of the *idols* of the *Canaanites* might yet remain in the land undestroyed; but since they had had experience, ocular demonstration, that they were *vain* and *idle* things, which had stood the *Canaanites* in no stead; but they had every where fallen before the *arms* of *Israel*; hence it is reasonable to conclude,

On conclude, that they must have the *utmost* *con-*
serving *tempt* of idols, at this season. Nevertheless
the *Joshua*, well knowing how *vain* men may be-
Lord. come, especially in *easy*, full, and prosperous cir-
 cumstances; he thus exhorts them, with great
 earnestness, to *put them away*, and *destroy*
 them, even all those *idols*, and to consider
 them, as of the same nature and kind, with
those of Terah the father of Nachor and of
Abraham, who served other Gods,—and not
 the true God. *Josh. xxiv. 2.*

It is farther evident, that this exhortation,
 has reference to their *after-conduct*, and not
 to the character of their *present* disposition,
 from *Joshua's* writing their promises and vows
 in a *book*, and erecting a *memorial-pillar*, *Josh.*
xxiv. 27. which was to *be a witness unto them*:
 by their recollecting on what occasion it was
 erected, *lest* at any time *they should deny their*
God. They were immediately to destroy the
 idols of the *Canaanites* that were in the land.
 And see to it, that in after-times, they did not
 become *idolaters*.

It is so far from being probable, that the
Israelites had at this time gone into idolatry,
 or *retained* and *venerated* the idols of their fa-
 thers, whilst they made war with the *Ca-*
naanites, that it was *morally impossible*. The
 historian has never said it was their case: so
 that for any thing Mr. C. has said or can say,
 from the history, the *second sense* he has men-
 tioned of *serving the Lord*, was justly appli-
 cable to *Israel* during the whole time of
Joshua's

Joshua's campaign, and even at the time of his thus exhorting the people. On

*serv-
ing
the*

His *third* sense of *serv-
ing the Lord* we have *Lord.*
p. 92. " Sometimes, says he, it implies, the
" *executing vengeance*, on those whom God
" has appointed to destruction, or, at least,
" on those who were *declared* to be thus de-
" *stined*, by the men who assumed the cha-
" racter of being God's *voice* to the people.
" And in this way of *serv-
ing the Lord*, it may,
" perhaps, be truly said of the people of *Israel*,
" that they *served*, or *intended* to serve the
" Lord all the days of *Joshua*, &c. And in-
" deed this way of serving the Lord is repre-
" sented in *holy writ* as *highly valuable*, and
" disobedience to commands of *this sort*, is re-
" presented to be most detestable." Hereup-
on he introduces *Samuel's* order to *Saul* *utterly*
to destroy Amalek.

Here is evident design of burlesquing the *commission* said to be given to the *Israelites*. But with what reason? Has Mr. C. ever attempted to set before his *reader* the *real* character of the *Canaanites*: or once attempted to prove, that the true God had no right of thus shewing his abhorrence of their provoking idolatry and vice? or, how it is inconsistent with the perfections of Deity, that he should thus *singularly* punish a nation, that was *singularly* abandoned to all that is reproachful to human nature? And make use of a
people

On people to extirpate that vile, abominable, pro-
*servi*ng nation, in order to establish the *better*
the *first principles* of his moral government
 among men: And in this great and awful ex-
 ample hold forth to the world his *abhorrence* of
 idolatry and vice!

He has done nothing like it.—Yet, I know it is said by way of objection, “ that it
 “ would have been more consistent with the
 “ perfections of God, to have extirpated these
 “ nations, by some other instruments of his
 “ vengeance, *rather* than by the hands of men,
 “ whom he has so expressly forbid to murder
 “ one another.”

But let the *obje*ctor take a review of those
wonderful, those *miraculous* methods of divine
 providence, that were made use of towards
Israel, in order to convince them, [who were
 very backward to the task] that it was the
voice of God; and that they would no more
 be chargeable with the *crime of murder*, than
 men are, who put to *death* the most obnoxious
 members of human society.—

Let him consider the *extirpation* of these in-
 habitants, as the historians have placed it; and
 it may lead him to *awful* and *adorable* senti-
 ments of God's *holiness*, of his *truth*, and
righteousness; but will, by no means, lead him
 to form any conceptions of *God most high*, but
 what are consistent with his character, of *the*
Lord, *the Lord God*, *merciful and gracious*,
slow to anger, *abundant in goodness and truth*,
keeping mercy for thousands, *forgiving iniquity*,
transgres-

transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them who HATE him.— Lord.

for, Let him farther consider, that the appointment of the *Hebrew* nation to be the *executors* of *divine vengeance* on the *Canaanites*, on account of their idolatry and vice, was an apt means of impressing them more strongly with an aversion to what was the *reason* of the judgment. They would see, that as they were to spare neither *man*, *woman*, nor *child*, who were delivered up to the sword; so it must be the case of themselves, of their own nation, if they became *imitators* of this wicked people.

And *moreover*, as all this depopulation and destruction was gradually accomplished, according to the express declaration of *prophecy*, all nations around had thereby a fuller evidence given them of the God of the *Jews* being the *supreme* God; and that they were *separated* by him, as a people whom he owned, and had taken under his protection.

The King of *Moab* and his princes, and the elders of *Midian* had had the information of God's design towards the *Canaanites* by *Balaam*, whom God made use of, as a prophet among them. And they might *all* have known that the God of *Israel*, was the *true*, the *supreme* God, during the forty years preservation of that people in the wilderness.

L

Let

On *the* *Lord.* Let the *objector* further consider, that this *very people of Israel*, when they suffered a defeat before the *Canaanites*, at any time, it was owing either to some neglect and disobedience to the *orders* given them, or it was on account of their *disbelief* and *distrust* of the commission being from God, that they should *utterly destroy* the *Canaanites*. And that in their *success*, they always had the manifest appearances of the *supreme God*.—When the sum of the evidence is laid together, it will amount to an ocular, as well as moral demonstration, that *God* had commissioned *Israel* to be the *executioners of his vengeance* : and could be no manner of breach of that Law, *thou shalt do no murder*.

Mr. C. indeed says, “ that supposing the *Canaanites* were *idolaters*, yet they were not *singularly so*; there having been *multitudes* of others both *then*, and *before*, and *since* that time, who have been *equally culpable*, which yet have been treated with much greater lenity. And that God should single out the idolatrous *Canaanites*, and treat them with so *severe* a resentment: whilst he *winked* at idolatry in all other *places* and *times*, is a supposition that greatly *derogates* from his honour, and therefore is not to be admitted.” p. 115, 116.

This again is saying *without book*. It nowhere appears from the history, that there were *multitudes* of other idolaters, at that time, *equally*

equally culpable. And therefore for any thing that Mr. C. can shew, they were singular in their enormous vice, and abominable idolatries! His conclusions or reasonings have no manner of foundation; because, from the History, they are represented as criminal *above* all other people. They were appointed to destruction, by reason of their crying iniquities; they had the notice of it, by one of their own *Diviners*; and had *forty years* stay of the execution.——

On
servicing
the
Lord.

He says, “ the *Israelites* *cherished* that idolatry, they were appointed to *extinguish*.”

The history every where assures us, that they suffered and were punished accordingly, or in proportion to their idolatry, when chargeable. So that this has no weight, as an objection to the *divinity* of the commission given to destroy the *Canaanites*.—With as much ease might every thing else be set aside, that this *writer* has offer'd, which is not particularly noticed.——*He* pretends to be guided by the *memoir* or *record*, and says, he can only be furnished with materials of his enquiry from thence. But he makes much more history, than he finds in that record.——

One might in the present case, ask this *Writer*, why he does not accuse the great God of injustice for *drowning* the world, by an universal deluge; sparing only *one family*? He that could *justly* do the *greater*, might

On surely, with as much justice, do the *less*.—
-serving Mr. C. professeth to write in *honour* and *justice*
the to the supreme God. I accuse him not of
Lord. hypocrisy, but with the want of *due attention* ;
 and would no more than he affirm, that God
 could, consistently *commission* men to do things,
in his name, that are unworthy of his perfec-
 tions. It is impossible he should. But in the
 case in question, tho' it has been made a dis-
 putable case, by Mr. C. and others ; yet, I can,
 in my own thoughts, reconcile it as much with
 the *perfections* of God, as I can his destroying
 the world *by a flood* : and think I see in it, not
 only *great*, but *wise* and *kind* design, when
 I view the extensiveness of it : *viz.* to estab-
 lish the doctrine of the *one God*, and spread
 the *reverence* of his *name* among men!—
 It could not possibly be the result of *imposture*.
 The circumstances in which the whole affair
 was conducted, prove the *divinity* of the com-
 mission, both to the *Israelites* and to others.
 —To the *Canaanites*, the commission had
 indeed the aspect of *judgment*, and the *Israe-
 lites* were to be the *executioners* of God's ven-
 geance. But what then? was there not a
reason? And shall Mr. C. or any man call the
 Governor of the world to account for it, or
 arraign him, at his own bar! God's *judg-
 ments* are often a great deep ; but *this*, he has
 been pleased to explain the reason of : and it
 appears to be such as will forever *justify* him.

Notwithstanding this, Mr. C. is displeas'd *On*
 at "Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel assuming *the*
 "the Character of being God's VOICE to the *Lord.*
 "people." }

If he will but admit the *history* to speak for itself, there are sufficient and convincing evidences, of their being his VOICE. And it was impossible that the people could be deceived in it. What they deliver, *in the name of the Lord*, is made good: and no instance, do I know of, that makes it suspicious. As to *Samuel*, the text cited, is, *Sam. i. 15.* I suppose he intends, *1 Sam. xv. 2.* which relates the reason of the destruction of *Amalek*, viz. *What he had done to ISRAEL.* This *Amalekite*-nation was the *first* that drew the sword against *Israel*, and they seem to have done it *offensively*; see the history, *Exod. xvii. 8.* probably, they attempted to have put *all Israel* to the sword.—It is very evident, that the *Amalekites* discover'd the most *savage, cruel, bloody* disposition, as may be learnt from *Deut. xxv. 17, 18, 19.* *Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt. How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God. Therefore it shall be, when the Lord thy God has given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance*

to

On to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembering brance of Amalek from under heaven; thou the shalt not forget it.

Lord. Does not this afford us a very full reason of the direction which Samuel gave SAUL? and was it not worthy a prophet of the Lord to examine their publick records, and give direction about the execution of those things which God had given in charge to Israel?—It is certain, moreover, that there was a base, dastardly, as well as cruel, savage disposition in the Amalekites; as is evident from their falling upon the rear of Israel; the feeble and wearied! and very probably, all the young children, and women, that were among them. And this they did, at a time when Israel had given them no offence. Besides, the Amalekites appear to have been very senseless, hardened idolaters; for, they feared not God.—Ainsworth has observed, that the Chaldee has it, he feared not the glory of the Lord.—i. e. He threw contempt on the visible symbol of the divine presence that was with Israel.

But perhaps Mr. C. may not pay so much regard to these passages, as he will to what his most excellent prophet BALAAM speaks concerning it. And what does he say? turn to Numb. xxiv. 20. And when he looked on Amalek, he took up this parable, and said, Amalek was the FIRST of the nations, but his latter end shall be, that he PERISH FOR EVER, — i. e. utterly be destroyed! Amalek's being the first of the nations that warred against Israel,

Israel, is assigned, as a reason of that *total destruction*, by this man of *superior understanding*! which Mr. C. allows *Balaam* to have been, p. 84.—

On
servings
the
Lord.

The perambulation this *Writer* has made around *the walls of JERICHO*, shews him to be a man of great *credulity*, a mere *Enthusiast*, one of a wild imagination; since he supposes, that the walls were *delved under*, or *so undermined*, by the *Israelites*, that upon their making a great shout they fell down! This deserves no sober consideration.—

I leave it to observe how he runs away with the notion, “ of the spies taking up their quarters with an harlot, who shelter’d and concealed them, as adding *treachery* to her *lewdness*.” p. 95. If Mr. C. had been an ingenious and earnest *enquirer* after truth, he might have been informed, from almost any of those skilled in the *Hebrew language*, that the word signifies an *hostess*, as well as an *harlot*. She kept an house of lodgings, or of entertainment for strangers. But, who would have insinuated from the History, that the spies had a criminal correspondence with her? Their *business* and their *danger*, as well as *Rahab’s*, were enough to have excused them from such censure. And it would have been much more becoming a modest man, especially one of Mr. C’s years, to have put a better sense upon the narrative. She might be an *honest* woman, tho’ an *hostess*, for aught Mr. C. knows. But because

On cause the *Hostesses* were so generally persons of serving ill-fame, our *translators* were led to use the word *Harlot*; which surely was not quite so *the Lord*. proper.

However, if this woman cannot be charged with *lewdness*, Mr. C. will charge her with *treachery*: and yet, from the history, she did no otherwise than what became a *wife* and *virtuous* woman to do. Her full conviction appears, *Josh. ii. 9, 10, 11.* *I know, says Rahab to the men, I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint, or melt because of you.* For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red-Sea for you, when you came out of Egypt; and what you did unto the two Kings of the Amorites that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed, and as soon as we heard, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath. This looks much like a *pious* confession.—

Allowing *Rahab* to have seen things in this light, what charge of *treachery* can lie against her? To have done otherwise, must have argued the utmost *stupidity* and *folly*, as well as *impiety*! and had she not been persuaded of the truth of it, she would scarce have risked her own life, and that of all her family, as she did, by *hiding* the spies. For the *hazard* she had run of their lives, is one ground and reason of

of her plea, that *their lives* might be spared together with her *own*.

On
serving
the
Lord.

“ The *destruction of Jericho* is the subject
“ of a declamation, p. 97: as if upon the foot
“ of a *massacrè*.”

Yet before such liberties had been taken, it should have been proved, that the *Jews*, under the conduct of *Joshua*, had not had sufficient proof, of its being the *judicial appointment of God*.—and that it was some way inconsistent with his moral character.

That the *innocent*, or *less nocent*, should fall with the guilty, was quite consistent with other instances of God's *judicial* proceedings with cities, states, and kingdoms.—But the permission or appointment is not chargeable with any injustice; because, this is not the *last state* of existence into which men shall come. A *retribution* will open and explain the whole plan of providence; and reconcile the most knotty and difficult appearances of it. Even such, which have *no* apparent reason assigned of them, but was not the case of the *Canaanites destruction*.

However, nothing can escape the lash of Mr. C. “ he rallies the *folly* of sending men “ to spy the land, when God had engaged, by “ *promise*, for their success.” p. 95:

Mr. C. as an anti-revelationist, is become a very *loose* writer; and therefore sometimes *dif-*


M

ficult

On *ficult* to be understood: yet, if I understand *servi*ng him here, he has his eye to *Moses's* sending *the* one man of every tribe, to *spy* out the land, *Lord. Numb. xiii.* For he says afterwards, that *these* *spies went to Jericho*; that is, those who had been *FOOLISHLY sent out to spy the land.*

Moses did it, no doubt, to satisfy the people, by adding the testimony of a *witnefs* from every tribe, to avouch the *truth* of what he had been instructed to tell them concerning the *land of Canaan.* 'The spies all do agree in the *fruitfulness* of the country: yet the *majority* of them are intimidated, from the observations they had made of the inhabitants. Upon which the people murmur against *Moses*, and against *Aaron*; even the whole congregation. So that hereupon God declares to them by *Moses*, that they should wander in the wilderness *forty years*; even till the carcases of all the grown persons who had murmured, should have fallen in the wilderness; and not *one* of them should enter this promised land, but *Joshua* and *Caleb.* And those very men who brought the evil report, actually and immediately died by the *plague* before the Lord.' *Numb. xiii. and xiv. chap.*

By what authority does Mr. C. charge with *folly* the sending of the spies? If we may rely on the history, the *only* authentic memoir, it was wisely done; and their murmuring gave occasion of such a testimony to the *promise* being

ing made by God, and to the divine mission of *On*
Moses, that was well suited to confirm their *servi*
faith in them: and reconcile that people to *the*
 conduct under *Joshua*, his successor, as became *Lord.*
proper for them. 

Mr. C. has overlooked this. He has not considered, that by *reason* of the *Israelites murmuring* at the task, assigned them, by *that Lord*, who had *divided* the *Red-Sea* for them, after the miracles wrought in *Egypt*, that there is the space of *forty* years appointed for their wandering, or their different journeyings in a barren desert: all which time they were to be fed from the immediate hand of God by bread from heaven. That to convince *Israel*, that *God* had designed them to be the *executioners* of *his vengeance* upon the idolatrous *Canaanite nations*, *ten* of the *twelve* spies who brought the evil report about the land, immediately *die* by *a plague*.——That *all* the *murmurers* at the appointment are threatened with death; and shall have their carcases fall in the wilderness within the space of forty years; and so be deprived of any advantage from the *promise* of a *good land* for an inheritance. That the *two spies* only, who had brought a *faithful* and *good report*, and who were willing to have relied on the power of God, and to have put in execution the appointment, shall *outlive* the forty years, and have an actual possession in the *good land*. Mr. C. I say, has not observed how the *accomplishment* of these things gave full and undeniable evidence of its being a divine ap-

On pointment : and proved, that *Moses's* commission was from the *true God*.—Had he duly considered these things, he would not have so boldly ventured, in the manner he afterward does, [as I shall take notice] to have charged that generation of *Jews*, which did put the decree in execution, with *murder*, and *inhuman barbarity*: tho' it should happen to be such a sense of *servng the Lord*, as is confined to the *execution of his vengeance*.

And moreover, when it is added, that the *forty years* miraculous preservation of this vast number of people in the wilderness, proved to be a *stay of the execution* of the sentence denounced against the *Canaanites*, or an opportunity given them of learning and concluding, that the *God of Israel* was the *only true God*, the adventure of such an opprobrious charge will be more perilous.—

Pray tell,—what *folly* does hence appear in *Moses's* sending the spies?

Mr. C. seems in that 95th page to intend the same men sent out by *Moses*; and afterwards by *Joshua*: but I shall take no advantage of this blunder, more than to observe, that it is of a piece with his other observations.

Mr. C. will have it, that *Joshua's* management of the siege of *Ai*, and his defeat in the *first* attack, p. 98, 99. was a notable instance of the fallacy of the pretence of being under *God's* direction. For, says Mr. C. “ this de-
“ feat

“ *feat* put *Joshua* into the utmost confusion at On
 “ *first*, till he had *recovered* himself, and thro’ *servi*ng
 “ his great *penetration* and *sagacity* he had *the*
 “ found out an *expedient* to *revive* the *courage* Lord.
 “ of the *Israelites*, and to *save* his own *repu-*
 “ *tation*, as God’s *VOICE* to the people. *Achan*
 “ had taken of the *accursed thing*, and that
 “ was to be considered as the ground of God’s
 “ *displeasure* against *Israel*; and consequently
 “ of their being put to flight by the men of
 “ *Ai*. — This he calls an *improper* and *unna-*
 “ *tural* dispensation of providence, that *Achan*’s
 “ *sin*, the *sin* of an *individual*, should bring
 “ displeasure upon all *Israel*. For that *Eze-*
 “ *kiel* has assured us, in the *name* of the Lord,
 “ that God is not a *partial* being—*that the*
 “ *soul that sinneth shall die*.”

I have examined the *history*; and can see no manner of reason or ground of the burlesque. If that only *authentic memoir* be made the guide of enquiry, it will not appear from thence, that the *evil* was found out by *Joshua*’s great *penetration* or *sagacity*; but by the Lord’s declaring to him, that *Israel* had *sinned*; and then shewing him in what *method* he should discover the offender. — In the estimation of the Lord, *Israel* had *sinned*, tho’ but *one* of all *Israel* was the *criminal*; and yet, this Lord is no *partial* being. When we consider the following things, this will be intelligible.

1. That a proclamation had been made thro’ the camp of *Israel* by their *General*, that *they*
 should

On should in any wise keep themselves from the accursed, or devoted thing, lest they made themselves accursed, and the camp of Israel a curse, Lord. and trouble it, Josh. iv. 18.—Hereupon they

were to look upon the interests of the whole camp, as depending very much upon every man's personal conduct, in the point of keeping themselves from the accursed, or devoted thing; which was certainly an argument of the utmost force to oblige men to their duty.

—And will not Mr. C. allow, that by the misbehaviour of one man, a whole battalion may suffer greatly, or be cut off? But will this affect the moral character of God; or even the skill of a General, tho' the whole battalion are destroyed by reason of one man's misbehaviour?

2. It happens, that the death which Eze-kiel is speaking of, relates to the moral character and final state of men; when he says, that no man shall bear another's guilt or iniquity, *i. e.* God, as judge, will not impute the crime of one man to another, as making any part of his character.—No more did he do it in the case before us; unless Mr. C. will say, and then prove, that because thirty-six men fell by the sword of the enemy, on account of Achan's having taken the accursed thing, that therefore these thirty-six men had taken that same accursed thing which Achan took.—On the contrary, they were no more chargeable with it than the rest of the army, who did not fall in the engagement. Nevertheless, Achan's taking the accursed thing, was the real occasion of

of this defeat; for the Lord had before declared to them, by *Joshua*, that he would consider such iniquity as what would bring a curse and a trouble upon the whole congregation. But surely, neither the Lord, nor *Joshua*, nor the congregation, nor any man who reads the history with care, has reckoned these men in the least privy to, or guilty of taking the accursed thing. So that the dispensation of providence appears neither improper nor unnatural; nor any way inconsistent with God's being an impartial sovereign. For, tho' innocent men may, and often do suffer greatly, even death itself, on account of the crimes of the most wicked; yet, as this belongs not to the retribution of the just and unjust, but is a part of this dispensation of trial;—so it will become Mr. C. before he ventures to arraign the dispensations of providence, to examine with much more care, to distinguish much better, and not support his favourite design, by authorities quite foreign to his purpose.—For notwithstanding all he is able to say to the contrary; *Moses*, and *Joshua*, and *Ezekiel*, do truly appear to have been God's voice to the people; Inasmuch, that if God be truth, by the mouth of his servant *Ezekiel*, we may let Mr. C. and every other gainsayer be liars, much rather than either *Moses* or *Joshua*. To adopt the ungentle language of, p. 99. where C. has appointed the odium for *Moses* and *Joshua*.

As

On As to *Achan's* family suffering with him, *servings* there was in this nothing *extraordinary*.
the Something like it has been reckoned *needful*,
Lord. in, perhaps all, however in most polite na-
 tions, to preserve *order*, and give *terror* to
 others; or, the better to prevent the perpetration
 of those *crimes* which would greatly affect the
 public welfare.—It is therefore justifiable,
 as we distinguish between the moral character
 of the *nocent* and the *innocent*, and only look
 on such severities as *political* or *civil ap-*
pointments designed for the service of the
 public.

Mr. C. says, it was *accursed*, “ because in-
 “ stead of the gold and silver being put in
 “ *God's storehouse*, *Achan* put it in his own;
 “ and that made it the *accursed thing*.”
 P. 99.

This *Gentleman* seems unwilling to do the
historian justice, when any thing lies in the
 narrative *unfavourable* to his design. Else,
 why did he not mention the *vessels of brass*
 and *iron*, as well as the *silver* and *gold*, which
 are said alike to be *consecrated to the Lord*?
Josh. vi. 19.—Truly this would have created
 him some difficulty: and have broke the edge
 of his drollery.—As it was proper that *dis-*
cipline should be preserved in an army. But
 does not Mr. C. remember to have read, in our
 public *News-papers*, what an alteration it made
 in the face of affairs when the *Queen of Hun-*
gary's

gary's army, when engaged with the Prussians; On
viz. when their *eagerness of plunder* quite *servi*ng
 changed the scenery of the action. And if *the*
 he would but consider the LORD, as *Gene- Lord.*
ral, and *King* of the *Jewish* army, he will
 see a *very* great propriety in this *rule of discip-*
line, that forbad *plunder*; and all *lampoon* would
 be spared about not putting the *gold* and *silver*
 in God's *storehouse*.

Besides, his historian tells him, that *Achan*
 pleaded *guilty*.—*Indeed I have sinned against*
the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have
I done, Joth. vii. 20. He owns *great* guilt,
 tho' Mr. C. treats what he had done, and the
 charge of crime ludicrously. Nay, he *had bid*
 in the earth, in the midst of his tent, the
 thing he *coveted*, because he knew it to be
accursed, ver. 21. every token, every mark of
 guilt, and capital offence does appear!

Yet, with Mr. C. *Achan* is *innocent*, and
 his punishment *unjust*. At the same time,
 this *Writer* pretends to have all his enquiries
 about *Achan* wholly directed by the history.
 But surely, no man can be a more *partial* and
unrighteous commentator than he.

The history of the tenth chapter of *Joshua*,
 likewise gives him offence, “ because of the
 “ *bailstones* discomfitting the armies of the
 “ *five Kings* of the *Amorites*.” p. 102.

But who can help it? it is not to be won-
 der'd at, that a man, who allows of no *par-*
 N *ticular*

On *ticular providence*, should dislike any account *serv*ing of *wonderful interposals*. And he thinks, *the* ‘ that the stopping of the *diurnal motion* of *Lord*. ‘ the earth, was quite needless; since the same
 { ‘ thing might have been effected by that other
 ‘ miracle, *namely*, the *bailstones*.’ I readily grant, that the same thing might have been effected in both cases, by the miracle of *large hail*. But pray why may there not be *variety* in the *miraculous*, as well as in the *ordinary* appearances of providence? Does not the Deity appear more adorable, when men are more influenced and impressed by such *variety*?— If *miraculous* interpositions had been always in one unvaried form; the epithet would not have belong’d to them. Nay, in the nature of things, it should seem that a train of *miracles* must be *varied*, and *uncommon* appearances.

Mr. C. that he may avoid the force of *miracles*, asks this question, “ What *assurance* “ have we, that any *miraculous* power, was “ exercised by, or among the *Israelites*, to “ countenance this commission? If it should “ be said, that the *credit* of those miracles is “ *sufficiently* supported by the history, in “ which they are recorded: Answer, then I “ fear our arguments must *end* in a *circular* “ *dance*; the *credit* of the histories is sup- “ ported by the *miracles*, and the *credit* of “ the miracles is supported by the *histories*.”
 p. 119, 120.

He well saw, that if the miracles were *credible*, the testimony was *full* for the divinity of the commission: and therefore he would set these aside. But under favour, Mr. C. is obliged upon his own rule of argument, to admit as fully the *truth of miracles*, as the truth of the fact of destroying the *Canaanites*: *i. e.* if the History, that only *authentic memoir*, be his guide, as he says it shall be. And therefore his whole argument, is a *vain, idle parade*; that is to say, if he rejects the *authentic testimony* of the commission being from God, in order, that he may vilify and condemn a *fact*, unjustly, arbitrarily bereav'd of its legal defence.—Such treatment, in a court of judicature, Mr. C. would think no language poignant enough to reproach!—

On
 serving
 the
 Lord.

He goes on inveighing against the destruction of the *Canaanites* as a most *inhuman, shocking carnage!* but he does not attend at all to the *inhuman* character and *carnage* of these idolaters, when they fell on the rear of *Israel*; and of whom the spies said, that they *eat one another*. See *Numb. xiii. 32. a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof.—Cannibals.*—So, I chuse to understand the words. And if we look over their *most hateful* character, one can scarce suppose or imagine any thing too *savage*, too *base*, too *vile* for them to practise.

I do not understand this to be any part of the *false report* which the spies delivered; but reckon that consisted in representing the *enor-*

On *mous* size, and *incredible* strength, and *fierceness* serving of the whole inhabitants!—Such sort of reports concerning the *Highlanders*, Mr. C. may remember, did greatly intimidate the minds of *the Lord*. *South-Britons*: tho' it was no more than an artifice of men, of either *dastardly*, or of *poison'd, infected* spirits, who could meditate the *banishment* of LIBERTY from these Kingdoms! It was much owing to the artful spread, of their being quite an unequal match for *Englishmen*, that they made so undisturb'd a march into the heart of *England*. But the report of the *Jew-spies* concerning the *Canaanites* as being *Canibals*, I think very consistent with their real character, or, with the truth of the case: for this account, tho' deliver'd by the *timid* or *evil-minded* spies, is no where contradicted. *Commentators* indeed understand the phrase, *a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof*; to intend, their *destroying one another by civil wars*. But this, I presume, is an improper sense, when put in the mouths of *these* spies: since what they said was to *discourage* and not to *encourage*: which this latter sense must greatly contradict. But the character of *men-eaters* would convey a most *shocking, savage* idea of the inhabitants.

There is no *analogy*, where Mr. C. says there is one, *viz.* “between the *Israelites* thus *serv-*
 “*ing the Lord, by executing his vengeance* upon
 “an irreclaimable, abandoned people. And
 “*John* xvi. 2. *The time cometh, that whofo-*
 “*ever*”

“ ever killeth you will think that he doth God
 “ service ; tho’ killing men is the subject of
 “ both.” p. 108.

On
 serving
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 Lord.

In the one case, they had the fullest testimony that could possibly be given, of its being the will of God, by an *apparatus* of miracles. — In the other, men have no testimony at all ; but stand condemned by every law both of God, and of civil society that is humanized. In the one case, *idolatry* and *enormous vice* is the reason of the appointment ; — in the other, religion, human liberty, a love of truth, and a firm attachment to it, is the reason of the *killing*. — In the one, the very *executioners* of divine vengeance, are threatened with *equal destruction*, and an *utter extirpation*, if they copy after the example and customs of these irreligious and wicked nations they destroy. — In the other case, they who *kill*, are threatned, in the revelation, with everlasting destruction for the doing so : forasmuch as the *killing* of another, merely because of religious sentiment, supposeth, *no eternal life abiding in him* who killeth. —

The *late* REBELLION, “ supposed to have succeeded, is a very bad comparison, tho’ called, “ by this writer, the *rod of God’s hand*,” p. 111.

The *design* of it was not to *extirpate* idolatry and enormous vice, but to *establish* them : so that we are well assured, that a *popish pretender*

On tender with his Scotch-highlanders, could not, serving by a secret divine influence, be stirred up, and the sent by God to chastise and punish us, upon a Lord. like foundation, with the Israelites.—The spirit of the whole design, its manifest aim and intention was such, all Britons might know, in making opposition to them, no man fought against God, or attempted to baffle and disappoint the gracious purposes of his kind providence towards us.—again,

Altho' the commission to destroy the Canaanites was unlimited; yet, from the Jewish-constitution, they were obliged to treat with friendship, and admit among them every stranger, that would embrace the true religion, or own and worship the one supreme God.—And the very case of the Gibeonites is fully in evidence: for tho' they used deception to save their lives, yet the great plea they offer to prevail for a league with Israel, is, the reverence they had of the name of the Lord God of Israel, Josh. ix. 9. And this league they had made with Israel, was all the reason which the five Kings had to make war upon Gibeon.—Farther,—It is very probable that great numbers of the Canaanites, who were possessed of some humanity, fled to Egypt, and made up those colonies that settled there under the PASTOR-KINGS.—Dr. WINDER, in his history of knowledge, I think, has made it very probable, “ that these invaders of Egypt, were Canaanites, who fled from before Joshua about the middle of his conquests. They had encouragement

“ couragement from the *weak state* the *Egyptians* must yet be in, on account of their overthrow at the *Red-Sea*. And, probably, the *Egyptians* were struck with a panic, considering them as a part of the *Hebrew-nation*, who had sojourned among them as shepherds.—This made their settlement, in the *Lower-Egypt*, easy.—And if his opinion be good, which I am pleased with, viz. “ that the *Egyptians* were led to *circumcise* their children after the Exodus of the *Hebrews*—as they would think on the tremendous judgments of God upon their nation, and imagine, that this conformity to the *Israelites* would reconcile them to their God, as it had, they knew, distinguished his favourite people.—which could not be a custom in *Egypt* before, because objected to the *Hebrews* as their reproach.” The very rite of *circumcision* would then keep the event of that great destruction alive upon the minds of the *Egyptians* for ages. Their *panic* would therefore be at this time strongly revived. For tho’ they probably behaved thus, in order to appease the God of the *Hebrews*; yet, they retained their idolatry, and worshipped many *strange Gods*: consequently, they would have no just ground of confidence arising from this compliment paid to the *God of Israel*.—
 “ The invasion made by the PASTOR-SHEPHERDS was about *forty* years after the egression. And *Joshua’s* conquest of *Canaan* was accomplished in *six* years. The *Doctor*
 “ supposes

On “ supposes these fugitives to have been *less pro-*
serving “ *fligate and wicked*, who chose not to defy or
the “ oppose *Israel*; which intitled them to the
Lord. “ connivance of providence.”

⏟ To return to the *Gibeonites*; when they assign a reason of their conduct, in *deceitfully* gaining a league, it is, say they, *because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the Lord thy God commanded his servant MOSES to give you ALL the land, and to destroy ALL the inhabitants of the land from before you; therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing*, Josh. ix. 24. They were deeply, thoroughly convinced of the *rightful and supreme sovereignty* of the God of *Israel*; and therefore form a stratagem, which was permitted to succeed, for their own safety. Nor do we find, from the history, that *Israel's Lord* ever disapproved the league being kept inviolable: but on the contrary, having put themselves under the *protection* of the God of *Israel*, they are most remarkably delivered from the confederate arms of *five Canaanitish Kings!* Mr. C. might here have seen a *reason* of that astonishing *phenomena* of the *hailstones*, and of the *earth's stopping in her diurnal motion*. The *miracle* is philosophically intimated, according to the truth of things, as the *moon*, the earth's *satellite*, stood still, at the very same time, in the valley of *Ajalon*. See Mr. *Derham's Astro-Theology*, in his objections against *Copernicus* answered, p. 19. for otherwise there would have been no need of the *moon's standing still* with

with the *sun*, she not being his *satellite*, but the *earth's*.

Hence one may conclude, from the case of the *Gibeonites*, and of the *Colonies* that settled in *Egypt*, under the *Pastor-shepherds*, and from the preservation of *Rahab* and her family, that tho' the commission to destroy the *Canaanites* was *absolute*, in the tenour of it, yet, there were *conditions of mercy* reserved for all such who should not *oppose* the authority of the true God: and that continued *impenitency* and *obstinacy* against the evidence of miracle, and after the *Canaanites* knew of the sentence, were the *reason* of the destruction, and gave it all its compass.

There is then an infinite disparity, and disagreement between the two cases of the destruction of the *Canaanites*, and the *late Rebellion*, under a *popish, idolatrous pretender*, who had not one single divine voucher of his commission, either to conquer or to destroy: but the contrary.

If what I have proposed to the public, in this Examination, should be entitled to the character of *just* and *fair* reasoning, then, I must be allowed to have proved the proposition, of which the Title consists, *namely*, "that *Truth* and *modern-deism* are at *variance*." For the *topics* are manag'd by Mr. C. in *defence* of the *infidel-scheme*. But if, on the other hand, I have failed in the
O attempt,

On
serving
the
Lord.

On attempt, I must ask pardon of the public, and serving of the Gentlemen, whose opinions I have injured the

Lord. I shall conclude this Examination, in the language of Mr. C's conclusion, with some variation. " The ground of what I have offered, " is in honour and justice to the supreme Deity. " For I am God's creature, a believer in his " son, Jesus; so, I think, I have a right to " take off those groundless imputations, where- " with Mr. C. has stained the characters of " good men, viz. patriarchs and apostles; the " beautiful and spotless character God most " high; and of the revelation he has made of " his purposes towards men."

E R R A T A.

PAGE 14. line 20. dele *since*. p. 19. l. 1. dele *comma*. p. 29. l. 21. for *plains*, r. *complains*. p. 66. l. 7. r. *but from*. p. 74. l. 8. dele *comma* after *kind*. p. 92. l. ult. for *when*, r. *with*. p. 93. l. 1. dele *when*. p. 96. l. penult. for a period, put a *colon*. p. 98. l. 7. r. *that in*

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LETTER to a FRIEND,

Containing select remarks upon the
 Rev. Dr. *Isaac Watts's* treatise,
 entitled, *the glory of Christ, as*
God-man. Works v. 305

To Mr. _____

DEAR SIR,

AT your request, I have read over
 and remarked upon Dr. *Watts's*
Glory of Christ, &c. and now pre-
 sent you and the public with my
 observations.

Pref. p. 6. He describes “ our Saviour
 “ as a complex person, God and man united,
 “ so as to make up one complex agent, one
 “ intellectual compound being, God joined
 “ with man, so as to become one common
 “ principle of action and passion. *John xiv.*
 “ 10. the God, and the man are one.”——

Could the Doctor defend this, his scheme
 might stand well enough. But it appears to
 be absolutely impossible from the nature of
 the pure, uncompound, immutable, infinite
 Spirit, that he should be so united: and the

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difference

difference between created, and increated, must eternally remain between *the God*, and *the man*. One intellectual being cannot become a *compound* of intellectuals: or God, and man can never so unite as to become one intellectual compound being. God is eternally impassible, as unchangeable; and cannot therefore undergo any union with another being, that would make him *one common principle of action and passion*.

Ibid. “The *child Jesus*, on this account, “is called, the *mighty God*. *Esay* ix. 6. And “*God’s own blood*, is mention’d, *Acts* xx. 28. “And the intimate and present *union* allows “him to say, *John* x. 38. and ver. 30. *I am* “*in the father, and the father in me, &c.*”

The *union* cannot be *personal*, as is here supposed, but *moral*. It is of the *same nature* and *kind* with that which subsists between his *disciples*, and *him*, and his *father*. But if it implied *one common principle of action and passion*, the perfect nature of God must be changed. If not changed, then the *Saviour* could undergo no real suffering, nor be capable of any real reward. For says the Doctor, p. 92. “the Godhead is incapable of any rewards, “nor can a God be rewarded at all.”—The God and the man could have no such union, because the *will* of the Saviour, was subject to the will of a *superior*. This *will* gives him *law*, on which account he calls him his *holy* and *righteous* Father. And *the God* rewarded the
obedience

obedience of *the man*.—The union then could not imply *one common principle of action and passion*.

Page 48. “The Godhead is generally allowed to be one and the same in all the three persons.”

The Doctor does not allow it in his *useful and important questions*, &c. for, p. 162. he has said, “that we are not expressly, plainly, and particularly informed, whether the *Spirit* be a really distinct principle or power of God; or has a proper distinct personality of himself: so neither are we required to *worship* him, in any text of the Bible that I can find.”

Here, the *personality* of the spirit is not found at all. And yet the Godhead of the three Persons is now asserted!—But if the Godhead of the Spirit is one and the same with the Godhead of the Father, *worship* is due. Yet, it can be *one and the same*, in none but *one and the same*. *i. e.* If Godhead means absolute, infinite perfection. And this sense of Godhead can belong to none but the Father. See p. 48. “The Father always maintains the character of the *invisible God*.”

But the *Son* never once claims this character; hence the Godhead, or what is implied in the character of the *invisible God*, cannot be one and the same, in the Father and in the Son.—The Godhead dwelling *bodily*
in

in the Son, left them as *different* as an *habitation* and an *inhabitant* are. And because the Godhead is said to dwell bodily in the Son, but never is said so to dwell in the Spirit; the Godhead is not one and the same in all the three Persons. Nay, there are not *three Personalities* with which it can be so much as *resident*, in the above sense of the Doctor.

Page 62. “ There is an infinite distance
“ between the great God, and a mere crea-
“ ture, even the most excellent creature, and
“ that when it is employed as an *ambassador*
“ for God.”

In p. 50. “ the pre-existent soul of Christ
“ was a *proper human Spirit*.” If so, then
in his pristine nature he was but a creature.
And no *union*, nor any *office* can make him
otherwise. But if it was any thing *else*, any
thing *besides* an human Spirit, then it was not
a *proper human Spirit*.

Page 67. “ The most familiar idea of a
“ *complex person* is that of *man*, who is made
“ up of *soul* and *body*.”

Grant this: will it prove that the body is
one common principle with the soul? or will it
not rather prove the one to be *subordinate* to
the other? The one a principle suited to *rule*,
the other to *obey*.—The soul is not so much
as conscious *how* the body is animated. The
simile will not answer; since God’s *residence* in
an angel, or in Christ, cannot intend any such
impressions upon the one or the other, as will
destroy

destroy the distinction of *personal consciousness*. The consciousness of *the God*, will not be the consciousness of the *Angel*, or of *Christ*; or, the *residence* will not imply an union that constitutes *one common principle of action and passion*. The *Angel* cannot be conscious, that that immediate exertion of power from the deity, was an immediate exertion of power from himself; as *God* himself would be conscious of the exertion. And the *Angel's* moral, personal ministrations, *God* could not be conscious of, as any other than the *Angel's* moral, personal ministrations.—I am therefore at a loss to know what the *Doctor* means, p. 67. when he says, “much more is *God* immediately conscious of every motion, action, and occurrence that relates to the *Angel*.”—Besides, *God's name* being *in*, or *with* the *Angel* of the *Covenant*, might as clearly be distinguished from the *Angel*, as the *voice* from the excellent glory was distinguishable from the man *Christ Jesus*; when it was said, *this is my beloved son, hear ye him*. 2 Pet. i. 17. comp. Math. xvii. 5.

P. 80. “*Jesus Christ* is both *God* and a creature.”

The idea is so complex, that a man ought to have a capacity of reconciling contradictions, in order to receive it.—If *God* is not a creature, and *Jesus Christ* is a creature, it is impossible that *Jesus Christ* can be both: Nay, if *Jesus Christ* be a creature, and *God* another creature

creature, it is impossible one creature can be both.

P. 81. “ *John x. I and my father are one.*
 “ The Father and the son are not two infinite
 “ spirits, but one and the same God.”

We are assured that the Father is *one infinite spirit*, exclusive of the son. If then the son has true and eternal Godhead, he is another infinite spirit. If he has not true and eternal Godhead, but as a *son* is a dependant, a derived being; he and the Father cannot be *one* and the *same* God.

P. 86. “ There are other surprizing powers
 “ and dignities which are derived to the man
 “ Christ Jesus, partly by his exaltation to the
 “ throne in heaven, and partly by virtue of his
 “ *union* with the Godhead.”

The *union* then cannot be personal: that is, such as to constitute one intellectual compound being *: because of the *difference* of the consciousness in that being, to whom surprizing powers and dignities are *derived*; and in that being's consciousness, who *imparts* such surprizing powers and dignities.

P. 88. “ That the great and blessed God
 “ condescended to assume any human soul and
 “ body into a *personal* union with himself, was
 “ a matter of free and sovereign favour.”

That he never did, or could do it, is evident, from his own infinitude and immensity:

* *Note*, This is what I mean by *personal union*, and what the *Doctor* would contend for.

and

and from the exprefs declaration of that very being, with whom he is faid to be in *personal union*. I came not to do my *own will*, but the will of *him* who fent me. Not *my will*, but *thine* be done.

Ibid. “ The *influences* and *privileges* derived from this union are *limited* by the will and pleasure of God.”

It cannot then be a *personal union*, by reason of the limitation. If God and man make up one complex agent, one intellectual compound being, one common principle of action and paffion, there can be no limitation of influence ; unlefs God can be fuppofed, by virtue of his own will and pleasure, to be what he is not ; or ceafe to be what he is. And it is as absurd to imagine any privileges derived to this complex being.

P. 89. “ One of the facred laws of this ineffable union feems to be, that the man Chrift Jefus fhould have ideas and influences, knowledge and power, communicated to him by the indwelling Godhead in fuch meafures, and at fuch fucceffive feafons, as he ftood in need of them for his feveral offices and operations in the divine œconomy.”

The union then is not personal : becaufe of the communication and dependance. But the infinite difference is preferved.

P. 91. “ The divine nature is eternal and self-fufficient, full in itfelf of all real and
P “ poffible

“ possible powers and dignities, nor can it receive any *new* powers, nor can it have any real advancement.”

But *new* powers and dignities are communicated to Christ Jesus; therefore the *divine nature*, which is eternal and self-sufficient, cannot belong to him. Where then is the *personal* union? or how is the Father and the Son *one* and the *same* God?

P. 93. “ The humiliation of Christ the mediator has a more peculiar respect to his human-nature, so it is the human-nature that is more especially exalted by the Father, but still considered in union with the divine, and under the character of mediator.”

How can the human nature considered in union with the divine, admit of *exaltation*, when it is supposed, p. 80. that by means of this union, Jesus Christ *is both God and a creature?*

P. 101. “ The man Christ Jesus may say, Father, I will that this or the other obdurate sinner be reclaimed, softened, and sanctified: Father, I will that his sins be forgiven him: and hereupon the blessed spirit of God works this divine change upon the sinner, and seals this forgiveness to the soul. ——— Why may he not work wonders of grace on the souls of men, in the same way as he wrought miracles of healing on their bodies?”

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The representation cannot be *just*; because it supposes the conversion and sanctification of a sinner to depend *merely* on the will of Christ; which if it did, *all* sinners would be converted and sanctified: for the same *reason*, which could excite him to *will* the conversion of one, would have the same strength in it for his *willing* the conversion of all, unless he be a *respector of persons*.—But tho' he does will the conversion of *all*, as his Father would have *all men be saved*; yet neither *his*, nor *his father's* willing such universal salvation, has any such effect. And *he* himself has never placed the remaining obstinacy of any sinner upon his *own* want of willing their conversion, but upon their *personal* unwillingness.

And one may tell the *Doctor* why Christ cannot work such *wonders of grace* upon the souls of men, in the same way as he wrought miracles of healing on their bodies;—it was, because in the one case they were *mere patients*, but in the other case they must always be considered as *agents*. One is the work of *irresistible power*, the other the successful effect of *moral suasion*. The subject of one operation, *inert matter*, of the other, *active spirit*.—

P. 180. “Distinct personalities,” are considered by him, “as having no distinct mind or will.—The three personalities are but one conscious mind or spirit.”

When I can conceive of a *personality* without a mind or will, I shall then be able to

conceive of distinct personalities as having no distinct mind or will.—But how I shall ever be able to conceive of *three* personalities as *one* conscious mind or spirit, I have no idea.—

P. 195. “Sonship is no image of *paternity*:
“ a derived property or subsistence is no image
“ of an undervived one.”

But we have no way of forming any distinct ideas of Christ, in his highest character, but under the appellation of a *Son*: and if *Sonship* is no image of *paternity*, any more than a derived property or subsistence is an *image* of an undervived one, then the difference between the *person* of the Son and the *person* of the Father remains infinite.

It is therefore a most absurd declaration, which we have p. 217. “The soul of Christ
“ is not a mere creature, for by its near and
“ intimate union to the divine nature, it be-
“ comes one with God: which honour is not
“ given to any creature whatsoever, but to the
“ man *Christ Jesus*.”

The honour given by the union, whatever that union is, supposeth a difference between the person *giving*, and the person *receiving* that honour. And if the *soul* of Christ, is not the soul of God the Father, but something distinct, it must either be dependent on him for its being, or independent. If independent on him, it cannot be *one* with God, unless dependency and independency can become *one*. But if dependent, then the soul of Christ, must
be

be another God for the sake of its independency.

You see, *Sir*, I have wrote without reserve upon the *union*.

These remarks are not intended, in the least, to reflect on the Doctor's *religious character*.—I venerate him as a *pious* Christian, as well as a Gentleman of learning, and of a fine imagination.—But I am of opinion, he mistakes the Scripture doctrine; and that his *Book* will furnish *matter of objection* to the Christian scheme. And hence I thought the giving of this *Letter* a place here, would not be *impertinent*.—Nevertheless, I imagine, you will be under apprehensions for me.—But be satisfied; I firmly believe in one God, and in all that is said in the *New-Testament* to the honour of *Jesus Christ*, whom I sincerely reverence as the SON of God, and the Saviour of men!

So that you see, *Sir*, by *profession*, I have as good a right as any man to the *Christian character*, and *fellowship*.—And yet, you know, it has been the constant *artifice* of men, who arrogate to themselves the name, *Orthodox*, to call out, *Arian!* and *Socinian!* as noxious persons,—just as a man would cry out, a *mad dog*.—Nevertheless, was I to resign the name of *Christian*, to be denominated a *partisan* of any human scheme, I freely own, that I should prefer that of an *Arian*, *Socinian*, or a *Sabellian*, far before that of a *tritheist*

theist or a *trinitarian*, who holds a *personal union* :—being firmly persuaded, that the *New-Testament* can teach no doctrine contrary to, or inconsistent with the absolute *unity* : nor does it ever intend to convey any such contradictory *Ideas*, as those of *one person* being *three persons* ! or of *three persons* being *one person* ! This could never be a doctrine of *divine revelation*. And I am fully of opinion that Dr. *Watts* has said enough to expose the *fallacy* of it ; tho' he would seem to maintain it. Does he not seem too much afraid of the snarl of *bigotry* ? —Had the Doctor understood the union between the Father and Son, as no other than a *moral* union, that may subsist between God, and any intelligent moral created Being ; and only have represented the *presence* of the Father with the Son, as the most adequate and adorable display that is made of the *one God* ! I am persuaded, he would not have felt those complex difficulties, that he often seems so very sensible of.—The Scripture warrants such sense.—For to us, *Christians*, there is *but ONE God and Father of all* ! and by the Gospel we are taught to believe, that this *one God* raised up *Christ* from the dead, and gave him glory, *that our faith and hope might be in God*. —The *offence* of the Cross, and the *scandal* given to the *credibility* of the Christian doctrine, by the *trinitarian-scheme*, I apprehend, cannot be enough lamented ! And to what is called *Orthodoxy*, is the modern-Deism, the *dis-*
belief

belief of Christianity greatly owing.—This appears from all the *tracts* wrote against revelation; which at the same time that it reflects so strongly on the orthodox scheme, greatly exposeth the want of ingenuity, and impartiality in the rejectors of the divine revelation.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged, humble servant,

C. Fleming.

*Hoxton-Square,
August 30, 1746.*





