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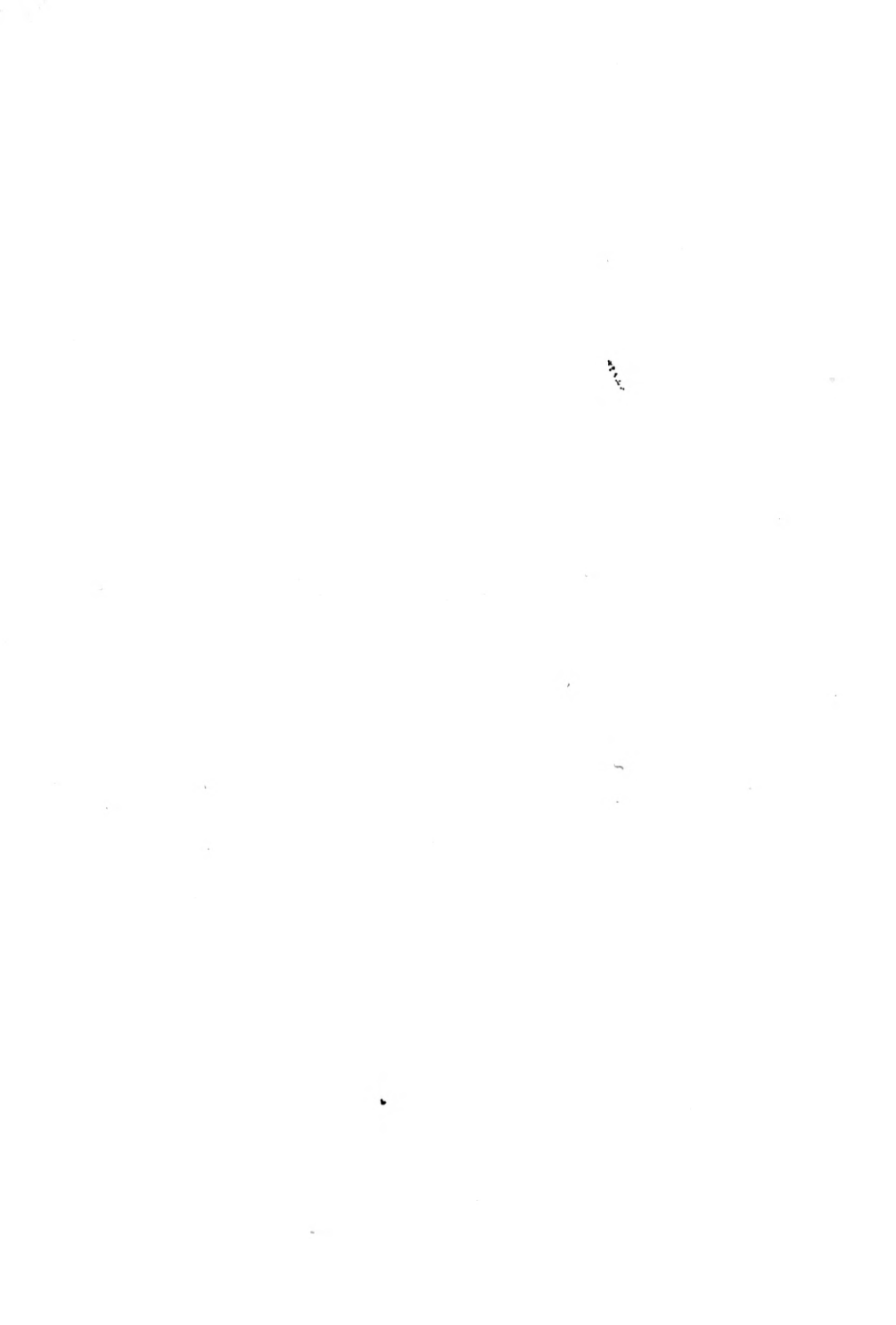
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A
VINDICATION
OF THE
Archbishop TILLOTSON'S Sermons,
Concerning the
Divinity and Incarnation of our B. Saviour, &c.

IMPRIMATUR,

Libro. Nov.
37. 1694.

R. A. BARKER.

A
VINDICATION
OF THE
SERMONS
OF

His Grace JOHN Archbishop of Canterbury,
CONCERNING THE

Divinity and Incarnation of our B. Saviour:

AND

Of the Lord Bishop of Worcester's Sermon on
the Mysteries of the Christian Faith:

FROM THE

EXCEPTIONS of a late Book, Entituled,
Considerations on the Explications of the Doctrine
of the TRINITY.

To which is annexed,

A Letter from the Lord Bishop of Sarum to the Au-
thor of the said *Vindication*, on the same Subject.

L O N D O N:

Printed for Ric. Chiswell, at the *Rose and Crown*
in St. Paul's Church-yard. MDCXCV.

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T O

His Honoured F R I E N D ,

JAMES CHADWICK, Esq;.

TH E Present I here make you being a Vindication of my late L O R D of *Canterbury*, and the Cause he seasonably appeared in, and successfully defended, the Dedication of it seems of right to belong to you, who besides the Happiness of a near Alliance and a long and inward Acquaintance, had a Just Esteem and Veneration for Him. It was not without His G R A C E'S Direction and Encouragement, that I entred upon this Work; and had He lived to have perus'd the Whole, as He did a Part

The Epistle Dedicatory.

of it, (a few Days before his Last Hours) it had come with greater Advantage into the world, and much more to my own Satisfaction, as having passed the Trial of that Exact and Impartial Judgment which he was wont to exercise in Matters of this Nature. But however it may fall short in that Particular, such as it is, I here present it to you, not doubting (though it may not deserve it for its own sake) but you will accept it in Remembrance of so Excellent a Friend, and as a Testimony of all due Respect from,

S I R,

Your Affectionate Servant,

J. WILLIAMS.

T H E

T H E

P R E F A C E.

THE Subject which the Author of the Considerations undertakes, is a prime Article of the Christian Faith, and so requires Seriousness and Decorum in the Management of it: And the Persons to whom he declares himself an Adversary, are not only of an eminent Order and Station in the Church, but also such as have approved themselves in their Writings to be of that Learning and Judgment, that Temper and Moderation, that their Adversary cannot but pay some Reverence, in Expressions at least, to their Persons for it.

But notwithstanding this, as if he had a distrust in his Cause, and durst not venture it abroad into the world upon the Strength of its own Reason and Authority, he soon endeavours to prepossess his unvary Readers with such Insinuations as he thinks will make them, if not of his own Party, yet suspect the Sincerity of the other.

For would you know who those are that he proclaims War against? They are one while a poor sort of weak people at the best, that, he saith, neither have nor can defend their Cause, but have given it up to the Socinians: But if you would indeed know who they are, in their proper colours; they are the great Pensioners of the world, that are bribed with great Rewards, They are of a Church, whose Fears and Aws are greater than their Bribes. Another while they are, great men indeed that defend the Do-

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Doctrine of the Trinity against them, but 'tis that they **Must** maintain it, p. 44. So that set aside Preferments, Fears and Awe, and without doubt these Great Men, and the whole Church and Nation (as he would have it believed) would Socinianise, and become their Profelytes. Would one think that this Person had ever read the Character his Grace has given his Predecessors in that Controversy, who used generally to lay aside unseemly Reflections, &c? Would one think this to be the Person that in the Page before said, That the Archbishop instructed the Socinians themselves with the Air and Language of a Father, not of an Adversary or Judge? Or rather, has he not given us reason to think he would have these doubtful Expressions construed to the disadvantage of him whom he therein pretends to commend? Or does he think, that after all, he has wiped his mouth, and comes off with some decorum, that he asks Pardon, if there be any thing here said, not respectful enough.

Solomon saith, As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth (or as the Septuagint reads it, traduceth) his neighbour, and saith, Am I not in sport? For can any thing blacker be said, than that because of the Preferments on one side, and the Fears and Awe on the other, these Great Men defend the Doctrine of the Trinity, and defend it because they must. All that can be said is, that in his opinion these are fatal Biasses; in his opinion, I say, who after all his pretence to a freedom from these Biasses which the Great Pensioners of the world are under the power of, cannot so smother it, but upon occasion it will break forth: O, saith he, Let the Church-Preferments be proposed as the Reward of only Learning and Piety, and then mighty things shall be done, and it shall be soon seen how many eyes this Liberty would open. Surely he must have too fatal an inclination this way himself, that can think so ill
of

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of mankind, and of such who are known to have been tried when time was, but despised his sort of Bribes and Fears too, when armed with Power and Authority; when they, with a bravery becoming their Learning and Integrity, dar'd to own (in his Phrase) not only an inconvenient but a dangerous Truth, p. 65.

Surely this is a sort of treatment that these Venerable Persons might not have expected from one of that denomination; that used to argue with decency. But what may not be expected from him, who has the confidence to tell the World, that the Ancient Unitarians did generally reject the Gospel, and other Pieces now attributed to St. John, and said they were written by the Heretick Cerinthus? p. 50, &c.

And because he thought himself obliged rather to vindicate those beloved Predecessors of his (as he would have it) than those Divine Books; he pretends particularly to set down their Reasons in order; of which matter, though (as he tells us) he will affirm nothing; yet, saith he, I should be glad to see an Answer to their Exceptions.

After which, I hope these Great men will think it no disparagement to suffer the utmost indignity in such Company as that of the Divine Evangelist.

But of this more in its proper place.

But why doth our Author thus lead up the Van, and bring up the Rear of his Answer to these Venerable Persons, with this popular Topick of Church-Preferments, and Church-Fears? Was there never a time when the Church of God professed the same Tenets which our Church defends, without any of those great Rewards to bribe them; and when on all sides they were beset with the Awe and Fears of a Furious and Embitter'd Adversary? Was there not a time when his Unitarians possess'd some of the greatest Preferments, when (as our Author tells us) they had their Paulus Patriarch of Antioch; and Photinus Metropolitan

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of Illyricum; and that their Followers abounded every-where, &c? p. 53.

And I may tell him as a secret, Was there not a time when the Power of these fatal Biasses was abroad, that their Metropolitans were not wont to treat the Trinitarians with the Air and Language of a Father, but of an Adversary, and a Tyrannical Judge? What else was the meaning of the Commotions, Violences, and Outrages us'd in those days, when Fire and Faggot were even among them in fashion; when Bishops were deposed, exiled, slain, and the whole Empire in a Combustion by those Infamous Practices? Surely (as our Author saith of his Adversaries) if those persons had believed as they said, they could never think it necessary to use the Precaution of such mighty Aws and Draconick Sanctions, to maintain a Truth so obvious, as they pretend, to every unprejudiced, and every honest man, p. 54.

This, I doubt me, is in his words a Thorny and ungrateful Subject. And he may thank himself for giving the occasion; and me for not tracing it further.

For which, as I am not conscious to my self of having done them any wrong; so I don't think it fit to conclude my Preface, as he doth his, with asking his pardon.

E R R A T A.

[D]Age 8.l.28. dele from *and* to *Perswasion*. p.12.l.25. r. *uncouth*. p.13.l. ult. r. *Paraphrase*. p.18.l.16. r. *What if*. p.26.l.15. for *usually* r. *really*. p.71. l. 15. after *place* make a (.) l. 16. for *and* r. *And*. l. 17. after *created* make a (.)

A V I N

A
VINDICATION
 OF THE
SERMONS

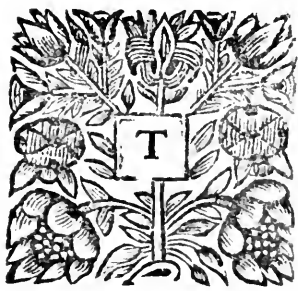
Of His *Grace* the Archbishop of *Canterbury*,

Concerning the

Divinity and Incarnation of our B. Saviour, &c.

S E C T. I.

Of the Deity of our Saviour.



THE Author of the *Considerations* having taken a liberty of dispersing the matter before him without any just order, doth accordingly often repeat things of the same kind; making some ventures upon a Point in one place, and taking it up again in another; so that his Reader is often rather amused than satisfied. Tho' wuthal, he takes occasion to quicken his Matter (which

would otherwise have proved nauseous and heavy) with several pert Remarks and Reflections. But being my design is not like

B

a *Man*

a *Man of Mystery* (as he scoffingly represents it) to darken the Cause, or to cast a milt before the Eyes of the Reader; I shall gently lead him by the hand, and endeavour to put what I have to say, into that order, that whatever force is in it, the Reader may soon discover; or what defects may be in it, he may be able to detect.

This Author allows His Grace to be *open and ingenuous in declaring his Opinion of the Trinity*; and is pleased to allow him a right to alledge particular Scriptures to prove the Divinity of our Saviour. And whether he has proved it or not, is the Point in Controversy.

Before I proceed to which, I shall briefly state the Point, and shew what are the distinct Opinions of the *Orthodox*, the *Arians*, and *Socinians*, concerning it; for into one of these, is the whole to be resolved.

‘The *Orthodox* hold, That Christ the Word, and only begotten of the Father, was truly and really God from all Eternity; God by Participation of the Divine Nature and Happiness together with the Father, and by way of Derivation from him, as Light from the Sun; and that he made all Creatures, and so could no more be a Creature, than it is possible for a Creature to make it self. Thus *A. Bp.* p. 23, 37, 38.

‘The *Arians* conceive, That sometime before the World was made, God generated the Son after an ineffable manner, to be his Instrument and Minister in making the World. And this Son is called God in Scripture, not in the most perfect Sense, but with respect to the Creatures whom he made. So our Author, p. 46. a

‘*Socinus* held, That the Son was not in Being till he was the Son of the Virgin; and that therefore he was a God, not in Nature, but by way of Office, Mission, or Representation, as *Moses*, and others, are called God in Scripture. So our Author, p. 48. b

Against these two last, his Grace directed his Discourse, and took them up in order; and in the first place founded his Argument upon the First Chapter of *St. John's Gospel*.

Here his Adversary labours with all his might to put by the force of those Arguments. Doth the Archbishop reason from the Context. If you will believe this Author, this Text is alledged impertinently by him for the Trinitarians, which it doth not favour, no,

not in the least. That his Grace can raise the Expressions no higher than Arianism, p. 46. That as for the Historical Occasion assigned by his Grace, there is no Historian (he is sure, no Ancient Historian) assigns it. And that many of the Ancients did believe that Cerinthus was the true Author of the Gospel imputed to St. John; and that the Ancient Unitarians did reject the Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation now attributed to him, p. 49, 50.

This is the Sum of what he has said; all of which will be comprehended under the following Heads.

1. I shall consider the Authority of St. John's Gospel, and other Writings ascribed to him.

2. I shall consider the Authority of those Unitarians who, he saith, rejected those Writings.

3. If St. John proves to be the Author of the Gospel, I shall consider the occasion upon which he is said to have written that Book.

4. I shall defend the Orthodox Explication of it, given by the Archbishop.

1. I shall consider the Authority of those Writings, which are usually ascribed to St. John, viz. The Gospel, Three Epistles, and the Revelation.

It's much, that we should be put upon the proof of this at this time of day, and by one that professes himself to believe the Christian Religion; of which inconsistency, I think it's much more difficult to give an account, than of the Writings of that Apostle, called in question by his dear Friends, the Ancient Unitarians.

It is certain, that there was not the least occasion given him from the Point in dispute to enter upon this matter, where both sides agreed, or would be thought to be agreed about the Authority of the Book they reason from: And which he saith, is with great Colour alledged for the Arian Doctrine, p. 46. and that Socinus's Explication of it, would perfectly agree to the Lord Christ. But I must confess, he has given too great reason to suspect, that he is in this Point of the same mind with the Ancient Unitarians; and would allow Cerinthus, or Simon Magus, or any of the like Rabble, to be Author of those Writings, rather than that Divine Apostle. But as he wisely observes, that those

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cient Unitarians that had rejected them; 'Yet, because they saw 'it begun to grow into Credit among the other Denominations 'of Christians, many of which had been seduced by the *Platonick* 'Philosophers that came over to Christianity; therefore they were 'careful to show them, that it was capable of a very allowable 'Sense; and that it doth not appear, that either *St. John*, or 'Cerinthus, intended to advance a Second God, p. 53. a

That is, in plain and honest *English*, they themselves did not at all believe those to be the Works of *St. John*; but because there was no going against the Stream, and that among the other Denominations of Christians these were universally received, they would then swim with it; and then whoever was the Author, whether *St. John* or *Cerinthus*, was no *Trinitarian*. And if they could have made this out to the satisfaction of the adverse Party, and there had been nothing wanting but their Approbation of the aforesaid Works to have made the Christians of other Denominations intirely theirs; then they that at first held, that *Cerinthus*, and not *St. John*, was the Author; and towards an Accommodation, came so far, as to say for convenience sake, *St. John*, or *Cerinthus*, to remove all rubs out of the way, and to have completed the design, would without doubt have intirely come over so far to them, whatever they themselves thought; and they would have consented that *St. John*, and not *Cerinthus*, was the Author. But alas! that was too hard a task, for *St. John* himself would not bend and comply, and could not be made a *Unitarian*. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, &c. was as stable as a Rock; and therefore if *St. John* would not be for them, they would not be for him. And then all the *Unitarians* with one consent reject the Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation, and give the Honour from *St. John* to *Cerinthus*, who should be said to write them, to confirm this Heretick's Cabalastick and Platonick Notions about the $\alpha\lambda\phi\omega$, or Word, and his Jewish Dreams about the Millenary Kingdom, p. 50.

Now which part our Author will take to, whether that of the Ancient *Unitarians*, Who, he saith, were Contemporaries to the First Fathers of the Church, and were Older than any of those Fathers whose Works are now extant (if we will believe him); whether, I say, he will take to them and reject these Books, or whether forsake his Friends, and side with those Fathers whose Works are

now extant, and the rest of the Catholick Church in receiving them, I am not able positively to determine; for he holds us in suspense and faith, *He will affirm nothing in the matter, but should be glad to see a good Answer to the Exceptions against these Books, which we receive as St. John's, that were made by the Ancient Unitarians.*

I do not think my self obliged to enter into the merits of that cause, unless he will yield those Books of *St. John* to be for the *Trinitarians*, and therefore calls their Authority in question: But when he professes *St. John* not to favour, no not in the least, the *Trinitarian Doctrine*, and to be wholly *Socinian*, What need is there to prolong the time and postpone the Consideration of the main Cause, and that I must be put upon the Proof of this, and hew my way through all those formidable Arguments of the *Unitarians* against *St. John's* Writings, before I must be admitted to Argue the Point in Debate? Which is, as if when his *Grace* had said, That the first Chapter of *Genesis* might as well be Interpreted of a new Moral Creation, as the first Chapter of *St. John*; before he would allow me to proceed to the Proof of this, he should require me to shew that *Moses* wrote the Book of *Genesis*, and oblige me to Answer all the Arguments of *Aben Ezra* against it.

But how impertinent soever this may be, yet to shew my self a fair Adversary, I will return him his Complement (since I have time for it) that *he shall not* (as he saith to his *Grace*) *put that question, which I will not satisfy, if I can, and reasonably may.*

Let us then See (for he has undertaken to shew us them) *what were the Allegations of the Unitarians out of Eusebius, but especially out of St. Epiphanius, who hath Written very largely of this matter* (as he saith).

For these Arguments this Author refers us to *Eusebius* and *Epiphanius*; but as for *Eusebius*, he says nothing of these Arguments our Author cites him for; and as for what are in *Eusebius*, they are not the *Allegations of the Unitarians*, but of some of the otherwise Orthodox against the *Apocalypse*, as I shall shew.

As for *Epiphanius*, our Author saith, *He hath written very largely of this matter*: but if he has, it had become him to have observ'd that it was because of the Answer he has given to the Arguments which the *Alogi* (in our Author's English, the *Unitarians*)

rians) alledged against St. *John's* Writings, in which that Historian is very particular ; and not to propose them as if they had stood the shock of several Ages, and to this day wanted a Reply: for after this manner he introduces them, *I should be glad to see a good Answer to the Exceptions of the Unitarians, against the Books which we receive as St. John's.* But perhaps in his esteem what *Epiphanius* hath said, is not a good Answer ; and as impertinent and ridiculous as that he makes for him in the case of *Thyatira*, of which more anon.

It's time now to examine them.

Object. 1. The *Unitarians* said, That it was the current Opinion and general Tradition, that *Cerinthus*, and not St. *John*, was Author of the Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation, that go under St. *John's* name: for as to the Revelation, it was scarce doubted by any to be the Work of *Cerinthus* ; and as such, was wrote against by divers Learned men of the Catholick Persuasion, as 'tis now called.

A. The Answer *Epiphanius* gives to that Clause about *Cerinthus*, is, 'How could *Cerinthus* be the Author of that which was directly opposite to him: for *Cerinthus* would have Christ to be a meer and late-born man, whereas St. *John* saith, *the Word always was, and came from Heaven, and was made flesh.* Now I conceive this Answer of *Epiphanius* to be good, unless they would have *Cerinthus* to contradict himself.

As to the other Clauses of our Author's Objections, (for they are not in *Epiphanius*) nothing is more false, than that it was the current Opinion and general Tradition that *Cerinthus* was the Author of all those Writings; and that the Revelation was scarce doubted by any to be his, and was wrote against, as such, by divers of the Catholick Persuasion: For,

1. There were some Books of St. *John*, of which there never

Eccles. Hist. was any question in the Christian Church, which *Eusebius* calls
l. 3. c. 24. ἀναλήπτως γεγραμῶς, such is his Gospel, which *Ireneus*, and *Euse-*
bius from him, say he published, while at *Ephesus*, at the In-
st. c. 25: stance of the *Asian* Bishops, and as such is often quoted by the Fa-
Iren. l. 3. thers. This *Sandius*, a late Author of the *Unitarians* acknowledges,
c. 1. who saith, The Gospel was always accounted Canonical. Such
Euseb. l. 5. again is the first Epistle of St. *John*, which, saith *Eusebius*, is ad-
c. 8. mitted by the present as it was by the ancient Christians with-
Hieron. Ec- out dispute. So St. *Jerom*; upon which *Grotius* saith, That it was
cles. Script. never doubted to be St. *John's*. So *Sandius* again. 2. Those
Sandius de
Script. Ec-
cles.

2. Those Books that were not so generally receiv'd as St. *John's*, were yet for the most part receiv'd as Canonical. Such were the 2^d. and 3^d. Epistles; of which some would have another *John*, call'd *John the Presbyter*, to be the Author, as St. *Jerom* saith, and *Grotius* from him; but for the most part it was believed to be St. *John the Evangelist* * : Against which (it seems) the *Ancient Unitarians* had nothing particularly to object; for else we should have learn'd it from our Author.

Of this sort is the *Apocalypse*; of which, saith our Author, it was scarce doubted by any to be the Work of *Cerintus*. *Eusebius* indeed saith, *Some do question it*: But who and how many were they on the other side that did not doubt of either its Authority or Author, even such as *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, &c. † *Iren. l. 4. c. 37. & 50.* † some of which interpreted it, (as St. *Jerom* saith) and say *Euseb. l. 5. c. 8.* that St. *John* wrote it when in *Patmos*. But I shall refer our Author for the rest to *Grotius* and *Sandius*; the latter of which charges them with *Blasphemy* that would attribute it to *Cerintus*. *Tertull. ad-vers. Marcion. c. 4.*

Hieron. Script. Eccles. Origen. Homil. In principio.

Lastly, saith our Author, The Revelation was as the Work of *Cerintus*, wrote against by divers Learned men of the *Catholick Persuasion*.

A. Dionysius Alexandrinus was of the number of those that questioned whether St. *John the Evangelist* were the Author; and for this indeed he offers several Reasons, but of so little force, that if our Author hath seen them, as he has not so he could not have the confidence to propose them in behalf of his *Ancient Unitarians*. But whatever that Father thought of the Author, he allowed the Book to be Divine.

There were indeed some others of the *Catholick Persuasion*, that *Dionysius* spoke of in the same Book, (as *Eusebius Eccles. Hist. lib. 5. cap. 24.* relates) that would have the *Apocalypse* wrote by *Cerintus*; but they were few, and such as were troubled with a sort of *Millenaries*, Followers of *Nepos* an *Egyptian Bishop*, (of Repute for his Learning, Faith, and Knowledge of the Scripture) who for their Opinion quoted the *Apocalypse*. And it seems, as the *Ancient Unitarians* rejected St. *John's* Writings, because they favour'd the Divinity of our Saviour; so those (otherwise Orthodox) would, it's likely, have rejected the

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the *Apocalypse*, because it favoured (as they thought) the Cause of the *Millennium*.

Upon the whole it appears, That it was the current Opinion and general Tradition, that St. *John*, and not *Cerintus*, was the Author of the Works attributed to that Evangelist.

Object. 2. They objected, he saith, ' That this Gospel is wholly made use of by the *Cerinthians* and *Valentinians*, the two chief Sects of the *Gnosticks*, and for this he quotes *Ireneus*, as well as *Epiphanius*.

A. What is this brought to prove? Will it prove *Cerintus* to be the Author of that Gospel? Then it may as well prove *Valentinus* to be the Author of it, as *Cerintus*, since the *Valentinians* wholly made use of it, as well as the *Cerinthians*.

Or will it prove that the Gospel is a *Valentinian*, a *Cerinthian*, or *Gnostick* Gospel? Then so would the other Scriptures be such as the Sects were that quoted them, that corrupted and wrested them, to serve their purpose. And thus *Ireneus* tells us the *Gnosticks* did, as he gives Instances enough, *Har. l. 1. c. 15, 16, 17.* Nay, *Cerintus* himself owned the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, at least part of it; will it therefore follow that the Doctrine of *Cerintus* was favoured in that Gospel, or might be proved from it?

Epiphanius.
Har. 28.5.
Philastrius
Har.

But his *Grace* saith, This Gospel was wrote against *Cerintus*; and then, saith our Author, how came the *Cerinthians* to use it?

A. They used it as the other Hereticks used that and other Scriptures. And *Ireneus* applies this to another purpose; for, saith he, *By this means they give Testimony to us.*

And this they might so much the rather do, as the Evangelist makes use of several Terms of theirs (as his *Grace* and *Grotius* have shewed) such as *Life*, *Light*, *Fulness*, which the Followers of *Cerintus* (who were willing to catch at any thing, as appears from *Ireneus*) finding there, would challenge for theirs; and this our Author himself intimates, when he thus expounds *Ireneus* That they, the *Gnosticks*, greedily used this Gospel as a Proof of their Eons.

Object.

Object. 3. 'The other Three Evangelists suppose all along that our Saviour Preached but one year, and therefore they reckon but one Passover; but (the pretended) St. *John* counts Three years, and Three Passovers; Which, saith our Author, seems to me an unaccountable contradiction; and yet it is granted on all hands, some finding a 4th year and Passover.

Answer. It is an unaccountable Contradiction indeed, if the other Three Evangelists had said, that our Saviour Preached but one Year, and that there was but one Passover, when St. *John* saith there were three Passovers, and consequently three years, or thereabouts. But the question is, whether the three Evangelists gave any such account; I am certain they do not. And if one will but consider the occurrences in the time of our Saviour's Preaching, as it's impossible (morally speaking) it should all be done in one years time; so he that will but consider the way of computation, as *Epiphanius* hath done *Her.* 51. 22. will see that what St. *John* saith must needs be true.

But what then will become of the other Evangelists? Must they be excluded out of the number of the Canonical? No surely. But we are to consider when each Evangelist begins, and what he takes in hand to pursue, of which *Epiphanius* gives a very good account.

And if we take this course, we shall find the latter Evangelists often to supply the Omissions of the preceding. And so St. *John*, who lived the longest, and wrote last of them, doth in the Case before us, and distributes the time of our Saviour's Ministry into Annals, or Passovers, after the Jewish way of Computation, beginning his Account from our Saviour's Baptism, and connecting it to *John* the Baptist's Imprisonment (where the other Evangelists begin) by which means the History is made compleat, and the Evangelists are found to agree, as *Eusebius*, and St. *Jerom* observe. The Omission of which, by the other Evangelists, makes it no more a Contradiction, than when St. *Matthew* begins the Genealogy of our Saviour with *Abraham*, St. *Luke* carries it to *Adam*, and St. *John* makes him to exist before the World. Omissions are no Contradictions, and such as these no unaccountable Omissions. And as for that single Passover, the other three speak of, it was not, as that was a Chronological Character of Time, circumscribing the whole space of our Saviour's Ministry; but a remarkable Point, denoting the special Season he suffer'd in, with

Her. 51.
5, 6.

*V. Wobes-
gen in loc*

relation to the great Type under the Law, and for which he is sometime called *our Passover*. This, I say, no more describes the compleat Time of his Ministry, than it will follow that because *Pontius Pilate* was then said to be Governor of *Judea*, that he was Governor but one Year only.

Objct. 4. 'The other Evangelists agree, that immediately after his Baptism our Lord was led into the Wilderness to be tempted Forty days. But *Cerenthus*, who knew not the Series or Order of our Saviour's Life and Miracles, says in the Gospel, which he has, say they, [*v. z.* the Ancient Unitarians] forged for *St. John*, that the next day after his Baptism, our Saviour spake with *Andrew* and *Peter*, and the day after went to *Galilee*, and on the third was at a Wedding in *Canaz*, and after this departed with his Mother and Brethren to *Capernaum*, where he abode some time.

A. Our Author saith, *The next day after our Saviour's Baptism, he spake with Andrew, &c.*

I answer, 1. There is no mention at all of our Saviour's Baptism in that Chapter, but the History of that being particularly related by the other Evangelists, *St. John* supposes it, and refers to it, *V. 15. John bare witness—This is he of whom I spake*, that is, formerly; and when that was, *St. Matthew 3. 11.* shews, which was just before his Baptism.

2. Accordingly, all the way there is an observable difference of Phrase between *St. John* and the other Evangelists. *Matthew* saith, He it is that *cometh after me*, that is, he that is to come. *St. John* saith, *Ver. 26. There standeth one among you, he it is that coming after me*, [as I have said.] So *ver. 29. John seeth Jesus coming*; — he spake of him, as one then known to himself, but that was not till his Baptism, *ver. 33.* So again, *ver. 30. This is he, of whom I said*, [formerly] *Ver. 32, 34. John bare record, saying, I saw the spirit,—and it abode upon him.* The Phrases, *said, saw, bare record, abode*, do shew that it was a certain time past, which he refers to. From whence it appears, (1.) That the Phrase, *the next day*, has no reference to our Saviour's Baptism (for that *St. John* is not relating) but to the Discourse then in hand; as the same Phrase, *Ver. 29.* had.

(2.) That there was a distance of time between our Saviour's Baptism, and that time that *John* the Baptist had the Discourse with

with the *Pharisees* at *Bethabara*, ver. 19, 24, 28. which was the day before he met *Andrew*, ver. 35.

3. It's not at all unreasonable to suppose, That our Saviour's Temptation in the Wilderness, &c. did fall in with that time; for after his Baptism he immediately went into the Wilderness, *Mark* 1. 12. And *John* the Baptist may well be supposed to have spent that time in Preaching and Baptizing near to *Jordan*, and in the parts adjoining to it; all which *St. John* omits, as having been before recorded by the other Evangelists, as well as our Saviour's Baptism.

But the Learned Reader may consult *Epiphanius*, *Hær.* 51. 13, &c. and *Petavius's* Notes upon it. And I will refer our Author to *Schlicdingius's* Note on *John* 1. 26.

Object. 5. 'He has feigned an Epistle, as from *St. John*, to the Bishop and Church of *Thyatira*, &c. But it's certain and notorious, say the *Unitarians*, that there was no Church at *Thyatira*, till a long time after *St. John's* Death. 'Tis a very ridiculous Answer made to this by *Epiphanius*, who being sensible (because he was of *Asia*) of the truth of this Objection, is forced to be content with this vain Elusion, that *St. John* writes Prophetically of this Church.

A. 1. It's far from being certain, that there was no Church, and if *St. John* be of any Authority, it's as certain there was a Church there, as in the other Six Cities, for it's in the same Stile; and it may be as well said, there was no Church at *Ephesus*, as at *Thyatira*, if the way of writing is to be regarded.

2. It's not probable that there should be no Church there, when Churches were planted all about; and that it's granted all the other Six were Churches then in being.

3. If I understand *Epiphanius*, he is far from granting it: All that he saith, is,

(1.) 'Supposing it to be so*, what will follow? why, 'These
' very Persons are forced from the things which they object against
' it, by their own Confession, to assent to the truth; that *St. John*
' foretold things to come by Divine Inspiration, concerning the
' Corruption of that Church, and those false Prophetesses that
' should arise in it Ninety three Years after our Lord's Ascen-
' sion.

* ἐὰν γὰρ
ἐπιπονή
which no
Latin Trans-
lator has
not reach-
ed.

(2.) He positively saith, There was a Church there in *St. John's* time; for saith he, ' *St. John* foresaw that after the time of the

‘Apostles, and of St. *John*, the Church would fall from the ‘truth into Error, even that of the *Cataphryges*, of which ‘were the pretended Prophetesses, *Priscilla*, *Maximilla*, and *Quintilla*.

So again, ‘He wrote by Prophecy to those Christians, that ‘then were there in *Thyatira*, that a Woman, who would call ‘her self a Prophetess, should arise among them.

So that our Author is as wide of the Sense of *Epiphanius*, as his *Unitarians* were of the Truth, that would so many years after affirm there was no Church at *Thyatira* in St. *John*’s time. I suppose our Author took it up at the second hand; for I perceive *Pererius*, and perhaps others, mistook *Epiphanius*.

It seems that the Church there had been either destroyed by Persecution, or corrupted by the *Cataphryges*, out of which Condition it having recovered a Hundred and twelve years after, (as *Epiphanius* saith) the *Alogi* ignorantly concluded there never had been a Church there till that time; or however, made use of this pretence to countenance their impious Design of overthrowing the Authority of that Book: A design that our Author hath shewed himself too great a well-wisher to, by so formal a Repetition of those sorry, and so often baffled Objections; and by adding what force he (under the name of the *Ancient Unitarians*) could to support them. Which brings into my mind an unhappy passage in *Serm. 2.* of the Archbishop, concerning the Doctrine of *Socinus*, and his uncouth way of managing of it. ‘It was only to serve and support an Opinion which ‘he had entertained before, and therefore was resolved one way ‘or other to bring the Scripture to comply with it: And if he ‘could not have done it, it is greatly to be fear’d, that he would ‘at last have called in question the Divine Authority of St. *John*’s ‘Gospel, rather than have quitted his Opinion.

It was evidently so in the Case of the *Alogi* or *Ancient Unitarians*; and what doth our Author want of it, that thus rakes into the Dirt of that Generation, and would have them the best part of the Christian Church? But that remains to be consider’d.

II. Who are the *Ancient Unitarians*, that our Author at all times speaks so venerably of, and that thus rejected the Books usually ascribed to St. *John*?

This name of the *Unitarians* and *Ancient Unitarians*, is a Title much made use of, of late; and it is a term of Latitude, that to those that know not the difference, adds much to the number; for under that, they would comprehend all that deny a Trinity, or think not alike of it with the Catholick Church, whether *Arians*, or *Photinians* and *Socinians*; though at the same time they disagree, as well among themselves, (as I shall shew) as with us, and particularly in the point in question, *viz.* the Authority of *St. John's Gospel*, &c. Our Author often speaks of the *Ancient Unitarians*; and if we would know how ancient they are, he tells us, they were *Contemporaries to the first Fathers of the Church*, and were older than any of those Fathers whose works are now extant, p. 50. that is, *St. Clement* himself contemporary to *St. Paul*.

Now whom should we so soon fix upon for his *Ancient Unitarians*, as *Cerinthus* and *Ebion*, for they were *Ancient*, as Contemporaries with the First Fathers of the Church; and were both of them *Unitarians*, as they both held that our Saviour was a *meer Man*? But here our Author interposes, and because he confesses he has met with these two names in the Church History; and when he did, to be sure finds no passable Character of them; therefore he will not have *Ebion* a Person, nor *Cerinthus* a *Unitarian*; and for the proof of the latter, offers no Testimony (the way for proving matter of Fact) but an Argument of his own; For, saith he, if *Cerinthus* held the Unity of God, and denied the Divinity and Pre-existence of our Saviour (as his Grace and the Moderns suppose) neither it should seem, would the *Unitarians* have reckoned him a Heretick, nor have rejected the Books which they supposed to be his; namely, the Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation, now attributed to *St. John*. As if a Person might not be Orthodox in one Point, and Heretical in others; and the *Unitarians* might not reckon *Cerinthus* a Heretick (who held *Jesus* was not born of a Virgin, but was the real Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, and that *Christ* descended upon *Jesus* after his Baptism, and leaving him again, returned to Heaven; and so it was *Jesus*, and not *Christ* that died; with more of these whimsical dreams) though he agreed with them in denying the Divinity and Pre-existence of our Saviour. The matter of Fact is beyond all contradiction, that *Cerinthus* was a *Unitarian*, as Church-History would have informed any smatterer in it, (as *Irenæus*, *Eusebius*, *Epiphanius*, &c. abundantly testify;) but it is his own Argument that is, in his Phrase, *obscure and puzzling.*

But

But he is not so willing to part with *Ebion*, the name I mean, and will have it given by some to the first Christians, because of their Poverty; and then because the *Ebionites* were *Unitarians* in one sense, therefore they must be Hereticks in none. But herein he is as unsuccessful as in his former attempt; for besides their agreement with the *Unitarians* in denial of Christ's Divinity, they held the Observation of the Law of *Moses* necessary, were Circumcised, and rejected *St. Paul* as an Apostate, &c.

Both of these then must be *Unitarians*, and Ancient *Unitarians*; but then comes a very obscure and puzzling part of his History; For whatever *Cerintus* himself thought, yet our Author tells us, that the Gospel of *St. John* was wholly made use of by the *Cerinthians*, his Followers. And then though these were *Unitarians*, yet being not of the number of those that wholly rejected *St. John's* Writings, we are much at a loss to find out those of them that were Older than any of those Fathers whose Works are now extant. I doubt we must come a step lower, and from being Older than those Fathers of the Church, whose Works are now extant, they will prove at the most Contemporaries with, if not after several of them, about the close of the 2d. Century, as is computed. Our Author himself points to them, and they were the *Alogi*, so termed by *Epiphanius*, because they denied Christ to be the $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, the Word, and the Son of God; and would have him a meer man. But now though these are *Unitarians*, and the most like to the *Socinians* of all the Ancient *Unitarians*, if not the only ones that are so (as *Sandius* would have it, p. 146, 147, &c.) Though they agree with his Character again, that they rejected all the Works commonly ascribed to *St. John*; yet they seem to be the only *Unitarians* that did anciently agree in disowning the Authority of all those Books; and then it will follow, that the *Unitarians* were not more Ancient than those Fathers, whose Works are now extant; though he saith, it is certain and confess'd by them all, that the Ancient *Unitarians*, from the Apostolick times to the *Nicene Council*, or thereabouts, did reject them. So that I see no remedy, but if he will be positive in it, that he must be contented to let the *Cerinthians* as well as the *Ebionites*, pass for *Unitarians*, to make his Sect thus ancient as the Apostolick times: But how he will do to find out those that did thus professedly reject all those Writings of *St. John* before

before them, and from the Apostolick times to them; and yet were older than such *Fathers of the Church*, as *Clemens Romanus*, *Polycarp*, *Ignatius*, &c. some of whose Works are now extant; I must leave to his Consideration.

Thus much shall suffice to have said about the Authority of *St. John's* Writings, and particularly of his Gospel. But there is another Point yet to be debated; which is,

III. To consider what was the occasion upon which *St. John* Wrote his Gospel. This is one of the first things his *Grace* doth take into Consideration; as the knowledge of this seem'd to him to be the *only true key to the Interpretation of this Discourse of St. John*, and the neglect of which was one of the grounds of *Socinus's* great and fatal mistake, as he saith.

How! *Socinus* mistake! rather let *St. John's* Gospel, and all his other Works, labour and sink under the Exceptions of the *Ancient Unitarians*; and lye by the walls till the world can give a good Answer to them. Rather let *St. John* take up words by chance (as our Author saith, p. 49.) and use the words *Life, Fulness, Only begotten*, as they came in his way, without any design, than the great *Socinus* should be blamed. *St. John*, indeed, may be said to use words by chance; but *Socinus*, formed, and thought, and concluded, and understood; and according as he formed, and thought, and concluded, so it must be meant. He was the man that saw plainly, (as he words it again, p. 48.) And if his *Grace*, in Vindication of *St. John*, and in compliance with the *Ancient Historians*, will adventure to Interpret him from the occasion of his Writing, he deserves to be treated with contempt. The *Serene Republick* owns none of these Titles, *Bishop and Archbishop*, &c. Thus scoffingly and boyishly doth he introduce this serious Argument. 'O he! says his *Grace*, 'How strangely has this man [*Socinus*] mistook for want of the 'Light of Ancient History! thus he Interprets Scripture by Scri- 'pture, and by Reason and Wit, not by the Fathers and the 'old Historians of the Churches Party, &c. I could find in my heart to Transcribe what his *Grace* has Wrote upon this case; his words are these: 'It was the great and fatal mistake 'of *Socinus*, to go to Interpret Scripture merely by Criticising 'upon words, and searching into all the Senses that they are ca- 'pable of, till he can find one, though never so forced and 'foreign

‘foreign, that will save harmless the Opinion which he was
 ‘resolved beforehand to maintain, even against the most natural
 ‘and obvious Sense of the Text which he undertakes to inter-
 ‘pret. Just as if a man should interpret Ancient Statutes and
 ‘Records, by mere critical Skill in words, without regard to
 ‘the true occasion upon which they were made, and without any
 ‘manner of knowledge and insight into the History of the Age
 ‘in which they were written, p. 18.

And that this was the way *Socinus* took, our Author’s own account of it will manifest, p. 48. where he chalks out the method his great Master observed in interpreting that Evangelist, and that is, by laying down certain Propositions, which he resolved to accommodate all to; such was the *Unity of God*: and therefore, saith he, when the *Word* is called *God*, it *Must be meant in a Sense of Office*: And whereas it is said, *all things were made by him*; those things *Must be the Spiritual World*, &c. And then farewell Fathers, and Historians, Occasions, and Scripture too, rather than the *Reason and Wit* of *Socinus* be called in question.

Well, but supposing that our Author is content to have the Historical Occasion of *St. John’s* Writing inquired into; yet, as for that assign’d by his *Grace*, it was, he saith, *below the Gravity of the Apostle to confute the Wild Gnosticks*, &c. And if you will take his word for it, he adds, ‘I am of opinion, That there is
 ‘no Historian (I am sure there is no Ancient Historian) who
 ‘assigns that Historical Occasion of *St. John’s* Writings, even
 ‘the *Gnosticks* and their *Eons*, mentioned by his *Grace*. In short,
 ‘he hath not very justly blamed *Socinus*, for not knowing an
 ‘Historical Occasion, which is mentioned in no Historian, p. 49.

This is very positive, *no Historian, no Ancient Historian*, and *mentioned in no Historian*.

We have gained before (if it be worth the while to prove it) that *Cerintus* and *Ebion* (supposing him for the present a Person) did deny the Divinity of our Saviour, according as his *Grace* represented it.

The next thing is to shew, That these their Opinions was an occasion which *St. John* took for the writing his Gospel, in the Judgment of the Ancient Historians, and Fathers of the Church.

Here our Author interposes, and saith, the account given of this matter by the Ancients, is *very different from this of his Grace*.

For they say, according to our Author's antique Translation, 'That the other Evangelists having committed to writing only the Gests of our Saviour, during one Years space: Therefore the Apostle *John*, being thereto requested, declared in 'a Gospel according to him, the time that was passed over by 'the other Evangelists, and what was done by our Saviour 'therein *.

* *Euseb. l. 3. c. 24.*

It is very true, That the one of these is different from the other; but tho they are different, they are not contradictory and inconsistent. For then, not only the Archbishop would contradict himself, who elsewhere gives the same account, and tells us from *Eusebius*, 'That St *John* wrote his Gospel last, and that 'on purpose to supply the Omissions of the other Evangelists †; but the Fathers also would contradict one another, and often themselves; who sometimes give the one, and sometimes the other, and sometimes both as the reasons of St. *John's* writing, (as I shall presently shew). By which way of arguing, *Epiphanius*, *Eusebius*, and St. *Jerome*, &c. will clash one with another; when the first of these saith, St. *John* wrote his Gospel * by the impulse of the Holy Ghost; and the other says, it was at the instance of the *Asian* Bishops. But now, as these two may well be accommodated, and are consistent; so it is in the Account given by the Ancients of the occasion of St. *John's* writing the Gospel; therefore St. *Jerome* † joyns them together, and after he had said, That St. *John* wrote it in Confutation of *Cerintbus*, and other Hereticks; adds, there is also another Cause, and then falls in with *Eusebius*.

† *Serm. 2. p. 94.*

* *Her. 5. 1. 12.*

† *Script. Eccles.*

So *Ireneus* expressly *. So *Epiphanius*.

* *Advers. Her. l. 3. c. 11. v. Epiphanius. Her. 5. 1. 2, 12, 13.*

And thus *Sandius* doth acknowledg, That against the Heresy of *Cerintbus* and *Ebion*, St. *John* (as we have it by Tradition) wrote his Gospel.

Thus far then we are safe, and have the suffrage of Antiquity on our side, that St. *John* wrote his Gospel against the Heresies of *Cerintbus* and *Ebion*. And indeed, by our Author's reply to this part, we may guess, That when he met with these two Names in the Church-History, he met with nothing against it. For thus he goes on.

First, As to *Ebion*, concerning him, It is, saith he, doubted by the Criticks, whether there was any such Man: Nay, a little after, he is got above the Criticks, and positively affirms, That *Ebion*

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never was. Now, supposing his *Modern Opposers*, and among them the Archbishop, for want of consulting the *Indexes of Names in Church History*, had mistaken; yet, how will that confute his *Modern Opposers*, who use to quote *Irenæus*, *Epiphanius*, &c. for their Assertion, that St. *John* wrote against the *Ebionites*? For tho' *Ebion* never was, yet the *Ebionites* were an early Sect, and as early as they make him.

But saith he, *This Name was given to the first Christians, because of their Poverty*, according to the signification of the word.

A. Then indeed St. *John* was in the wrong for writing against these *first Christians*, whom St. *Paul* refers to, as our Author would have us understand, *1 Cor. 1. 26.* or at least, all those Fathers were mistaken that would have St. *John* write against the Heresy of the *Ebionites*, or that reckon that among the number of Heresies. For what Heresy is there in simple Poverty?

But if they that would have the name an Appellative, say it was not because of their Poverty, but because they thought, *θεωρῶνς ὡς τὰν υἱὸν*, poorly and meanly of our Saviour, as they would have him the Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, as some of them; or of *Mary*, as others; but all of them agreeing that he was a mere Man. So *Eusebius*. What if *Ebion* at last is found to be a Person? So it's affirmed by *Tertullian*, *Præscript. c. 33.* &c. *Hieron. in Isai. c. 1, & 3.* *Hilarius Epist. de Trin. l. 1. r.* *Origen in Matth. 5, &c.*

Mar. 30.

So *Epiphanius* expressly, *Ebionites* were so called from *Ebion*; whose Followers, saith he, would be so-called from their being poor like the Apostles: But, saith that Father, *This is a Fiction of their own; For Ebion was a proper Name.*

As for *Cerintus*, all that he has to say, is, That the Gospel of St. *John* could not be wrote against *Cerintus*, because *Cerintus* was said to be Author of it. But this is to reason about matter of Fact. It's plain, the *Ancients*, to whom our Author appeals, did assert, That it was written against *Cerintus*; and it's as plain, That *Cerintus* held these Opinions, against which St. *John* is supposed by them to have written. To which he has nothing to reply, but that *Cerintus* is said to be the Author of it; but that I have already consider'd before. Thus far then, I hope, 'tis pretty evident, That there are *Historians* and *Ancient Historians*, that do assign the same Historical Occasion of St. *John's* Writings, as is assigned by his Grace.

But

But it's likely he will reply, That these words of his, *no Historian, and to be sure no Ancient Historian ever assigns that occasion mentioned by his Grace,* are to be limited to the *Gnosticks*. Whatever he may say, yet I doubt few Readers will suppose it; for he has so artificially mingled all these together, that what he affirms may be applied to all; and yet, if examined, he can restrain it to this or that particular. And therefore, that I may shew how little he is acquainted with this Argument, or how little he consults Truth and Candor in it, I shall consider it with respect to the *Gnosticks*.

He cannot deny, but that the Terms, *Word, Light, Fulness, Only Begotten,* are the Phraseology of the *Gnosticks*, or else he must never have read *Irenæus*; which also are used by *St. John*. Now the question will be, Whether *St. John* hath used them by chance, as our Author imagines? Or that in Opposition to these Dreams, *St. John* shews all these Titles did truly belong to our Saviour, and to which there is a *Perpetual Allusion*, as his Grace affirms. I verily believe, That if a *Gnostick* had accidentally light upon that Chapter, as the *Platonick Amelius* is said to have done, he would no less have been convinced there was this Allusion to their Hypothesis, than that Philosopher was that the Evangelist did Platonize. Hence it was, That the following *Gnosticks* would have confirmed their *Conjugations* and *Eons* from thence.

*Iren. l. 1.
c. 1. l. 3.
c. 11.*

But saith he, It was below the gravity of the Apostle to confute the wild *Gnosticks*, and their Chimerical *Eons*.

Why so? When this Sect so far prevailed, That during the Lives of the Apostles, it grew to a great height, to the great Prejudice and Disturbance of the Christian Religion, as his Grace observes; for whose Purity and Preservation it became even this great Evangelist to be concerned. And tho' our Sage Philosopher may call them, *Chimera's* and *Sickly Dreams*, (as in truth they were) and so too trivial a Subject for the Apostolical Pen to write of; yet, when we consider how far those Heresies spread, how long they continued, and what mischief they did (as may be seen in *Irenæus, Tertullian, Epiphanius, &c.*) we may agree to what *Epiphanius* saith upon this occasion. Neither, saith he, let any one contemn these *Dogmata*, as full of folly; for foolish People are persuaded by foolish things. Nay, prudent Persons may decline from the right way, if the mind be not exercised in the way of truth; as that

Har. 27. 7.

Adv. Her.
l. 26. c. 17. Father gives an instance of himself, when likely to be perverted by the *Gnosticks*.

But lastly, saith our Author, *I am of opinion, that there is no Historian, I am sure no Ancient Historian, who assigns the Historical Occasion of St. John's Writings, even the Gnosticks and their Eons, mentioned by his Grace.*

I answer, That what has been before said is sufficient, when there is a *Perpetual Allusion* to the Phrase and Opinions of the *Gnosticks*; and very often in the Apostolical Epistles, as has been observed by many Learned Persons.

Adv. Her.
l. 3. c. 11. But to put this past dispute, besides what is elsewhere, let our Author turn to *Irenæus*, and he will find that Ancient Author expressly affirming, That *St. John* wrote his Gospel against the Error of *Cerinthus*; and a little after, that *St. John* took away all ground of Dissention; and by the words, *the World was made by him*, he confuted the *Gnosticks*. So that if our Author was of that *Opinion*, it was without any ground.

IV. It's high time we now proceed to enquire into the sense of *St. John*. The *Ancient Unitarians* finding (as I have observed) the Gospel of *St. John* not reconcilable to their opinion of *Christ's* being a *meer man*; like *Alexander*, at once cut the Gordian knot, which they could not fairly untie; and rejected *this* and *other pieces* now attributed to that Evangelist, as *Uncanonical* and *Heretical*. But an after-generation (whom our Author dignifies also with the same title of *Ancient Unitarians*) more wary than the former, seeing that Author, whoever he was, to grow into credit among the other denominations of *Christians*, were careful to shew them, that it was capable of a very allowable sense, as our Author saith, p. 53. a.

And this seems to be the case of *Socinus* and this his Defender, who must not quit *St. John*, and with the *Ancient Unitarians*, call his Gospel the *Fiction and Forgery* of *Cerinthus*, (as our Author saith they did) for it has been too long in credit with the other denominations of *Christians*, to admit of such despiteful usage and violence: and therefore they will undertake to shew them it's capable of a very allowable sense; but by such *pitiful and wretched shifts*, by such *precarious and arbitrary suppositions*, (as his *Grace* rightly terms them) and an *invention which no indifferent Reader of St. John, that had not been prepossessed and bias'd by some violent prejudice, would ever have thought of*, p. 58, 65, &c.

And

And this will appear, if we try it by any of those ways by which the sense of an Author is to be obtained; such as the Occasion, the Phraseology, the Scope, Design and Context.

As for the Occasion, if the Authors alledged above, are of any Authority, it's so far unquestionable.

As for the Phraseology, that is to be understood by the common use of the Words, or the Subject, or Science they relate to; and accordingly were these Phrases in *St. John* applied in their proper and ordinary signification, *as not only the Orthodox Christians, but even the Arians, and Amelius the Platonist did understand them,* (as his *Grace* observes from *Eusebius*) and our Author is forced to confess as much; for in the account he gives of the *Historical occasion* (*viz.* of *Socinus's* new Project) he thus introduces it, '*Socinus* finding it to be the first of all God's Declarations, *I am the Lord thy God* &c. he understood *in the beginning,* 'to be *in the beginning of the Gospel state*; and the *Word* was a 'God in a sense of Office; and the *World* he made, a *spiritual* 'World.

Now what is this, but to carry off the words from a plain literal to a figurative sense, and so to acknowledge their Doctrine is not favoured by the Phraseology of it?

But supposing it to be so, yet, saith our Author, '*Socinus* observed, that the Scriptures abound with such Metaphors and 'Figures even when they speak of God, as when God is said to 'have Eyes, Arms and Bowels, &c. to denote the sight, power 'and mercies of God. P. 49. a.

It's granted; but withal, as he saith, *the Scriptures therein trust to the judgment of the most common Readers,* and question not *but the most ordinary capacity will so understand them.* But then how comes this to pass, that from the time of *St. John* downwards, not the most common and ordinary, nay, the most accurate Readers, and extraordinary Capacities, were ever so happy as to make this discovery before the fortunate *Socinus*? And why were not they as well able to find out in this discourse of *St. John* the Ministerial Deity of our Saviour, the beginning of the Gospel state, and the spiritual World, (the only Key, it seems, to unlock the sense of that Divine Writer) as they were by the Hands, Eyes and Bowels of God, to understand his Power, Sight and Mercies? It's evident that the most ordinary Capacities did, generally speaking, by these Corporeal Members, understand.

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derstand the abovesaid Attributes of the Deity to be described. And it is also evident that for *Socinus's* explication of that Evangelist, the most famed Expositors, and much more *common Readers*, no more thought of it, than the Ancient Navigators did dream of that new World, which *Columbus* two Ages ago was so happy as to discover. So that it evidently appears, that there is not the same reason to interpret the Phrases, *In the Beginning*, and *the Word was God*, and *all things were made by Him*, in a metaphorical and figurative sense, as there is for the understanding the Corporeal Organs of Speech and Action, &c. after that manner, when applied to God: but that rather they must be understood properly and literally, as the Orthodox, the *Arians*, and all others have understood, and his *Grace* has expounded them.

But *bold*, saith our Author, 'His *Grace* himself; when he comes to interpret the particular expressions, can raise them no higher than *Arianism*, (*viz.* that the Son was generated some time before the World) though he alledged them to prove *Trinitarianism*. p. 46. b.

Well, supposing this, yet if his Exposition hold so far good; the *Socinian* Hypothesis, that will not allow our Saviour to have any existence before his Nativity of the Virgin *Mary*, will then be utterly overthrown.

But what doth our Author mean? When he affirms or denies, as he pleases, what *Irenæus*, *Eusebius* and *Epiphanius* say; they are Books few understand, and fewer have: but methinks he should be a little more cautious when he uses the same liberty in a Book published but the last year, and that has the good hap to be generally well received and read. How then can he say that his *Grace* can raise the expressions no higher than *Arianism*? when it's the first of his Corollaries, *viz.* 'The Word here described by St. John, is not a Creature. And then follows, This Conclusion is directly against the *Arians*, who affirmed that the Son of God was a Creature. p. 39.

And there is not a branch of those Verses which the *Archbishop* doth not alike interj. r. t. Thus he saith of Christ the Word, that is, *the eternal Son of God*. P. 6. 59.

In the Beginning, that is, *he did exist before any thing was made*, and consequently is *without Beginning*, and eternal. P. 19, &c.

Was God, that is, *from all eternity*. P. 24, &c.

But perhaps, he will say, this his *Grace* has attempted, but not prov'd.

That remains to be tried by what he has to object against it; and then he only offers somewhat as a Reply to his *Graces's* Exposition of the Phrase, *In the Beginning*, leaving all the rest that was said in exposition and defence of the other Phrases of the Evangelist, to continue as they were; and if we may judge of what he could have said of the rest, by what he has said of this, it must needs have been very insignificant: For thus he argues.

1. '*In the Beginning*, is interpreted *without Beginning*, which two are distinctly contrary. P. 48 b.

A. I answer; This is not directly laid down as the interpretation of that Phrase; but is rather the consequence of what his *Grace* had said just before, as the preceding quotation shews, *In the Beginning*, that is, *he did exist before any thing was made, and consequently is without Beginning, and Eternal.*

2. Granting he had thus explain'd the Phrase, *In the Beginning*, to be *without Beginning*, yet they are not directly contrary. To have a Beginning, and to be without Beginning, are directly contrary, and more than so, a Contradiction. But to be *in the Beginning*, and to be *without Beginning*, are so far from being contrary, that they are very well consistent, for else God himself would not have been *in the Beginning*. Thus it is, Gen. 1. 1. *In the Beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth.* By which Phrase is shewed, that the Heaven and Earth had a Beginning, and so were not *in the Beginning*; (for then they had been before they began to be) and so it could not be said, *In the Beginning were the Heavens and the Earth*; for then they had, as God, been without Beginning. But it's said, *In the Beginning God created them*, that is, he that himself had no Beginning, gave a Beginning to them. After this manner doth the Wise-man express it, in the place quoted by his *Grace*, on this occasion, *The Lord possessed me [Wisdom] in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was*, Prov. 8. 22, 23. So that to Be *in the Beginning*, was to be before his *works of old*; to be *without a Beginning*, and from *Everlasting*.

2. He objects, 'Though he [Archbishop] cannot find the Coeternity in the words of St. *John*, yet he can interpret his
'ow

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own interpretation of his words, so as to make out the Co-
 ' eternity : For he saith, *in the Beginning*, that is, *the Son already*
 ' *was, when things began to be*; and by Consequence, the Son was
 ' without a Beginning; for that which was never made, could
 ' have no Beginning of its Being. And then he smartly returns
 upon him, ' How, Sir, is that a good Consequence, or any Con-
 ' sequence at all? For supposing the Son was when the World
 ' began to be, which is not yet Six thousand years ago, will it
 ' follow, that therefore he was absolutely without a Beginning,
 ' or was never made? &c.

Ans. If his *Grace* had left this Consequence to stand upon
 its own foot, without offering any proof for it; yet any one
 but competently acquainted with the Scripture-Phraesology,
 would not have questioned the reason and force of it; and if
 not with respect to his Adversary, yet for a *salvo* to his own ig-
 norance, would have forbore his *How, Sir, is that a good Conse-*
quence, or any Consequence at all? But I much question his igno-
 rance; for his cautious Adversary, that had been us'd to write
 with a due guard as well as strength, took care to prevent this
 Objection, and fortify his Consequence with the best authority,
 that of Scripture.

For thus he goes on immediately after the words quoted by
 this Author, (and so he is the more inexcusable) *The Son al-*
ready was when things began to be, and consequently is without Be-
ginning, &c. And so the *Jews* used to describe Eternity, *before the*
world was, and before the foundation of the world, as also in sever-
al places of the New Testament. And so likewise Solomon de-
 scribes the Eternity of *Wisdom*, *The Lord*, says he, *pass'd me in*
the beginning of his way, before his works of old, &c.

So that if the *Consequence* be not *good*, or if it be no *Consequence*
 ' at all, the Scripture is to be blamed, and not his *Grace* for fol-
 lowing it in a line of Argumentation. According to the Scrip-
 ture way of speaking, that which was *before the world*, is ac-
 counted eternal; And therefore what was in the Beginning had
 no Beginning; and so the whole Cause of *Arianism*, that would
 have Christ to be part of the Creation, though before the world
 was, must unavoidably miscarry; which was the Case in hand,
 and what his *Grace* undertook to prove. But this was fit to be
 conceal'd; for otherwise our Author would have had as little to
 say to the *Archbishop's* Explication of the Phrase, *In the Beginning,*

as he has to the other Phrases of the Evangelist. Therefore he chooses rather to wind off with a bare Repetition or two, to the *Socinian* Hypothesis, to try whether he can with better success encounter his Adversary upon his own Principles, than upon those of the *Arian*. p. 47. a. b.

Socinus being a person of a sharp and piercing wit, soon perceived that the *Arian* Scheme was not consistent with St. *John*; for since there was nothing in the world but Creator and Creature, that which was the Creator (as the *Arians* did admit the λόγος, or Word to be, and as St. *John*'s words, if literally understood, do import) could not be the Creature. And therefore, either he must, with our Author's *Ancient Unitarians*, forgo St. *John*'s Authority, or find out some other Explication than had yet been thought of; and that constrain'd him to fly to a Ministerial God, and a Spiritual World, as the *Archbishop* had shewed, *Sermon* II.

All that our Author has to say upon the *Socinian* account, is with reference to a double Charge brought against it; and that is, the unreasonableness and the novelty of this Explication.

As to the first of these, *His Grace* saith, *Sermon* II. p. 75. 'According to this rate of liberty in Interpreting *Scripture*, it will signify very little or nothing, when any Person or Party is concerned, to oppose any Doctrine contained in it; and the plainest Texts for any Article of Faith, how Fundamental and necessary soever, may by the same arts and ways of Interpretation be eluded and rendered utterly ineffectual for the establishing of it. For example, if any man had a mind to call in question that Article of the *Creed*, concerning the *Creation of the World*, why might he not, according to *Socinus* his way of Interpreting St. *John*, understand the first Chapter of *Genesis* concerning the *Beginning of the Mosaical Dispensation*; and Interpret the *Creation of the Heaven and the Earth*, to be the Institution of the *Jewish* Polity and Religion, as by the *New Heavens* and the *New Earth*, they pretend to be understood the New state of things under the *Gospel*, &c. It is certain that it was not the Phrase of St. *John* misled *Socinus*, or gave him any occasion for his novel Interpretation, but a pre-conceived Principle (as has been before observed); for indeed the Phrase of St. *John* bears such a conformity to that of the First of *Genesis*, that one seems to be a key to the other; and in the beginning

ginning God created the Heavens and the Earth, is so like to in the beginning was the Word, ——— and all things were made by him; that one is naturally led to think that as they in words seem to relate to the same state of things, so that the *Word* that thus was in the beginning, and made all things, was truly God; and that the whole Phrazeology of it is as properly and literally to be understood in *St. John*, as in *Genesis*; and that the one can no more admit of a Moral and Allegorical Interpretation, than the other.

This is so pertinently alledged by *His Grace*, and the Parallel so lively represented by the Bishop of *Warcester*, in a Discourse there referred to, that our Author seems perfectly at a loss whether to grant or deny it; and so from admitting the case as it is proposed, would advance another Scheme of it; for thus he saith, 'Let *His Grace* put the case, as it usually is, and I am content to join issue with him upon the instance he hath here given. The first Chapter of *St. John* speaks of a certain Person, namely of the Lord Christ, who is confess'd to have been a Man, and yet it saith of him, *All things were made by him*, ——— So if the first Chapter of *Genesis* imputed the Creation there spoken of to *Moses*; if it said, *In the beginning Moses Created the Heavens and the Earth*, it would be not only absurd, but absolutely necessary, to interpret the Chapter Allegorically and Figuratively; and to say that the Heavens and Earth are the *Jewish* Polity and Religion, the Church and the Discipline thereof, &c.

Now this Answer of his contains somewhat absurd, somewhat untrue, and is also besides the case.

1. It contains somewhat absurd, which is, To conceive that it's possible for *Moses* an Inspired-Writer, to have delivered himself after that manner; and that when he was to Write of the first Institution of the *Jewish* Polity and Religion, he should thus describe it, *In the beginning Moses created the Heaven and the Earth; and the earth was without form*, &c. and *Moses* said, *let there be light and there was light*, &c. And yet our Author, to save *Socinus's* wild Interpretation of *St. John*, is contented to grant this; we, saith he, say it, we affirm it, that if the first Chapter of *Genesis* imputed the Creation to *Moses*, it ought to be so interpreted.

2. It contains somewhat untrue, as when to make out his Parallel, he saith, *The first Chapter of St. John speaks of a certain Person*.

Person the Lord Christ, who is confessed to have been a man, and yet it saith of him, All things were made by him. For he knows very well, that the Person there spoken of, is not confessed by any of his Adversaries to have been a Man, when that is spoken of him, that all things were made by him. For then he was the *Logos*, the *Word*, the only begotten Son of God; and was not a Man, or made *Flesh*, till about Four thousand Years after the Creation.

3. The Case as he puts it, is not the case put by the Archbishop; which was to this effect, supposing such a one as *Spinoza*, that would have the World not to be Created, but to have been *ab Aeterno*, finding the Book of *Genesis* to be in such credit with his Countrymen the *Jews*, and the several *Denominations* of Christians, that it was not to be gainsaid; he is therefore careful (as our Author saith some of the *Ancient Unitarians* were in the case of *St. John's Gospel*) to shew that it is capable of another and an allowable sense; and so in order to their satisfaction expounds it, of the *Jewish Polity and Religion*, of *Spiritual Heavens*, and an *Intellectual Light* (in our Author's phrase).

Now the Question upon this is, Whether *Spinoza* might not as speciously thus expound the First of *Genesis* for the advantage of his Hypothesis, as *Socinus* did the First of *John* to serve his design?

And that any one that compares the one with the other, *Genesis* and *St. John*, will be able to discern.

Indeed as absurd as the supposition of his concerning *Moses* is, it might as allowably be said of him, as *Christ the Word* have that said of him in *St. John*, if the *Word* was no more than *Moses*, a Ministerial and Temporary God, and had no more been in the beginning than *Moses*.

And then the Book of *Genesis* might as well have begun in the same Phrase with *Moses*, as *St. John* with the *Word*; after this manner, 'In the beginning was *Moses*, and *Moses* was with God, and *Moses* was God [or a God, as he will have it]. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. Such pitiful and sorry shifts are those drove to that first resolve upon an Hypothesis, and then are to seek how to maintain and defend it.

The only Point remaining with our Author is, 'That the Evangelist, who was a *Jew*, speaks here of the *Messias*, in the usual Stile

and Language of the *Jews*, who were wont to say, and say it in almost all their Ancient Books, that the *Messias* should make a New World, he should abolish Paganism and Idolatry from among the Nations; and thereby (as the Prophets also speak) Create a New Heaven and a New Earth.

Answer. I acknowledge the Scripture sometimes calls a Political or Moral Change in a Church or People, by the Term of New Heavens and New Earth: But, in our Author's way of speaking, it trusts to the Reader's Judgment and common sense, in a matter that it's not well possible for him to doubt in, or to question what are the Heavens and Earth there spoken of, as *Isaiah* 65. 17, 18. 66. 22. 1 *Peter* 3. 13. &c.

But here is no intimation given in the Evangelist, that the Phrases should be Translated from a Natural to a Spiritual sense; nor can it possibly be without great violence, as their own Explication of it will shew: For they are forced to understand Christ to be Personally the *Word* in one Clause, and the Gospel to be the *Word* in the other, as *Socinus* doth, *In the beginning was the Word*, Christ; and the *Word*, that is the Gospel, *was with God*. Or for the avoiding of that difficulty, others of them make Christ to ascend Actually, Personally, and Bodily into Heaven before his Ministry (though the Scripture speaks not one word of it) that they may put a colour upon the Phrase; *The Word was with God*, as *His Grace* has shewed *Sermon II. p. 62.* of which more anon.

But now if we take the words in their natural and proper sense, there are several other places to confirm it, as *His Grace* has shewed, *p. 101, &c.* and which it shall suffice for the present to refer to.

The next thing to be considered is, the Novelty of this Exposition of *St. John* by *Socinus*, of which saith the *Archbishop*, it is quite to another sense, and such as by their own confession was never mentioned, nor I believe thought of by any Christian Writer whatsoever before him. *Sermon II. p. 57.* which he more largely prosecutes, *p. 64, &c.*

What saith our Author to this?

'Suppose this; Why may we not own that time and long consideration do improve all sorts of Sciences, and every part of Learning, whether Divine or Humane? I do not think it to be any Diminution of *Socinus*, that it may said of him, and
of

of this Context, he hath rescued it from that Darkness in which it long lay.

d. This Observation of his had in reason been prevented, if he had well weighed what his *Grace* had said upon it, who thus pursues his Argument.

1. That the literal Sense was so obvious, that the *Orthodox*, and even the *Arians* and *Platonists* (as *Amelius*) agreed in it. But here our Author, like a flying *Tartar* that dares not in a Pursuit look behind him, throws a spiteful Dart at his Adversary. 'As to Friend *Amelius*, I think it sufficient to say, 'That the Credit of the *Trinitarian* Cause runs very low; when 'an *uncertain Tale* of an *obscure Platonist*, of no Reputation either for Learning or Wit, is made to be a good part of the 'Proof that can be alledged for these Doctrines. This is spoke at all adventures; for if he had read *Eusebius* * upon it, he would have found the *Platonist* to have deserv'd a better Character, and neither the Person to be so *obscure*, nor the Relation of it such an *uncertain Tale*, as he would represent it †.

* *Præpar. p.*
540.

† *V. Sandius, p. 115,*
119.

But he that can make *Historical Occasions* out of Propositions, and will prove matter of Fact by reasoning upon it without Authority, may be allowed to make Characters at his pleasure, and stamp what he will upon a Quotation.

Let him however take or refuse *Friend Amelius*, it's a small part of the proof depends upon that *Tale*; the use made of that in concurrence with the Judgment of the *Orthodox* and *Arians*; was; that not one of them ever imagin'd that there was any other World alluded to in that place, than the Natural and Material World, nor other *Beginning* than that of the Creation.

2. His *Grace* goes on; 'Surely it ought to be very considerable in this Case, that the most Ancient Christian Writers, ' *Ignatius*, *Justin Martyr*, &c. and even *Origen* himself, are most ' express and positive in this matter, &c. And if this Interpretation of *Socinus* be true, it's almost incredible that those who ' lived so very near *St. John's* time, and were most likely to ' know his meaning, should so widely mistake it. And then that ' the whole Christian World should for so many Ages together ' be deceived in the ground of so important an Article of the ' Faith; and that no man did understand this Passage of *St. John* ' aright before *Socinus*. This very consideration alone, if there ' were

‘ were no other, were sufficient to stagger any prudent man’s
 ‘ Belief of this Misrepresentation.

3. And as his *Grace* goes on, ‘ That which makes the mat-
 ‘ ter much worse, is, that the *Religion* which was particularly
 ‘ design’d to overthrow *Polytheism*, and the belief of more
 ‘ Gods, hath according to them been so ill taught and under-
 ‘ stood by Christians for so many Ages together, and almost
 ‘ from the beginning of Christianity, as does necessarily infer a
 ‘ plurality of Gods. An inconvenience so great, as no Cause,
 ‘ how plausible soever it may otherwise appear, is able to stand
 ‘ under the weight of it, p. 73. And which the Reader may there
 ‘ see admirably enforced.

For which reasons it cannot well be suppos’d, that either
Time or long *Consideration*, would place a man in so advantagi-
 ous Circumstances, that he should beat out that Track, which
 all Christians for 1500 years together, were not able before
 him to descry: But after all, this shall be no *Diminution to Soci-
 nus*, as our Author will have it.

But tho in words he will not allow it a *Diminution*, yet he in
 Fact betrays it; and after all, is not willing to own the Charge.
 For thus he argues, ‘ Why doth his *Grace* say, That not only
 ‘ all the Fathers, but all Christians have for this Fifteen Ages,
 ‘ agreed in his Interpretation of this Context? Have there been
 ‘ no Christians in the World for 1500 Years, but only the *Arians*
 ‘ and *Trinitarians*?

This is a little too gross, for he knows full well, that this is
 not asserted by the Archbishop; therefore he makes another at-
 tempt.

‘ Or was *Socinus* the first (for that (it may be) was his *Grace*’s
 ‘ meaning) who departed from the *Arian* and *Trinitarian* Sense
 ‘ of the Context?

What an obscure Writer doth he make his *Grace* to be, when
 he is, as it were, forced to come again and again upon the
 Enquiry, and at length to conclude with, *it may be it was his
 meaning?* And yet at last he is so unfortunate as to mi-
 stake it.

For his *Grace* doth no more say, That *Socinus* was the first
 man that departed from the *Arian* and *Trinitarian* Sense of the Con-
 text, than he saith, That not only the Fathers, but all Christians
 have for Fifteen Ages agreed in it. For he knew full well, that
 there

there were *Cerinthians*, and *Ebionites*, and *Photinians*, and others, that went under the General Name of Christians, that differ'd as well from the *Arians* as the *Orthodox*, and would allow our Saviour no other Existence, than he had as the Son of *Mary*, and so could not with consistence to their Principle, expound *St. John*, as the *Orthodox* and *Arians* expounded him. But let his *Grace* speak for himself, *viz.* 'Not only all the Ancient *Fathers* of the *Christian* Church, but, so far as I can find, all Interpreters whatsoever for *Fifteen hundred* years together did understand this passage of *St. John* in a quite different Sense, [from *Socinus*] namely of the Creation of the Material, and not of the Renovation of the Moral World.

And however our Author would evade and mollify it, his *Grace* had proved it beyond Contradiction by the Confession of his great Oracle *Socinus*, and his Advocate *Schliclingius*, that own the true Sense of these Words was never before rightly explained*.

* *V. Archb.
Serm. 2. p.
69.*

And indeed, what our Author himself alledges, is a tacit Confession of it; for he produces nothing from *Paulus* or *Photinus*, or the Ancient *Unitarians*, of the *Word* that was God by Office, or of the beginning of a Gospel State that *Word* did exist in, or of a Spiritual World he made, or of the *Word's* being with God in the Revelation of the Gospel, or of the *Personal Word's* being with God before his Ministry to receive that Revelation: But on the contrary, he tells us that according to them, the *Word* was God, as his Generation was Divine, and was *from the beginning with God, in God's Decree and Intention*; and that the World was not made by him, but for him; a quite different Explication from that of *Socinus*.

Thus far then it's evident, That his *Grace* has sufficiently shew'd the Novelty of the *Socinian* Explication of *St. John's* Gospel. This was a tender point, and what our Author had no mind to touch upon, but something must be said, for else the Cause would have suffer'd, and he had lost the opportunity of shewing his Reading about their Patriarch *Paulus*, and their Metropolitan *Photinus*, (*Titles*, it seems, *owned in their Commonwealth of Learning*) and the *whole Provinces* possessed by their *Followers*, p. 53.

But if our Author is of any Credit, they did not only possess *whole Provinces*, but Ages too, the *two first undoubtedly* (as he suggests).
And

And saith he, ' We are ready to dispute it in the presence of the
' Learned World, that the Fathers mentioned by his Grace
' were less of the mind of the *Trinitarians*, than of ours. They
' held the Doctrine that was afterwards called *Arianism*, p. 52. b.
54. a.

The first false Step he makes, is, That he takes it for granted, that his Grace allows the two first Ages of Christianity to be for the *Socinians*, or at least not against them. For, saith he, *if of Seventeen Ages, we have (as we have undoubtedly have) the two first, much good may do his Grace with the other Fifteen. He must not deny us the two, nay, the three first, generally speaking.* It seems his Grace must not, nor indeed can deny him it he insists only upon the last Fifteen Ages as his *Period*, for then he quits the two first. But now any indifferent Reader will soon see, that when his Grace speaks of *Fifteen hundred years*, it's with respect to the Ages intercurrent from the Apostles to the time of *Socinus*, whose Exposition he charges with Novelty. [So p. 64, 73, &c.] And who lived in the last Century.

The second false Step, is his way of proof, which is this, ' We will [*saith he*] wrest it from all the World, that the Apostolick Creed, which was the only Creed of the three first Ages, is wholly *Unitarian*, and perfectly contradicts that Interpretation of the beginning of *St. John's Gospel*, which his Grace seeks to advance, p. 52.

How that is, we must seek further, *viz.* p. 53. b. where he takes it up again. In the Apostles Creed, ' The Lord Christ ' is uncontestably spoken of, as having no Existence before he ' was generated in the Womb of the Blessed *Mary*, by the Spirit ' of God.

Not to insist upon that, that it was *the only Creed of the three first Ages*, it will require a more than an obstinate Resolution to wrest it out of the possession of the *Trinitarians*, who both from the distribution of the Creed under its three General Heads, do assert a Trinity, and from the Character given to our Saviour of being the *only Son of God*, do maintain his Divinity. But for this, being he has offer'd no proof, I shall refer him to *Bishop Pierfon* upon that Point, which he has at large explained and defended.

3. His next false step is, That whereas his *Grace* particularly names *Ignatius, Justin, Athenagoras, Ireneus, Tertullian, and Origen,* as of the same mind with himself; this Author affirms, That contrariwise they held the *Arian* Doctrine; where yet he fails in his main Point, which was to clear *Socinus's* Explication, and his Doctrine, from Novelty: But instead of that, all he attempts is to shew that the Ancient Fathers were for the *Arian* Doctrine; which is to say they were not for the *Socinian*: And yet even there he fails again; as has abundantly been proved by *Dr. Bull*; and which I shall look upon as unanswerable, till I see the Book he promises us in Answer to it.

Having all this while been employed in Vindication of the Authority of *St. John's* Gospel against the Ancient *Unitarians* that questioned it, and our Author that proposes their Arguments; and in Vindication of the Orthodox Exposition of it, against the *Arian* on one side, and the novel one of *Socinus* on the other; I shall now proceed to the Consideration of those Texts of Scripture which the *Archbishop* occasionally made use of for the Explication of *St. John*; and they are, *Heb. 1. 1. And Col. 1. 15.*

His *Grace* has alledg'd *Heb. 1. 2.* several times in his Sermons, twice in his First, for the Explication of *St. John*, and *Col. 1. 16.* And thus far our Author goes along with him in the bare quotation; but he manifestly wrongs him, when he thus triumphs as he goes off from the Text; *Would a man build the belief of more gods than one, contrary to the whole current, and most express words of the rest of Scripture, on a Text so uncertain as this is?* p. 51. b. I say he manifestly wrongs him; for he knows very well, that his *Grace* agrees with the current and express Words of Scripture, in asserting the Unity of the Godhead; and so could never attempt to build the Belief of more Gods than one, upon any Text whatsoever, unless he would contradict himself.

What is it then his *Grace* alledges this Text for? Why, it is to justify *St. John*, when he saith, That all things were made by the Word; and consequently the Word that made all things must be God. The Proposition is *St. John's*, the Consequence is indeed his *Grace's*, but what will necessarily follow, as he has proved it from *Heb. 1. 2.* I perceive our Author needs to be remembered upon occasion: For tho' this is the use his *Grace* makes of that Quotation in *Sermon First*, yet our Author is to know there is a *Second Sermon*, where his *Grace* doth not criticise upon

Words and shew how they may be expounded this way and that way, and leave it, in our Author's Phrase an *uncertain Text*; but fully shews. That this Verbe, and Col. 1. 16. *must necessarily be understood of the old Creation of the Natural World, and not of the Moral World, and the Renovation and Reformation of the Minds and Manners of men by the Gospel.* And this he not only at large confirms, but also gives a particular Answer to the Comment of *Schlictingius* and *Cressius* upon it; *Sermon II. p 103, 106. &c.* Now our Author in reason should have interposed in the behalf of these his deserted Friends, and have given a just Reply to their Adversary; but his business is rather to propose, and repeat, and make some sudden fallies, than grapple with his Opponent, and come to downright Blows.

The first Adventure he makes is, That the word *αιῶνες*, which we render *Worlds*, more usually and properly signifies *Ages*; and is so translated by *St. Jerom*; and therefore divers of the most Learned Criticks understand this Text of the Gospel *Ages*; of which the Lord Christ is (under God) the undoubted Author.

A. It seems the Learned Criticks go different ways, and our Author dares not lay too much on their side, that understand this of the Gospel-Ages; for he saw that the Phrase, *he made the Ages*, was harsh, and as unusual as it is usual for the Greek word to signify Ages: And which is worse, that the word *Ages* in the Jewish and Scripture-Style, ordinarily signifying the Age before and the Age under the Messias, it must follow, That the Lord Christ must be the undoubted Author of both the Ages; of that from the Foundation of the World to the Gospel, as well as that from the Gospel to the End of the World: And if so, he must have been existent before the Ages; for else how could he be the Author of them? This he that has been so conversant in the Learned Criticks of the Trinitarians, cannot be ignorant of: And because I have not a Lift of them at hand, I shall for the present refer him to *Dr. Hammond* on *Luke 1. p. &c.*

Whether he foresaw this or no, I cannot divine; but however, he has another answer in reserve. For thus he goes on;

But, saith he, let us say *αιῶνες* here is *World*. yet *Grotius* gives very good reasons why we ought to render the word thus. For whom he made the Worlds; i. e. God made the World for the Messias, or with intention to subject it to him in the fulness of time.

A. But supposing it may be so rendred, yet there is no such *salvo* for *verse 10.* where it's said of Christ, (as the *Archbishop* hath unanswerably proved) *Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, &c.*

2. The *Greek Phrase, ὁ ἀρχὴ*, is the very same with what is used, *John 1. 3. All things were made by him*; where the ordinary Translation is allowed; and as far as the Phrase will go, it may as properly be applied to our Saviour, as the efficient, as the final Cause, *i. e.* That the World was made by him, as for him: And that it is here to be understood of the former, his *Grace* has shew'd.

3. The *Apostle, Col. 1. 16.* uses these two distinctly, *ὁ ἀρχὴ* by him; and *εἰς αὐτὸν*, for him. But to this our Author has somewhat to say.

For the *Archbishop* having made use of that place of *St. Paul* to confirm what he had before produced out of *St. John*, the Opponent thinks himself bound in honour to attack him: But in his usual way: For whereas his *Grace* had spent about twelve Pages in both his Sermons upon the Explication of this Text, and in Answer to the most considerable Objection against it; our Author replies, *He urges that Text.* — *He observes moreover, That in the foregoing Verse the Lord Christ is called the First-born of every creature. And he seeks to prove, I think he has proved it, That First-born here is as much as to say Heir or Lord of every creature. P. 51. b.*

A. He speaks as coldly, as if he durst not trust his Reader with his Adversary's Arguments, or so much as suggest for what reasons or upon what grounds the *Archbishop* urged that Text. Only he grants, That when his *Grace* had shewed that by First-born was principally meant an Heir, he softly answers, *I think he has proved it.* And if he has, he has so far wrested none of the least of the Texts produced both by the *Arians* and *Socinians*, out of their hands. *Archb. p. 33, 34.*

But he goes on, if I may call omitting so.

I will mit, That the greater number of Criticks and more Learned Interpreters, of his Grace's own Party and among them Athanasius himself, translate and interpret that Text, not of real Creating, but of the Modelling of all things.

A. 1. I hope he will admit those to be Criticks that are in the *Critici Sacri*, or those whom *Mr. Pool* has inserted into his *Synopsis*; but if we may pass a judgment upon the *Learned Interpreters*

ters by them, we shall be far from finding a Number, and I believe it will be a Number of one, if he will be so favourable to us as to allow *Grotius* to be one of his *Grace's Party*.

As for *Athanasius*, I had the curiosity to consult him (though it's too hard a Task to put upon his Reader to turn over two Folios to search for a Quotation) but could find no such Explanation of the Apostle, as he suggests. But on the contrary, from that place he shews that all things were created by him, and so he could not be a Creature. So in his *Ἐκθεσις πίστεως*, and his *Synod. Nicenæ Decret.*

A. 2. He saith he will omit this, that is, as I thought, give it up; but I find rather it is that he will not be obliged to defend it: He finds the *Archbishop* had made the Point of a *Moral Creation* a little too hot to be maintain'd; but being it's what he himself has a great liking to, he goes on to say all he can say, in hopes his Reader may think as favourably of it as himself. But he comes off as to himself, as I said, *I will not insist on this Concession*.

He therefore comes to another Retrenchment, and that is the Account given of it by *St. Chrysostom* (as he will have it) in the *Opus Imperfectum*, who reads it thus; *For him were all things created*. So saith he, *the Sense is, all things were originally created by God for the Lord Christ; namely, to subject them, in the fulness of time, to him, and his Law*.

A. As for what he saith of the *Opus imperfectum* of *St. Chrysostom*, whoever was the Author of it, it's granted by the Learned that it is not *St. Chrysostom's*. But let it be whose it will, I am pretty confident that there is no such Exposition of that Phrase in the Book (though it consists of 54 Homilies.) And besides the turning it over, I am confirm'd in it from what is said there, *Homil. 30.* upon that, *Who is my mother, &c. I, who before the constitution of the world, created the world, know no such worldly Parents, &c.*

Indeed this Version of *δι' αὐτῆ*, *for him*, is merely to serve the Hypothesis that he is advancing. For when he can apply it to a *Moral Creation*, he admits it, as *John 1. 2.* and so it's necessary to be understood here, *v. 20.* *δι' αὐτῆ*, *by him to reconcile all things to himself*.

And accordingly as the Apostle begins, so he ends the Verse with the same Phrase; *By him were all things created*; and as one would think to prevent all cavil, uses Phrases as distinct as the efficient and final

final cause, for so he closes the Verse, *All things were created by him, and for him; by him*, as the efficient; and *for him*, as the final cause. But here our Author would fain find out an evasion, and that is by translating *εἰς αὐτὸν*, to *him*; and then it shall be, *All things were created for his use, and to his service*. And if any one should ask what is the difference? he answers immediatly, that the latter, *to his service*, is exegetical and explanatory of the former, *for his use*. This, he saith, is probably design'd by the Greek, and yet he knows how (by a peculiar Rule of Logick) to crowd more into the Conclusion than is in the Premisses, and out of what, in his own opinion, is but *probable*, to infer a *necessity*; for thus he concludes, *the Greek word being probably design'd as exegetical: Therefore the sense of necessity is, for him, and to him, i. e. for his use, and to his service*. Just as if I should say, it's probable that he never read the *Opus imperfectum*, that calls it St. Chrysostom's; and therefore it's certain he has not.

To conclude, Tho he would as to this Text fairly, if he can get rid of this *moral Creation*, and *Athanasian spiritual modelling* of things, for a reason he knows; yet he is still within the enchanted Circle; for at the last his *probable* Explication leaves him there; and what was it else when he says, *All things were originally created by God for the Lord Christ, namely, to subject them in the fulness of time to him, and his Laws?* And how doth that differ from the *modelling and changing all things in Heaven and Earth, to a new and better estate? on the Earth, by abolishing Paganism, and Idolatry, &c. and in Heaven, Angels and heavenly Powers being put under his direction, &c.* as he tells us in the Column of those things that are omitted.

Lastly, It's not *probable* that his is the just Explication of this place, and that for a Reason or two.

1. Because the Apostle discourses this afterwards, *v. 20. Having made peace through the blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

For the clearer understanding of which, I shall take liberty to set before the Reader the connexion of a few Verses. The Apostle, *v. 14* speaking of our Saviour, *in whom we have redemption through his blood, &c.* proceeds to shew who this Redeemer was, and that in a two-fold capacity. First, in respect of his Divine Nature, *who is the image of God, the first-born or heir of the whole*
creation.

creation: And then gives the reason of such his preheminnence, and why he bestows so great a Title upon him; and that is *v. 16, 17. For by him were all things created, &c.* From thence he proceeds to discourse of him as to his Human Nature, and the station he is in, *v. 18. And he is the head of the body &c.* And this done *v. 20.* he returns to the point where he set forth *v. 14.* And accordingly his Lordship's Explication is very easy and natural, *p 34. Who is the image of God, the heir and Lord of the whole creation; for by him all things were created.*

2. This Author's account of this place is not *probable*; for Christ's being the Head over all things, was not till his Death and Resurrection, when his Mediatory Kingdom began; whereas our Author says, *That all things were originally created by God for the Lord Christ*; and without doubt as for *his use and to his service*, so for the advantage of them that were under his government and direction. But what a vast solitude was there, a Chasm of 4000 years before his Birth and Being? and in what a condition was the whole World of Intelligent Beings, till our Saviour's Resurrection and Ascension? What *Service* could he challenge from them, when he himself lay in the *Embrio* of nothing? And what advantage could they have from him that was to come into the world for the Redemption of Mankind 4000, 3000, &c. years after? Where was the *Paganism* and *Idolatry* he in that dismal Interval abolished? *Where the Angels and Heavenly Powers that were put under his direction, and by him employed in defence and succor of the faithful?* What was it to those unhappy souls, born so many ages before his time, under the Constellation of *Paganism* and *Idolatry*, that some thousands or hundreds of years hence should arise the Lord Christ, who *in the fulness of time* was to be *actually set above all Thrones and Dominions.* &c. and in *whom as in their Head, all things should be united and consist?* as our Author words it.

J

Of the Pre-existence of our Saviour.

THAT the *Word* described by St. *John* had an Existence before his Incarnation, and his being born of the Virgin, was a Conclusion his *Grace* inferred from the Phrase, *In the Beginning.* *Serm. 1.*

This he confirmed by several Texts of Scripture, which he ranked under the two following Heads. *Serm. 2. p. 84.*

1. ' Those which expressly assert the Son of God to have
' been, and to have been in Heaven with God, and partaker
' with him in his Glory, before his Incarnation and appearance
' in the World.

2. ' Those which affirm that the World and all Creatures
' were made by him.

Of the first sort are *Job. 3. 13. 6. 62. 8. 58. 13. 3. 16. 27. 17. 5. 1 Job. 1. 1.* in which it's said of our Saviour, that he came down from Heaven, was with God, was before *Abraham*; that he had a Glory with the Father before the World was.

To those which say our Saviour *was in Heaven, and came down from Heaven,* our Author returns some general Answers, (as for method's sake I shall consider them.)

First, He answers in general, *That these Texts, in their most literal sense, amount to no more than this, that the Lord Christ is a Messenger, really come forth from God to men. As much is true of every Prophet, and the very same is used concerning St. John Baptist, Job. 1. 6. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.*

Ans. 1. If these Texts amount to no more than this, that the Lord Christ is a Messenger from God to men, then can no more be concluded from thence, than that he was no more a Prophet, and no more with God, and no more sent from God, than other Prophets, or than *John the Baptist.*

And if *as much as this is true of every Prophet,* then it may be said of every Prophet, and of *John the Baptist* as well as our Saviour,

viour, that he *ascended into Heaven*, and came down from Heaven, and *was with God*, and had a *Glory with him before the World was*, &c. But where do we find the Scripture to express it self after this manner of any but our Saviour, no not of *Moses*, as much a *Friend of God*, and conversant with him, as he is affirmed to be?

2. If these Texts amount to no more than this, that Christ is a *Messenger from God to men*, then how will our Author be able to make use of any of these Texts for that new Doctrine of theirs, concerning Christ's Ascension into Heaven, before he began his Ministry? For if as much is true of every Prophet, then our Saviour no more ascended than other Prophets; and then what becomes of his express proof for such an Assertion?

Secondly, He answers again, *How little these Texts are to his Grace's purpose, would have been obvious to every Reader, if he had set down some few of the many Texts which so plainly expound to us what is meant thereby.* Joh. 7. 28. *I am not come of my self.* Joh. 5. 43. *I am come in my Father's name.* Joh. 8. 42. *I came not of my self, he sent me.* Joh. 7. 16. *My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me, &c.*

A. These Texts would have not been to his Grace's purpose, if they prove no more than that our Saviour was a Messenger sent from God to men, and which is as true of every Prophet. For if our Saviour no more came from God than other Prophets (as far as these Texts will then signify) he was no more pre-existent than they. But these Texts are to his purpose if they expressly say, that Christ actually came down from Heaven to declare the will of God to men (as our Author in the next Paragraph, forgetting himself, doth affirm.) For if that be allowed, then all the Difficulties his Grace has urged against their imaginary Doctrine of our Saviour's Ascension into heaven, before his Ministry, will return upon them, and require an answer.

As for what he adds from these latter Texts, 'Would our Saviour have said he came from God, is sent by God, to deliver a Doctrine which is not the Messenger's, if he had himself pretended to be God?'

A. This, I am sure is nothing to the purpose; for what is this to the Pre-existence of our Saviour, the present subject of the Discourse? But however, what inconsistency is there in this, for our Saviour to say, *the Doctrine is not mine, but his that*

sent

sent me, tho he himself be God, and partake of the same Nature with the Father, when he is the only begotten of the Father, and was also Man? Why is this any more inconsistent, than to have it said, that he is God, and yet the Man Christ Jesus; that he was in the beginning with God, and yet born in the fulness of time; that he knew all things, John 16. 30. 21. 17. and yet knew not the time or day of Judgment? Mark 13. 32, &c.

These things are consistent upon the Principles of the Orthodox or Trinitarians, that hold the Word to be God and Man; but not upon theirs that hold, that he is Man and not God.

3. He answers again in general, That his Grace propounded to prove the Pre-existence of our Saviour, by the Texts that expressly say our Lord Christ ascended into Heaven before he began his Ministry, and then came down from Heaven to declare the Will of God to Men. That is, he propounds to prove the Trinitarian Doctrine, but really proves the Doctrine of the Unitarians.

A. 1. If this be so, his Grace was mightily mistaken, to attempt the proof of this Point by such Texts as expressly say the contrary. A great and inexcusable over-sight, if it were true. But where are those Texts that expressly say, that our Saviour ascended into Heaven before his Ministry? It was a prejudice Socinus would infuse into his Reader, that there is but that one Text of St. John 1. to prove the Pre-existence of our Saviour before his Incarnation, which the Archbishop has disproved, p. 81. But here it holds; for his Texts that he saith expressly prove what he asserts, shrink all into one, viz. No man hath ascended into Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven.

2. Where is it expressly said in that, or any other Text, that our Saviour ascended into Heaven before his Ministry? It is not so expressly said, That our Saviour ascended into Heaven, but that Servetus understood it Spiritually, and saith that it was so express'd, because his Spirit was from the beginning in Heaven, and that his words were heavenly. But it's neither there, nor any where expressly said, That our Saviour ascended into Heaven before his Ministry, and then came down from Heaven to declare the Will of God to Men. That is wholly a Fiction of a Case, as his

Of the Pre-existence of our Saviour.

Lordship has sufficiently proved. Our Author, indeed, would represent it, as if his *Grace* had only *found fault* with them for this their Opinion; and after the having bestowed a few hard words upon it, and call'd it an *Arbitrary and Precarious Supposition*, (tho he himself *understands the Text in a literal Sense*) should then give it up.

But that this is a Fiction of their own, I may say again, his *Lordship* has sufficiently proved; and so much the more reason have I now to say it, as his Adversary has not dared so much as to take to task any one Argument or Paragraph relating to it. For with what strength doth his *Grace* argue against it from the exact History of our *Saviour's* Life, from the importance of the matter (if true), from the Silence of the Evangelists, and especially of *St. John*? How doth he argue against it from the Weakness of the *Socinian* attempts to prove it, and for which in effect *they have nothing to say*? How from the inconsistency of it with Scripture? and that whereas *St. John* saith, *The Word was in the beginning*, and then *was made Flesh*: They say, That he was first *made Flesh*, and then a great while after was *in the beginning with God*. How, lastly, doth he argue from the disagreement in the several parts of this their Interpretation; as it may be worth the Reader's while himself to observe*?

* *Serm. 2.*
p. 93, &c.

All this our Author has prudently pass'd over; but that he may seem to say something, and have a fair opportunity to Complement where he wants a Reply; he forms a Question for his *Grace*, (for it's a Charge, and not a Question, *Archbishop*, p. 92, 93.) *He demands*, saith he, *when did this Ascension of our Saviour into Heaven happen*? His *Grace* had indeed charged it upon them, that they themselves *cannot agree precisely when*; and without doubt he wanted a fair account of it. But our Author unfortunately pitches upon that time for it, which his Adversary had beforehand prevented. For thus he answers, *St. John hath resolved this Question in these words of his Gospel*, [in the beginning the Word was with God] i. e. *in the beginning of his Ministry, just before he enter'd thereon; the Lord Christ was with God by ascending (as himself expressly and often saith) into Heaven*. This Account of it is very precise. But to this his *Grace* had already made two Exceptions.

1. That this is not consistent with their own Explication of the Phrase, *in the beginning*, that is to say, when the Gospel first began to be published; which was by Authority from him (*he having ascended into Heaven, and came from thence to declare the Will of God to men, as our Author saith*) but that was not began to be published, till after he had been with God (in their sense.) And therefore if the *Word* was at all with the Father, so as to ascend from Earth to Heaven, it must not have been *in the beginning*, but before the beginning.

2. He sheweth, this is not reconcilable to another Opinion of theirs, which is, that Christ was not God but by Office and Divine Constitution, and that he was not so constituted and declared till after his Resurrection, and his being advanced to the right hand of God; but if *in the beginning*, is in the beginning of the Gospel-state, then the *Word* was God in the same beginning that he was with God, and so must be God by Office, before he enter'd upon his Office of Publick Ministry, and consequently long before his Resurrection. But if he was so constituted not till after his Resurrection, he was not God in their sense of *the beginning*, and so consequently was not with God, nor did ascend into Heaven before he began his Ministry. So that there is no manner of proof, either for the Matter, or the time of this Legendary Doctrine of theirs, concerning our Saviour's Ascension into Heaven before he began his Ministry, if the aforesaid Arguments hold good.

But that which our Author presses most, (without regarding the Arguments against it) is the *literal* sense of the Phrase, *No man hath ascended, &c.* in which, he saith, the Archbishop doth understand it. But this is no more true that his Grace so understands it, than that it's expressly and often said in Scripture, that our Saviour ascended into Heaven before his Ministry, (as our Author affirms) unless it be when his Grace undertakes to prove that such an Ascension never was.

But supposing it were *literally* to be understood, yet will it not serve their purpose. For then, according to the letter of it, our Saviour must have come down from Heaven before he ascended thither. If it had been worded, that *no man hath come down from Heaven, but he that hath ascended into Heaven*, then he would have ascended first, and after that have descended: But when it's said, *No man hath ascended into Heaven, but he that came down*

down from Heaven, (if the manner of speaking is to be our Guide) then he must have come down before he ascended, after the way the Apostle speaks, *Ephes. 4. 9, 10. Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he also descended first, &c.*

I say, the order of Words then shews, that his Descent must have been before his Ascension; which is diametrically opposite to the *Socinian* Hypothesis, and is not to be accommodated but by the Orthodox sense of it, *viz.* that he that in the Beginning was with God, and had a Glory with the Father before the World was, in the fulness of time was *made Flesh*, and came down from Heaven, to fulfil and declare the Will of God to men. And then it orderly follows, No man hath so ascended into Heaven, and no man hath been there to understand the Will of the Father, but he that first came down from Heaven, and is in due time to ascend thither; as if he had said, (to transcribe the Paraphrase of a very learned person) *from me alone are these things to be learned, for none can go up to Heaven to fetch the knowledge of them from thence, but I came down from Heaven to reveal the Will of God*, &c.*

* Lightf.
Third Part
of the
Harm. in
loc.

The second sort of Texts which speak of our Saviour's Existence before his Incarnation, are these, *Father glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the World was, John 17. 5. And before Abraham was, I am, &c. John 8. 58.*

To the first our Author replies, that according to *St. Austin* and *Grotius*, this is to be understood of *God's Decree*, after this manner, *Let me now actually receive that glory with they self, which I had with thee in thy Decree and Purpose before the World was.* And if we may take his word, he saith, that he has sufficiently confirmed this Interpretation in the Second Edition of his *Brief History of the Unitarians.*

He very seasonably refers us to his *Second Edition*, (which I have not seen) for in the first it exceedingly wants some Confirmation. All that he has to say there, is, that we in Scripture are sometimes said to have that which we have in *God's Decree*. From whence he infers, *Therefore so also we may understand, that Christ had Glory before the World was.* An inference very cautiously worded, *Therefore we may understand, &c.* And it was not without reason, as I shall immediately shew.

A. 1. I grant that the Scripture doth often represent things after this manner, so that that which is to be hereafter, is spok'n of as if it was actually present and existent, as *Isaiah 53.*
 3. *He is despised and rejected of men.* And in like manner we are reputed to have that which we have by promise, as in the place he quotes, *2 Cor. 5. 1. We have a building of God, &c.* But then as Decrees and Promises do in the nature of them respect the future, so there must be some reason for this manner of speaking, which without such reason would be absurd. Now, the reason of such Forms of Speech, is to represent the certainty of the thing, that it being thus appointed and promised by Almighty God, it shall as certainly be fulfilled in its season, as if it was now actually present. But set aside such Reason, and such Forms of Speech will be absurd; as for Example, if I should say, all Generations that shall be to the Worlds end are now in being, and have been ever since the World was. But there is no such reason for such an Interpretation here, for this respects the time past.

2. Tho we should be said to have that which we are decreed to have, yet we cannot be said to have it *before the World was*; as for instance, we cannot be said to have *a building of God* before the World was; for that is to have it before we were. We may be said by the foresaid Prophetical Scheme of Speech to have what we that are in being, shall have in its proper time; but we are not said to have it, or to have *had* it before the Foundation of the World. God indeed may be said to give before the World, by virtue of his Decree and Intention so to do, because he always was, is, and ever will be, and to him all things are present in their Causes, over which he has an absolute Power. But tho we may be said to have, with respect to the time to come, as well as present (in the Cases aforesaid) yet we cannot properly be, nor are in Scripture said to *have* it before the World was, because we are born in the World. Thus God may be said to give us Grace or Salvation *before the World began*, in the place he cites, *2 Tim. 1. 9.* but we are not said to *have* a building of God *before the world was.* And so when it's said, *Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*; as it doth suppose our Saviour to have been in being, and to have had a Glory with the Father before the World, so.

so he cannot be said to have it in Decree before the World was.

3. And that the words are not capable of such an Interpretation will further appear from the Phrase, *with thee*, which answers to that which went before, *with thine own self*; and if the latter doth signify the actual Enjoyment of that Glory, then so doth the former. Indeed, the Phrase *with thine own self*, and *with thee*, (for they are both one) doth suppose the Person that is *with God* to be in being. As it was when God is said to be *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; thereby is implied, that those Holy Patriarchs are alive, according to our Saviour's reasoning, *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*, Matth. 22. 32. And if *to be the God of Abraham*, did imply that *Abraham* was in being; then surely, if it had been said of *Abraham*, that he was *with God*, it must also imply that *Abraham* actually was. For he could no more be said to be *with God*, and not be; than God could be said to be *his God*, and he not alive.

And accordingly it might as well be said of *Abraham*, that God was *his God* in Decree and Intention, as *Abraham* might be said to be *with God*, and yet be no otherwise so than in God's Decree. So absurd is it, with our Author, to allow our Saviour to have had no Being before the World was, and yet to say he was *with God* before the World, which is in the same breath to say he was not, and yet he was. A difficulty our Author, with those he follows, found to be so great, that they chose rather to give a new interpretation of the Phrase, *in the beginning*, John 1. 1. (as has been before shew'd) and so to allow the *Word* to have then been actually *with God*; rather than to maintain, as some others before did, that the *Word* was *with God* in his Decree, contrary to the plain and evident meaning of that Phrase.

4. I may add, If the sense of this Prayer of our Saviour is, *Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee in thy Decree and Promise before the world was*; then (according to what our Saviour saith, ver. 22. *The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them*, the like Glory being promised to and decreed for all the Faithful) every good man may use the same Prayer with our Saviour, and say, *Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the*
World

World was. But I suppose *St. Austin*, (who our Author saith was for this decretal sense) would not have presumed to do so.

I confess I have done more than in strictness I was obliged to, when he refers us to another Book of his, and to another Edition of that Book; but I am apt to think this Answer will serve for either Meridian.

The second Text produced by the *Archbishop*, is *John* 8. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am*: 'The obvious sense of which words (saith his Grace) is, That he had a real Existence before *Abraham* was actually in Being, p. 86.

But on the contrary, the *Socinians* say, That he was before *Abraham* was, in the Divine Foreknowledge and Decree. This his Lordship took to task, and shewed,

'That this is nothing but what might have been said of any other man, and even of *Abraham* himself; and that our Saviour had then no preference or advantage above *Abraham*. And then argues from the words *I am*, as the proper Name of God, whereby is signified the Eternal Duration and Permanency of his Being. Which he confirms by several other places.

To this our Author has nothing to reply; but would insinuate as if his Grace had only proposed the place, without any manner of Proof; for after this ridiculous manner doth he represent it: *His Grace will not bear of this* [about the Decree]; *we cannot help it; but we know the reason to be, because he taketh it as a ground of his Interpretation of this Text, that our Saviour was (not only in God's Decree, but) in actual Existence before his Progenitor Abraham; but that is the Point which his Grace had to Prove, not to Suppose as a ground of Interpretation.* This person writes, I perceive, for a Party, and presumes his Readers will never consult the Books he pretends to answer; for else he would not so boldly venture thus to impose upon the world, and to tell us that his Grace only *supposes*, but does not *prove* what he proposes; and accordingly he himself slips over the Argument, and runs from it as far as he can.

2. He replies, *Here again I must mind his Grace, that none of his Proofs, in their utmost stretch, run higher than Arianism.*

A. *Proofs*: He should have call'd them *Suppositions*, if he had not forgot himself.

But what if those *Proofs run no higher than Arianism*? they are sufficient: For all his *Grace* was under any obligation at this time

time to prove, was our Saviour's Pre-existence, against the *Socinians*, Sermon II. p. 56, &c. (having in his former Sermon maintained the Point of our Saviour's Deity, against the *Arians*, &c.) And if he has proved that, he has gained the Point under Consideration.

All that our Author has further to say, is, To give us his Opinion of this Text over and over, and utters it in with a Magisterial Authority: *But if we can, let us make both Arians and Trinitarians sensible what is the meaning of these words, Before Abraham was, I am, from the Circumstances and Context.*

But if I may not too much incur his displeasure, by laying aside his Supposals for the present, I will venture to propole the Case as the Evangelist relates it, and then discourse with him upon it.

In *Verf.* 48. Our Saviour replied upon the *Jews*, *Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad. To this they captiously object, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? That is, Was't thou coexistent with him, and born in his time, who has been so long dead? Whom makest thou thy self? [ver. 52, 53.] To this our Saviour answers, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Which Text, according to our Author, is elliptical and imperfect, and wants somewhat to supply it: Which he thus attempts, I was long before Abraham's time in the decrees and promises of God.*

Now supposing it so to be, Why must it thus be supplied? *O*, saith he, *it cannot be true in any other sense, being spoken of a son and dependant of Abraham.*

Supposing that to be spoke of such a one, why may it not as well fall upon the former as latter part of the Clause, and so be read, *Before Abraham was the Father of the Gentiles, (signified in Isaac) I am, or I was in the world?*

Or why may it not be said, *Before Abraham was, I was in being?* For though our Saviour was a Descendant of *Abraham* according to the *Flesh*, yet he was the begotten Son of God (as none of *Abraham's* Posterity was) that was in the beginning, and before the World with God; and so he might literally say before *Abraham was, I was or am.*

But supposing we admit his Explication, that *before Abraham was, I was in God's decree.*

Would

Would this prove what was to be proved, That he that was not fifty years old, had seen *Abraham*, or that he was Co-existent with *Abraham*? Suppose we take it as he would have it, independent of what it was to prove, what a mean thing was it for our Saviour to alledge, *I was before Abraham*, namely, in God's Decree? For,

Might not the *Jews* then reply, So *Abraham* was before *Adam*, and so both *Abraham* and *Adam* were before the World?

Might they not say, so were we then before *Abraham*; *Abraham* before himself, and we before we were? Nay, might they not say, Is any thing before another? Art thou before *Abraham*, or *Abraham* before us, since all would then be co-existent alike in Decree, being the Decrees are alike Eternal?

Might not our Saviour as well have said, I have seen *Abraham*, reserving to himself, in the Book of *Genesis*; as say, before *Abraham* was, *I was*, reserving to himself, in the Book of God's Decree?

Lastly, If our Saviour had said, Before *Abraham* was, I was in God's Decree, or had been so understood, where was the Blasphemy for which the *Jews* would have stoned him?

It is apparent that the *Jews* presently understood him, being a Title known to all, and known to belong only to God, as well known (by reason of that noted place it relates to in *Exodus*) as *Jehovah*, and so immediately they took up stones to cast at him.

But his Grace hath not so done with this Text, but goes on to fortifie it with other parallel places, as to the phrase and signification, p. 100. as *Hebr.* 13. 8. *The same yesterday, to day, and for ever.* And *Revelat.* 1. 8, 17. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty,* *Rev.* 22. 13, 16.

This our Author declines, and instead of proposing it as it lay in his *Grace's* Sermon, he takes up the latter of these places in the close of his Discourse upon this Head after this manner, *The last of his Grace's Texts to prove the Pre-existence and Divinity of our Saviour, is Rev. 1. 8. p. 58. b.*

Though out of its place, I am content to take it as he proposes it; and especially because I may hope now, if ever, to make a Convert of him; for thus he answers, *When his Grace proves that these words are spoken, not of God, but of Christ, I will thank him, and give him the Cause.*

Fairly offered, and fit to be accepted.

In the first place, I take it for granted, that I need not remind him of what his Grace has observed, That *these Expressions are the common Description which the Scripture gives of the Eternity of God, whose Being is commensurate to all the several respects of Duration, past, present, and to come.* For this is the reason why our Author denies this to belong to our Saviour, since that would be to ascribe such a Being to him, as is commensurate to all these Durations. Therefore with his usual assurance, he affirms, "That they are not spoken of our Lord Christ, seems to me as clear as Meridian Light, from what is said *v. 4. From him which is, which was, and which is to come, and from Jesus Christ.* Where we see plainly, that Jesus Christ is distinguished as a different person from that Almighty who is, and who was, and who is to come; therefore he cannot be intended in the Description, *v. 8.*

Answer. I suppose that he intends this as a general Answer to the several places of the Revelation quoted by his Grace; and then it's as much as to say, that since *Jesus Christ is distinguished from him who is, and was, and is to come, v. 4. therefore he cannot be intended at v. 8. nor 17. nor Ch. 22. 13, 16.* That is, that these Expressions, which are the common Description the Scripture gives of the Eternity of God, are never applied in any of those places to our Saviour: But if it appears that they are at any time applied to our Saviour, his Argument is utterly ruined, and it will unanswerably follow, that if *Jesus Christ is, and was, and is to come,* then he is alike Eternal as the Father, and partaker of one and the same nature with him.

2. How doth it follow that *Jesus Christ is distinguished as a different person from him who is, was, and is to come; therefore he cannot be intended in the Description at ver. 8.?* For he may be a different person from the Almighty Father, who is described by that Character, *v. 4.* and yet as the Son have the same property Essential to the Divine Nature ascribed to him. This we contend for, and this I shall endeavour to prove.

I shall begin with *v. 8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* All the question is, who is the Lord that thus saith of himself, *I am Alpha and Omega, &c?* For this we must consult the context, and then the Character will appear

pear to be his that cometh with Clouds, v. 7. That made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father, v. 6. the first begotten of the Dead, the Prince of the Kings of the earth, that loved us and washed us in his blood, even Jesus Christ, v. 5. So that he is no less the Alpha and Omega, than he is the Prince of the Kings of the earth.

But let us go on with that Divine Writer, whom we find after the same manner describing our Saviour, v. 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.* And that it's given as a Character belonging to him, is evident, for he is the same that commanded St. John to write, and whose Voice he heard, the Son of man that he saw in the midst of the seven candlesticks, v. 12, 13. So again, v. 17. he that saith of himself, *I am the first and the last,* is the same with him that saith of himself, v. 18. *I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.* So again, he saith of himself, chap. 2. 8. *These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive.* And as St. John begins, so he ends this Prophetical Book, cap. 22. 13. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last;* viz. the same with him that saith, ver. 12, & 20. *Behold, I come quickly; — Jesus that sent his Angel to testify these things,* v. 16.

From all which laid together it is very manifest, and as clear as the Meridian light, that these Phrases are applied to our Saviour, that he is *the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* But how can the Being of a Creature be commensurate to all the several respects of Duration, past, present, and to come? And what a presumption would it be in a Creature that had a beginning, to say of himself, *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last?* So that our Author must in the conclusion side with his Antient Unitarians and deny the Revelation to be Canonical; or be as good as his word, and give his Adversary the Cause, and write a Retraction.

The last place our Author touches upon (omitting several other material Texts cited by his Grace) is 1 Job. 1. 1, 2. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, &c.* which he thus expounds (calling into his aid Grotius and Vorstius, in his Opinion two the ablest Interpreters the Church has yet had.)

1. *The Word of Life, that is, the Gospel.*
2. *Eternal Life, i. e. the Immortality therein promised.*

3. From the beginning, that is, they were always intended and purposed by him, but not manifested till reveal'd in the Gospel.

4. We have seen and handled, is to signify their knowledge of it was most assured and absolute. For the Hebrews are wont to declare the certainty and clearness of things by Terms borrowed from the Senses.

Ans. Though the Hebrews are wont to express the certainty and clearness of things after that manner; yet I don't find that the Scripture is wont to speak thus of the Gospel, viz. The Gospel which was from the beginning, which we have seen with our Eyes, and our Hands have handled, and which was with the Father. But I find that Saint John in his Gospel speaks of our Saviour in the like terms, for thus he saith of him, *In the beginning* (which is the same with *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς* here, as his Grace observed p. 19. and Grotius before him) *was the Word, and the Word was with God, v. 4. In him was life, v. 14. We beheld his Glory, and he is said to be manifested, Joh. 14. 21, 22. and 1 Joh. 3. 5, 8.*

Now what can be more evident than that when the Author is the same, the phrase the same, and more agreeable to the Subject under consideration, that it should be alike understood in one Book as the other, and so that which we have heard, and seen, and looked upon, and handled, and was with the Father, should be the Son, and not the Gospel of God?

But saith our Author, Grotius and Vorstius think otherwise; and he goes on, *I know not why his Grace overlook'd this Interpretation of two of the most learned and judicious Criticks of this or any other age.*

Answer, I answer in his phrase, *I marvel much how our Author should know that his Grace overlook'd it, for it's likely that he might not have the same opinion with this Writer of these two great men, so as to think them the ablest Interpreters the Church has yet had: Vorstius for many reasons, and Grotius for his posthumous Notes (I should rather call them *adversaria*) come not up to that Character. Besides his Grace knew very well what both the Antient and learned and judicious Criticks of latter Ages, thought of this Text. In the number of the former is Tertulian, adv. Praxeam. c. 15. Amongst the latter is Erasmus; and even Grotius is inconsistent with himself, when he goes off from the Gospel to the Miracles that attested it, in his Explication of the word *ἑώρακέν τε*, which we have looked upon.*

Before his *Grace* leaves the Argument of our Saviour's Deity, he takes notice of a usual plea of the *Socinians*, that they glory they have Reason clearly on their side in this and the other point of the B. Trinity; and that the Difficulties and Absurdities are much greater and plainer on our part than on theirs, A. B. p. 115.

To each of these his Lordship made a distinct Reply, and shew'd particularly as to the Doctrine of the Trinity, that tho' it was above, yet it was not contrary to Reason; that though there were Difficulties, yet no Absurdity in it. This our Author thought fit to pass over in silence.

As to the latter, his *Grace* undertook to prove that the Opinion of our Adversaries hath greater Difficulties in it, and more palpable Absurdities following from it, than any they could charge upon the Orthodox.

As when they say, *That the Son of God is a meer Creature, not God by Nature, and yet truly and really God by Office, and by Divine Appointment and Constitution; to whom the very same Honour and Worship is to be given which we give to him who is God by Nature.*
p. 123.

In which his *Grace* observes two Difficulties and Absurdities.
1. That 'they hereby bring Idolatry by a back-door into the Christian Religion, as they give Divine Worship to a mere Creature, and as they willingly admit two Gods, the one by Nature, and the other by Office. 2. That they cannot vindicate themselves in this point in any other way, than what will in a great measure acquit both the *Pagans* and *Papists* from the charge of Idolatry.

This our Author saith, is not an uncommon imputation on the *Socinian* Doctrine, and thus far he is in the right, for besides Modern Writers, the stream of the Fathers charge the *Arians* with Idolatry as they Worship Christ, whom they suppose to be a meer Creature. Thus *Athanasius*, *Gregory Naz.* and *Nyssen.* *St. Basil*, *Epiphanius*, &c.

And this Charge our Author doth rather avoid than deny; for which purpose he divideth the *Unitarians* into two sorts:

Such as give Christ no Divine Worship: Of these he saith, *It is certain we have wrote no Book this seven years, in which we have not been careful to profess to all the world, that a like Honour or Worship (much less the same) is not to be given to Christ as to God.* And then he will by all means have this Charge of worshipping our Saviour.

Saviour, to be a foul Calumny thrown on them by the *Trinitarian* Preachers. Do the *Trinitarians* think, saith our huffing Controvertist, they may devise a Religion for us, and then come up into their Pulpits to declaim against the Schemes that are purely of their own Invention? In good time we shall have a *Pulpit Socinianism*, as there was in the late Reign a *Pulpit Popery*; for this Author writes in the very way and Phrase of *Misrepresentation* and *Representation*. But after all, is this a *Misrepresentation*? Did never any *Unitarians* or *Socinians* give Honour and Worship, a like and even the same to Christ as to the Father? Is that Charge a *Device* of the *Trinitarians*? Our Author will undertake for himself, for that is the *We* in this Book, the Author of the *History of the Unitarians*, the Author of the *Criticisms* on Mr. *Milbourn*, &c. and so for *Seven Years* backwards. *We*, saith he, have wrote no Book this seven years, in which we have not been careful, &c. But were there no years before the last *Seven*, that can be looked into? He knew what the *Arians*, and what *Socinus* and his Followers held and do hold. But he and his, for whom we want a Name, (for they are in this neither *Arians* nor *Socinians*) unless we will call them *Francisco-Davidists*, are herein very reserved and cautious, that they may not give the same nor alike Honour to our Saviour as to God. Indeed if they were of another mind before the *seven years* past, they have done well to change it, to ease themselves of a troublesome Charge of giving Divine Worship to a mere Creature, as did the *Arians* and *Socinians*; and of as troublesom Adversaries as *Socinus* found *Franciscus David* to be, that would not allow Divine Worship to be given to Christ, because he was a Creature, and that by so doing they should be guilty of *Idolatry*.

But after all his suming, and his talk of a *Devised Religion*, and *declaiming Pulpits*, and *Schemes purely of their own Invention*, he is forced to own that there is a second sort of *Unitarians* that give Divine Worship to our Saviour; and that's an Objection in his way. *But his Grace will say perhaps, Why? Do you not pray to Christ?* And to close the Objection, *Do you not then give the like, nay the same Honour to Christ as to God?*

His Answer to this is well worthy our Observation.

1. *There are indeed some Unitarians who pray to the Lord Christ.* But why *Some*? Did not the numerous *Arians*, and did not *Socinus*, and generally all called after his name do so; and did they

they not think themselves obliged so to do, inveighing against those that did not?

2. He adds by way of Excuse, They pray'd to him indeed, but it was to him, *as that Mediator King, who is (say they) appointed by God to succour us in all our straits and wants.* But is not this to equal him with God, to whom alone we are taught to direct our Prayers? Nay, is not this to attribute to him the Divine Properties of Omniscience and Omnipotence, when he is supposed to know and succour us in all our straits and wants? No, saith he, for they own that his knowledge either of our wants or Prayers is only by Revelation from God; and his Power by which he relieves us, is wholly of God's giving.

But is not Prayer a part of Divine Worship, and peculiar to God? And don't they then equal him to God, when they pray to him? And is not that Idolatry, to give to a Creature the Worship belonging to the Creator? And can any Divine Appointment make that not to be Idolatry, which in its nature is so? (as the Protestants use to maintain against the Church of Rome). And besides, don't those Socinians that worship our Saviour, affirm that they worship him as God? Thus Socinus himself pleads, *Ut pro Deo ac Domino suo venerentur*, Tom. 2. p. 631. That they worship him as their God and Lord. And much more to the same purpose. And what is it to worship him as God, but to give him Divine Worship?

The Second Difficulty and Absurdity his Grace charges upon them, is a Plurality of Gods, *the one by Nature, the other by Office, a Creature-God, a God merely by Positive Institution.*

All that he has to say to this, is, *Will he deny positively and directly, that the Lord Christ is a God by Representation and Office?* And then steals off with, *Let his Grace give it under his hand, That the Lord Christ is not a God in these senses.*

A. This is much as if when charged with Idolatry for giving Divine Worship to Christ, if a mere Man, he should say, *Will his Grace deny positively and directly, that Christ is a Man?* For though he denies not Christ to be a Man, yet he affirms, That Christ, if no more than a Man, is not to be worshipped with Divine Honour. So tho he should not deny Christ to be a God by Representation and Office, yet he affirms that one who is so and no more, cannot be the True God, nor be worshipped as God; for that would establish a Plurality of Gods. But his Grace

on the other hand took not himself concerned, nor doth the Case require, that he should positively assert, That Christ is a God by Representation; for that is more than our Author himself dares to do, who faintly enough concludes, *That as Moses is called a God, so also Christ may be called a God by Mission, Representation, and Office.*

Now how unreasonable a thing is this, That he should put it so hard upon his Grace, to deny positively and directly, what this Author himself dares not positively and directly affirm? for he cautiously saith (for fear a Proof should be required), *So also may Christ be called a God.* But our Author is too sparing and modest in his expressions, for the Socinians are not backward to acknowledge, That our Saviour is *True God*, and that *there are more True Gods than one*; and that to say *there is One only Supreme Independent God*, and to *worship one God by Nature*, is *Judaical*, and a *renouncing of the Christian Religion.* Vid. *Smalcus Exam. Cent. Err. & Refutatio Smig. de novis monstris, &c.*

To conclude, His Grace had said, 'That the Socinians cannot vindicate themselves in this Point any other way, than what will in great measure acquit both the Pagans and the Papists from the Charge of Idolatry.

This our Author calls a *Thunder-clap*; and truly by his own Pleas he makes good the *Imputation.* For,

1. He saith, They pray to Christ as a *Mediatory King*, who is appointed by God to succour us in all our straits: And of this kind were the *Dii Medioximi* among the Heathens; and so are the Mediators of Intercession, the Saints and Angels, in the Church of Rome, who they say are appointed by the Supreme God to hear and succour us.

2. He saith, That the knowledge our Saviour hath either of our Wants or Prayers, is only by Revelation from God; and his Power is wholly of God's giving.

So the Romanists say, That the Saints have their Knowledge of our state, either by Revelation, or *in speculo Trinitatis*, in the Glass of the Trinity; which is much the same.

3. Our Author saith, The Worship given to Christ is not the same which is given to God. So the Church of Rome hath their Superior Worship, *Latria*, which they give to God; and an inferior, *Dulia*, which they give to Saints.

4. Our

4. Our Author saith, Though these *Socinians* pray to Christ, yet they don't hereby equal him to God. This is the very Plea made by the Church of Rome for the Worship they give, and the Prayers they offer to Saints and Angels.

From all which we see how much Modesty as well as Truth there is in what his *Grace* observes, That they cannot vindicate themselves in this Point any other way, than what will in a great measure acquit both the Pagans and the Papists from the Charge of Idolatry.

S E C T. II.

Of the Incarnation of our Blessed Saviour.

AFTER a Discourse of several Pages, which our Author declines, his *Lordship* proceeded to the most usual and considerable Objections of his Adversaries against the Doctrine of Christ's Incarnation. As,

Object. 1. They say, 'That this Union of the Divinity with the Humane Nature, is, if not altogether impossible, yet very unintelligible.'

To this his *Grace* replies, That there is no impossibility, is evident from the Union between the Soul and Body of a man, p. 147, and 158.

Against this our Author makes two Exceptions.

Except. 1. In a personal Union of a Soul with a Body, the Union is between two Finite and Commensurate things; which is not only possible, but very conceivable. But in the pretended personal Union of God to Man, and Man to God, the Union is between Finite and Infinite.

Answer. Here our Author over-runs the Point, when he considers the personal Union of a Soul and Body, merely as a Union between two Finites; for instances between such, the World is full of: Whereas the Difficulty is, as the Union is between Soul and Body, that is, Spirit and Matter, which are two extreams, and so incommensurate; and yet notwithstanding they are not only vitally united, but they both retain their distinct

Natures and Properties, as his Grace observes. Under which Notion, the personal Union between two such *unequals* is as difficult to conceive (were it not that *we are sure that it is*) as the personal Union between the divine and humane Natures in our Saviour.

But our Author pursues his Point. For, saith he,

The personal Union of God to Man is *between Finite and Infinite*; which cannot be without admitting one of these things; Either that *Finite and Infinite are Commensurate*; which every one knows is false: Or, that the *Finite is united only to some part of the Infinite*, and is disjoyned from the rest of it; which all Trinitarians deny and abhor; because if so, *Jesus Christ should not be perfect God, but only God in part.*

Answer. By this way of arguing our Author may as well undertake to prove, that there is no such thing as a *personal Union* between the Soul and Body; For, that cannot be imagined without admitting one of these two things; either that Soul and Body are *commensurate and equal*, and alike extended, which every one knows is false: Or, That *Body and Soul are united as to some part only*, which is disjoyned from the rest, and that is of a Spirit to make it material. What more plain, if his Argument be true, than that there can be no personal Union between the Soul and Body, such distant extremes? So that you may as soon expect that the soft and impalpable Air should be united to a Thunderbolt, or a Speculative thought to a Millstone, as that there can be a Union between things so incommensurate and unequal, as a Body and a Soul are. But if notwithstanding such conceived Difficulties, Soul and Body are thus found to be united; then is it alike consistent that the two Natures in our Blessed Saviour be united in one Person.

Again, by the same way he may go on and prove that *Immensity* is no perfection of the Divine Nature; and that it's impossible God should be every where, and Essentially present. For *Immensity* (if it be) has a relation to place, that is, *Infinite to Finite*: but such a relation cannot be in God, without one of these two things, that *Finite [place]* and *Infinite [immensity]* are *Commensurate*, which every one knows is false: Or, that the *Finite [place]* has a relation to some part of the *Infinite*, and is disjoyned from the rest of it; and so the Divine Essence is partible and divisible, which all deny: The Difficulty

we see presses as hard upon the personal Union of Soul and Body, and God's Imminently, as upon the Union of the Divine and Humane Natures in our Saviour; and which he must deny, or give up his Argument.

Indeed it is not for us to talk Metaphysically of the Divine Nature, till we understand our own; nor of the Nature, Kinds and Modes in higher matters, till we understand the Connexion and Union of parts in a pebble or a bubble: lest by such an Attempt we run our selves into Heresie, a dangerous and inevitable Rock, as our Author represents the Case; or into his downright Nonsense, of uniting two Understandings, or Persons, by the Abolition of one of them.

Except. 2. *The Union of Soul and Body may be personal, that is, may constitute or make one Person: because it is not the Union of two Persons, but only of one Person (the Soul) to a thing which is otherwise without Life, Reason, Memory, or Free-Will.— But in the (pretended) Union of God with Man, there are two distinct, and very different Lives, Reasons, Memories and Free-Wills, which utterly destroy the Notion of a personal Union. For a personal Union supposes but one Life, one Reason, one Memory, one Free-Will. Because if these things which constitute a Person are found more than once, there is no longer one Person but two, and consequently no personal Union in the sense in which we are arguing.*

Answer. I deny that two Lives, or two Understandings, or two Free-Wills, do necessarily make two different Persons or Beings, when there is a Subordination between them; for then they receive their Denomination or Title from the Supreme. As we usually say there are three sorts of Life, Vegetation in Plants, Animality in Brutes, and Rationality in men; now if one of these is alone, that gives Denomination to it, as a Plant is called a Vegetable. But when the Vegetative life is united to the Animal, it loses that Character, and the Creature then is called an Animal, and is so called as if there was no Principle in it of Vegetation. And the rational (though there be Vegetation and Animality) is so called, as if there was no Vegetation or Animality. That is, when there are several Powers one in Subordination to another, they make not several Beings (as they would do if alone) but the Supreme gives the Denomination to the whole.

And thus it is in the Case before us, where there are two Natures, the Divine and Humane; two Lives, the Immortal and Mortal; two Understandings, an infinite and a Limited; two Wills; and yet not two Persons: because the Understanding and Will of the Inferior (the Humane Nature) is subordinate to the Superior (the Divine) and so the Person is as much one, as if there had been but one Nature, one Life, one Understanding, and one Will.

As to our Author's History of *Apollinaris*, *Nestorius*, and *Eutyches*, (were I disposed to make Excursions) I could present him with the Rhapsody and Bedrole of the Opinions of those he calls *Unitarians*, from *Cerintus* and *Ebion* downward to *Socinus*, and of the Violences and Outrages of the *Arians* against the *Photinians* and Orthodox; and of the Rancour of the *Photinians* against the *Arians* and Orthodox: but that I shall refer to a more proper occasion.

Object. 2. 'Tis a thing incongruous, and much beneath the Dignity of the Son of God, to be united to Humane Nature.

To this his *Grace* makes a large Reply, and amongst other things saith: 'The lower any Being, be he never so high, condescends to do good, the Glory of his Goodness shines so much the brighter.

To this passage alone our Author returns an Answer, if I may call a Representation so, and in requital I shall return him the Reverse of his Comparison, *mutatis mutandis*. If Christ by the just interest he has in the favour of his Father, procures the pardon of Sinners, and to keep them for the time to come from the like bad courses, should obtain the Grant of eternal Happiness, and then give them such Counsel and Precepts, as might best dispose them to a new Course of Life; — Would not this Care and Benignity be sufficient, unless the Son of God himself came, and be content to be clothed with the Rags of Humanity, and to be bound and buffeted, Imprisoned, Arraigned, Condemned and Crucified for them? In his Judgment, Such a Scene would have more of Folly than Goodness. And he concludes, Therefore much less is it to be supposed of God, than of a Wise man.

This needs no farther Animadversion, the Impiety of it is a sufficient Reply.

Object. 3. 'The Incarnation is not necessary, saith he. For our

‘ our Opposers grant this, that the pardon of Sin might have
 ‘ been offer’d to mankind by a Prophet in the name of God;
 ‘ so that there was no apparent cogent Necessity, no extraor-
 ‘ dinary and indispenfable cause for it; and so must be allow-
 ‘ ed an unaccountable, causeless Debasement of the Divine Ma-
 ‘ jesty; and seeing no such cause is assigned, saith he, we have
 ‘ leave to believe it never was.

A. The Objection is of our Author’s own forming; and there are two Uses he makes of his Adversary’s Concession (which for the present we will take as he represents it.)

1. That if there was no *apparent cogent Necessity*, no *indispenfable cause* for the Incarnation, it must be an *unaccountable* and *causeless Debasement*.

2. Seeing no such cause is assigned, therefore they *have reason to believe it never was*.

As to the First, it’s a gross Mistake; for there may be a good and sufficient cause for that, which there is no *Cogent* and *Indispenfable*, and much more no *Apparent* necessity for: He tells us, That *the Gospel and pardon of Sin might have been offer’d to Mankind by a Prophet in the name of God*, and so there was no *Apparent* and *Cogent* necessity for Christ’s Incarnation. And surely if the offering *Pardon by a Prophet* was sufficient, there was no *Apparent*, *Cogent*, and *indispenfable* Necessity for Christ’s coming into the World; and then (according to our Author’s way of arguing) Christ’s coming into the World is as *unaccountable*, and *causeless*, as he would have his Incarnation to be.

2. As to the Second: ‘ Seeing no such cause is assigned, therefore the Son of God was never incarnate.

A. I answer, By this way of arguing, Christ was never Crucified, any more than he was Incarnate. For if there was no *Indispenfable* cause for it, it might have been omitted; and there was no *Indispenfable cause* for it, where the *Teaching of a Prophet* was sufficient. And without an *Indispenfable cause*, our Author has taught us *The Wisdom of God would not stoop to such a Humiliation*; And consequently, our Saviour was no more Crucified than he was Incarnate, if our Author argues right.

Under the covert of this Objection, our Author takes to Task the Reasons which his *Grace* offers for our Saviour’s being Incarnate; and excepting the case of Mysteries (which I shall reserve for another place) our Author frames one general Answer to them all, *viz.* That

That these Considerations do not prove the Incarnation expedient in the Age of Augustus; for they were much more forcible in the Time of Adam, than of Augustus. For in the last, God could propound only to reclaim Men from their Idolatries, Errors and Impieties; but if he had been incarnate in the Age of Adam he had prevented them. And if these are good Arguments, 'tis Morally impossible, either that there was in the Age of Augustus, or ever shall be an Incarnation. He concludes, I think; I may say, this is an accurate and just Reasoning: it being founded on this Maxim of common Prudence, that what was more expedient to be done at first than afterwards, would have been at first, if it had been at all expedient to be done.

A. The Reasons given of Christ's Incarnation, viz. The reclaiming Mankind from their Idolatries, Errors and Impieties, are the same with the Reasons for Christ's coming into the World: And where the Reasons are the same, they are to be tryed in the same way. Let us therefore put Christ's coming into the World, into the room of his being Incarnate; and we shall find it as requisite (if our Author's Argument be of any force) that he should have come into the World from the beginning, as that he should have been Incarnate from the beginning; and as Morally impossible he should have been born in the Age of Augustus, as that he should have been Incarnate in his time. For these Reasons were much more forcible in the Age of Adam than of Augustus. For by so late a Nativity as the Age of Augustus, God could propound only to reclaim Men from their Idolatries, &c. but by being born in the very time of Adam, he had prevented the Idolatries of 4000 Years.— If these be good Arguments for Christ's Nativity, 'tis Morally impossible, either that there was in the Age of Augustus, or that there ever shall be a Saviour born into the World.

The same Argument will also affect the Gospel, and make it necessary, that it should have been as completely published in the Age of Adam as of Augustus.

This is a home Charge indeed, a charge of a great Oversight and neglect in Almighty God, for want, it seems, of attending to a Maxim of common Prudence, viz. Of doing what was more expedient to be done at first than afterwards. For according to our Author, the whole design of Salvation by Christ was mistimed, and the fulness of time for it was in the Age of Adam, and not of Augustus. This he accounts accurate and just Reasoning;

soning; and I suppose the next News we hear, will be Amendments upon the Gospel; and a Set of Chronological Tables to rectifie us in these Matters. And to that work I leave him. For I suppose he will not expect from his Adversaries, that they should prove to him, that the time of *Augustus* was better than that of *Adam*, for our Lord's appearance in the World; or to give him the Reasons, why Almighty God chose the time of *Augustus* for the Nativity of our Saviour, and the publishing the Gospel by him, rather than the time of *Adam*.

A Vindication of the Lord Bishop of Worcester's Sermon concerning The Mysteries of the Christian Faith, from the Exceptions made against it, by the Author of the Considerations on the Explications of the Doctrine of the Trinity.

IF the Author of *the Considerations* had a mind to have writ upon a Noble Argument, this Learned Adversary gave him a fair occasion to try his Skill, by proposing the two different *Hypotheses* concerning the Salvation of mankind by *Jesus Christ*, and shewing the agreeableness of the one, *By his assuming our Nature, and suffering in our stead*, to the revealed Will of God. Which he confirms, as it's *most plain and easie, and agreeable to the most received Sense of the Words*; as it *suits with the Scope and Design of the whole New Testament*; *hath been generally received in the Christian Church*; and *best agrees with the Characters of those Persons from whom we receive the Christian Faith, viz. Christ Jesus and his Apostles*. Upon the last of these his Lordship more particularly Discourses.

But instead of taking his Adversary to Task about this weighty Subject, our Author chuses rather to fall upon some other Points, where he may have a greater Scope for the gratifying his roving Fancy; not caring to be tyed up by the Rules and Measures of strict Argumentation; and therefore for the fitting to his purpose what he had to say, he passes over the other, under the Character of a *great many Heads*, too troublesome for a Reader's view, whereas *the Chief of all* (as he will have it) *lies in these Three*.

A Vindication of the

- 1. ' God may justly require of us to believe what we cannot comprehend.
- 2. ' Those who reject the Mysteries of Faith, do themselves advance greater Mysteries than those they declaim against.
- 3. ' The manner and way of Salvation the Church teaches, tends more to the benefit of mankind, than the way of Salvation by Christ taught by the Socinians.

Of these Three Propositions our Author thus passes his Judgment. *The first is true, but not to the purpose. The Second is borne to the purpose, but not true. The Third is neither true nor to the purpose.*

When he elsewhere read this Character of a certain Book, without doubt he thought the Cadence of it very pretty, and might be divertive for his Reader, whether it were right or wrong, and fit for his purpose or not. But because I am apt to suspect the Exactness of such Turns of Fancy, I shall make bold to examine them, and see how his Character and the Heads of Discourse he applies it to, will agree.

The first, saith he, is true, but not to the Purpose.

The contrary of this used to be accounted true by his Predecessors in the same way; Socinus himself, as his Lordship shewed [Serm. p. 21.] denied the Divine Prescience, because he could not comprehend it; and the incomprehensibleness of a Doctrine used to be a mighty Argument amongst the Socinians, against the truth of it, as might be shewn. But our Author is of another mind, as he tells us, for the present: And if his Lordship could by Prescience have foretold his mind, and foreseen he would have replied upon him, he might have spar'd to himself (as he gravely observes) the Pains of these ten Pages in his Sermon, in which he seeks to prove, that there are many things we do not comprehend. But his Lordship is not to be blamed for want of that Prescience, which the acute Socinus would not allow to God himself. And to say the truth of it, he thought he had wrote against a Socinian Point, but our Author can tell him, He utterly mistakes; perhaps his Lordship had not read the Notes on the Creed of Athanasius, nor the Trinitarian Scheme of Religion, nor the Answer to Mr. Milbourn, (Books our Author recommends) nor the History of the last Seven years; for it's likely he might there have found the Index Expurgatorius to Socinus, and

and his Successors ; and the Alterations made in this Refining Age in their grosser Doctrine, without which they will tell him he writes against imaginary *Socinianism*. But our Author within the compass of Three pages changes his mind. In page 4. *All the works of God are Incomprehensible, and we cannot comprehend the least Spire of Grass.* But pag. 7. *He cannot understand why his Lordship and many others are so positive, that we cannot comprehend an infinite Attribute, as Eternity.* Now I should have thought that *the works of God, and a Spire of Grass* are as comprehensible as an *infinite Attribute*. He tells us, *Contradictions are by all confessed to be Impossibilities* ; and so I take *Comprehensible* and *Incomprehensible* to be ; it remains therefore upon him to shew that they are possible ; and that while it is not possible for a *Spire of Grass* to be comprehended, that yet *Eternity* may : He bears a little too hard upon his Readers, to suppose their Memory or Attention will not hold out Three pages together ; and that he may have the liberty to affirm and deny, and contradict himself (as shall best serve his end) without offence to their understanding. But perhaps, *The heat of Writing and Controversie* was the occasion of this Inadvertency.

The first of these, *The Incomprehensibleness of God's works*, is left in it's place to try its fortune, and to subsist upon its own Credit. But when he maintains *the Comprehensibleness of an infinite Attribute* (he might have said *Infinity*, for that is a Divine Attribute) because it sounds not so well, and *these Men that have taught the World, that to do Contradictions would not be a Perfection, but an Imperfection in the Divine Nature*, may have also taught them, that *Infinity* cannot be comprehended by a *Finite* understanding, nor *God* be comprehended by a *Creature* ; because of this he takes himself concerned to make good his Paradox, by setting up such a *Notion of Comprehension* as he conceives may support it : And that is, that *to comprehend a thing, is to have a clear, distinct and adequate Conception of it.* And he adds, *May we not have such a Notion of an infinite Attribute ? I think we may.* Let us suppose for the present, his Definition of *Comprehension* to be good and right ; may we not then have *as clear, distinct, and adequate Conception of a Spire of Grass, or any of God's Works*, as of *Infinity and Eternity* ? And then how comes he before to acknowledge the Truth of that saying of his Lordship's, that *we cannot comprehend the least Spire of Grass ?*

But how true soever his Notion of Comprehending may be, he mistakes in the Application, when he saith, *We may have a clear, distinct, and adequate Conception* of an infinite Attribute. Now we used to say (till the days of discarding Mysteries came on) that only God can comprehend his own Essence, and nothing less than Infinite could have a *clear, distinct, and adequate Conception* of Infinite. For 'tis evident we have not a *clear, distinct, and adequate Conception* of that which we can give no *adequate* Definition of. But we can give no adequate Definition of Infinite; and therefore are forced to speak of it by way of Negation, and rather say what it is not, than what it is. Thus he himself describes *God's Eternity*, viz. 'Tis *that Duration by which he is without all Beginning and End*, which is by no means, a *clear, distinct, and adequate* Definition of it. For first *Duration* applied to *Eternity*, is what is usually call'd a *Contradiction in Adjecto*: For saith our Author, *It is of the Nature of a Duration to consist in a Succession*; But in *Eternity* is no *Succession*. For what *Succession* was there before the *Creation* of the World? And yet there was the same *Eternity* then as now. So that to describe *Eternity* by *Duration*, and to cut that *Indivisible* into parts by *Succession*, is to make a temporary *Eternity*, which methinks sounds as ill as an *Eternal moment*. Secondly, Its by no means an adequate Definition of *Eternity*, because it consists of *Negatives*, *without all Beginning and End*. A greater Proof cannot be given of the *Inadequateness* of our *Conception*, than thus to go through the *World of Beings*, and *Affertions*, and to say it is not this; and it is not that, and yet we are never the nearer to tell what the thing really is. As if I would ask, What is an *infinite Attribute*? And he should answer, A *Perfection* without bounds. What is a *Spirit*? A *Being* that hath no *Flesh and Bones*. What *Eternity*? A *Duration without Beginning or End*. Do we understand *Infinity*, a *Spirit*, or *Eternity*, the better for all this? As suppose when the word *Spirit* is applied to *God*, *Angels*, and *Souls departed*; will the above-said Definition give me any *clear, distinct, and adequate* *Conception* of it, and assign the difference between what it is in *God*, and what in a *Creature*, or what at all? A mistake then it is in the thing, as well as a *Contradiction* in him; and the reason of this *Blunder* (next to a *Carping-Disposition* of mind, watchful to take all advantages) is, that he was not aware.

aware of the difference between *apprehend* and *comprehend*, and confounded *Existence* with *Essence*, *That* the thing is, with *what* the thing is. And of both of these he himself has given us a remarkable Instance.

For the Bishop having said, *If nothing is to be believed but what may be comprehended, the very Being of God must be rejected* 100. P. 22. Our Author upon it makes this Observation, *That the Attributes of God are Incomprehensible, I have often heard; but never till now what his Lordship adds in the next place, purely from himself, If nothing, saith he, is to be believed, &c.* But why is this purely from himself? For this admirable Reason, subjoyned by our Author, *To comprehend the Being or Existence of God, is only this, to comprehend that God is: and if we cannot comprehend that, all Religion ceases.* But how came that word *Existence* in? *To comprehend the Being or Existence of God is only this.* &c. For his Lordship has no other word than *Being*, which plainly there refers to the Nature, and not the Existence of the Almighty. So in the Paragraph just before, *It is Madness to pretend to comprehend what is Infinite: And in the close of the same Paragraph, As long as they believe an Infinite and Incomprehensible Being, it is Nonsense to reject any other Doctrine which relates to an Infinite Being, because it is Incomprehensible.* So that it's God, as an *Infinite and Incomprehensible Being*, that his Lordship is Discouraging of; not of his Existence, but his Essence and Nature. And yet we are not at an end of these Difficulties, were we to consider his Existence.

To return to the Bishop's first Proposition (as recited by our Author) *viz. God may justly require of us to believe what we cannot comprehend.* To what purpose is this? For our Author saith, *He [the Bishop] utterly mistakes, in thinking that we deny the Articles of the New Christianity, or Athanasian Religion [concerning the Trinity, the Deity, and Incarnation of our Saviour, &c.] because they are Mysteries, or because we do not comprehend them; we deny them, because they are Contradictions, Impossibilities, and pure Nonsense, p. 4. b.*

Surely this *New Christianity*, this *Athanasian Religion*, is no other than *Babylon* in the Revelation, that had *Mystery* wrote on her Forehead, that was the *Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the whole Earth*; and deserves to be treated in like manner, if she vends *Imposture and Contradictions* under the name of *Mysteries*, as he represents it. But in defect of a Royal Authority to consummate the Sentence, there is a terrible Scourge, a Book

wrote by a *Learned Friend* of theirs, that hath wrought wonders, and with the like Success as the Whips were shew'd to the *Sicilian Slaves*, to their utter Discomfiture. So that the *Merchants of these Wares* have their *Markets* spoiled, or *much hindered*, if he is to be believed. And yet after all, if we may guess at the Book by his Sample out of it, it's as gentle as one could wish; and falls in with his Adversaries. For what doth he say, but what they have said before him? As,

1. *There are in Religion some Mysteries, and Incomprehensible Secrets.*

2. *We are not to give the venerable Name of Mystery to Doctrines contrary to Nature's and Reason's Light.*

3. *The ordinary meaning of Mystery in Scripture, is not something in it's own nature dark and obscure, but something intelligible, and kept secret in past Ages, and was revealed in Gospel-times.* But for all this, may not the word *Mystery* be applied to such things as are in some measure known, but in much greater unknown to us (as his Lordship saith)? And when our Author's Friend doth say, *the ordinary meaning of Mystery in Scripture, is for what was a Secret, but now made known*; it supposes that he was sensible it was also sometimes there us'd for what was in its own nature dark and obscure. I thought to have pursued this Argument, but I rather pass it, because it's under the Consideration of a *Learned Pen*.

Amongst the Instances that are *Incomprehensible*, his Lordship begins with *Eternity*; and saith, That he is apt to think, *there is no greater Difficulty in the conception of the Trinity, and Incarnation, than there is of Eternity.* A bold Saying! And he deserves to be expos'd for it. *Difficulties* the Bishop calls them, but our Author will have it *Contradictions*, and *many Contradictions* in the Trinity and Incarnation; and insinuates that his Lordship would himself have call'd his *Difficulties* in *Eternity*, *Contradictions*, if he durst; For thus his Adversary goes on, *He dares not call them Contradictions (though as he states them they are undeniable Contradictions) because if they were confess'd to be Contradictions, he would be forced to deny an Eternity.* And it is not long before we are told the Bishop denies that also.

There are two *Difficulties* his Lordship observes in the *Eternity of God*.

The first is, 'That if God was for ever, he must be from himself; and what Notion can we have in our minds concerning it?'

Our Author represents this, as if it was the Bishop's design to argue against God's Eternity, after this manner, *I am sorry an Eternal God must be a Contradiction. Had he no way to defend his New Mysteries, but by espousing the Cause of the Atheists? &c.*

A Calumny as black as Hell! For, is there any word leaning this way? What! to prove that there are Contradictions in the Notion of Eternity, or that an Eternal God is a Contradiction! Doth not his *Lordship* both affirm there is *great reason* to believe the Eternity of God, and in the same breath effectually prove it, and confute those *Atheists* whose *Cause* this Slanderer would have him to *espouse*? But this is his usual way of prefacing an Argument; the reason for it lies open enough.

But where is the Contradiction? At last it proves one of his own making. For, saith he, *What makes him [the Bishop] say, God must be from himself, or self-originated? For then he must be before he was.*

For *God to be before he was*, is a Contradiction. But I do not see how it follows, that *if he is from himself, he must be before he was*? For he may be *from himself*, and yet be necessarily and eternally Existent. This 'tis likely our Author saw, and therefore to clinch his Argument, he joyns an *alias* to the Phrase, *From himself*, and then it is *From himself, or Self-originated*. And now he has put a pretty varnish upon it; for *Self-originated*, if strictly taken, implies an Origine or Beginning *from himself*: And (as he saith) *All Origination of what kind soever is inconsistent with an Eternal Being*. If his *Lordship* had said, God had his Beginning or Origination *from himself*, or in his Adversarie's phrase were *Self-originated*, there had been some colour for him to have inferred, Then he *was in Being before he was*. But to be *from himself*, is no more liable to such an inference, than when we say he is *Self-existent*, or in the word used by the Fathers, *ἄυτῶθεο*, *God of and from himself*, that is, so as to have no Cause nor Beginning.

The second Difficulty his *Lordship* proposed about God's Eternity, is, *How God should co-exist with all the differences of times, and yet there be no Succession in his own Being?—And Succession being not consistent with the Absolute Perfection of the Divine Nature, therefore God must be all at once what he is.*

This

This our Author saith, is a *great many Contradictions*, and proposes no less than Five Queries upon it, which he gives his Lordship time till Dooms-day to answer. For thus he closes them, *The Notion of the Trinity, and this Notion of Eternity, will be vindicated both in a Day.*

However we will try if the Day for it be not already come; and for trial's sake, I will venture to offer them again to the Reader, as they stand in his Treatise.

Q. 1. 'What is the difference between an *Eternal Moment*, (which every one discerns is a Contradiction in the very terms) and between *possessing Eternal Life all at once*, which is his Lordship's Definition of Eternity?

A. The difference is as great, as between Contradiction and Truth. An *Eternal Moment* is a Contradiction; for a *Moment* is a moveable point, and passes as soon into not being, as it came into being. It was not, it is, and immediately is not; and so nothing more opposite in the nature of it to Eternity. But Eternity admits no Succession, no Divisibility, no Moments, no Past, no Future, no Motion, no Change, and consequently must be all existent together, and *all at once*: For there is no mean between Succession, and *all at once*; and since Succession is incompatible with Eternity, Eternity must be *all at once*. And if God did not *possess himself all at once*, he could not be Eternal.

Q. 2. 'Seeing it is of the Nature of all Duration to consist in a Succession, else it were not Duration but a Moment, I ask whether it be not unavoidable, that if Almighty God possesses *Eternal Life all at once*, he must have passed into some Durations before they are? The Duration, for example, in which the Day of Judgment shall be, is not actually come. But if God possesses Eternity all at once, he is already entred upon that Duration, that is, he is entred upon it before it is.

A. If it be of the Nature of all Duration to consist in a Succession, then there can be no more Duration than there is Succession in an Eternal Being: And consequently, 'tis a gross Absurdity to conceive of God, as *entring upon a certain Duration*, and *passing into some Duration*, which is to conceive of him as a Temporary Being, and that began to be, (for so it is in all Succession) and not as one that is Eternal.

Q. 3. ' Seeing it is a Contradiction, and therefore impossible, that any Being should possess a Duration before such Duration is; I desire to know of his Lordship, how it can be an Imperfection (as he affirms) in the Divine Nature, not to do that which implies a Contradiction &c.

A. 'Tis true, that it is a *Contradiction, and therefore impossible* for a Creature, to whom Duration and Succession belong, to possess a Duration before such Duration is. But it is a Contradiction, and therefore impossible for God to possess any Duration (which consists in Succession) because he is Eternal. For him to possess a certain Duration and Succession, would be to suppose him in Duration *A*, before he removed to Duration *B* and when he is in Duration *B*, to have left Duration *A*. Eternity in God, is with respect to Time, what Immenity is to Place; and so he is *all at once*, as he is at once in all places; and as notwithstanding the innumerable Divisions in place, God is no more divided, than he was before Place was created. So, notwithstanding the manifold distributions of time, God is no more in one Duration than in another, but is now the same Eternal undivided Being, when there is a *Before*, a *Present*, and an *After* in Time, as he was before there was any Time, Duration or Succession.

Q. 4. ' How is it more an Imperfection to pass from not being, into such a Duration, to such a Being in it, than 'tis an Imperfection to pass from not operating in such a Duration, to operating in it? This last all men must confess to be true of God; for none will dare to say, God made all his Works at once.

A. *To pass from Duration to Duration, and from not being in such a particular Duration to a Being in it*, is no other than Succession which (as has been shew'd) is utterly inconsistent with the Nature of God, who is Eternal.

To pass from not operating in such a Duration, to operating in it, is to suppose there was a Duration before God did operate in it, which is manifestly absurd. For Duration is a continuance of Time; but what Duration was there in Eternity, before there was any Time, or God began to operate and make the World?

Again, *To argue from the Works of God to his Nature*, is to circumscribe him to Time and Place, as they are. And he may as well argue, That God began to be, when he began to Operate,

Operate, as to argue from Succession in the Creatures, or a Succession of God's Operation in the Creatures, to a Succession in Himself; and that he cannot be *all at once*, because he did not make all his Works at once.

Q. 5. 'What shadow of Imperfection is it to pass from one Duration to another, when the Person so passing, carries with him all perfections into every Duration?

A. If this were so, the Almighty would want one perfection of his Nature, which is Eternity. For he can no more carry his Eternity with him into the various Successions of Duration, than he can pass from place to place, and carry his Immensity with him.

'Tis the Uplshot (I will not say the Design) of these his Queries to overthrow the Eternity of God, under colour of disproving the Notion of the *Platonists and Boethius, the School-men and the Doctors, and Professors of Mysteries in our Times*, (as he derives its Pedigree, and is pleased to give their Character) viz. That *Eternity is a possession of all at once*: And so turns all the bitter Invectives upon himself, with which he so virulently, and without any pretext endeavours to wound his Adversary. For what else is the effect of his Doctrine of Succession in God, and passing from one Duration to another? For where there is Succession, there was a beginning, unless he will make the first *Moment* in his Succession to be *Eternal*, which he knows is a *Contradiction in Terms*.

The Two remaining Difficulties which his Lordship offers to our Consideration, and to shew how incomprehensible things are, are the Spirituality of God's Nature, and his Prescience.

To the former he makes no other Reply, than to disavow (if it is so) what was charged upon some of their Way about God's Corporeity.

As to the latter, nothing will serve his turn, but that the Bishop opposes the Unity of God (that envied Doctrine) by finding *Contradictions in his Eternity and Foreknowledge*.

But what if the Bloody Charge fall upon Socinus, who found the *Difficulties*, and as he thought, the *Contradictions* in the Doctrine of God's Prescience to be so great, intrenching upon the Freedom of Humane Actions, and making God the Author of Sin; that he thought it the better way wholly to deny it. But this our Author is very careful to suppress.

2. Proposition. 'The difficulties, saith his Lordship, are in
'point of reason more insuperable in the *Socinian* way than
'ours; of which he gives several Instances that may be called
'*Mysteries*.

1. The Mystery on the part of the Orthodox, is the Eternal Son of God's being with the Father before the World was made by him.

The Myltery on the other side is, 'That although Jesus were born Six months after *John Baptist*, yet he was in dignity before him. Now this, saith the Bishop, is a Myltery; forasmuch as it cannot be conceived that the Evangelist should, in *lofty expressions, and profound language*, prove a thing which was never disputed.

It is *St. John* that is refer'd to, and if he may be esteemed the Author of that Gospel, yet our Author cannot find that *profound language and lofty expressions* in him. *The sense indeed, saith he, is sometimes profound, but the expression is always mean.*

So little judgment had *Friend Amelius*, when at the first reading he thought the Barbarian (as he call'd that Divine Evangelist) to Platonize; and in his *profound language* to imitate his great Master. Indeed our Author rather thinks of a Character besitting a Rhetorician, Orator, or Poet, than a Philosopher or Divine Writer. As if because the Evangelist had not an *elevation of conceit or expression*, like or above the *Greek or Roman Orators*, or Poets, his *language* could not be *profound*, nor his *expressions lofty*.

2. Saith he, *If the language were profound, it would not follow, the Sense intended must be a Mystery.* But it would follow, that *St. John* that wrote of such sublime things, after that manner, would not take pains to prove what was never disputed, viz. that although *Christ* were born six months after *John Baptist*, yet he was in dignity before him.

At last, by head and shoulders, he brings in a Paraphrase of the *Socinians* on the beginning of *St. John*, which has already been consider'd; but because I am not willing to be behind-hand with him, I shall repay it with another, borrowing some help towards it from his own Exposition, viz.

'In the beginning of the Gospel, the *Word* Jesus Christ being about 30 years old, was then in being and alive: And about that time was rapt up into Heaven, as *St. Paul* was,

‘ which we are piously to believe, being the Scripture is silent
 ‘ in it. And after a very short stay there, but so long as it
 ‘ may be said, he *was with God*, this *Word* came down again from
 ‘ Heaven, which we are upon the same consideration to believe,
 ‘ as his former Ascension. And then or some time after, perhaps
 ‘ at his Resurrection, he was constituted a God, not an Eternal
 ‘ God, but a Man-God, a Creature-God, a finite temporary
 ‘ God, that dates the beginning of his Deity from the term
 ‘ aforesaid. And being thus a God, he made a New World, as
 ‘ the Eternal God made the Old. And though he had *nothing*
 ‘ *in him of the Divine Nature*, (for that God could not give him)
 ‘ *nor any of the Incommunicable Attributes of the Deity, Omnipotence,*
 ‘ *Omnipresence, Omniscience,* and such like. (Wherefore *’is better*
 ‘ *to use the words Christ, Lord and Saviour, than God,* because there
 ‘ may be no *small inconvenience with respect to the Vulgar*) yet he
 ‘ was to have the same honour given him by Angels and men,
 ‘ which they gave to the Father, the Eternal, Omnipotent,
 ‘ Omnipresent, and Omniscient God. And to encourage them
 ‘ in this, they are to know, that *Faustus Socinus had cause to think,*
 ‘ that his Uncle *Laelius had, by many prayers obtained from Christ*
 ‘ *himself a very dextrous and admirable Interpretation of a difficult*
 ‘ *place in St. John.*

Now this I take to be an unintelligible *Mystery*, and fit to be
 put to that, That *although Christ Jesus were born six months after*
John, yet he was in dignity before him.

But here he saith they have on their side *the principal Critics*
of the Trinitarians, particularly Erasmus and Beza, who under-
 stand the Phrase, *For he was before me,* John 1. 15. of a *priority*
of dignity and excellence, not of a priority of time.

Admit this for the present, then the sense of that place will
 amount to this, *He that cometh after me, is preferr’d before me; for*
he was preferr’d before me: Or, He that cometh after me, is more ex-
cellent than me; for he was more excellent than me. Thus St. Chry-
 sostom expounds $\xi\mu\omega\sigma\theta\delta\epsilon\upsilon\ \mu\epsilon.$ *is preferr’d before me,* by $\lambda\alpha\mu\omega\sigma\theta\delta\epsilon\upsilon$
 $\tau\epsilon\rho\theta,$ $\epsilon\upsilon\pi\eta\rho\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\rho\theta,$ *more excellent, more honourable.*

2. The *Mystery* on the Orthodox side is, ‘ That a Divine Per-
 ‘ son should assume Humane Nature, and so the *Word* be made
 ‘ *Flesh.* The *Mystery* on the other side is, ‘ That an Attribute
 ‘ of God, his Wisdom or Power, is made *Flesh*; that is, for
 ‘ an *Accident* to be made a *Substance.*

In Answer to this our Author saith,

1. By the Word we do not understand God the Son; the rather, because no such person is once mentioned in all Holy Scripture.

Ans. If that were a Reason sufficient why the Word in that Proposition, *The Word was made Flesh*, should not be understood of God the Son; then 'tis as much a Reason why the Word in the first Verse should not be understood of God the Son: But if notwithstanding that no such person is once mentioned in Scripture as *God the Son*, yet the Word in Verse 1. is to be understood of a person; then notwithstanding that, Verse 10. may as well be understood in like manner of the Personal Word. But is no such person ever mentioned in Scripture, as *God the Son*? What is the Word but the Son of God, and when the Word and the Son are the same, what is the difference between *God the Word*, and *God the Son*? And when the Son is called God in Scripture, what is the difference between *God the Son*, and *the Son that is God*?

2. But what do they understand by the Word, when the Word is said to be made Flesh?

He answers, *The Power and Wisdom of God.*

Now if so; where then is the Fault, when the Bishop charges it upon them as a *Mystery beyond all Comprehension*, that they say that *an Attribute of God, his Wisdom or Power, is made Flesh*?

Here he comes in again with his, *We do not mean hereby, as his Lordship would insinuate, that the Wisdom or Power of God was turned into Flesh, or Man.*

Now this is more than his Adversary charges them with: But what do they mean?

Why, *We mean*, saith he, *as the Trinitarians thereby also mean, that the Word was Incarnate, tabernacled in Flesh, abode on the Man Christ Jesus in more ample manner, and much larger measure, than on former Prophets.*

Ans. If they mean, *By made Flesh, as the Trinitarians themselves also mean*; then they must mean, that the Wisdom and Power of God is Incarnate, and took upon it the Flesh and Nature of Man; or else they do not mean by that Phrase as the *Trinitarians* do. But suppose we give him back again what he has granted, and allow that they do not mean as the *Trinitarians* mean, when they say, *the Word was Incarnate*; but that they mean, *the Word abode on the Man Christ Jesus*; that is, the Word, Power, or Wisdom, abode on the Word Christ; yet how comes he from the *Word's tabernacled in flesh, or was made flesh*, to interpret it, *abode in Christ*. Methinks there is much of *Mystery* in this.

But I have not yet done; for tho he saith, *The Language and Expression of St. John is always mean*, yet I apprehend St. John to be consistent with himself, and to write intelligibly.

But our Author brings all this into question, by a forced Interpretation, and setting up his own meaning against that of St. John; as will appear to any indifferent man, from the Connection and Order of this Chapter; whether it be the part before *verse 14.* or that which follows.

Before; for thus the Evangelist proceeds, *In the Beginning was the Word, — And that Word was the true Light. — And the Word was made Flesh.* So that the Word that was made Flesh, was the same that was the true light, and that was in the beginning. And therefore if by the Word that was

made Flesh, is to be understood *the Power and Wisdom of God*, then so it is to be understood when the *Word* is said to be *in the beginning*, after this manner; In the Beginning was the Power of God, and the Power of God was with God, and the Power of God was God

Let us consult the Words following the Clause, [*the Word was made flesh*] and it will be yet more evident; *The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the father, &c. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, &c.*

So that the same *Word* that was made flesh, dwelt among them; the same *Word* that was made flesh, and dwelt among them, and whose Glory they saw, was the only begotten of the Father. The same *Word* that was made flesh, and dwelt among them, was he of whom *John* bare witness. Now if the whole Tenor of that Discourse; before and after, belong to the Personal *Word*, then so doth the Clause between; or else he will make *St. John* write for as no Intelligent Writer can be supposed to write.

3. The Mystery on the side of the Orthodox, is, That the Son of God *'came down from Heaven*, and took our Nature upon him. The Mystery on the other side is, *'That Christ should be rapp'd up into Heaven*.

This Mystery of theirs our Author will have to be no more difficult than *St. Paul's* being caught up into the third heaven: And so far he is in the right; for that was no more impossible than this, and Christ might have ascended before his Ministry, as well as after his Resurrection. But this is not the Mystery that his Lordship lays his hand upon; but it is this, That in a matter of so great Consequence, and so remarkable a Part of History (if it had been true) the Scripture should be wholly silent; that when it is so punctual in the relation of *Moses's* Converse with God at the giving of the Law, and of our Saviour's Forty Days Temptation in the Wilderness, and his Transfiguration, &c. that there should be no more said of this Ascension of our Saviour, than of the *Virgin Mary's* Assumption, tho' (as they would have it) it was to receive Instructions in the Will of God concerning the Gospel-Dispensation; and when he was constituted and made a God, (as some of them say.) This is a Mystery. But I acknowledge that the invention of this is a new Mystery; it being apparent, that it was by them thought necessary to make some tolerable sense of these words, *He came down from Heaven*, as his Lordship observes of this before.

As for the Mystery on the other side, we acknowledge it to be so, but not for the Reason he gives, because to descend or ascend *belongs only to Limited and Finite Beings*. Since notwithstanding that, God in Scripture is said to go down, that that is not to be understood of a local Descent, but of a manifestation of the Deity. And the Son of God is said to come down from Heaven when he became Man, because he took the Humane Nature into Union with the Divine; and where the Humane was, there was also the Divine.

4. The Mystery on the Orthodox side is, *'That God should become Man* by taking our Nature upon him.

The Mystery on the other side is, *'That Man should become God, &c.*

In the former, an Infinite is united to a Finite; in the latter, a Finite becomes Infinite.

Our Author saith, the Bishop found it necessary to misinterpret their Doctrines, before he could find Mysteries in it.

A. But surely he doth not misreport their Doctrine, when he saith, That they make a Man to be God. Our Author is very tender in the Point, and saith he may be called a God; and saith, That it cannot be satisfactorily proved, that any Authentick Copies of the Bible do give to him the Title, God. But Socinus, and his Followers, are not sparing to call him a True God, and to give him Divine Worship as such (as has been shewed); and I question whether our Author can say more about the Authentick Copies than Sandius, which has been sufficiently confuted before he published his Brief History,

2. As for what our Author saith concerning the case of Moses, Magistrates and Angels being called God: I ask, whether any of them may be called a True God. For if Moses was, for example, as much a God as Christ, he might have, and challenge the same Divine Worship as is given, and is due to Christ.

5. The Mystery on the side of the Orthodox is, 'That Christ suffered for our sakes; as a voluntary Sacrifice of Expiation of the Sins of Mankind, and not for his own sake.

The Mystery on the other side is, 'To make him suffer as one wholly innocent; which is, to make the most innocent persons as apprehensive of suffering as the most guilty.

Here our Author interposes, and saith, His Lordship seems not to understand the state of the Question, because he had said, 'Tis more reasonable to believe that Jesus Christ suffered for our sakes, than for his own. Whereas he suffer'd for both; for his own sake, to obtain a glorious reward, &c.

Ans. It is plain, that when his Lordship saith, Christ suffer'd for our sake, and not for his own; he means thereby, not for his own sake, as he did for ours; for our Sins, and not for any of his own: so it immediately follows, We are all agreed, that the Sufferings of Christ were far beyond any thing he deserv'd at God's hands.

2. He saith, The Unitarians never denied, as his Lordship here fancies, that Jesus Christ made himself a voluntary Sacrifice for Expiation of the Sins of Mankind.

Ans. Let us suppose this, what is it then they deny? They deny, he saith, that this Sacrifice was by way of true and proper Satisfaction, or full and adequate payment to the Justice of God.

A. That there might be a Sacrifice of Expiation where there was no full and adequate payment to the Justice of God, is true, because it is not possible, saith the Apostle, that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. But the case is not the same in this Sacrifice, (for that which is denied to the former, is yet granted and given to the Sacrifice of Christ, Heb. 10. 4, 10.) which may not improperly be called a Satisfaction and Payment; and if so, in regard of the Dignity of the Person, may be said to be full and adequate; since as Sins are called Debts, so Sinners are Debtors

to the Justice of God's Law, in respect of which we are said to be redeemed by the Blood of Christ, as Captives or condemned persons were redeemed by Silver and Gold, 1 *Per.* 1. 18, 19.

But yet we are not come to the bottom of their Doctrine; for when we might reasonably have thought the controversy to be at an end (since they grant that *Christ was an Expiatory Sacrifice for our Sins*) they take all away again by an Explication that makes the Sacrifice no Sacrifice, and the Expiation no Expiation.

For he thus determines the Point.

3. *We say this Sacrifice (as all other Sacrifices) was only an Oblation or Application to the Mercy of God.* Or as it follows, *He suffered for our sakes, that he might recommend us to the Mercy and Forgiveness of God.*

A. I have said before, by this account of an Expiatory Sacrifice, the Expiation is no Expiation; for the Definition here given of an Expiatory Sacrifice, is this, that 'tis only an Oblation, Application, or Recommendation of a Person to the Mercy and Forgiveness of God.

Now that can be no Definition of a thing, which is as well applicable to a thing of another Nature, as to the thing defined: And that is the Case here, for according to this Definition of an Expiatory Sacrifice, Intercession would be such a Sacrifice.

For it may be thus described, *Intercession is only an Oblation, Application, or Recommendation of another to the Mercy and Forgiveness of God.* So that in effect, an Expiatory Sacrifice is no other than an Intercession. And then indeed we, and I think Mankind (except our Author, and those of his way) have been under a great mistake, that have been taught, that Sacrifices of Expiation were instead of the Offender, in whose sufferings he was reputed to suffer, and upon whose sufferings and Penal Death, he was supposed to be in a respect discharged.

6. The Mystery on the part of the Orthodox is, 'That the Son of God took upon him the Form of a Servant for our advantage. The Mystery on the other side is, 'That a meer Man should be exalted to the Honour and Worship which belongs only to God.

As to the former our Author replies,

'Tis more reasonable to suppose with the *Unitarians*, that God hath admitted us to Conditions of Pardon and Favour, for his own mercy's sake, and in contemplation of the unblemish'd Life, and voluntary sufferings and Sacrifice of Christ Jesus; than to suppose with his Lordship, and his Party, that God himself took on him the Form of a Servant, and suffer'd in our steads, to reconcile us to himself.

Ans. 1. He might as well suppose, that 'tis more reasonable that God should admit us to Conditions of Pardon and Favour, for his own mercy's sake, than for the sufferings and Sacrifice of Christ. For what needed such a Sacrifice, and the Son of God to be expos'd to such Extremities, when God could have pardoned men for his own mercy's sake, as well without these sufferings of Christ, as without a *Satisfaction*.

2. What he supposes is very absurd that God should admit us to Conditions of Pardon, upon the contemplation of the voluntary Sacrifice of Christ; and yet that he did not suffer in our stead, nor to reconcile us to God. For Substitution,

tution,

ruption, or to die in the stead of another, is of the nature of an Expiatory Sacrifice: And he might as well say, Christ is our Intercessor without mediating for us; as that he was our Sacrifice, and not be sacrificed for us; or be a Sacrifice for us, and yet not suffer in our stead.

3. 'Tis not more reasonable to suppose God admitted us to Conditions of Pardon for his own mercy's sake, than it is to suppose that he suffer'd in our steads, and to reconcile us to God: For that is not unreasonable which hath God for its Author.

But will he say, the difficulty is not yet solved; for 'tis God's Reconciling us to *himself*, and Suffering for *himself*, and Paying to *himself* the Debt of the Debtor, and Satisfying the wrong done to *himself*? Which saith he is a *Mock-satisfaction, such a ridiculous Scene, that begets Laughter or Contempt in considering men.* Surely he means such as himself, that writes *Considerations.*

Our Author is so used to forget himself, to leave out, put in, or alter, that he can no more slip an occasion, (how small soever) than those that are used to another way, can let go an opportunity, though it be but a Petty-larceny. Thus he saith, *His Lordship and his Party suppose that God himself suffer'd in our steads, as well as took on him the Form of a Servant.*

Now to say the truth, his Lordship had not this Scene in his eye under *Mystery* the 6th; for in that he is speaking of the Incarnation of our Saviour, when he took on him the Form of a Servant; but it was in *Mystery* the 5th that he spake of Christ's Sufferings and Sacrifice.. His Lordships words are, *The Son of God took upon him the Form of a Servant*; so that he was so far from saying, *God suffer'd in our stead, &c.* that he did not so much as say, *the son of God suffer'd in our stead,* (though it be true.)

But will he say, Is not this all one, when he that suffer'd and died, is, in our opinion, God as well as Man?

I answer No, with respect to his *Observations.*

For restore *Son of God* to its place (as it is in *his Lordship*) instead of: God, and then we shall see the difference.

As 1. 'Tis more reasonable to suppose with the *Unitarians*, that God hath admitted us to Terms of Pardon for his own mercy's sake, &c. than that *his Son* should suffer in our stead, to reconcile us to God.

2. It's an Incomprehensible Mystery, that God should rather chuse to send *his Son* to suffer for us, than to forgive us.

3. 'Tis a *Paradox*, for the *Son of God* to pay the Debt of the Debtor to God, and to satisfy for the wrong done to Him.

How is the *Scene* changed upon this? And where doth the Absurdity lie? While indeed he put God in the place of the *Son of God*, it look'd somewhat speciously; but restore the term *Son of God* to its place instead of God, and the pretended Absurdity lies apparently at his own door.

But may he urge, Don't you acknowledge the Son of God to be God? And then it may be as well said, *God himself suffer'd in our stead, &c.* as the *Son of God suffer'd.* &c.

I answer, God (as that signifies the Divine Nature in Christ) could not suffer: All that we say is, That the person that took upon himself the Form of a Servant was God, and not Man, before such an Assumption of
Humane

Humane Nature: that when he assumed that Nature, he was God as well as Man; and that person who was God suffer'd in Humane Nature, but the Godhead or God no more suffer'd and died when Christ died, than the Manhood could be Omnipresent and Immortal, because the Godhead was so; or the Soul die, when the Man is said to die.

2. I answer further, That the Son of God is not the Father; and that there being such an incommunicable personality, if I may so speak, those things belong to the Son that could not belong to the Father. And as the Father was not Incarnate but the Son, so the Son became responsible, and paid the price of our Redemption to the Father; and therefore it was the Act of the Son that was God, and not of the Godhead, as common to three persons to reconcile us to God.

As to the Mystery on their own side, the Worship of a *meer Man*, it has been already consider'd, only he should have had some moderation in his Charge, when he said his Lordship *might as well have accus'd them of Sodomy or Witchcraft, as of giving proper Divine Worship to a Creature, to the Man Christ Jesus*; when his Party owns it, and he himself makes a feeble Excuse for it. For, saith he, *if it is a mistake, 'tis simple Error, not Mystery, much less Idolatry*. Now, methinks, 'tis an unintelligible Mystery, that *there should be a proper Divine Worship, peculiar to God; and yet there be no Idolatry in giving the same to a Creature*. 'Tis an *Incomprehensible Mystery* again to say, *the giving proper Divine Worship to a Creature, is not Idolatry*.

'Tis a Mystery again, That the Church of *Rome* should be charged with Idolatry, for giving Divine Worship to Creature-Mediators, and yet in these persons 'tis *simple Error*.

'Tis a Mystery again, That Christ should be esteem'd by them a God, and so constituted by God, and yet there be *no small Inconvenience with respect to the Vulgar* to have him so called.

'Tis a Mystery again, That *St. Paul* blames them who do service to such as are not Gods: And yet if God himself had set them up, and given them the Name above every Name, and they had not mistook in the kind, nor exceeded in the degree of that service they did to them, they should not have been blamed. And so the Saints and Angels might have been made Objects of Worship as well as Christ, and the Virgin *Mary* might have been established *Queen of Heaven*, and a *Hyperdulia* accordingly given to her.

So that he has made as pretty a Defence in this Part for the Creature-Worship of the Church of *Rome*, as their heart can wish, and as he has made for *Transubstantiation* in the next Part.

3^d Proposition is, 'The way or manner of saving Sinners by Christ, taught by the Church, is more for the Benefit of Mankind, than the *Socinian Hypothesis*.'

This I shall be as short upon as he; and till I see an Answer to what his Lordship has said, and was also said by the Archbishop upon that Argument, I shall rest contented, and not think the Proposition nevertheless true or pertinent, for his saying 'Tis *neither true, nor to the purpose*.

To the Reverend Dr. WILLIAMS.

Reverend Sir,

I Understand that you are now about a *Vindication of the late Archbishop of Canterbury's Sermons concerning the Trinity, in Answer to the Animadversions that were made upon them.*

I am very glad so great an Argument is in so Good a hand : But since the *Animadverter* gave a late *Discourse* of mine a share of the same Book, I think it may be proper, that somewhat in Justification of what I writ, should accompany this Performance of yours: And because every Man is naturally more the Master of his own Thoughts than another, though in other respects he may be much Superior to him ; I shall therefore give you a particular account of what occurs to me, with relation to my *Discourse* on this Subject, and shall leave it to you, either to Publish it with your Book, in the same simplicity in which I am forced to Write at this distance from my Books and Collections, or which will be much to the advantage of what I am to offer to you, though it may put you to a little more trouble, I leave it to you to draw such things out of this Paper as seem of the greatest weight, and mix them with your own Composition. By this they will appear with those solid Characters of true Judgment and Learning, by which all your Writings are distinguished.

I shall without any farther preamble, enter upon the matter that is before me ; and shall in the first place offer you some general Considerations, before I come to what is more particular and Critical. The Foreign Writers of this Author's Persuasion, have indeed in their way of Writing, set a pattern to the world : Their Stile has been Grave and Modest, free from Reflection or Levity. They have pursued their Point with a Strain that deserves great Commendation. But those who have taken

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great liberties with them, have said, That this was only an Artifice to soften the Horror that their Opinions were apt to give; and to possess the world with such favourable thoughts of their Persons and Doctrines, as might both remove Prejudices, and dispose all men to believe well of those who seemed full of a Christian Spirit; and they have been apt to suspect, that as their Numbers and their Hopes might encrease, they would change their Stile, and raise their Spirits. This Writer has done what lay in him, to justify those suspicions. It seems he thinks the Party is now so strong, that the hard words of *Nonsense*, *Contradiction*, and *Absurdity*, may be let fly liberally; though upon so grave a Subject, Modester Words would have imported full as much, and would have had a much better appearance. He loves also to divert himself as oft as he can:

P. 90.

I had in the general part of my Discourse said, *That since there may be Mysteries in the Divine Essence that are far beyond all our Apprehensions; therefore if God lets out any hints of any such to us, we are to receive them in such a plain sense as the words do naturally bear.*

Conf. p. 20,
21.

From hence he runs division upon the word *hint*; and studies to make the whole appear ridiculous: Though when I come to treat of the proofs that ought to be relied on in this matter, I had laid this down for a ground, *That in so sublime a Point, there ought to be a greater fulness of express words, than for bare precepts of Morality, or more easily received Notions: And that we ought not to suppose, that if God intended to Reveal any thing to us that should pose our Understandings, he would only do it in hints, or in Words and Expressions of doubtful Signification, and that therefore those who denied Mysteries, had a right to demand full and Copious Proofs of them.*

P. 109.

The taking notice of this would have been more sincere, but some of the *mirth* into which *hints* led him, would have been spoiled by it. I mention no other Strains of this sort, though he does often with the same *Candour* and *Modesty* endeavour to make those he writes against look Ridiculous; which is pursued so flatly, that one would think that the Civil and more Artificial Words with which he begins his Considerations, were writ by another Pen, but were in the Management spoiled by his own.

Conf. p. 15.

To pass over his many indecent Reflections, especially when nothing of that sort was used, to give a Provocation or Colour for such returns; there is another imputation of a much higher nature,

Nature, which deserves a severer Expostulation. He frequently Reflects on the *Aws*, and other *Biaſſes*, and *Interests*, that he apprehends are the Considerations which engage men to persist in the Persuasions which he writes against. This is, with a slight disguise, to say, that because the Law would turn Men out of their Benefices, if they owned the contrary Doctrine, therefore to save these, they not only Speak and Write, but Worship God in Acts that are plainly against their Consciences. This is often repeated, though perhaps more broadly in the other Considerations, than in those that relate to my self. I reckon my self to be equally involved with my Brethren in the Imputation; and will therefore Answer it with the solemnity that so grave a matter requires: I call God to witness, how unjust, as well as black, this Accusation is. If I did not sincerely Believe this Doctrine, I should think it a horrid Prevaricating with God and man, to make Confessions which I do not Believe, and to join in Acts of Worship which I think Idolatrous. No man of Conscience can think himself clear of so Criminal an Imputation by holding his Peace, when those Confessions of Faith are made; his Standing up to them, nay, his continuing in the Communion of the Church that uses them, is a plain avowing of them: And he must live and die in a state of Damnation, who can make those Professions, and continue in such solemn Acts of Worship, when all this is a lying both to God and man.

The blackest part of the charge of Idolatry which we lay on the Church of *Rome*, is a mild thing compared to this, if true. Here is not only material, but formal Idolatry committed in the highest Instances possible, if we Worship One as the Great God, whom we believe to be but a mere Creature. A man who can upon any consideration whatsoever, sell himself at this rate, can have neither Conscience nor Religion; no Sincerity, nor true Piety: If this insinuation carried only a Personal Reflection on our selves; though the injustice of it be very great, yet it might be more easily passed over, if it were not for the great advantage it gives to Atheistical and Prophane Minds, who are inclined enough to think that all the Professions of Religion which men make, are only matters of *Custom* or of *Interest*: These are now fortified as much as the Credit of this Writer can amount to. When some Per-

sons of whom the world has not otherwise had very ill impressions, are represented as *over-aw'd* and *bias'd* by *Interest*, to go against their Conscience, and to lye daily to God, and deceive the world by false Professions; no wonder that Religion it self should pass for a Cheat, if things of this nature could be generally believed. Men who could sell and stifle their Consciences at this rate, might as well deliver themselves up to all Immoralities, and should make no scruple to go over to all the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, where they might make the better bargain, and be much less guilty than this Writer would make us seem to be. God, who knows the sincerity of our Hearts and of our Professions, will I hope both clear us from so base an Imputation, and forgive those who either lay it on us ourselves, or do too easily believe it upon the suggestions of others.

As in this, so in several other respects our *Socinians* seem to be serving the Designs of the Atheists. This Writer is not contented to weaken the Credit of the Books that are believed to be *S. John's*; but studies to make the whole *Bible* pass for a vitiated and corrupted Book; and that these Corruptions are as ancient as *Epiphanius's* time; because that Father speaks of *some places that were found in the Copies that had not been Corrected*; upon which he concludes, *That some have been Modelling the common Bibles far above Twelve hundred years.* This is the very Plea of the *Mahometans*, who do not deny the bulk of the Christian Religion, which is acknowledged in the *Alcoran*, they only say that the New Testament is much altered from what it was at first, the Christians having put in and left out a great deal of it: Or to use this Writers word, they having *modelled* it anew. If this be as true, as it is boldly asserted, there is indeed very little regard due to that Volume, about which he thinks there has been so much dishonest Dealing; and that for so many Ages. The opening this matter, he thinks would *raise the very Foundations of Babylon*; He might have rather said of the Christian Religion. For if the Books that are the Text of it are so mangled, what certainty is there left about any part of it? He does not seem to design this as a Service to the Church of *Rome*; where the currant Doctrine is, that no Submission is due to the Scriptures, but as they are attested and explained by the Church; tho' the great Pains he takes to excuse

excuse Transubstantiation, looks very kindly towards them.

The true Consequence of this must be, that the Scripture may (perhaps) contain many good things: But that we are sure of nothing concerning it; since it has had so strange a fate upon it for so long a time. This is to be answered only by attacking him as a downright *Deist*, by proving that we have the Scriptures genuinely conveyed down to us. The Attempts of a *Mercenary Critick* on this Head ought not to pass upon us; who know how little regard he has to any Religion. No doubt there was anciently great Care taken to compare the Manuscripts of the Bible. In some Copies, Marginal Notes and Glosses might have been mixt with the Text; and Copied out as a part of it: And that might be discovered by other more Correct Copies. This is all that can be gathered from *Epiphanius's* words; how much further soever an impious Critick may endeavour to stretch them. There is no harm done by attacking our Translation; or by shewing the various Readings of some Copies, and endeavouring to establish the true Reading, from ancient Copies or Quotations: but it strikes at the whole, to accuse all the Copies now extant, as having been long vitiated by Fraud, and on Design.

I shall offer you but one other general Consideration, on that part of this Writers Book, in which he thinks he has the greatest advantage given him. Because there have been some different Methods taken, in explaining the *Trinity*, in which some seem to have adhered so much to the *Unity* of the Deity, that their *Trinity* seems unconceivable; while others have asserted such a *Trinity* as seems inconsistent with *Unity*, he represents us all as so divided and broken, that we agree in nothing; but in the maintaining of some Terms and Phrases against them: in which we have very different Apprehensions from one another. *Conf. p. 18.*

This seems to give Scandal to some good minds, as well as advantage to bad ones: and therefore it ought to be well explained. There is then a great difference to be made between that which is a part of our Religion, and those Conceptions by which we may more distinctly set it forth, both to our selves and others. To make this more sensible by Instances that are foreign to this Matter: Many Protestants have different Apprehensions concerning the manner of Christ's Presence in the Sacrament;

Sacrament; some asserting *Consubstantiation*, others a *real Presence*, and others only a *Figurative one*: But all agreeing, That this is a Sacred Institution of Christ's, accompanied with a Divine Vertue and Blessing, to those who worthily receive it, by which the Benefits of the Death of Christ are conveyed to them; they are all of the same Religion, who do agree in this, tho' they have different Methods of apprehending and explaining the matter. In like manner, as to the Decrees and Providence of God; some think that all arises from the Antecedent and fixed Acts of God; whereas others believe that a foresight of all future Events is to be considered as Antecedent to those Acts: Upon these two Suppositions, there seem to be very different Ideas formed of the *Power, Wisdom, Justice, Goodness, and Truth* of God, and yet all who confess a Providence, who adore it, submit to it, and depend upon it, are of the same Religion; for in these consists Religion with Relation to Providence. Religion being the Sense that we have of God and Divine Matters, by which our minds go towards him, in Acts conform to it. Therefore all those who do worthily receive the Sacrament, or sincerely acknowledge Providence, have the same Religion upon their Heads, how different soever their Explanations of them may be. So as to this great Point, all those who worship God as *One*, and who do also worship the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, together with the *Father*, as God, have truly the same Religion, the same Acts of Piety and Adoration; tho' some of them may have different ways of explaining either the *Unity* of the Essence, or the *Trinity* of the Persons. If this is well weighed, I hope it will put an end to the Insultings of some, and the Offences of others.

I confess the less men go into Explanations, it will be the better, and the less liable to censure: unless it be to offer such Illustrations, as rather shew how a thing may be explained, than affirm how it ought to be explained: And therefore since *God is unsearchable, and past finding out*, to Perfection, the best Method is to consider what is the clear meaning of these Texts of Scripture, that declare any of those Depths to us, and to judge of them according to the plain Importance of the Words, examining that by the Context, the Style and Phraseology of the Scriptures, and by all the other Indications by which we may find out their true meaning.

This leads me to the first Remark that I shall make on this Writer's Considerations which fall on me, and on that part of my Discourse that relates to Mysteries in General. He yields that there may be great Difficulties in some things, of the truth of which we do not doubt; but then, says he, we are well assured that these things are truly so: whereas some *Ambiguous words of Scripture* cannot give us such an assurance concerning pretended Mysteries. But all that I aimed at in this part of my Discourse was, that if any such things should happen to be revealed to us in the Scriptures, that then we should be bound to believe them; notwithstanding all Objections to the contrary: as we believe the Objects of Sense and Reason, tho' we cannot answer all those Difficulties that arise about them; for if we are once sure that such Books are come from God, and that they are faithfully handed down to us; then, unless we will submit to an infallible Tribunal, we must trust our own Reasons with the finding out of the true and plain meaning of them: When that is found out, we are as much bound to believe it, as we can be to believe any of the Objects of Sense: since this is laid down for a truth, contested by none, that God is the *God of Truth, and cannot lie*. There lies no Exception against any part of this Discourse; since it runs all upon the Supposition, that the thing is clearly revealed in the Scripture; and that yet there lie as unanswerable Difficulties against it, as against those Truths which our Senses or Reasons do attest to us.

The excursion made by him to excuse Transubstantiation, is not so much meant in favour of it, as in opposition to these (pretended) Mysteries; but indeed it is so little to the purpose, that it seems to me not to deserve to be examined. My words are not faithfully reported by him; for whereas I had said, That we had the *fullest evidence of sense against it, in an object of sense*; he has left out *fullest*, and then diverts himself by showing how the Evidence of *Sense* may be mistaken; as in an *Oil* that appears crooked in *Water*, with other Instances of the like force; whereas all this had failed, if he had considered the Importance of the word *fullest*, that is, an Evidence given with all the Exactness, and after all the Corrections that *Sense* can lay be ore us. *Sense* it self has led us into a whole Theory of Refractions, according to the Medium through which

P. 93.

which we see an Object pass : What he says about Accidents, is too slight to be remarked : We see the same Objects in the same manner after their pretended Transubstantiation, that we saw before it ; therefore either our *Senses* are not infallible in their strictest application to their proper Objects, or they are as true after Transubstantiation as they were before it. The Inference after all that he would draw from what he says upon this Head, shall be easily acknowledged by me ; That where the Evidence of *Reason* is as plain and full against an Object of *Reason*, as the Evidence of *Sense* is here concerning an Object of *Sense*, that there we have very good ground to reject it. If it were pretended that God were both *One* and *Three* in the same respect, the Evidence of *Reason* against this is so clear, that I acknowledge that no Authority whatsoever ought to induce us to believe it : But if it is revealed that the same Being is both *One* and *Three*, then since the Notion of *Unity* is capable of such difference, since also that of *diversity* is of the same largeness, and since the same Being may be *One* in one respect, and *More* in another ; this opposition between such *Unity* and such *Trinity*, is no proper Object of *Reason*, nor can *Reason* give us a full Evidence, much less the *fullest* against it.

I think there remains nothing to be considered on this Head, except the Scorn with which he treats me ; which I thank God I can very easily bear, and will make no returns. He might after all, treat those Matters for which so many Persons of Worth and Learning have so particular a Veneration, with more Modesty. It seems he thought a Boldness of Expression, and a Scorn of his Adversaries, would have some effect on ordinary Readers ; which very probably it may have ; but better Judges will put another Construction upon it. I wish him a better Temper, and so I leave him, to come to the main Argument on which I had chiefly relied.

I will only say this for an Introduction to it, That the best Rule of Criticism is to consider the whole Thread, Strain, and Phraseology of a Book, and not to descant upon the various Significations that the Words themselves taken severally may be capable of. The not considering this aright, seems to have given the occasion to all the odd Comments of the *Socinians*.

The Name *Jehovah* was the peculiar designation that was appropriated to God in the Old Dispensation. This the Seventy have rendered quite through their whole Translation, *Κύριος*; and through the whole New Testament this is the designation that is given to Christ, sometimes with, and sometimes without the Article, and other emphatical Words: From which, since the greatest part of the New Testament was particularly and in the first place addressed to the *Jews*, great numbers of whom Read the Old Testament at that time most commonly in Greek; this conformity of Stile seems very plainly to demonstrate, that Christ was the true *Jehovah*; or at least that the true *Jehovah* dwelt in him. In Answer to this, he denies that *Jehovah* was the peculiar designation of God, and sets up an Argument for this, of which I had made no use, and then he pretends to Answer it; for after he has quarrelled with our Translation of a Verse in the Psalm, and has laid aside some other Translations of those Words, he at last settles on this as the true one, *Thou whose name is Jehovah, art alone the most high over all the earth.* I will at present accept of this Translation; for it yields all that I pretend to, That *Jehovah* was the known Name of God in that dispensation. I will not enter into the Rabinical Niceties concerning it, as whether it signified the Essence or Eternity of God, or whether it imported only God's being in Covenant with them, and the truth and stability of his Promises: Whatsoever might be the proper signification of the word *Jehovah*, it was at first delivered to *Moses* in such a manner, that there was no need to go to any of the *Psalms* to find out that it was the Name by which God made himself particularly known to the *Jews*. That whole Discourse with *Moses* in *Exodus*, is spoken by God in the First Person: *I am the God of thy Father, — I have seen, — I am come down, — I will send thee:* Here is no intimation of a Message carried by an Angel, but plainly the contrary: And when *Moses* asked how he should answer them that should ask him what was his Name; God said unto him, *I am that I am.* These words come very near the formation of the word *Jehovah*; and it is plain by what is said Three Chapters after that, *I am the Lord, or Jehovah; and I appeared unto Abraham, and unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the Name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.* It is clear, I say, that by that first Apparition to *Moses*, the Name *Jehovah* was then understood;

Conf. p. 23,

24.

Ps. 83. 18.

Ex. 3. from
v. 2. to the
end.

v. 6, 7, 8,

10.

v. 13, 14,

15.

Ex. 6. 2, 3.

derstood: And it is expressly said, *This is my name for ever, this is my memorial throughout all generations.* To all this he may object, That in the beginning of that Vision it is said, that an *Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire*: From which it may be inferred, That all that is set down there, was said by this Angel, who speaks in the Name of God, and assumes his Person as being sent by him; and that therefore this *Name* may be given to any one who speaks in the Name of God. But that Vision of the Angel will import no more, but that an Angel appeared in the *Fire*; and by that *Moses* was led to go towards the Bush, and then God himself did immediately speak. This agrees with the whole Context, and puts no force on any part of it: Whereas it is a very violent strain to make an Angel thus speak as if he were the Great God, without any Intimation given that he only spake in his Name. This agrees with that general Remark of the *Jewish* Writers, who observe that when ever the *Sheckinab* appeared, Angels Accompanied it.

7 Acts 38. This agrees also with what is said often in the New Testa-
 3 Gal. 19- ment, that the Law was given by *Angels*, though it is said as
 2 Heb. 7. plain as words can make a thing, that God himself appeared; that is, that by an immediate Act of his own Power, he made all those Glorious Representations to be seen, and the Voice of the Ten Commandments to be heard. To this also belong those words of Christ concerning his Appearing at the last Day, *In his own glory; in his Father's glory; and in the glory of his Angels*: Together with all that is said of Angels Appearing with him at the final Judgment: The Charge given to St. Paul, *Before God, the Lord Jesus, and the elect Angels*, does also agree with this. So that the *Angel* that first appeared to *Moses*, was only one of the Attendants on this *Sheckinab*, or Manifestation of God himself. Any Name that is given to a Place, into the composition of which *Jehovah* enters, such as *Jehovah Tsidkenu* given to *Jerusalem*, is too slight a thing to be stood upon. It is therefore plain, that *Jehovah* was a Name peculiarly appropriated to God in the Old Testament, which the Seventy do always render *Κύριος*. So since Christ is all through the New Testament called by the same Name, this Argument has great force; nor is it shaken by the giving the term *Κύριος* as a common compellation to other Persons; as we say *Sir*, or *Lord*; which, as is not to be denied, occurs frequently in the New Testament;

16 Mat. *but*
 27.
 25 Mat.
 31.
 8 Mark
 38.
 9 Luke
 26.
 13 Mat.
 41.
 24 Mat.
 31.
 1 Tim. 5.
 21.
 Jer. 33. 16.
 Genf. p. 24.

but the use of it in a particular discourse, where it is restricted to that Person, cannot be compared to a constant Stile of calling *Christ* simply, and without limitation, *Lord, the Lord, my Lord,* or *our Lord,* as the designation that belonged properly to him.

Soon after the New Testament was written, *Domitian* would be called *Dominus* simply. Now this was looked on as a strain of Insolence beyond what the former Emperors had assumed: for though the word *Dominus*, as applied to some particular thing, implied no more, but that such a thing belonged to such a Person; yet the term *Dominus* without a restriction, imported that all the *Romans* were his *Slaves*, and that he was the Master of all their *Properties*. The same is to be applied to the use of the word *Κύριος*: In a limited sense it signifies not much; but in so large and so general a sense, it must be understood to be equivalent to the common use of that word in the *Septuagint* Translation. *St. Paul* rejects their being called the *servants of men* with a just indignation: And yet if *Christ* is but a *Man*, and at the same time the *Lord of all*, he was no better than the *servant of a man*. So I think this Argument is not weakened by any thing that this Writer has offered against it.

Suet. in Dom.

1 Gal. 10.

I had brought a confirmation of it from the Prophecy of *Haggai*, of filling the second temple with glory: Nothing was built upon the addition of his glory; so that this Writer might have concluded, that there was no design, but only the want of exactness in using it. *Filling with glory*, was that upon which the force of this Argument was laid. I shall not enlarge here to shew, that by *Glory* in the Old Testament, the *Shekinah* is generally to be understood. *St. Paul* thought so; for in one place reckoning up the Priviledges of the *Jews*, he says theirs is the *Glory*, and the *Covenants*; and in another place describing the Holiest of all, he speaks of the *Cherubims of glory*. So that by *Glory* with relation to the Temple, that immediate Manifestation of God, could only be meant: This is also confirmed from the word *Fill*, which cannot be applied to any building or decoration, but must be meant of somewhat that was to be shed abroad in the Temple. All this will appear very plain if we consider the last words of the Book of *Exodus*, where this Phrase is first used. The Tabernacle was set up with every thing relating to it, according to the Directions that God had given to *Moses*;

Conf. p. 24, 25.

9 Rom. 4;
9 Heb. 5.

40 Ex. 34.

and then it is said, that a *Cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle*: which is again repeated in the next Verse. These words are also repeated when the History of the Dedication of *Solomon's Temple* is given; it is said, *That the cloud filled the house of the Lord*; and in the next Verse it is repeated, *That the glory of the Lord had filled the house*. This gives the true key to the understanding of *Haggai's Prophecy*, which must be explained according to the *Mosaic Phrase*: This gives the key likewise to understand those words of the *fulness of the Godhead that dwelt bodily in Christ*, and of our receiving of *his fulness*. But to apply that Prophecy, as this Writer does, to the rebuilding the Temple by *Herod*, agrees no ways with the words that accompany it, on which I had chiefly built; of *his giving peace in that place, and of his shaking the Heavens, and the earth, and all Nations*: To that he has not thought fit to make any sort of Answer; and yet either these are only pompous words that signify nothing, or they must signify somewhat beyond any thing that can be ascribed to what *Herod* did. That which is the only key by which we can be led into the sense of those words, I mean the words of *Exodus* and *Kings*, does in no sort belong to it: Whereas the Prophecy was literally accomplished by *Christ's* coming into the Mountain of the House, if the *Sheckinah* lodged in him in a more eminent manner than it had done in *Solomon's Temple*. So, I think, no part of this Argument is shaken.

To this I shall add another remark, which in some sort belongs to this matter, though in his Book it stands at some distance from that which I am now upon. He insults much upon the advantage he thinks he has, because in a place of the *Romans*, it is in our Bibles, *God blessed for ever*; whereas he thinks *God* is not a part of the Text. I will not at present enter upon the discussion of that, but shall only observe, that the force of the Argument from that place, lies chiefly upon the word, *blessed for ever*. After the *Jews* began to think that the Name *Jebovash* was so Sacred, that it was not to be read, instead of it they used this Circumlocution, the *Holy*, and the *Blessed*, sometimes both together, sometimes the one, and sometimes the other. This was a practice in use in our Saviour's time: One of the Evangelists says, that the High Priest asked, *If Christ was the Son of God*; the other reports it, that he asked if he was the

1 Kings. 8.

10. 11.

2 Hag. 6,

7, 8, 9.

2 Col. 9.

1 John

16.

9 Rom. 5.

Conf. p. 29.

16 Mat.

63.

14 Mark

61.

Son of the blessed: And St. Paul in that same Epistle speaking of 1 Rom. 25. the Creator, adds *Blessed for ever*; a form of speech that among them was equivalent to *Jehovah*; and therefore when he says the same of Christ, it was a customary form of Speech, importing that he was *Jehovah*. So whether the word *God* was in the Original Text, or not, the place is equally strong to this purpose.

The next Argument that I insisted on, was the Worship From p. 121. that is paid to Christ in the New Testament; which as it has in it self great force, so it seemed to have the more weight upon this account, because it must be confessed, that the *Jews* who could not be unacquainted with the Worship of the Christians, never Objected that to them, if we believe the Apostles to have writ sincerely: They mention their other Prejudices, and Answer them, but say nothing of this: Which shews, that if they are allowed to be candid Writers, there was no such prejudice then set on foot. And yet if Christ was Worshipped in the *Arian*, or *Socinian* Hypothesis, this was so contrary to the fundamental Notions of the *Jews* at that time, that we cannot imagine that they could pass it over, who were concerned on so many accounts to blacken the Christian Religion, and to stop its progress: Therefore there being no other Notion in which this Worship could give them no Offence, but that of the *Godheads dwelling bodily in him*; and since they were not offended at it, we cannot conceive that there 2 Coll. 9. was then any other Idea of this matter, but this, which was both suitable to their Doctrines, and to the Practice of their Ancestors during the First Temple.

This seems to be such a Moral Argument, as goes farther to satisfy a man's mind, than even stricter proofs will do: As some Presumptions do convince men more effectually than the most positive Evidence given by Witnesses. To all this he has thought fit to say nothing but in these words; *There are abundance of exceptionable things in that Discourse, to which I have neither leisure nor inclination to Reply, as some others (perhaps) would.* Conf. p. 26. A man who is at
leisure

leisure to Write against any Discourse, should give himself the leisure to consider the most important things that are in it, especially if they seem to be New. As for his inclinations, I will not be so severe as to judge of them; though what he has said to question the Authority of the New Testament, as we now have it, gives a handle to a very heavy suspicion, That he thought this was not to be answered, but by a more explicate attack made upon the whole New Testament, than he thought fit to adventure upon at present.

He goes on alledging some instances where God and Creatures seem to be mixed in the same Acts and Expressions: *The People worshipped the Lord and the King. St. Paul is adjured before God, Christ, and the elect Angels. The people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel; and they believed the Lord and Moses.* From which he infers, That both Kings and Prophets were Worshipped and Believed without any Idolatry. If we had no other warrants for the Worship of Jesus Christ, but such general Words, I should easily acknowledge that there were no great force in them: The falling down to him prostrate, and Worshipping him while he was here on Earth, and the Believing what he then said, will not infer Adoration: But the Prayers Offered up to him now that he is in Heaven, the command of *honouring the Son, even as the Father is honoured*; the Worship that Angels and Saints in Heaven Offer to him, are such evident Characters of Divine Honour, that we have lost all the Notions of Idolatry, if these things can be offered to a Creature. This Writer would indeed reduce all this to as narrow a point as can be; as if Christ did only in the Vertue of his Death, offer up on our behalf a general Intercession; for he doubts whether there is any special Intercession made for us or not. The Story of *St. Paul's Conversion* is plainly contrary to this: *St. Paul Praying to him when he was in his Temptation by the Messenger of Satan, and the Answer he obtained, do very clearly shew Christ's Immediate Hearing and Answering of Prayer; which is urged by Socinus himself with great force against those*

Ibid.

1 Chron.

29. 20.

1 Tim. 5.

21.

1 Sam. 12.

18.

14 Ex. 31.

Ibid.

9 Acts 5.

17.

2 Cor. 12.

8, 9.

those who did not Worship the Lord Jesus. St. Stephen died Worshipping him, and Praying, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit*; and, *Lord lay not this to their charge*. These are such express Authorities of a Spiritual Worship, which do so fully explain the meaning of that general Rule, That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; that the Invocating and Worshipping of Christ is as fully set forth in the New Testament, as any one part of the Christian Religion whatsoever. Invocation must import both Omniscience, and Omnipresence, as well as Omnipotency. We call on him as supposing that he is near us, that he hears us, and both will and can help us. Now this Writer had best consider how all this can be offered to a meer Creature. The Honour or Worship that we give to the Father, is the acknowledging his Infinite Perfections, together with the tender of our Homage to him. This cannot be offered to a Creature, without manifest Impiety: Nor can any such Worship become ever the matter of a Divine Precept; because there is an essential Incongruity between these Acts and a created Object; and by consequence, there is an essential Immorality in them. Now that all Idolatry should be so severely forbid in the New Testament, and yet so grossly practised in it, must be indeed a very strong Argument against the whole Christian Religion, if Christ was a meer Creature, which cannot be excused by any softnings whatsoever.

But since this is a Consideration so much insisted upon, it may be proper to open it with its utmost force: When the New Testament was writ, there were Four sorts of men that could only be considered by the Penmen of it; 1st. The Jews, to whom it was to be offered in the first place. They were strongly possessed against all the appearances of Idolatry; and had never Prayed to *Miser* nor *Elijab*, the Chief of their Prophets. 2^{dly}. The Gentiles, they were abandoned to all the several sorts of Idolatry, from all which they were to be reclaimed, and to be taught to Serve and Worship none but the Living God. 3^{dly}. The false Christians, that began early to corrupt Christianity,

Christianity, and to suit it with Judaism and Paganism: They set themselves against the Apostles, and studied to raise their own Credit, by derogating from theirs. The 4th. were the true Christians, who were generally weak and ignorant, who needed Milk, and were not capable of hard or sublime things. With respect to all these, we ought to believe that such a Point, as at first view might offend the *Jews*, and harden the *Gentiles* in their Idolatry; as might give advantage to false Christians, and be a stumbling-block to the true ones, was to be plainly and simply delivered; not in pompous expressions, or figures that might seem to import more than was meant by them; but in measured and severe words. The nature of man carries him too easily to Idolatry; so that this inclination was to be resisted and not complied with; and yet *St. John* begins his Gospel with a solemn set of Phrases, that are as it were the Frontispiece and Introduction to it: which if the Exposition of these men is to be admitted, must be only a lofty saying of ordinary matter in very high-flown Expressions. Such likewise must be the Second Chapter to the *Philippians*, with a great deal more of the same strain. If it was meant by all this to worship Christ as the true *Jehovah*, that is, as having the *Eternal Word*, and the *fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him*, then the matter was properly expressed, and suitably to the Doctrine and Practice of the *Old Testament*, and was delivered in a Phrasiology agreeing with it.

But if a new Doctrine was introduced concerning a man that was made a God, that was so called, and was to be worshipped as such, here was such a stumbling-block laid in mens way, and so little care taken either to restrain those Excesses into which Humane Nature is apt to run, or to explain the Scruples and Difficulties that must naturally arise upon it; that it seems to be scarce conceivable how any can entertain this, and yet retain any value for that Religion; I must confess I cannot; and it is so natural for a man to judge of others by himself, that I do not think others do it, or indeed can do it.

I men-

I mentioned some other passages of the New Testament, and I did but mention them, because others have examined them so Critically, that nothing was left for me to say upon them. But to all these this Writer opposes a very specious thing; he says there is not one of all those passages, but *some one or other of the most Learned Assertors of the Trinity, has Translated or Interpreted them to another sense: Upon which he takes occasion, according to the Modesty of his Stile, to reproach me for my Confidence; he thinks, that assuredly I will be ashamed of such Rhetorickations.* It is certain, that when a great many passages look all one way, though every one of them singly might not come up to a full proof; yet the combination of them all shews such a Phraseology running through the Scriptures, that the conjunction of them all together, gives a much fuller satisfaction to the mind, than any one of them, or indeed all of them taken severally could do: Many circumstances about a fact concurring, grow up to a proof; which any one, or indeed all of them, in their own nature, could not amount to: And therefore if such a Stile runs through the Scriptures, that at every step a man feels himself straitned, and that he must disentangle himself by the Subtilties of Criticism, and these often very much forced; a Book full of such Passages, may be called a Book of Riddles, darkly writ to puzzle ordinary Readers: But it will be hard to maintain a Reverence for such Writings, to esteem them Inspired by God, and delivered to plain and simple Readers as a *Lamp, or Light for their Instruction, that by them the man of God may be made perfect.* The concurrence of those Passages, the Thread of them, and the Stile of the whole, has a force beyond what is in every one of them apart. If therefore all Criticks have not been equally certain of the force of every one of them, this will not weaken the Argument from them all together.

Criticks are like other men, apt to overvalue their own Notions, and to affect singularities; some to raise the strength of those Arguments which seem clearest to them, may be willing to make all others look the weaker; others

may study to lessen the Credit of such Writers, against whom they may have, on other accounts, some secret resentments; and so they may undermine those Arguments on which they had chiefly built. The first great Critick that begun the weakning of most of the Arguments drawn from Texts of Scripture on this Head, I mean *Erasmus*, did not understand the *Hebrew* so well as he did the *Greek*; so that he considering the *Greek* Phraseology more than that which had arisen from the *Hebrew* and *Siriack*, might often mistake. Therefore the diversities among Criticks concerning particular places, does not weaken the force of those Inferences that are drawn from them; much less the Evidence that arises out of the whole, when laid all together.

Ibid.

He thinks I would have done a Generous thing if I had acquainted the English Reader with the doubtfulness of that passage in *St. John's Epistle*, of the Three that bear witness in heav'n. I cannot oblige any man to read all that I have writ, and so do not charge him for not doing it: I have done that more fully than any that I yet know of; and that in a Book, which of all those that I have yet writ, was the most universally read by the most different sorts of People: Nor has my doing that so copiously, and in a Book of such a nature, scaped some severe, but unjust censures. I will not lye for God, nor suppress a truth that may become an honest man to own.

Consf. p. 32.

Thus I have gone over all that seemed material, and to need explanation, on the first Head concerning the Divinity of the Son of God. I must only explain one thing, with which he concludes those his Considerations. I had Illustrated this matter by the *indwelling* of the *Cloud of Glory*, and had explained from that, the *fulness of the Godheads dwelling bodily in Christ*: From thence he fancies this to be *Nestorius's Doctrine*, and that it is also theirs, who own *That God (by his Spirit or Energy) was in the Lord Christ in a very especial and powerful manner*: and so he pretends that they submit to my *Doctrine*. I can assure him, that both the Spirit with which he writes, and the *Doctrines* which he espouses, are such, that I reckon this the heaviest
of

of all the Imputations that he has laid on me; but it is as just and true as the rest are. We do not certainly know what Nestorius's Doctrine was, if it was no more than that he did not allow the term of the *Mother of God* to be due to the Blessed *Virgin*, as some pretend; and that all that was further charged on him, was only a consequence drawn from that; this was no heinous thing: But whatever Nestorius himself might be, the Opinion charged on him, and Condemned by the Church, was, That the *eternal word* in Christ, was only of the nature of an assisting Power, like the Spirit of Prophecy in the Prophets; but that it was not so united to him, as to make One Person with his *Human Nature*. In this sense I have fully condemned that Doctrine; for as the Soul is united to the Body, and dwells in it, in another manner than a man dwells in a House; and as the Soul actuates the Body, in another manner than a man actuates such Tools as he works by; so the Union of the Human and Divine Nature in Christ is represented in Scripture as the compounding one Person, as much as in other men the Union of *Soul* and *Body* makes one Man.

If he submits to this Doctrine, I shall be glad of it; for then he submits to a Doctrine which, I think, is very expressly Revealed in Scripture: But for any *Indwelling*, like that of the Spirit of Prophecy; even in the eminentest degrees imaginable, the Epistle to the *Hebrews* does so plainly carry this so much higher, to a thing of quite another nature; and states such an opposition between Christ and all Prophets, even *Moses* himself, like that of a *Son* and a *Servant*, that I think the reading that with due attention, will soon satisfy a man, that this *Indwelling* is a *vital* one, like that of the *Souls* dwelling in the *Body*, and not an assisting one, like Inspiration, or the gift of Tongues, or of Miracles. 3 Heb. 3, 4, 5, 6.

When Christ Commanded all to be Baptized in the name of the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; he plainly mentioned *Three*: If therefore I, to adhere to Scripture-terms, had avoided the frequent use of any other word but the *Three*, I thought how much soever this might offend others, 28 Mat. 19. Conf. p. 17, who 32.

who might apprehend that I seemed to avoid mentioning of *Trinity*, or *Persons* (which yet I shewed flowed from no dislike of those *Words*, but merely that I might stick more exactly to *Scripture-terms*) yet I had no reason to think that men of the other side would have found such fault with this. *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, are the *Three* of whom I Discourse; so instead of repeating these words at every time, I shortned it by saying the *Blessed Three*: Now it is a strain particular to this Writer to enlarge on this.

I go now to the *second Head*, concerning the Death of Christ: Here this Writer affirms that, which if it flows from Ignorance, as in Charity to him I hope it does, then certainly he ought not to have Writ concerning a matter, to the History of which he was so great a stranger. He says, that the Doctrine which I propose concerning the Propitiation by the Death of Christ, as an Expiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, has been the very Doctrine of the Socinians, which they have owned from the beginning in all their Books. To seem to justify this, he sets down some of my words, leaving out, with his usual candour, those that were most Critical; for whereas I had said, That Christ had suffered on our account and in our stead; he leaves out these last words, and in our stead; which are the very words on which the Controversy turns, as is well known to those who have studied it to any degree; the turn being whether Christ died *Nostro bono*, or *Nostro loco*: And whereas I had added, that upon the account of Christ's Death, God offered the world the Pardon of Sin; he leaves out that which was most Critical here, upon the account of it; nor does he mention that with which I concluded the Period; And He (God) will have us in all our Prayers for Pardon, or other Favours, claim them through that Death, and owe them to it. Such an unfaithful recital of my words, gives no advantageous Character of the rest.

It is indeed a strange degree of assurance to make us believe, that the Socinians have at all times owned this Doctrine; since not only all their first Writers denied it, and the *Racovian Catechism* is express to the contrary; but after

after *Grotius* had managed the Controversy merely in order to the asserting the Expiatory Verrue of the Sacrifice of Christ's Death, without insisting on the Metaphysical Notions which had been brought into it; yet *Crellius* not satisfied with this, endeavoured to Answer that whole Book, and adhered still to the first Notions of *Socinus*. I do not deny, but that since that time some of their Followers have come off from them, and have acknowledged the Expiatory Vertue of that *Sacrifice*: Therefore though I have no mind to encrease the number of Controversies, and am very glad when any do forsake their Errors, especially such heinous ones; yet it is a peculiar strain of confidence to say, That *this was their Doctrine from the beginning*.

As for the Niceties with which the Primitive Church was not acquainted, and which were not started before *Anselm's* time in the end of the *XIth* Century, concerning the Antecedent necessity of a Satisfaction, and the Subtleties that the Schoolmen did afterwards devise concerning Equivalents; I do not think they belong to this matter, as it stands Revealed to us in the Scriptures, and therefore I did not insist on them. It is no part of the Doctrine of our Church; and *Dr. Outram's* Learned Performance on this Subject, has been so universally applauded and acquiesced in, that I thought all men were satisfied from thence, what is the Doctrine generally received among us. Our Articles are the only standard to judge of our Doctrine, as far as they go; but they have determined nothing in this matter, but rest in the general Notions of Expiation and of Reconciling us to God.

In lib. cur
Deusho-
mo.

I have now done with all that part of the late Book which falls to my share; and have made those Explanations and Reflections upon it, that seemed necessary. I have said this once for all, and shall no more return to it, upon any new provocation whatsoever: Such crude and bold Attempts, are oftener to be neglected than Answered. These men are at best the Instruments of the Devils, who design by their means to weaken the Credit of the Christian

stian Religion, and of those Books that are the standards of it. I hope they do not know whose work they are doing, nor what ends they are serving. I pray God give them a better discerning, and more serious Tempers. I wish you may be happily successful in your Attempts to undeceive them, as well as in all your other Labours, in which you lay out your Time and Studies so worthily for the Service of the Church; for which *great is your reward in heaven.* I pray God to Bless and prosper you in them; and am with a very particular esteem,

Reverend Sir,

Your Affectionate Brother,

*Westminster,
2 Feb. 1697.*

and most humble Servant,

G. SARUM.

T H E

T H E C O N T E N T S.

<p>O <i>F the Authority of St. John's Writings.</i> <i>Answer to the Objections of our Author's</i> <i>Ancient Unitarians, against the Autho-</i> <i>rity of St. John's Writings, particularly</i> <i>the Gospel and the Revelation.</i> 6</p> <p><i>Of the Name Unitarians.</i> 13</p> <p><i>Of Ebion and Cerinthus.</i> 13, 18</p> <p><i>Of the Alogi in Epiphanius.</i> 14</p> <p><i>Of the Occasion of St. John's writing his</i> <i>Gospel.</i> 15</p> <p><i>Of Socinus's Exposition of the Beginning of</i> <i>St. John's Gospel.</i> 21</p> <p><i>The Unreasonableness and Novelty of that</i> <i>Exposition.</i> 25</p> <p><i>The Archbishop's Exposition of Hebr. 1. 1.</i> <i>and Col. 1. 16. vindicated.</i> 33</p> <p><i>Of the Pre-existence of our Saviour.</i> 39</p> <p><i>Of Christ's coming down from Heaven; and</i> <i>the modern Socinian Exposition of Christ's</i> <i>personal Ascent into Heaven before his</i> <i>Ministry.</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> <p><i>A Vindication of his Grace's Exposition of</i> <i>John 17. 5. John 8. 58. Revel. 1. 8.</i> <i>and John 1. 1.</i> 47</p> <p><i>Of the Difficulties and Absurdities in the</i> <i>Socinian Hypothesis.</i> 53</p> <p><i>Of the Incarnation of our Saviour.</i> 57</p> <p><i>Of the Argument for the Incarnation, taken</i> <i>from the Personal Union of Soul and Body.</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> <p><i>Of the Humility of our Saviour in his Incarna-</i></p>	<p><i>tion, and of the fulness of time for it.</i> 60</p> <p><i>A Vindication of the Bishop of Worcester's</i> <i>Sermon.</i> 63</p> <p><i>Of Things Incomprehensible.</i> 64</p> <p><i>Of the Author's Self-contradiction.</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> <p><i>Of God's Eternity, and his being of Him-</i> <i>self, and possessing all at once.</i> 68</p> <p><i>Several Queries about God's possessing all at</i> <i>once, answer'd.</i> 70</p> <p><i>Socinian Mysteries.</i> 73</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Bishop of Sarum's Letter to J. W.</p> <p><i>Of the Socinian way of managing Contro-</i> <i>versies.</i> 81</p> <p><i>Of this Author's way of Calumniating.</i> 83</p> <p><i>His Charge of the Corruptions in the Sacred</i> <i>Text consider'd.</i> 84</p> <p><i>Of the different Opinions concerning the</i> <i>Trinity; and that the Trinitarians may</i> <i>notwithstanding be said to be of the same</i> <i>Religion.</i> 87</p> <p><i>The Name Jehovah peculiarly appropriated</i> <i>to God, and yet given to our Saviour.</i> 89</p> <p><i>Of the Name Lord; and of the Shechinah</i> <i>among the Jews.</i> 91</p> <p><i>Haggai 2. 6, 7. and Rom. 9. 5. explain'd</i> <i>and vindicated.</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> <p><i>Of the Worship given to our Saviour.</i> 92</p> <p><i>Of some modern Crotchets.</i> 97</p> <p><i>Of Nestorius's Doctrine.</i> 99</p> <p><i>Of the End for which Christ died.</i> 100</p>
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Books lately Printed for Richard Chiswell.

Memoirs of the most Reverend *THOMAS CRANMER*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*. In Three Books. Collected chiefly from Records, Registers, Authentick Letters, and other Original Manuscripts. By *John Strype*, M. A. Fol. 1694.

Dr. *John Conant's* Sermons. Published by Dr. *Williams*. 1693. 8vo.

Of the Government of the Thoughts. By *Geo. Tully*, Sub-dean of *York*. The Second Edition. 8vo. 1694.

A Commentary on the First Book of *Moses* called *Genesis*. By *Simon Lord Bishop of Ely*. 4to. 1695.

The History of the Troubles and Trial of the most Reverend *WILLIAM LAUD*, Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*; wrote by himself during his Imprisonment in the *Tower*. To which is prefixed, the Diary of his own Life faithfully and entirely published from the Original Copy; and subjoyned a Supplement to the preceding History; The *Archbishop's Last Will*; His large Answer to the Lord *Say's* Speech concerning *Liturgies*; His *Annual Accounts* of his Province delivered to the King, and some other things relating to the History. Published by *Henry Wharton*, Chaplain to Archbishop *Sancroft*, and by his Grace's Command. Folio.

Bishop of *Sarum's* Sermon at the Funeral of Archbishops *Tillotson* 1694.

— His Sermon preached before the King at *St. James's Chappel* on the 10th of February, 1692, being the first Sunday in *Lent*, on 2 *Cor. 6. 1*.

The Possibility, Expediency, and Necessity of Divine Revelation. A Sermon preached at *St. Martins in the Fields*, January 7. 1694. at the beginning of the Lecture for the ensuing Year founded by the Honourable *Robert Boyle*, Esq; By *John Williams*, D. D. (The Second Sermon is in the Press).

A Sermon of Holy Resolution, preached before the King at *Kensington*, December 30. 1694. By his Grace *Thomas*, Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, Elect.

ADVERTISEMENT. Feb. 25. 1693.

There will be Published several Sermons and Discourses of the most Reverend Dr. *JOHN TILLOTSON*, late Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, by Order of his Administratrix; faithfully Transcribed from his own Papers, by Dr. *Ralph Barker*, Chaplain to his Grace; which are disposed of to *Richard Chiswell*, and his Assignees. If any Person pretend to publish any other, except those already Printed, they are to be lookt upon as Spurious and False.

The first that will be published, are his Sermons of *Sincerity and Constancy in the Faith and Profession of the True Religion*. Which are in the Press, and will be finished in *Easter Term* next.

